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FEATURE ARTICLE 1

International Conference ASEM Initiative on Lifelong Learning

By RAHAYU SRI KIRANA AHMAT ADAM
Junior Research Assistant

From the time of ancient Egypt, the philosophical teachings of Socrates in Greece to the fundamental teachings of proper conduct and social relationship principles of Confucius in China, education has progressed tremendously over the centuries throughout the world. Historically, civilizations from both Asia and Europe have contributed to the fundamentals and concepts of education that we adopt and practise today.



Welcoming the Minister of Education, Tan Sri Musa bin Mohamad (third from left)

Globalisation has increased the importance of knowledge and the necessity of acquiring it as a basis for development. Education has been accorded the highest priority, since the key for survival of an individual living in the 21st century is to successfully attain a proper and formal education. Much effort has been carried out to eliminate universal illiteracy and help improve education on all levels. Societies all over the world have come to realize the importance of education and the need to be a part of a knowledge-based society. This contributes to the emergence of 'lifelong learning'. *Demographic, technological, and industrial change, the emergence of information economies, and of global markets combine to make lifelong learning vital to international competitiveness*¹.

¹ "Education, Adult," Microsoft® Encarta® Encyclopedia 2000. © 1993-1999 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

Lifelong Learning has taken its toll on the fundamentals of education, as the idea of lifelong learning is to promote the concept of continuous learning, and not the mere possession of an education background. *The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) member countries*² have concurred to promote lifelong learning, as part of the agenda to establish knowledge-based countries in accordance with development. The ASEM Lifelong Learning is an initiative with the vision to strengthen dialogue and exchange of experience and to develop co-operation to enhance focus on lifelong learning as a core political field of action within the ASEM-countries (www.asemlll.dk)

As a member country of ASEM and in line with Malaysia's Vision 2020, Malaysia formulated a proposal for the ASEM Lifelong Learning initiative along with Singapore, Ireland and Denmark. The opening conference was held in Denmark, and Malaysia, being the chair for the Thematic Working Group II, was to host the subsequent conference; The International Conference, ASEM Initiative on Lifelong Learning; held here in the Auditorium of the Asia-Europe Institute (AEI), University of Malaya from 13th till 15th May 2002. It was jointly hosted by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia and the Asia-Europe Institute, University of Malaya. The conference assembled speakers from all over Asia and Europe, as experts in the field of Lifelong Learning to present papers based upon their research and experience.

The three day conference was officially opened by the Honourable Minister of Education, Malaysia, Tan Sri Musa bin Mohamad, representing the Right Honourable Deputy Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi. The objective of



Official opening by Tan Sri Musa bin Mohamad, Minister of Education, Malaysia



Tan Sri Prof. Emeritus Dr. Awang Had Salleh



Professor Dr. Hassan bin Said



Tan Sri Dr. Johari bin Mat

the conference was to collaborate the exchange of ideas from both Asia and Europe on the lifelong learning issue. The theme of the conference was Integrated Approaches to Lifelong Learning and the Recognition of Skills and Prior Learning. There were six panels altogether, each with different sub topics and each session consisted of 3 speakers from Asia and 3 speakers from Europe followed by a discussant for each panel and a question and answer session.

First Day 13 May 2002

As the first day of the conference was also the opening ceremony, journalists and reporters were enthusiastic to make their way to AEI and witness the beginning of a new educational dimension; an ASEM Lifelong Learning initiative taking place at the very heart of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur. The programme started with a keynote address by Tan Sri Prof. Emeritus Dr.

Awang Had Salleh, Pro-Chancellor of University Pendidikan Sultan Idris and President of the Malaysian Association for Education, and was chaired by Tan Sri Dr. Johari bin Mat, former Secretary-General of the Ministry of Education, Malaysia. After the morning coffee break, the conference began with the first presentation by speakers in Panel 1: "Enlightened Philosophies". The chairperson for this session was, Prof. Dr. Hassan bin Said, Director, Higher Education Department, Ministry of Education, Malaysia.

This first topic, Changing Mindsets: "Lifelong Learning for Educationalists" was presented by Prof. Dato' Dr. Ibrahim Ahmad Bajunid, Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University Tun Abdul Razak, Malaysia. Prof. Dr. Ibrahim is a familiar name amongst the education fraternity and members of the press, as he is also an active columnist in a local newspaper, The New Straits Times; writing articles that revolve around life and also education in Malaysia.

As the orientation of the conference was to collaborate ideas and create intellectual exchanges between Asia and Europe, the next presentation was by a speaker from Europe; Prof. Dr. John Field, Director, Division of Academic Innovation and Continuing Education, University of Stirling, United Kingdom. He



Professor Dato' Dr. Ibrahim Ahmad Bajunid



Professor Dr. John Field



Dato' Mustafa Mansur



Professor Dr. Hajime Kobayashi

²ASEM Member Countries – Austria, Belgium, Brunei, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, The Netherlands, The Philippines, United Kingdom, Vietnam



Mr. Alastair Thomson



Professor Dr. Wazir Jahan Karim



Professor Gajendra Verma



Break for refreshments during the conference

spoke on the second topic, which was Lifelong Learning in Asia and Europe: A Comparative Perspective.

The third topic, Meeting Skills Needs: Private Sector Perspectives, was presented by Dato' Mustaffa Mansur, Vice-President, Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM).

The session continued with presentation by Mr. Alastair Thomson, Policy and Development Officer from the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), United Kingdom on Trade Union Promotion of Lifelong Learning in England 1999-2002 and Assessment of Different Approaches; Prof. Dr. Wazir Jahan Karim, Director-General, Academy of Social Sciences and Director, Women's Development Research Centre, Universiti Sains Malaysia on Lifelong Learning for Gender Equality; and Prof. Dr. Gajendra Verma from the Centre for Ethnic Studies in Education, Faculty of Education, University of Manchester, United Kingdom on Migrants and Social Exclusion: Lifelong Learning and the New Europe. After the speakers have presented their papers, Prof. Dr. Hajime Kobayashi from the Graduate School of Letters, Hokkaido University, Japan acted as a discussant and summed up the proceedings of Panel 1. A question and answer session followed. The conference was then adjourned for lunch. The Conference Opening Ceremony took place in the afternoon. The attendance by Ambassadors and High Officials of the ASEM member countries' embassies in Malaysia was encouraging, as the Asia-Europe Institute has increasingly become a

centre for integration and intellectual exchanges between Asia and Europe. The first day of the conference ended with refreshments.

Second Day 14 May 2002

On the second day of the conference, papers were presented by speakers from Panel 2, Panel 3 and Panel 4.

Panel 2: Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

Datuk Dr. Syed Muhamad Syed Abdul Kadir, Secretary-General, Ministry of Human Resources, Malaysia, officiated as Chairperson.

Topic 1 - Lifelong Learning Legal Framework – With reference to APL
Dr. Teruyuki Fujita, Assistant Professor, Institute of Education, University of Tsukuba, Japan

Topic 3 - Lifelong Learning from the Learner's Perspective: Accreditation of Prior Learning and Credit Bank System in Korea

Dr. Moo-Sub Kang, President, Korea Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training (KRIVET), South Korea



Datuk Dr. Syed Muhamad Syed Abdul Kadir



Dr. Teruyuki Fujita



Dr. Tran Khanh Duc

Topic 5 - E-education for APL: Formal, Non-formal and Informal Learning Leading to APL

Dato' Dr. Vincent Lowe, Managing Director, RezZen (M) Sdn. Bhd., Malaysia



Dr. Moo-Sub Kang



Dato' Dr. Vincent Lowe

National Institute for Educational Development, Ministry of Education and Training Vietnam

Topic 6 - Learner Partnership – An Integrated Approach to Adult Education

Mr. Janos Toth, Vice-President, European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), Brussels

Prof. Dr. Felix Librero, Chancellor, University of Philippines from the Open University of Philippines acted as discussant and summed up the proceedings of Panel 3 followed by a questions and answers session. The conference adjourned for lunch. The conference continued with presentation by speakers from Panel 4.

Panel 4: Best Practices

The chairperson for this panel was Dato' Mohamed Jawhar Hassan, Director-General, ISIS, Malaysia.

Topic 1 - Distance Education – New Initiative in China

Prof. Dr. Shir-Ming Shen, Deputy Director, School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPACE), University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Topic 2 - Bridging Formal and Non-formal Learning Environments: The Case of Second Chance Schools Network in Greece

Dr. Chistos Doukas, Secretary-General, General Secretariat for Adult Education, Ministry of Education, Greece.

Topic 3 - Funding of Lifelong Learning: The Japanese Experience

Mr. Hiromi Sasai, Principal Researcher, Research Department of Lifelong Learning Policy, National Institute for Educational Policy Research (NIER), Japan

Topic 4 - Funding of Lifelong Learning: The Italian Experience

Prof. Dr. Paolo Orefice, Dean, Faculty of Education Sciences, University of Florence, Italy

Topic 6 - APL in Europe: Non-formal and Informal Learning

Mr. John Brown, Team Leader, Equal Opportunities, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, United Kingdom.

Due to a last minute withdrawal, a discussant speaker for Panel 2 was not available. The chairperson continued with the questions and answers session. A half hour coffee break followed. The conference continued with presentations by speakers from Panel 3.



Mr. John Brown



Dato' Mohd. Mydin bin Mohd Shariff

Panel 3: Integrated Approaches

The chairperson for this panel was Dato' Mohd Mydin bin Mohd Shariff, Director-General, Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA), Malaysia.

Topic 1 - Mass Education: The Role of Community Learning Centres (CLC)

Mr. Sheldon Shaeffer, Director UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, Thailand

Topic 2 - Citizenship, Civil Society and Lifelong Learning

Prof. Dr. Peter Jarvis, The School of Educational Studies, University of Surrey, United Kingdom

Topic 3 - Mass Education: The Role of Regional Organizations

Prof. Dr. Ir. Soekartawi, Director, SEAMEO Regional Open Learning Centre (SEAMEO SEAMOLEC) Indonesia

Topic 4 - Vocational Education and Access for All

Ms. Maria Edwige Rudowski, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), France

Topic 5 - Veterans and Social Exclusion: Lifelong Learning and ASEAN

Dr. Tran Khanh Duc, Head, Unit of Educational Development,



Mr. Sheldon Shaeffer



Professor Dr. Peter Jarvis



Professor Dr. Ir. Soekartawi



Ms. Maria-Edwige Rudowski



Mr. Janos Toth



Professor Dr. Felix Librero



Dato' Mohamed Jawhar Hassan



Dr. Shir-Ming Shen

Topic 5 - Influencing Public Policy
Dr. Erlinda C. Pefianco, Director,
SEAMEO INNOTECH, Philippines

*Topic 6- Capacity Building for
Active Citizenry*
Ms. Stella Dadzie, Consultant, Front
Line Training, United Kingdom

Prof. Dr. Frank Griffiths,
Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Leeds
Metropolitan University, United
Kingdom was the discussant for
this panel. He summed up the
presentation of Panel 4 and also
congratulated the organizers for a
successful conference. This was then
followed by a question and answer
session. The conference adjourned
for the day, and refreshments were
served.

Third Day
15 May
2002

After group
photography,
the programme
started with a short briefing given by
Prof. Dr. Ibrahim Ahmad Bajunid,
the organizing committee member of
the conference, on the orientation of
the next conference agenda, which was a working group
discussion. These discussions were based on the main



Dr. Christos Doukas



Mr. Hiromi Sasai



*Professor Dr. Paolo
Orefice*



Dr. Erlinda C. Pefianco



Ms. Stella Dadzie



*Professor Frank
Griffiths*

topics of the four panels. Participants
had been divided into their respective
group discussion when they
registered, based on their topics of
interest. The group discussion was
then adjourned for coffee break.
The programme continued with a
presentation of a draft report from
each group leader, on the outcome
of their discussion. The conference
ended with a closing remark by
Prof. Dr. Hassan bin Said, Higher
Education Department, Ministry of
Education, Malaysia and was then
adjourned for lunch.

The conference was a success as
it drew participants, many of whom
were academicians and professionals
from Asia and Europe involved
directly or indirectly with Lifelong
Learning, to share their views, ideas
and experience. Everyone had an
opportunity to gather and share their
knowledge during the questions and
answers sessions and thus created
a two-way discourse for both
speakers and participants. It also
enabled many to meet academicians
and professionals from different
countries and thus expand the network between Asia and
Europe in the arena of Lifelong Learning.

Group photo in front of the AEI building



Lifelong Learning Towards National Resilience



By AMER HAMZAH JANTAN
Ministry of Education

The Delors report has always been referred to in the interpretation of Lifelong Learning. The report calls for a broad concept of education, which is pursued throughout life: flexible, diverse, and available at different times and in different places. The report identified the four pillars of education, namely:

- **Learning to know**

The mastery of learning tools rather than the acquisition of structured knowledge. Includes developing concentration, memory skills and the ability to think.

- **Learning to do**

Education to equip people to do the various type of work needed in the future. Includes innovation and adaptation of learning to future work environments.

- **Learning to live together, and with others**

Education to avoid conflict or peacefully resolve it, through education to discover other people and their cultures, and involvement in common projects.

- **Learning to be**

Education that contributes to a person's complete development: mind and body, intelligence, sensitivity, aesthetic appreciation and spirituality.

A further analysis of the four pillars of education would help us understand that "Learning to Know" refers to "Personal Development"; "Learning to Do"

refers to "Employability"; "Learning to Live Together" refers to "Social Inclusion"; and "Learning to Be" refers to "Active Citizenship".

All the four pillars of lifelong learning put together will contribute towards national resilience – the ability of a nation to remain a global player in the era of globalization. Every nation will depend on its people in its development. The government may introduce various policies and actions in the development of the nation, but it is the people who would determine the success or failures of such policies and actions. World-class organizations invest in their people in order for them to remain leaders in their respective businesses. Nations would need to do the same if they are to compete globally. They need to invest in their people and provide the best opportunities for learning throughout their life. The commitment of citizens to self-improvement through lifelong learning is a national asset.

The Malaysian Government introduced the Malaysia Incorporated Policy on 1 July 1991. The Malaysia Incorporated Policy stresses the importance of cooperation between the public and private sectors in order to ensure rapid economic growth and national development. At its core, the Malaysia Incorporated Policy puts emphasis on citizenship responsibility for the development of the nation vis a vis partnerships and collaboration starting from government initiatives, and incorporating corporate resources, and populace awareness. People are stakeholders in the Malaysia Incorporated Policy, whether as service or resource providers (corporate sectors) or as citizenry. The government will provide the necessary infrastructures and incentives for development and change, while its people whether as providers or citizen consumers should reciprocate by contributing their best towards the development of the nation. The people should take responsibility for the rise and fall, and well-being of the nation.

In order to be resilient, nations need to invest on its people so that they may become better providers of the services and resources required for the development of the nation, while at the same time becoming informed/enlightened consumers of those services and resources to enable a continuous flow of provider-client-provider development. The people should be nurtured into becoming lifelong learners in partnership, thus providing

learning resources while simultaneously developing learning opportunities to others.

A key aspect of partnership learning in the lifelong learning concept is that people should learn what responsibility means, as opposed to what responsibility is. The former is responsibility in action in the lives of real people; the latter is a conceptual frame of the nature of responsibility. In this aspect, lifelong learning in building a citizenry for national resiliency is the focus on partnership learning in active responsibility.

In a broad tapestry, lifelong learning for national resiliency involves creating opportunities of learning in four major areas:

- (i) Skills and knowledge to prepare for the eventuality of job diversification and job flexibility. This ensures resiliency in employability of citizens.
- (ii) Engagement and commitment in active citizenry roles vis a vis professional activism, community activism and national agenda activism. This ensures a high level of citizenry participation in the development and decision making framework of policies, systems, and procedures with respect to their roles as working professionals, community members, and national/world citizens.
- (iii) A high tolerance for change. As globalization sets in and the world becomes technology-dependent, the rapid flow of information precipitates a potentially high need to be aware of and to accommodate transformations of life cultures, work cultures, relationships, and identities.
- (iv) Integrity of positive values that are receptive to progress, change, and continuous development. Positive values would also include a healthy respect to understand and apply the integration of knowledge and skills across all professions in creative and innovative ways to develop new knowledge, or portfolio of skills. The result of this enlightenment is the people's sense of being empowered in their quest for a better living.

In the context of Malaysia, these aspects of lifelong learning have been gazetted as being the joint responsibility and partnership between the private sector and the government. Through their recruitment, employment and training, the corporate sector is often the best platform for rapid training and changing of mindsets, skills, and knowledge. The corporate sector provides the context for immediacy in the application of the learning of active responsibility.

FEATURE ARTICLE 3

Higher Education in Malaysia: A General Comparison between Private and Public- based Institution

By DANG MINH TUAN
Research Assistant, AEI



Higher education has an important role in Malaysia's development. The aim of higher education in Malaysia is instrumental in nature, namely, that of meeting manpower needs for socio-economic development. The last three decades have witnessed a dramatic growth in higher education in Malaysia. This growth has been multidimensional in nature - physical infrastructure, faculty, student enrolment and staff recruitment, and the diversity of curricula. The introduction of new programmes reflects the diversity of objectives and directions pursued in achieving socio-economic development. Several pieces of educational legislation introduced in 1996 liberalized the involvement of the private sector, which established private universities, set up foreign university campuses in Malaysia and gave further impetus for the growth of private colleges. The legislation also introduced the concept of corporatisation for public universities, which is an attempt to provide autonomy in the management and financial structures.

With the democratisation of the educational system, the number of Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) has increased tremendously since the 1990s, which include public universities, private universities and private colleges. Direct beneficiaries of the progress should be the citizens, the government and the people in the education business themselves. The clients of the IHLs, namely the prospective and existing students, parents and sponsors are given opportunities to choose their favourite schools and programmes. The service quality of the IHLs should be a guide for them to make the right choices. Institutions of higher learning in Malaysia, which are under the control of the Ministry of Education, provide opportunities to equip individuals with knowledge, skills and professionalism to meet the needs of national human resources for national development, especially for the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) project. The public and private institutions play important roles to fulfil national needs.

The similarity of public and private-based institutions is that both provide higher education to students leading to

the award of certificates, diplomas and degrees at different levels. These institutions, presently, offer a wide range of courses in Information Technology, Medicine, Management, Finance, Accountancy, Business Administration, Marketing, Science, Humanities, Hospitality, Engineering, Computer Science and other technical and soft-skill related courses. In Malaysia, there are 8 public universities and one international university providing undergraduate (bachelor degrees) and postgraduate studies (Master degrees and PhD). Malaysian public universities take in about 80,000 students each year. The 652 private colleges, ten private universities and four foreign university branch campuses have a student population of about 232,000.

There are some significant features in the public and private institutions of higher learning. A public institution of higher learning may be defined as a higher educational institution (including a University or a University College) established and maintained by the Government, to provide an on-campus higher education; off-campus distance education; or on-campus higher education or off-campus distance education in affiliation, association or collaboration with other approved higher educational institutions, professional bodies or organizations whether situated within or outside Malaysia. This public educational system co-exists with the widespread and expanding system of private institutions. These institutions mostly cater exclusively for local examinations, especially the Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia (STPM) which is equivalent to the A-Level and professional courses. The most recent development has been the introduction of “twinning programmes” whereby a local college enters into an arrangement with a foreign university and provides the first stage of the degree course in this country, while the final part is taken at the university concerned overseas or the student is enabled to study in Malaysia under the “3+0 programme”, under which the student need not go overseas to complete the final components at that foreign university.

The differences between private and public institutions in terms of tuition fees and entry requirements should also be taken into consideration. Unlike manufacturing, the higher education industry is highly regulated. For instance, the Ministry of Education must first approve changes in fees. The government encourages merger of smaller colleges in order to gain economies of scale. However, reports of such mergers in the industry are rare; perhaps because most private colleges value their independence and have carved a special niche in the market. The demand for private higher education in Malaysia will continue to rise. This is due to a rising population of high school graduates, rising affluence of parents, a belief in the quality of a foreign university education and especially the rising costs of providing public higher education. On the supply side, the government envisages that there would be 120,000 places for degree and diploma courses offered by the private sector. Private colleges provide alternatives to parents to choose from. The parents, especially those who are better endowed financially, have the widest choice possible. According to the statistics, public universities tend to have very high entrance requirements (but charge low tuition fees) compared to the average private colleges that admit students into their diploma programmes. Upon completion of their diploma courses, the students may then proceed to

the “twinning” degree programmes in collaboration with foreign universities as stated earlier. Finally, these students will be graduating with foreign degrees without having to leave the country. What about the tuition costs of private education compared with public education? From existing data, a three-year undergraduate programme at one of the public universities costs about RM1,400 - RM1,500 per year in tuition fees, which is only 13% of the actual cost (University of Malaya, UKM, UPM and etc.) whereas it costs about RM30,000 to complete a 4-year IT degree at Universiti Tun Abdul Razak (UNITAR), about RM16,000 for a business degree per year (total 2 years) at INTI College Malaysia (INTI Student handbook) and between RM8,000 to RM13,000 per year for an engineering degree at Multimedia University (The Star, July 18, 1999). And he can expect to pay much more to study for a Monash University degree at its Sunway campus. If a student chose to study in the USA or the UK, he will have to pay about RM35,000 to RM45,000 per year in tuition fees alone. If one includes living expenses, books and other needs, the average cost of the programmes per annum in the Midwestern USA is about USD15,000 (RM57,000) (The Star, July 4, 1999) and in the UK it would be much more expensive, it will cost him about USD20,000 (RM76,000) (University of Buckingham website). All these go to show the extent of subsidization (87%) in Malaysian public universities. Following corporatisation, Vice-Chancellors of public universities in Malaysia have been directed by the Education Ministry not to increase tuition fees to local students, as the government has promised the general public that tuition fees would remain unchanged after corporatisation.

The quality of higher education is also one of the differences between these institutions. The quality of higher education is tied to the quality of the teaching staff. Without exception, lecturers in public universities must possess, as a minimum, a master's degree before they can be recruited. Many of them have doctoral degrees. And most of them are Malaysians. Their job is not only to teach, but also to do research and engage in consultancies. Their research exposure enhances their credibility as university lecturers. Promotion to higher levels in their career depends on their research and publications. This is where public universities differ from the private colleges. Most lecturers in the smaller colleges have only a first degree. This is deemed sufficient if they only prepare students for diploma courses. If these colleges conduct “twinning programmes” with foreign universities, then their foreign partners may send their better-qualified lecturers and professors to teach. The main function of a lecturer in a private college is teaching. Research is an expensive undertaking, which may not bring in any immediate returns. Generally, private colleges will not be willing to spend money on research in the academic disciplines that they teach. This activity increases cost and reduces profit.

So, in conclusion, there are a few differences between private-based institutions and the public-based institutions in terms of the quality of teaching, tuition fees and other payments, and the pursuance of knowledge through research and development which is integral in the public institutions of higher learning but not in the smaller private institutions

International Master Programmes

Introducing AEI International Master Programmes

In 2002, two International Master Programmes— International Master's Programme in Information Management and International Master's Programme in Regional Integration will be offered by Asia-Europe Institute (AEI). The period of study for both Master Programmes by coursework and project paper is two semesters. University of Malaya will provide the lecturers with input from experts from Asia and Europe. Initially, twenty students are to be enrolled. The number of newly enrolled students is planned to increase by five each year to 2006.

Prof. Dato' Anuar Zaini Md. Zain, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malaya, officiating the launch

Entry requirements for both programmes are:

- Bachelor degree or its equivalent; or
- Professional qualification from recognized professional bodies; or
- Other qualifications as approved by Senate from time to time.

International Master's in Information Management

The philosophy behind this programme is the recognition that the future employment scenario is constantly and rapidly being transformed by technology. The technology is capable of augmenting human functions, but it is not a solution to social and organizational issues.

AEI have long realised these trends, and have sought to design programmes that will attract those who wish to supplement and enhance their existing qualifications, those who wish to change direction after an initial career progression, and those keen to update and expand their skills. The Master Programme in

Information Management is designed by AEI to develop this expertise by equipping students with specialist knowledge of the link between information and communications technology, and knowledge economy and the business environment in Asia and Europe. Such skills are invaluable in small – scale enterprises, multinational corporations and for policy makers in the region to ensure competitive edge and success in a global market.

International Master's in Regional Integration

Internationalisation of production and economic convergence are two major global trends in economic development in the 20th century. These trends can be observed in the form of unrestricted movements of capital around the world, the emergence of international and intergovernmental economic organizations and the outburst and revival of more integrated communities which allow for the settlement of common problems both in Asia and Europe.

The objective of the Master Programme in Regional Integration is to analyse the process of regional integration in Europe and in Asia, in its various dimensions and significance and to relate this to the process of economic development achieved in the two regions since the end of Second World War. Through

the analysis and discussion of theories of both regional integration and economic development and through the empirical study and comparison of the actual processes that occurred in Europe and Asia, students will acquire a deep understanding of the political, social and economic dimensions.

Curriculum Structure of the Master Programmes

| Components | Semester 1 | | Semester 2 | |
|---|--|--------------|--|--------------|
| | Subjects | Credit Hours | Subjects | Credit Hours |
| ASEM Course (Both master programmes) | Political Economy of Asia – Europe Relations | 3 | | |
| | Globalization and Regional Integration | 3 | | |
| Research Methods (Both master programmes) | Research Methods and Data Analysis for Social Scientists | 3 | | |
| Research Seminars (Both master programmes) | | | Business Networks and SMEs | 3 |
| Programme Core Courses (Regional Integration) | Globalization and Economic Development | 3 | European Model of Regional Integration | 3 |
| | Political Economy of Regional Integration | 3 | Asia – Europe: Trade and Financial Issues | 3 |
| | Institutional and Legal Framework for Regional Integration | 3 | Multilateral Institutions and Economic Development | 3 |
| Programme Core Courses (Information Management) | Information Management in the Digital & Global Economy | 3 | Electronic Marketing and the Global Distribution Network | 3 |
| | Business and Enterprise Modeling | 3 | E-trade and Small and Medium Scale Enterprises | 3 |
| | Information Technology and the Digital Economy | 3 | Social and Economic Dimensions of IT and the Digital Economy | 3 |
| Cross Programme Courses (Regional Integration) | Information Management in the Digital & Global Economy | 3 | Social and Economic Dimensions of IT and the Digital Economy | 3 |
| Cross Programme Courses (Information Management) | Finance and Accounting Tools for SMEs | 3 | Political Economy of Regional Integration | 3 |
| University of Malaya Elective Course (1 only) (Both master programmes) | Business Ethics and Corporate Governance | 3 | | |
| | International Business Management | 3 | | |
| | Business Communication | 3 | | |
| | Organizational Development and Change | 3 | | |
| | Cross – Cultural Management | 3 | | |
| | Intellectual Property and Business | 3 | | |
| | Social – Political Environment of Business in Malaysia | 3 | | |
| | Managing Innovation and Technological Change | 3 | | |
| | Issues in Corporate Governance | 3 | | |
| | Managerial Planning and Control | 3 | | |
| | Management Control Systems | 3 | | |
| | Economics Development & Planning | 3 | | |
| | Trade and Growth | 3 | | |
| | Financial Markets & Institutions | 3 | | |
| | Economics Policy Analysis | 3 | | |
| Internship (Both master programmes) | | | Internship | 3 |
| Project Paper (Both master programmes) | | | | 6 |
| Total Credit Hours | | 24 | | 24 |

Interviews



Professor Fernando Rodrigo of Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, Spain talks to Ondrej KUTIK and CHAI Chung Chiet

1. What is your impression of countries in the Southeast Asian region?

I have visited most of the countries in this region. I observe that these countries are going through tremendous political, social and economic changes for the better. They are also looking less to the United States and other industrialized nations for solutions. Instead, there is more regional awareness now as they are willing to come together and discuss possible solutions to common problems.

2. What are your expectations of teaching in Malaysia?

I look forward to a challenging task ahead. I am excited about the prospect of having students and professors from both continents coming together and discovering the global trends at the economic, political, cultural and social levels.

3. What kind of students are you looking for?

Students are expected to be intelligent and hardworking as the International Master in Regional Integration is considered a challenging programme. But I stress that these are just the minimum requirements. I put a premium on the following qualities: be highly motivated, curious and eager to meet any challenges thrown by the professors, students and the new environment around them. Students of the programme must be willing to set sail to new frontiers, for there is much to dare. I also hope that the students would appreciate and share the spirit of the Asia- Europe Institute, the spirit of friendship with people from different countries and backgrounds.

4. How would the International Master programme contribute to Regional Integration in Malaysia and other countries?

I believe that not only are countries in Southeast Asia showing interest in regional integration, but also countries like China and Japan are beginning to accept the idea of regional integration. The programme will enable students to appreciate the problems and benefits of regional integration as experienced by European and other nations. I see an important role for the Asia-Europe Institute in creating awareness and providing expertise for the development and progress of regional integration in Asia.

5. What are the characteristics that make your programme unique compared to other master programmes?

To the best of my knowledge, I have yet to come across another master programme that focuses solely on regional integration. The International Master programme is unique in the sense that it takes a comparative approach to learning about the lessons, successes and failures of regional integrations in the world.

6. Is the International Master programme recognized outside of Malaysia?

Universidad Autonoma de Madrid and University of Malaya will jointly award the International Master in Regional Integration. Students of the programme are considered students of both universities. Therefore, the degree is internationally recognized.



Professor Antony Bryant of Leeds Metropolitan, United Kingdom talks to Ondrej KUTIK and CHAI Chung Chiet

1. Have you been to Southeast Asia before the launch of this co-operative international master programme? What is your impression of these countries?

I have made several trips to Malaysia, five times to be exact. Even though I have not

had the chance to travel around the country, I am quite impressed with the country's progress and also the warm and friendly atmosphere of the people. I hope to learn more about the different cultures in the future. As for other Asian countries that I have visited, I managed to take a short trip to the capital of the Philippines, Manila and is equally impressed with the hospitality shown by the people there. I am pleased with the excellent work ethic shown by Asian students at Leeds Metropolitan University in the United Kingdom and, having taught Asian students before, I feel Asian students are hard-working.

2. What are your expectations of teaching in Malaysia, compared to your previous experience in other countries (Amsterdam, South Africa...)? What are the similarities and differences that you expect to find, teaching in Malaysia?

Based on my teaching experience in other countries, I noted that the similarities of the technical conditions i.e. availability and accessibility of facilities are at about the same level. Nevertheless, I found that the level of enthusiasm and eagerness to learn amongst my students in South Africa were higher and better compared with my students back in UK. I feel that I expect the students enrolled in this Master's programme will have the same level of enthusiasm and I am looking forward to an international atmosphere brought together by students from Asian and European background.

3. What kind of students is this master program designed for?

This is not a technically oriented programme; it is not just another IT programme. I welcome students from various background and experience, but also expect some students to at least have a technical background/'know-how'. The

orientation of this programme is more toward the management of information: distribution of information i.e. knowledge. There are no specifications for the ideal student, however students in this programme are expected to have the interest and willingness to work in a team and build their own group identity. Students who possess skills and strengths in specific areas are expected to help other students thus resulting in an exchange of knowledge and experience. I also hope that the students would develop strong bonds of friendship after completing their studies in Malaysia.

4. How would your programme contribute to Information Management? (Especially in Malaysia?)

I feel that this programme would give the opportunity to students from different backgrounds (Asian-European) in the exchange of ideas, knowledge and experience. It is hoped that students will learn to share information and further develop their social and communication skills in the international atmosphere of the programme.

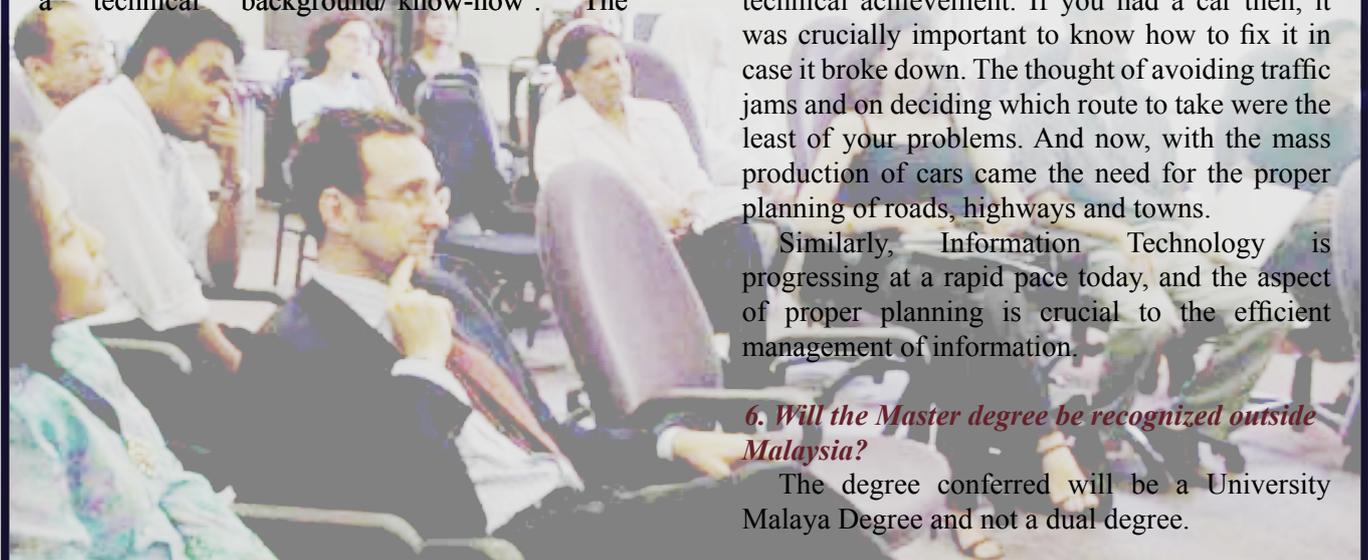
5. What are the characteristics that make your programme unique compared to Information Technology and Business Management programmes?

The International Master Programme is neither an IT course nor another typical Master of Business Administration. The content of the programme is drawn from various academic disciplines, and the focus is on managing information. Students can expect to learn how to plan good information infrastructures while taking into account various social, economic and technical factors. I offer the following analogy: The car, invented more than 100 years ago, was considered an amazing technical achievement. If you had a car then, it was crucially important to know how to fix it in case it broke down. The thought of avoiding traffic jams and on deciding which route to take were the least of your problems. And now, with the mass production of cars came the need for the proper planning of roads, highways and towns.

Similarly, Information Technology is progressing at a rapid pace today, and the aspect of proper planning is crucial to the efficient management of information.

6. Will the Master degree be recognized outside Malaysia?

The degree conferred will be a University Malaya Degree and not a dual degree.





Not Just A Cultural Programme

By CHAI CHUNG CHIET
Junior Research Assistant, AEI

We gather every Wednesday evening at an institute noted for being the starting point for a new kind of visionary; visionaries who dream up rich possibilities from Asia-Europe interaction and cooperation. The cultural showcase is one idea you'd expect from your regular visionary at the Asia-Europe Institute (AEI).

The expansion of Asian-European understanding is one challenge that AEI is ready to accept. It is an effort of towering dimensions. Mutual understanding in the pursuit of knowledge shall lead to deliverance from ignorance and prejudice.

The showcase features Asian and European cultural performances and films with diverse creativity. The strong demand for these productions is a convincing proof that the children of tomorrow shall inherit a friendlier world when the adults of today build bridges between nations.

Yet the audience is not alone in shouldering this responsibility for posterity. Each presentation requires extensive collaboration between the people at the Institute and the respective embassies. Communication goes back and forth until every single detail is ironed out and finalized. The Institute, a highly networked model of Asian-European co-operation, spares no expense in making each presentation a success.

Take the film 'Jinnah'. The acting High Commissioner of Pakistan came and graciously officiated the event with her inspiring speech on Pakistan's founder, the great Mohammed Ali Jinnah. No longer would the accomplishments of a historical figure be memorized

for the convenience of examinations. Surely, students of history, politics or international relations would be roused to examine more closely the roots of this nation from the perspective of its people. The Pakistani entourage reciprocated the appreciation of the audience by having a reception with tables groaning with refreshments and ethnic food; weeks of planning and correspondence went into this recipe for miniature peace on earth.

The Italian Trade Commission, too, turned to AEI when the Institute's Auditorium was chosen as the premier venue for the screening of Italian films during the 'Italian Festival'. The festival sought to expose the public to different forms of the arts, which the Italians excel at: film, fashion, jewelry, and culinary skills. This recognition bears witness to the Institute's commitment to promoting the best from Asia and Europe.

Being the expert in Asia-Europe relations, AEI strives to emphasize the interests that unite us instead of the differences that divide us. AEI, together with the Goethe Institut Inter Nationes, organized two musical concerts by bands from Germany. The Royal Thai Embassy and Malaysian-Thai Association with their presentation of Thai Classical String concert represented Asia. Our universal language is music. The concerts, as expected, were a success. The pace for future collaborations has definitely accelerated for all.

AEI looks forward to a steady enlargement of cultural opportunities for everyone. We welcome proposals, ideas as we continue to chart new goals for the betterment of all mankind. This banner of international partnership will stand mighty for years to come. Where understanding is

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

The Promotion of Cultural Diversity

By RAHAYU KIRANA AHMAT ADAM
Junior Research Assistant, AEI

Movie Showcases

“All Work, and No Play, makes Jack A Dull Boy”. Relative to this famous proverb, AEI have gathered a collection of educational movies from both Asia and Europe: Screened every Wednesday, 8:30pm, at the AEI auditorium. This screening is open for University Malaya’s students and also the public to enjoy movies from both regions and learn about its culture, politic and history as well. In this sense, education i.e. learning is promoted in a more appealing manner, “Watching the Movies”. The Foreign Embassies/Institutes and Trade Commissions around Kuala Lumpur have always supported AEI in our monthly Movie Showcase and also Cultural Shows by giving their cooperation, presenting introduction for the movies, providing us with refreshments (typical delicacies of their respective country) and also publication materials. Here are some of the movies & performances that we have showcased for the past 6 months of the year 2002.

January

- Little Buddha – *China/USA*
- Sose Halunk Meg – *Hungary*
- November 1828 – *Indonesia*
- Drei Herren (Three Gentlemen) – *Austria*
- Tonight Somebody Goes Home – *Taiwan*

February

- Malena – *Italy*
- Himalaya – *China*
- Jean de Florette – *France*
- Red Persimmon – *Taiwan*

March

- The Castle (Franz Kafka’s novel) – *German*
- Brother – *Japan*
- Eternity and A Day – *Greece*
- Death Row – *Philippines*

April

- Jazz Concert: The Baden Wurttemberg Youth Jazz Orchestra – *German*
(Jointly organized by Goethe Institute, KL)
- The Matchmaker – *Ireland*
- Dari Jemapoh ke Manchesteer – *Malaysia*
- Comedian Harmonists – *Germany*
- Salween – *Thailand*

May

- An Evening of Thai Classical Strings
(*Courtesy of the Embassy of Thailand*)
- Siberian Barber – *Russia*
- Amore Perros – *Mexico*
- Jazz Performance: Christof Lauer on Saxophone and Jens Thomas on Piano – *German* (Jointly organized by Goethe Insitute, KL)
- Jinnah – *Pakistan*
- Chicken Run – *Great Britain/USA*

June

- Italian Festival: (1) Ballando-Ballando
(2) Bread and Tulips
(Jointly organized by the Italian Trade Commission)
- Red Firecracker & Green Firecracker – *China*
- Jose Rizal – *Philippines*
- Manon of the Spring – *France*

Intellectual Exchanges from Both Asia and Europe



Academic Activities

Several important academic activities were held and organised by AEI during the first six months of this year. Thanks to events of international dimension, such as the “International Conference on Lifelong Learning” and the visit of European students for the “Young Europe Meets Asia” event, to Seminars and Round tables, AEI is actively pursuing its target of forming a multicultural interactive environment for creating, sharing and respecting ideas and of promoting mutual understanding between Asia and Europe on political, economic and cultural issues.

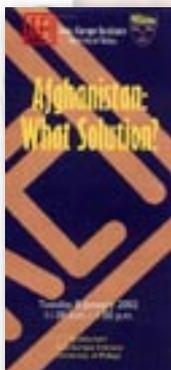
Here are the academic events held from January to June 2002.

January

Tuesday, 8th January 2002:

SEMINAR: “*Afghanistan: What solution?*”

With the cooperation of the Goethe Institute in Kuala Lumpur, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Institute for Strategic and International Studies (ISIS Malaysia), AEI opened its 2002 academic activities with this seminar on one of the most crucial issues in the international arena today. After Prof. Dato’ Dr. Shaharil Talib’s welcoming remarks, Dr. Noordin Sopiee from ISIS opened the seminar with a speech on Afghanistan and Asia-Europe Relations. Dr. Norbert Heinrich Holl from the Goethe Institute followed offering a European perspective on possible solution for Afghanistan; a Malaysian viewpoint of the problem was then given by Dato’ Abdul Aziz Mohammad from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Thanks to the interest and concern of participants, an interactive questions and answers session brought the Seminar to a successful end.



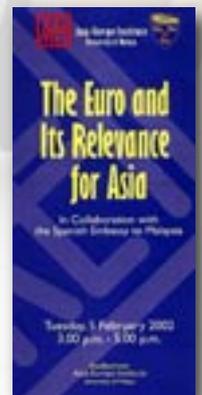
By SILVIA GUIZZARDI
Junior Research Assistant, AEI

February

Tuesday, 5th February 2002:

SEMINAR: “*The Euro and its Relevance for Asia*”

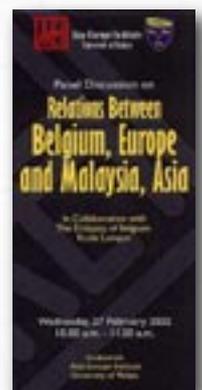
The Euro has become a reality since the 1st of January 2002, influencing international financial markets and economies worldwide. On this topic, AEI organised a seminar on the relevance of the Euro for Asia together with the Spanish Embassy in Malaysia. Guest Speakers were H.E. Mr. Alvaro Iranzo, Spanish Ambassador to Malaysia and representative for the EU Presidency, Dato’ Mustafa Mansur, Vice President of the Federation of Malaysia Manufactures and Mr. Peter Rondorf, Deputy Head of Mission, German Embassy in Malaysia.



Wednesday, 27th February 2002;

PANEL DISCUSSION: “*Relations Between Belgium (Europe) and Malaysia (Asia)*”

A Panel Discussion on the relations between Belgium and Malaysia was held on 27th February at AEI, in collaboration with the Embassy of Belgium in Kuala Lumpur. H.E. Annemie Neyt – Uttebroeck, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Belgium and Datuk Abdul Hj. Razak Ramli from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia were invited to share their thoughts and comments with the participants.



March

Friday 29th March 2002

“Sixth Programme Co-ordinator Committee (PCC) Meeting – UMESP Programme”

This meeting was organised to discuss and evaluate the results of UMESP achieved since 1999, particularly focusing on the academic year 2001 – 2002, but also analysing general achievements of the programme, which ended on 31st March. Please refer to the article about UMESP in the previous pages.

April

Saturday, 6th April 2002 – Wednesday, 10th April 2002

Academic Exchange Programme: “*Young Europe Meets Asia*”

Enhancing mutual understanding and working together to improve their respective societies is a major task for young generations both in Asia and Europe. Aware of the importance of this target, and in line with its mission, the Asia-Europe Institute organised the programme for Malaysia within the study tour by the delegation of the Free University of Bozen (Bolzano, Italy) to Asia in Spring 2002. The tour offered to the young European participants the possibility to meet the different realities of the Asian region.

The programme in Kuala Lumpur combined different activities and events, including discussions and lectures on some relevant issues related not only to economics and politics, but also to social and cultural aspects relevant both in Asia and Europe. Several speakers discussed and lectured to the young delegates. They were Dr. Giovanni Capanelli and Prof. Dato’ Dr. Shaharil Talib from AEI, Prof. Dato’ Dr. Anuar Zaini from UM, and Prof. Dr. Alfred Steinherr, Rector of Bolzano University. The Italian Entrepreneur Marco Davi gave a talk on business opportunities in Malaysia, and Dr. Mohamed Ariff, Executive Director of MIER, was invited to speak during the Round table “Models of Regional Economic and Financial Integration: Lessons from Asia and Europe”.

The academic part of the programme was combined with other activities such as a guided tour of Kuala Lumpur and of its main attractions (KL tower, KLCC), visits to the Islamic Art Museum and to Putrajaya.

Tuesday, 9th April 2002 – AEI Series on Globalization Challenges

ROUND TABLE 1: “*Models of Regional Economic and Financial Integration – Lessons from Asia and Europe*”

Dr. Giovanni Capanelli moderated this round table



on regional integration in Asia and Europe. Prof. Dr. Alfred Steinherr, Rector of the Free University of Bozen (Bolzano, Italy), and Dr. Mohamed Ariff, Executive Director of the Malaysian Institute of Economic Research were invited as speakers.

Monday, 24th April 2002

Pre-Conference Briefing for the “*International Conference on Lifelong Learning*”

As a part of the preparatory process of the International Conference on Lifelong Learning (see the events in May), AEI and the Malaysian Ministry of Education organised this Meeting to present the structure, the programme, the contents and the objectives of the forthcoming Conference.

Tuesday, 30th April 2002 - AEI Series on Globalization Challenges

ROUND TABLE 2: “*Asia and Europe in an era of increased Concern for Global Security – Challenges of Global Terrorism*”.

Dr. Otto Graf. Count Lambsdorff was invited to present a European perspective on Global Security and Terrorism Challenges, while an Asian perspective was offered in the speech by Tan Sri Razali Ismail, Chairman of the Malaysian Peace Corps and of the Malaysian Wetlands Foundation. Dato’ Mohamed Jawhar Hassan, Director-General of ISIS Malaysia, was appointed as Chairman and Moderator of the discussion. The event was organised with the support of the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung and of the Goethe Institute in Kuala Lumpur.

May

Monday, 5th May 2002

SEMINAR: “*Recent Trends in Japanese Financial and Currency Issues*”

This seminar was organised by AEI, ISIS Malaysia and MAJECA (Malaysia – Japan Economic Association). Prof. Dr. Naoyuki Yoshino and Prof. Dr. Shumpei Takemori from Keio University, Tokyo, addressed participants on problems and prospects of Japanese finance in the last decade and on current Japanese currency issues, respectively.

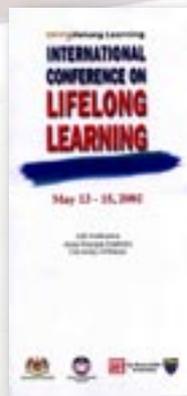
Monday 13th – Wednesday 15th May 2002

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “*ASEM Initiative on Lifelong Learning*”



This important international event, organised by AEI and the Malaysian Ministry of Education, focused on the idea of an ASEM initiative on Lifelong Learning, which was launched during the ASEM Conference on “States and Markets” (Copenhagen, 8-9 March 1999). As declared at the end of that conference, Lifelong Learning is a prerequisite for mitigating the negative effects of globalisation. ASEM countries have a common interest in identifying and exchanging experiences regarding Lifelong Learning, and in pursuing a joint ASEM initiative on it.

The International conference on Lifelong Learning aimed to offer the possibility of further discussion and advancement on this topic, and was attended by many



participants and several speakers coming from countries and academic institutions in Europe and Asia.

An article on this conference is published in this issue.

June

Wednesday 26th June 2002

LECTURE: “*The Production Technology of Malaysian Commercial Banks and Estimation of Stochastic Cost Function*”

In this lecture, organised by AEI, the Faculty of Economics at UM and the Centre for Japanese Studies, ISIS Malaysia, Professor Hidenobu Okuda, from Hitotsubashi University (Tokyo), presented a paper on “The Production technology of Malaysian Commercial Banks and Estimation of Stochastic Cost Function”. A discussion followed the lecture.

ACADEMIC SERIES

The Production Technology of Malaysian Commercial Banks and Estimation of Stochastic Cost Function

By MAMIKO HADA
Senior Research Assistant, AEI

On June 26th 2002, AEI co-organized with the Centre for Japan Studies, ISIS Malaysia, a lecture on ‘the Production Technology of Malaysian Commercial Banks and Estimation of Stochastic Cost Function’ by Professor Hidenobu Okuda, Professor of Economics, Graduate School of Economics, Hitotsubashi University, and by Mr. Hidetoshi Hashimoto, a visiting lecturer from the School of Economics, Nihon University. The seminar was held in the Faculty of Economics in UM campus, where approximately twenty students from various faculties gathered in a cosy atmosphere.

Prof. Okuda and Mr. Hashimoto have already done similar studies in Thailand and Philippines, and they chose Malaysia as their third subject, an important addition in order to get a bigger and clearer picture of the region. They believe that their study would play a critical role in the endeavour to understand the pre and post-Asian financial crisis, because there is a dearth of in-depth studies on this very issue in Southeast Asia. Their hope is that their study will contribute to the further understanding of this economic crisis, the effects of which we can still see, not only in the circles of economists but also of policy makers of these nations.

Their research was on how efficient and cost-effective Malaysian banks had been in the 1990s, right before and after the Asian crisis. Given that there are not too many similar researches on this topic, their aim at this stage was fact-finding, rather than making recommendations or suggestions to help transform Malaysian banks become more competitive in the face of globalisation.

In their research, they found that “neither economies of scale nor economies of scope, which are said to be intrinsic to the banking industry, were observed by commercial banks in Malaysia...(therefore) it is safe to assume that the management of domestic banks in Malaysia must be inefficient.” Many students did not agree with this statement; first of all, the definition of what is ‘efficient’ and what is not in Malaysia may not be the same with how it is generally defined in the Western-oriented academy. Both speakers readily admitted that they are not specialists on Malaysia and that they had collected all the data from secondary sources. This may be another reason why their statements sometimes sounded a bit underrated to many in the audience.

However, their efforts to understand and to compare Malaysia with other countries in the region is to be respected, especially when they wrote at the end of their report that “one must not jump to such conclusions (that Malaysian banks are inefficient) because there are constraints on our analysis...In Malaysia, the business activities of commercial banks are severely restricted...it has not been possible to analyse these circumstances because the data used in this paper concern individual banks”. Their research should be evaluated in the longer-term, and we are looking forward to hearing from them about further development and progress in their research. Their attempt to understand Malaysia, with limited resources, does deserve a compliment. Coffee break followed the lecture. Students had the chance to exchange views with the speakers in a more casual and relaxed atmosphere.

About AEI: Asia-Europe Institute, University of Malaya

The Asia-Europe Institute (AEI)

The Asia-Europe Institute is a postgraduate research and teaching institution. It was established under the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process and is dedicated to teaching and research, with a philosophy of enhancing Asia-Europe relations by weaving an educational web that facilitates the understanding of cultures, histories, politics, institutions, economics, business and legal practices.

The first step towards AEU

At ASEM I, Bangkok, 1996 and ASEM II, London, 1998, Malaysia made a commitment in the field of higher education to establish an Asia-Europe University (AEU), which will serve as an educational infrastructure and knowledge network for Asia and Europe in the 21st century.

In 1997, the Government of Malaysia established the Asia-Europe Centre (AEC), the first step of Asia-Europe University cooperation in education designed to support the Fourth Pillar of the ASEM process.

Three years after its inception, on January 2nd 2000, the AEC was transformed into a full-fledged academic institution. It was renamed Asia-Europe Institute (AEI) and hosted by the University of Malaya, the oldest university in Malaysia.

Knowledge Enterprise

AEI is dedicated to teaching and research through networking with strategic and smart partners. This Knowledge Enterprise, based on high quality educational standards, shapes a new generation of individuals possessing a competitive advantage in today's interlinked markets. It is an investment in a cost efficient, pragmatic, and innovative academic institution to contribute to the enhancement of Asia-Europe university cooperation. Its International faculty of students, lectures and researchers encourages creativity and global understanding in a classroom atmosphere of cultural diversities.

To meet the changing needs of contemporary societies, AEI promotes collaborative research with academic as well as government and private sector institutions. In addition, it develops new epistemologies with relevant prescriptions for consultancy in policy-related areas.

Emporium Of Ideas

AEI is an emporium of ideas to expand the knowledge capacities of individuals and institutions for sustainable economic growth and social development.

Our Mission

- Creating new wealth for future generations through knowledge investment.
- Forming a multicultural interactive environment for creating, sharing and respecting ideas.
- Enabling educational synthesis through cultural immersion and learning institute
- Preparing students to meet the challenges of the global society by encouraging private sector/business participation
- Building a shared future through collaborative research for social and economic advancement.

Research Projects

AEI seeks to promote innovative research by providing the stimuli and incentives for scholars to excel in a knowledge-based environment. The research approach at AEI is interdisciplinary, cognizant of the political, economic, cultural and social factors within a society's historical trajectory. Its research ethos and paradigms are therefore academically rigorous in the best traditions of scholarship from Asia and Europe.

In order to promote collaborative research and the establishment of university-industry-government smart partnerships to meet the demands of a changing society, AEI also provide the scope for consultancy in policy-related areas. It will work closely with policy-oriented institutions in Asia and Europe to link new epistemologies with relevant prescriptions founded on pragmatism.

Current Collaborative Research Projects:

- Historical Statistical Database on National Accounting
- Survey on the Presence and Strategy of European firms in Asia
- Social Interaction and Stratification Scale
- Critical Thinking and Inter-religious Dialogue
- Ethnic Conflict and Civil Society

INTERVIEWS : Asia-Europe Integration

PROFILE

Veronika Kutikova is 25 years old. She was born in Slovakia (former Czechoslovakia). She obtained a master's degree in Financial Management at the age of 23 from Slovakia's most prestigious university. She started her international career by studying and joining internships abroad. Presently she is in AEI. Besides her mother tongue she speaks English, German and Portuguese. She is very friendly, communicative and willing to help. She loves sports. From time to time she cycles to the office. At work she is a true professional. And when her work is done she knows how to enjoy.



1. What do you do at the Institute?

I have been here for almost a year and a half. I have many duties in this Institute. The two main ones are assisting UMESP (University of Malaya European Studies Programme). UMESP offers two courses: "Current European Issues" and "Process of European Regional Integration". The lectures are held here in the Asia-Europe Institute by the Fellow-in-Residence, Dr. Giovanni Capannelli and visiting professors from several European universities. In the three years that the courses have been on offer we have had about 30 visiting professors from Europe. My second duty is to organize the Cultural Showcase Programme. We screen movies every Wednesday evening at 8:30pm and although the main target audience is University of Malaya students, the shows are opened to the public. Admission is free.

2. Tell us more about Malaysia that you have come to know

Malaysia is a very fascinating country. What I find most interesting about Malaysia is the way different races and cultures live together. Another astonishment is the technical development, how the country is developing. I find Asians friendlier. They smile more than Europeans.

3. What are your plans for the future?

My future plans are still very flexible. I intend to stay here for a few more months and then I plan to go back to Europe.

PROFILE

Mamiko Hada is from Tokushima, Japan. She received her undergraduate degree in Social Psychology from the University of Tokyo and her graduate degree in communication from the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania (U Penn) in the United States. While at U Penn, she worked as a research assistant and translator. Upon graduation, she then worked as a business consultant for an Information and Communications Technology (ICT) consulting firm in Washington DC, specializing in wireless technology regulations in the United States. Her hobbies include swimming and reading.

Currently, Mamiko resides in Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur with her husband, Richard. He is a student of anthropology from the United States, doing research in Malaysia for his PhD. Mamiko does not speak Bahasa Malaysia and therefore relies on Richard, who speaks the language fluently whenever they interact with some locals.



1. Tell us more about what you do in the Asia-Europe Institute?

I think I've done a lot of things. The major thing was the Lifelong Learning Conference in May. I corresponded with the international and

local speakers. I also contacted the ministries and embassies to invite them. There were a lot of protocols to observe and it was quite political in that we could only choose speakers from the ASEM nations. That's what I was doing before. The other thing is the master's programme, like the

marketing, research, and also the implementation of the programmes. When I first came the courses were already planned, so the things I needed to do were market research, going to private companies, business councils and also to some ministries to ask for their advice and support. So what I've been doing is more like logistics and support. I had plenty of chances to attend seminars in AEI, starting with Afghanistan, like how things are happening there to the Lifelong Conference and also the recent one by the professors of economics from Japan. I think I learned a lot of things but unfortunately I am more on the organization side, organizing seminars. I make sure everything goes smoothly. So I learn more of the backstage operations than the topics.

2. Tell us more about Malaysia that you have come to know.

That's a difficult question. I didn't know much about Malaysia before but I think I will credit myself that I know a little more than the average person because my husband, Richard is studying about Malaysia. So, he used to tell me a lot about Malaysia, but it was very interesting for me to come to Malaysia because, you know, I'm from Japan and I studied in the United States, but I always felt a little unhappy because of not knowing any other place in Asia. So it was a great chance to come to know Malaysia and I would say many things in Malaysia are similar to

those in Japan. But I also find things that are quite different. I find it very interesting that it is a Muslim majority country, so you can see a lot of religious things going on. There are 3 ethnic groups here, which is not the case in Japan. So I guess I have come to know Malaysia as quite interesting but it is difficult to generalize. I dislike people who come to Malaysia and say 'Oh, Muslim country, very scary, terrorist country' kind of thing. I just feel that I need to defend Malaysia from these people. So I guess I feel very personally attached to it by now.

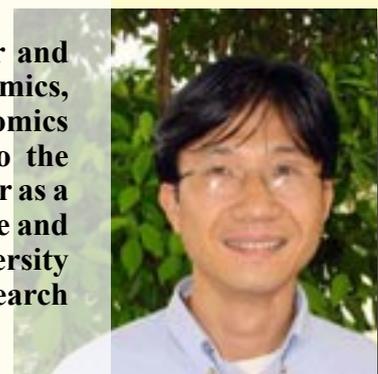
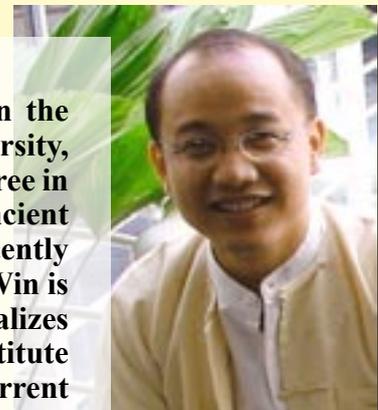
3. What are your plans for the future?

My plans for the future, the immediate future is to go back to the United States and get some job that connects me to Asia. I used to just want to have a job that connects with Japan but I guess now, being here and getting to know Asia a little more, not just Malaysia because AEI has a lot of people from other Asian countries, I feel that I have come to know more about Asia. In the future, I want something that connects me between the United States and the Asian region. I would love to have a job that bridges the United States and Asia. I want to decrease the number of people who come to Asia and say, sort of colonial things. So I hope to contribute to these mutual understanding. And I hope to come to Malaysia and this region through my job so I can continue to learn.

PROFILE

Win Myat Aung, 34 years old, is a senior research assistant in the Asia-Europe Institute and is a graduate from Mandalay University, possessing both Bachelor of Arts with honors and a Master's degree in International Relations. He is from Mandalay, Myanmar, an ancient city of the last capital of the Myanmar kingdom, and has recently completed his second Master's degree in University of Malaya. Win is actually attached to a Research Institute in Myanmar that specializes in Myanmar history. He was working with the Research Institute in Myanmar, doing research in old Myanmar history and current regional study. When the institute wanted to train more researchers in regional studies, the institute's director recommended Win for a scholarship to Malaysia. He has been in Malaysia since July 1999. Win is currently single.

Tin Htoo Naing, 33, is also from Myanmar. He holds Bachelor and Master degrees in Economics from the Institute of Economics, Yangon, Myanmar. He was a tutor in the Institute of Economics in Yangon University, Myanmar, and was then transferred to the Universities Historical Research Centre also in Yangon, Myanmar as a research assistant. He is also currently single. Seeing the expertise and experience that he possesses, Tin was then transferred to University of Malaya to work in one of the economics and historical research projects conducted by the Asia-Europe Institute.



1. Tell us more about what you do at the Institute?

Currently, Win is attached to one of AEI's historical projects, while Tin was transferred from the Universities Historical Research Centre to work on the National Accounting research here in AEI; analysing data.

2. Tell us more about Malaysia that you have come to know? (Similarities and differences from that of your country i.e. food, system, country as a whole, people, weather etc.)

According to both of them, adapting to Malaysia's warm and sunny climate is not a problem as Myanmar is also a part of the Southeast Asia region. However, there are some differences in the weather condition. Myanmar has three seasonal changes such as the monsoon, summer and also winter whereas Malaysia has no specific seasonal changes. According to Tin, winter in Myanmar, you would be able to experience snow in the hillside region, specifically in the eastern and southern part of the country. The food and customs are more or less similar and so both of them have no

difficulty adjusting so far, although, Tin feels that the agriculture products such as fruits and vegetables here in Malaysia are treated more with chemically produced fertilizers compared to Myanmar. On the country's governance, Win mentioned that he is quite impressed with Malaysia's political system and its government, especially the Prime Minister Dato' Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamed. He added that being a multicultural country and having a stable political climate, Malaysia has progressed so much and would be even more developed in the future. For this reason, he feels that Malaysia is a prosperous country.

3. What is/are your future plan(s)?

Win plans to return to his country and work with the Ministry of Education. This is the same with Tin. Both of them plan to marry and have children, but only after they have built a solid career foundation. Both of them concluded that the experiences they gained here in Malaysia would be of great use when they return home to Myanmar.

Interviews

*Interns from Europe talk to AEI Research Assistants
Dang Minh Tuan & Chai Chung Chiet*

An Intercultural Experience

Silvia Guizzardi, 23, is a native of Mantova, Italy. She holds a bachelor's degree in Economics from the Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi in Milano. She studied Environmental and Development Economics.



Silvia: Yeah why? (laughs) And then I came here. Kuala Lumpur is such a developed city, much more developed than other cities in Europe and the people are very nice. It is an advanced city and I really like the country, beautiful landscape and people are very open and tolerant.

Michael: *Why did you choose AEI for your internship?*

Silvia: I met a guy by the name of Jeremy. He had worked here before and so he told me about this Institute. I was looking for the opportunity to travel and stay in Asia for at least two to three months and this matched my interest perfectly; that's why I'm here.

Tuan: *What is your impression of Malaysia?*

Silvia: I used to think Southeast Asia as uniform. So for me Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia, Indonesia and Laos...they were all the same. And I was expecting a less developed country. I mean a poorer country. And I was feeling a little bit scared of the cultural differences as this being an Islamic country and I am a woman, a girl and alone. So basically...

Tuan: Alone? Really?

Coping with life in Malaysia

Silvia: OK, with the food, it is great, cheap and abundant. It is full of food. There is food everywhere. The culture is a mix. I don't know if you have, like the Malay culture because you have different ethnic groups, Chinese culture, Indian culture, and traditional Malay culture and see how they combined with each other. What I find interesting in Malaysia? Everything. Especially the places you can visit. And it's so interesting for me. It's so new. Everything can teach me something.

Michael: *And how about the spicy food here?*

Silvia: Spicy food? You just have to avoid it or take out all the spices.

Tuan: What are your plans for the future?

Silvia: I do not what I am going to do in September. Maybe I'm going to take my Master's in England or here. I have a very nice job offer in Rome, Italy. So

I don't want to take any decisions now because I cannot take any decision. Basically, one day I would take my Master's and then I would continue to travel around. That's all. Let it be.

Ondrej Kútik, 22, is the younger brother of Veronika Kútiková, AEI's Senior Research Assistant. He graduated from Slovakia University of Technology with a bachelor's degree in Telecommunications. He is from Bratislava, Slovakia.



Michael: Why did you choose AEI for your internship?

Ondrej: For me it was kind of easy as Veronika is working here and the institute offered me this job. I had the opportunity to go to the United States, Germany or Asia. I decided that Asia would be the more interesting. It's my first time in Asia and Malaysia.

Tuan: What is your impression of Malaysia?

Ondrej: As for me, 3 years ago I heard almost nothing about Malaysia. I knew it to be in this region but 2 years ago, Veronika moved here and started to give us information. We looked into the atlas and OK, so this is Malaysia. And when I came I already had lots of information so for me maybe it is not surprising but the first thing that was very different when I came out of the airport building and the hot air was like 'whoosh'. I was surprised. And I like the landscape, the nature and the people

are very nice. I've been to Taman Negara, my first jungle experience. It's very nice.

Coping with life in Malaysia

Michael: And how about the spicy food here?

Ondrej: OK, so about the food, I think it is good. And beer here, it is very interesting to me. I mean Tiger Beer, I like it. It is not that expensive compared to foreign beers. And the food, it is little bit spicy maybe but you can get used to it when it's not too spicy. That's about food. The culture I find it interesting because you can find different cultures in Malaysia. I have been to different temples like Hindu, Chinese and Christian church. And what I find interesting in Malaysia especially in Kuala Lumpur is the technical development like the LRT, KLCC. It's a nice building. I like it.

Tuan: What are your plans for the future?

Ondrej : I have plans only for next year. Then I will see. So when I come back from Asia, I'll stay home for one week and then I will do my master's in Sweden. If I get more scholarships or if I don't get scholarships, maybe I'll continue. It's still open. I don't know.

Ralph Becker, 24, is from Strassen, Luxembourg. He is a graduate of London Guildhall University with a degree in Design Studies with International Relations and Marketing. He speaks seven languages: English, German, French, Luxembourgish, Spanish, Tagalog, and Mandarin.



Michael: Why did you choose AEI for your internship?

Ralph: Good morning. Actually, I was here in April during a stopover to Bali. I was here for only four days and I really liked the city. At first, I was actually thinking of an internship either after my master's or preferably before that. And Silvia, our lovely Italian sister, mentioned about the internship opportunity here in AEI. And so I visited the website and found that the research programme was really interesting and basically in line with

my master's anyway. So I thought I might as well be here instead of being somewhere in Europe and get some hands-on experience in Asia and now I'm here. I'm stuck (laughs).

Tuan: What is your impression of Malaysia?

Ralph: Yeah. Emmm...I have been to this region a couple of times. I have been to the Philippines for a few times. Actually, when I was younger I visited Thailand, Malaysia, and China. But I was not really conscious of what I saw and experienced. The last countries I went to were Singapore and the Philippines. I thought Kuala Lumpur would actually look more like Manila and Jakarta. Actually, if you look at it, it does superficially resemble Singapore in an organized and efficient way. I was really surprised as I thought it would be unorganized, chaotic and dirty. I was positively surprised about that. It's interesting to be

here because I actually start to grasp what Malaysia is all about. Because I do a little bit of research and start digging, go beyond what is superficial and what is laid down to you. Beautiful skyscrapers and all. And that is really interesting. So I am looking forward to learn more about Malaysia.

Coping with life in Malaysia

Ralph: I am staying in a hostel now. It's cool because it has this huge lounge, two huge TVs, a pool table, and a bar. It's in Puduraya. There's a 7-11 in the corner. I've gotten used to being there now. It's really cool. The really cool thing is that they got really nice showers. That is so important to me. I love hot showers; I mean I need a proper shower. I meet like loads of people. Yesterday, I went in and I was really tired so I started talking to some Japanese people. That's pretty cool, actually. But still, I might be looking for a house today. I'll be staying in Malaysia for two months and then I'll be going to the Philippines. I'll be doing my research 'thing' here. And in the last week of August, some of my friends are coming over, from Luxembourg, from Germany,

and we'll all go to the Philippines to meet my parents there. My mum is from the Philippines. And I really love sushi, and here you can get cheap sushi. I like it. Spicy food can sometimes drain your system a little. Make me happy; give me a shower. People here are nice which is interesting. Cool culture, food and yeah, that's it. And it's warm. I was looking forward to a warm country because it was just raining and cold in the UK.

Tuan: What are your plans for the future?

Ralph: The future? The future is in constant movement. It is not to be determined by this present day. The key is not held in my hands. Pandora's box is still sealed. I am going to do my master's in London and then I'm going to buy a house, a dog, settle down with two kids, a boy and a girl. I'm going to grow a beard. Smoke a pipe. But you shouldn't plan your future too much because everything is moving and you are presented with new options everyday. On the other hand, if you don't get what you want, you'll get disappointed that not even a good shower can do much good.

Christoph Pantel, 23, is a German national studying at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy. He expects to complete his degree in International Economics next year.



Michael: Why did you choose AEI for your internship?

Christoph: I guess I'm here because my university organized a study trip to India, Malaysia and China. I had figured then that this was very interesting and not enough time to discover even close to a little bit of the things that could be discovered here. So I talked to Prof. Dr. Giovanni Capannelli in a meeting here in AEI in April and he told me about the internship opportunity. I sent in my CV and said I could come and figured this would be interesting especially working under his supervision on a project, which concerns with European companies and their strategies in Malaysia. And so I, well, appreciate being here, and I think it's a very good experience.

Tuan: What is your impression of Malaysia?

Christoph: When thinking of Malaysia, I would not have been able to pin it down exactly on the map. And when looking at Southeast Asia on the globe, it's more scattered; chaotic, it somehow makes you feel confused about the different countries.

I might be able to say something about East Timor since the country has been on the news in Europe. Had it not been for my trip in spring, I would not have much to say about Malaysia. But actually Malaysia is quite advanced compared to its neighbors. I have heard some things about Kuala Lumpur and Singapore but apart from that, I did not have any impression and did not try to indulge in prejudices before coming here. Since my coming here in spring was an ad hoc decision and my coming here in summer was also an ad hoc decision, so I was free of any impression. Well, I think this helps me in understanding the whole thing a little bit better.

Coping with life in Malaysia

Michael: And how about the spicy food here?

Christoph: Well, how am I coping with the life in Malaysia? With regards to food, food I like very much. I was kind of compelled to spicy food that left me on edge in northern Europe but here I am well very satisfied. I like it very much especially the prices; you can eat out twice a day and it's even cheaper if you would go to the supermarket. About the culture, I have kind of a diverse opinion since I find it very interesting the way the state and society is coping with Islam as

the main religion here compared to the common European stereotype about Islamic countries. And so far I have able to learn quite a lot due to my two Malay roommates whom I talk to almost everyday for a couple of hours which helps in understanding the country and its cultures better. And so, what I find really interesting, things like temperature, the heat, the different kind of weather than Europe is the cultural diversity and the society. For example, how people deal with each other, all the different ethnic minorities; the real real big differences which don't exist in that way in Europe. I mean you have differences in Europe also but they are usually not as deep as you could find them here. And basically the fact that Malaysia is still a developing country and the region is a developing

region is a thing that impresses me since Europe basically, everyone have enough to live and even if you don't work, you are given a place to live and have enough money for food and famine stuff would not just be possible there than here. People are still surviving here. So far, I like the region very much. I'm quite happy here.

Tuan: *What are your plans for the future?*

Christoph: Well, first I'm going to discover how Asia works. I'm going to change the world. For the immediate future, I would probably settle for moving to northern Italy that is supposedly quite nice. What else could I say? Three cars, fish, beard.

Vlatka Cini, 22, of Osijek, Croatia, is in the final year of her bachelor's degree in Economics at the University of J.J. Strossmayer in Osijek. Her main area of interest is Financial Management.



Michael: *Why did you choose AEI for your internship?*

Vlatka: I was in Malaysia in March this year and also in Kuala Lumpur and I liked it very much. I was here for 3 weeks but at that time I didn't think that I would be coming back. So by coincidence, a few months later, I heard about the Asia-Europe Institute and the possibility of having an internship here for two months. Since I am now at the end of my studies, I find it a very good opportunity to be here now and also it is something very different from what I have done before and...I think this is a great chance to see Asian culture.

Tuan: *What is your impression of Malaysia?*

Vlatka: Until a year ago, I didn't know anything about Malaysia and I could hardly pin point it on the map. But I was really surprised when I came here. I thought it would be much more traditional, not developed. I was very surprised when I saw KL which is a very modern city; skyscrapers around. What I like very much about Malaysia is the harmony of Malays, Chinese and Indians who live together. I think Malaysia is a country with great opportunities to become really great and developed. I mean now it is even more attractive in every way. I think it is on the right track to be on the same level as Japan and European countries.

Coping with life in Malaysia

Michael: *And how about the spicy food here?*

Vlatka: Food in Malaysia is very interesting. Rice, chicken, and fish. Food is actually very good. It takes some time to discover what is really good. For example, fried banana, it's great. I like Chinese temples.

And I would also say Malacca is really beautiful. What I find really interesting is that people are really friendly. They always recommend a place to eat, to stay, to try something new.. When I first came, I had the impression of an old, very conservative country but it turned out to be completely different.

Vlatka: So in the next few, I plan to finish my studies and also take Master's. After that I don't know. You shouldn't plan everything. For example, a few months ago I would never dream that I would be in Malaysia now. But here I am. So everything comes so spontaneously. It's more fun and you get more surprises in life.

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