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Memory of the World Asia Pacific Regional Register Nomination Form

1 Title of Documentary Heritage Item or Collection (max 10 words)

The title will be used for such activities as publicity and certificates of inscription.

Historical Asian Children's Collection (1890 – 1990),
The Asian Children's Literature Collection,
National Library, Singapore.

2 Summary (max 200 words)

Give a brief description of the documentary heritage being nominated, and the reasons for proposing it. Include the type of document heritage such as manuscripts, papers, film etc. Highlight the nature, uniqueness and significance of the nominated documentary heritage.

The Historical Asian Children's Collection (1890 – 1990) within the Asian Children's Literature (ACL) Collection was developed in the 1960s at the National Library Singapore to raise the awareness and understanding of Asian-centric children's literature. From an initial collection comprising mainly children's literature of British or American origin written by Western authors, the collection was later developed by local children's librarians to reflect Asian children, backgrounds, and communities in the four official languages of Singapore – English, Mandarin, Malay and Tamil.

Besides raising the profile of Asian stories, writers and illustrators, this collection also sought to draw links to Singapore's rich multi-cultural heritage and historical connections to China, India and Southeast Asia. It is reflective of Asian cultural and literary heritage, which contains folk tales, fairy tales, myths and legends and selected non-fiction, involving largely materials depicting customs and socio-cultural practices and beliefs.

In the late 20th century, this collection was the only known research collection of children's books in English in the region. In view of its long historical development and unique heritage status, this collection was curated as a special collection meant for reference and research in 2005.

This collection contains rich and diverse content, interesting illustrations and unique formats and would be an important heritage collection that needs to be preserved for future generations.


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3 Nominator/s Contact details

3.1 Name of nominator/s (person/s or organisation/s)	
National Library Board, Singapore (NLB)	
3.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage	
Collection is in NLB's holdings	
3.3 Contact person/s	
Ms Sharmini Chellapandi	
3.4 Contact details	
Name Ms Sharmini Chellapandi	Address 100 Victoria Street Singapore 188064
Telephone +65 6992 3791	Email Sharmini_Chellapandi@nlb.gov.sg

4 Declaration of Authority

I certify that I/we have the authority to nominate the documentary heritage described in this document to the Asia Pacific Regional Memory of the World Register. All nominators must sign here. (A signed support letter from the nominators' National Commissions is required when the nomination is from two or more Member States. See Section J in the Process document for more details)

Name  Ng Cher Pong (Mr)	Position Chief Executive Officer, NLB
Address 100 Victoria Street Singapore 188064	Email ng_cher_pong@nlb.gov.sg

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Signature/s of nominator/s.....

5 Legal Information

5.1 Owner/s of the documentary heritage (name and contact details, if different from the nominator/s)

Name Ng Cher Pong (Mr) Chief Executive Officer, NLB	Address 100 Victoria Street Singapore 188064
Telephone +65 6332 3301	Email ng_cher_pong@nlb.gov.sg

5.2 Custodian/s of the documentary heritage (name and contact details if different from the owner/s)

Name Alicia Yeo, Director National Library	Address As above
Telephone +65 6992 3662	Email alicia_yeo@nlb.gov.sg

Please note: Written permission for nomination of this item from the Owners and/or Custodian/s if different from the nominator **must be attached** to this Nomination Form.

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5.3 Legal status

Provide details of the legal and administrative powers for the preservation of the documentary heritage.

NLB has a dual mission to be the repository of the nation's documentary heritage and to provide a collection of general reference materials to support Singapore's information and learning needs.

The Historical Asian Children's Collection (1890 – 1990) is aligned to NLB's Singapore and Southeast Asian collection scope and focus. The Collection relates to Singapore and Southeast Asia where folktales and literature form an intrinsic part of the cultural and historical narratives of Southeast Asia.

5.4 Accessibility

Describe how the documentary heritage may be accessed

Any access restrictions should be explicitly stated below (for instance if advance permission is required, or if general access is not permitted by tradition or custom of the originating community).

The collection is generally open-access and available at the National Library, Singapore which also houses the national reference collection. However, there are some titles which may be rare, unique or in a more fragile condition. These include unbound books, pop-up books, handwritten and limited print titles and are kept in a closed access or restricted area. Some of these may be retrieved upon application by library users and researchers.

5.5 Copyright status

Describe the copyright status of the item(s) / collection, if known.

The answer to this question is not taken into account when determining whether the nominated documentary heritage meets the criteria for inscription.

The copyright for the individual titles resides with the authors, illustrators, or their estates, or with publishers.

It is worth noting that a lot of stories traditionally within Southeast Asia and Asia followed the oral tradition. Many were passed down through generations and only in recent decades captured and documented into books. More often than not, these stories, reside in the public domain and cannot be attributed to a particular creator or author.

6 Details of the Nominated Documentary Heritage

6.1 Exact title of the documentary heritage

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Give the exact title of the nominated documentary heritage and the exact name of the nominating institution/s.

Historical Asian Children's Collection (1890 – 1990),
The Asian Children's Literature Collection.

National Library, Singapore
National Library Board.

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6.2 Type of documentary heritage

Describe the type/s of documentary heritage. Examples include papers, photos, digital, maps, manuscripts, film etc.

The larger collection, which numbers over 10,000, is primarily in book format in the four official languages of Singapore, namely, English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil. A small number is also available in a Southeast Asian language such as Bahasa Indonesia. Many Southeast Asian stories, particularly those published in the earlier decades were only available in their original languages. These were subsequently translated into English and added to the collection, thereby increasing the reach and access.

There are some titles with unique characteristics, such as unbound books, pop-up books, handwritten and limited print titles.

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6.3 Catalogue or registration details

Give the catalogue or registration details for the item or collection.

A nominated collection or archival fonds must be finite, with clear beginning and end dates. If the catalogue or registration details are too long, provide a description of the contents with sample catalogue entries, accession or registration numbers. **Or** you can add the catalogue/registration details as an appendix, or provide a link to an online inventory.

This list provides a sampling of the catalogue details:

S/N	Title	Author	Call Number	Language	Year of Publication	Publisher
1	The snake-charmer, and other stories	Dodd, E. F. (Elizabeth Frances)	823.914 DOD	English	1953	Madras : Macmillan, 1953.
2	Tales of long ago in the Philippines	Ramos, Maximo D., 1910-	398.2095 99 RAM	English	1953	Manila : Alip, 1953.
3	Sejarah ringkas alam Melayu. Jil. 2	Mansur Sanusi	959.5 MAN	Malay	1955	Penang : Sinaran, 1955-.
4	Ahmad, Shaida and Meng on Casuarina island	Dunhill, James	823.914 DUN	English	1955	Singapore : D. Moore, 1955.
5	Ajo pada nembang	Hardjasoebrata, R. C.	784.4959 8 HAR	English	1955	Djakarta : Noordhoff - Kolff, 1955.
6	Wan-Fu : ten thousand happiness	Robinson, Hugh Laughlin	813.54 HUG	English	1957	New York : Longmans, Green, 1957.
7	The journey of Ching Lai	Lattimore, Eleanor Frances, 1904-	813.54 LAT	English	1957	New York, Morrow, 1957.
8	Elephant bridge	Moynihan, Robert	823.91 POT	English	1957	London : Hutchinson & Co., 1957.
9	The little books : a tale of Thailand	Morgan, June	266.0959 3 MOR	English	1957	China Inland Mission, 1957.
10	To beat a tiger one needs a brother's help	Lewis, Elizabeth Foreman, 1892-1958	813.54 LEW	English	1957	London : Gorge G. Harrap & Co., 1957.
11	乐园奇遇记	吴志菁	398.2 WZJ	Chinese	1957	Xin jia po : Goh Keng Leng, 1957. 新加坡 : Goh Keng Leng, 1957.

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12	Jalan kesihatan dan ilmu perubatan	Ibrahim Abdul Rahman	613 IBR	Malay	1957	Penang : Sinaran, 1957.
13	Munshi 'Abdullah	Darus Ahmad	959.5 DAR	Malay	1957	Penang : Sinaran, 1957.
14	Riwayat hidup To' Janggut dan peperangan-nya di-Kelantan	Abdullah bin Amir seling Kelantan	959.5 ABD	Malay	1957	Pulau Pinang : Sinaran, 1957.
15	Tiger of Bitter Valley	Youngberg, Norma R.	823.914 YOU	English	1957	New York : Morrow, 1957.
16	Happiness for Kimi	Lattimore, Eleanor Frances, 1904-	813.54 LAT	English	1958	New York, Morrow, 1958.
17	Lady Precious Stream : an old Chinese play done into English according to its traditional style	Taylor, L. W.	895.12 HSI	English	1958	Kuala Lumpur : Oxford U.P, 1958.
18	Under the nipah palms : tales for Malaysians	Taylour, Kenlis	823 TAY	English	1958	Singapore : Eastern Universities Press, 1958.
19	Gift from the Mikado	Fleming, Elizabeth P.	813.54 FLE	English	1958	Philadelphia, Westminster Press [1958]
20	Orang-orang di-Tanah Melayu	Lewis, G E D.	330.9595 LEW	Malay	1959	Kuala Lumpur : Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1959.

Sample Catalogue entries

The Raja's crown: a Singapore folktale

This story relates the origins of Singapore and how it got its name.

Title: The Raja's crown : a Singapore folktale / by Chia Hearn Chek ; illustrated by Kwan Shan Mei.

Creator/Contributor: Chia, Hearn ChekKwan, Shan Mei

Publisher: Singapore : Federal-Alpha, 1975.

Physical Description: [32] pages: color illustrations; 20 x 26 cm.

Series title: Moongate collection : folktales from the Orient

Notes: Malay ed. also published.

Language: English

Subject(s): Tales -- SingaporeTales -- Singapore -- Juvenile literature

Content Type: text

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Media Type: unmediated
Carrier Type: volume
BRN: 4238083

A kingdom lost for a drop of honey, and other Burmese folktales

Fifteen tales from the area of Mandalay in Central Burma (Myanmar) with 28 scratchboard illustrations by renowned Burmese artist Paw Oo Thet.

Title: A kingdom lost for a drop of honey, and other Burmese folktales / by Maung Htin Aung and Helen G. Trager. Illustrated by Paw Oo Thet.
Creator/Contributor: Htin Aung, UTrager, G., 1910-Pau Oo Thet, illustrator
Publisher: New York, Parents' Magazine Press [1968]
Physical Description: 96 pages illustrations (part color) 23 cm
Notes: Selected from Maung Htin Aung's Burmese folk tales and Burmese law tales.
Language: English
Subject(s): Tales -- BurmaFolklore -- Burma
Content Type: text
Media Type: unmediated
Carrier Type: volume
BRN: 716505

6.4 Images of the documentary heritage.

Three to six digital images of the documentary heritage should be provided as attachments to this form. By providing the images you are agreeing that they can be used by MOWCAP for the purpose of promoting Memory of the World e.g. newsletters, website etc. Please clearly note on this form if you do not wish MOWCAP to use the images for publicity or promotional purposes (for instance if not permitted by tradition or custom of the originating community).

3 images will be shared as attachments. As NLB may not own the copyright, it is advisable to check if these will be used by MOWCAP.



6.5 History/Origin/Background/Provenance

Set out the history of the item or collection - its 'life story' or provenance - from the time when it was created to its place in your institution. This is critical to the item or collection's

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authenticity. You may not know all the details, but give as comprehensive an account of the item or collection's provenance as you can.

The origins of the Collection can be traced to the collection put together by children's librarian, Eleanor Smith and to the children's section at the Raffles Library and Museum in the 1950s to early 1960s. Smith, the younger sister of Hedwig Anuar, the first Singaporean Director of the National Library, started the children's collection of English books on Asians and Asian communities when she was a librarian at the Teachers Training College (TTC). TTC was the predecessor of the National Institute of Education. Smith, who specialised in children's library services, joined the National Library in 1961 bringing over the children's collection from TTC. She trained the first batch of children's librarians in Singapore.

With the opening of the new National Library building in 2005, the collection was reclassified as the Reference Asian Children's (RAC) Collection with a dedicated space and classified as a special collection. It was transferred to the Woodlands Regional Library in 2012 and renamed the Asian Children's Literature (ACL) Collection. This was in line with the setting up of themed collections at public libraries in Singapore and to broaden the reach the general population particularly children and families.

The collection was subsequently brought back to the National Library in 2020 as a large part of the collection was unique with single copies and not feasible for general lending. The intention is for books published from the late 1890s through to 1990 to be kept intact as a specially curated heritage collection. This approach is in keeping with the uniqueness and value of the historical collection as a nationally and internationally significant collection. As such, these have been processed and tagged to indicate that they fall under the Historical Asian Children's Collection (1890 – 1990).

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6.6 Bibliography

Provide a list of at least 3 published sources that have been produced using the nominated documentary heritage.

A bibliography provides evidence that the documentary heritage has been used by scholars, and knowledge of its impact and influence is in the public domain. It is a good idea to cite the works of scholars from outside your own country, as well as local scholars, to demonstrate this influence.

1. Lai, Nam Chen (1981). *Images of Southeast Asia in children's fiction*. Singapore : Singapore Universities Press
2. Hadijah Rahmat (2006). *Peranan dan perkembangan sastera kanak-kanak*. Kuala Lumpur : Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
3. Khoo Sim Lyn. *In search of the child: Children's books depicting world war II in Singapore*. *BiblioAsia*, Vol. 5, Iss. 2, Jul 2009, pp. 10-13.
4. Noel Chia Kok Hwee. *The growth of imagination in Singapore children's literature in English (1965-2005)*. *BiblioAsia*, Vol. 7, Iss. 1, Apr 2011, pp. 20-27.
5. *Stories from Asia: the Asian Children's Literature Collection*. (2017). National Library Board.

6.7 Names, qualifications and contact details of experts

Provide the details of three to six independent people with expert knowledge about the values and provenance of the documentary heritage who may be contacted by MOWCAP for further information on your nomination. Note that the Register Sub Committee (RSC) may also contact other experts.

The names and contact details of your referees will not be publicly disclosed by MOWCAP nor disclosed without their permission to any third party.

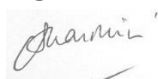
Name	Qualifications	Address
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

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Name [Redacted]	Qualifications [Redacted]	Address [Redacted]
Name TBC [Redacted]	Qualifications [Redacted]	[Redacted]

I certify that the above named experts have given their written permission for their names and contact details to be used in connection with this nomination to the Memory of the World Asia Pacific Regional Register.

Signature



Full name (Please PRINT)

Sharmini Chellapandi

Date

26 May 2022

7 Authenticity and Integrity

7.1 Authenticity and Integrity

Is the documentary heritage what it appears to be? For example, has its identity and provenance been reliably established; are supplementary parts being kept elsewhere and not included in the nomination; has it been altered or damaged; are sections or pages missing; is part of the documentary heritage lost?

they are published materials, of which a small number have been made using traditional binding methods or in non-standard formats. These are also more likely to have a limited print run. Examples include:

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- **The old man who made the dead trees blossom.** (Title in Japanese: Hanasakajijii)
 Part of Kobunsha's Japanese fairy tale series ; no. 4 by David Thomson
 Publisher: Tokyo : Kobunsha, Meiji 18 [1885]
 Format: On double leaves, Japanese style (fukurotoji), crepe paper
- **Kyoiku gangu kaoka kumitate** (Educational toy house set)
 Publisher: [Japan : s.n., a. 1870].
 Physical Description: Woodblock printed. Consists of 9 paper houses and buildings, to be unfolded and set up for play.
- **Pang Tao (Flat Peaches): Eight Fairies Festival**
 Publisher: [China : Publisher not identified, [between 1900 and 1950]
 Physical Description: 1 folded leaf (20 pages): colour illustrations; 22 cm; Wooden covers, with a Chinese character "fu" engraved on cover.
- **The hare of Inaba** / told to children by Mrs. T.H. James. Part of the Japanese fairy tale series (Hasegawa)
 Publisher: Tokyo : Hasegawa Takejiro, Meiji 19 [1886]
 Physical Description: [18] pages: colour illustrations; 15 cm. On double leaves of crepe paper in Japanese style (fukurotoji). Illustrated by Sensai Eitaku. Hand-coloured illustrations.

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8 Primary criteria: Regional Significance

More details on what is required for each criterion are provided in the [MOWCAP Register Process document](#) available on the MOWCAP website

You only need to provide information for criteria that are relevant to your nomination

8.1 Historical Significance

What does the documentary heritage tell us in relation to the history of the Asia Pacific region as a whole, or to a sub-region such as Central, South, Southeast, East Asia or Melanesia, Micronesia, Polynesia, Australasia?

The Historical Asian Children's Collection (1890 – 1990) provides an illuminating look into the cultural heritage of Asia and in particular Southeast Asia as a large part of the understanding of cultural practices, beliefs, identity and values are richly described in literature. There is research value not just on the rich diversity of content but in the illustrations and formats of these books. These provide insights into the different trends, narratives, writing styles, design and aesthetics when the books were first written and produced.

While the collection is a unique research and reference source, it should also reach out to a wider audience such as early childhood educators, primary school teachers, parents and children and students to share and promote awareness and appreciation of Asian literature as well as instill a sense of pride in Asian-centric literature.

In addition, through these stories and the illustrations, there will also be an enhanced understanding and appreciation of the lived experience, culture and heritage of the many communities that make up this region.

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8.2 Form and Style Significance

Is the document an outstanding example of its type?

This criterion refers to the physical nature of the documentary heritage. Is the documentary heritage a particularly fine exemplar of its type; does it have outstanding qualities of beauty and craftsmanship; is it a new or unusual type of carrier or is it an example of a type of document that is now obsolete or superseded?

Many books in this collection are out of print and hence are important as a record of documentary heritage. Some of these books are unique as they have been printed or bound in unique ways often employing indigenous or traditional methods.

Examples:

Kyoiku gangu kaoka kumitate

- A Japanese educational toy set from circa 1870

Pang Tao (Flat Peaches): Eight Fairies Festival

- Accordion-bound picture book, published circa 1900 – 1950

The hare of Inaba (1886)

- Part of a Japanese fairy tale series (Hasegawa); on double leaves of crepe paper in Japanese style (fukurotoji) with hand-coloured illustrations.

In The Dark

- a modern re-telling of a Sufi fable, this book, published in India, is calligraphed and silkscreened on handmade paper.

- Many titles in the collection are first editions. Out of the approximately 1000 titles published on or before 1970, for instance, about 40% are first editions. These also would have limited copies surviving in one location, especially in Southeast Asia.
- The following table provides a sampling of titles across the 4 languages that are first editions.

S/ N	Title	Author	Publisher	Year	Language
1	A jaunt through Java : the story of a journey to the sacred mountain by two American boys	Ellis, Edward Sylvester, 1840-1916	New York: A.L. Burt	1888	English
2	On the Irrawaddy : a story of the first Burmese war	Henty, George Alfred	London: Blackie	1897	English
3	The hero of Manila : Dewey on the Mississippi and the Pacific	Johnson, Rossiter, 1840- 1931	D. Appleton	1899	English

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4	Chinese mother goose rhymes	Translated and illustrated by Issac Taylor Headland	NY: Fleming H. Revell	1900	English
5	The flowered donkey	Mackay, Margaret	Faber	1951	English
6	Legends from Eastern lands	Troup, Miloslav	Hamlyn	1967	English
7	Three tales of monkey; ancient folk tales from the Far East	Tooze, Ruth	John Day Co.	1967	English
8	Pebbles from a broken jar; fables and hero stories from old China	Alexander, Frances, 1888-	Bobbs-Merrill	1967	English
9	Brave Mujong	Borneo Literature Bureau	Kuching: Borneo Literature Bureau	1966	English
10	Mir-i-Nisa	Villa, José García	A. S. Florentino	1966	English
11	The boy in the rooftop school	Wong, Jeanyee	Random House	1967	English
13	The sheep of the Lal Bagh	Mark, David, 1922-	Parents' Magazine	1967	English
14	Hikayat Sang Kanchil : ia-itu mengandongi dua puluh cerita kanchil karangan Daeng Abdul Hamid yang di-petek daripada Hikayat Pelandok	Ahmad Murad Nasruddin, Haji,	Malaya Pub. House	1953	Malay
15	Hikajat si Malin Kundang	Samah, S.	Gedung Buku Nasional	1955	Malay
16	Panchatantra	Ibrahim Abdul Rahman	Sinaran	1960	Malay
17	Harta karun dan badjak laut	Lubis, Mochtar	Indonesia Raya,	1964	Malay
18	Si mimpi anak kelinci	Usman, K.	Miswar	1975	Malay
19	Gairah emas hitam	Resmana, Min,	Pustaka Jaya	1975	Malay
20	怪鸟之子	Zuber Usman 著 ; 建裕与荣盛译	青年书局	1960	
21	甘肃民间故事选 甘肃人民出版社编辑	甘肃人民出版社		1962	Chinese
22	甲必丹叶亚来 = Kaptan Yap Ah Loi		商务印书馆新加坡分馆	1962	Chinese
23	彭亨河历险记 : 童话	一华	万里文化企业	1969	
24	ஆபத்திரன் கதை / Āputtiran katai	Īlaṅkumaran, Irā,	Pārati Puttaka Nilaiyam	1961	Tamil

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25	குட்டியானை/ Kuṭṭiyānai	Maṇi, Pe. Cu.,	Es.Ār. Cuppiramaṇiy a Pillai	1963	Tamil
26	பவழவல்லி	Rājanārāyaṇaṅ, Ki	Kalaimakaḷ Kāriyālayam	1968	Tamil

c. In addition to what has been shared in (a) and (b), a large number of the nominated collection are:

- later editions but still of value to Singapore and Southeast Asian readers, as earlier editions may not be easily available anymore
- not the first UK edition but the first edition published in the US or the first edition published in English
- reprints/ impressions of the original publication

Examples include:

Title	Author	Publisher	Year	Remarks
Vicky and the monkey people	Barbara Bingley	Abelard-Schuman	1966	This is the 1 st US edition. Title first published in 1965
Jungle John	John Budden	Longmans Green	1966	This is the 2 nd edition; 1 st edition published in 1937
Pong Choolie, you rascal--!	Lucy Hernson Crockett	Holt	1961	First published in 1951; NLB Singapore holds the 1961 reprint
The peach blossom forest, and other Chinese legends	Robert Gittings	Oxford University Press	1961	First published in 1951; NLB Singapore holds the 1961 reprint
Chik and the bottle-house : with drawings by Peggy Fortnum	Geraldine Kaye	T. Nelson	1966	2 nd edition: 1 st edition was published in 1965
The men of the Burma Road	Yee Chiang	Metheun	1943	4th edition
Juan of Manila	Marie McSwigan	E.P. Dutton	1947	NLB Singapore holds the 2 nd impression
Adventure in Bangkok	Laszlo Hamori	Constable Young Books	1966	2 nd edition: 1 st edition was published in 1964.

d. We do not hold any manuscripts or archives of the authors in this list, except for a handful of writers who are Singaporean or based in Singapore. One such author is Stella Kon for several of her more recent manuscripts and playscripts, such as *River Run Silver* (undated) and *East Coast: Three Beaches* (1979).

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8.3 Social Community or Spiritual Significance

Is the documentary heritage attached to a specific existing community and demonstrably significant? Information should be provided on what the nominated item represents and how this attachment is expressed.

The titles in this collection, are adaptations and interpretations of the oral storytelling tradition prevalent in the region. These still hold significance and resonate with the many communities, ethnic and linguistic groups that make up Asia. In many ways, given the added emphasis on titles from the region, they are also a reflection of the broader Malay world or Nusantara. In addition, with increased modernisation, many of these long-standing practices, physical landscapes as well as languages/ dialects are fast disappearing.

Having documentation through this collection provides strong evidence of the lived experiences and rich cultures as well as tangible products that existing and future generations can learn from, appreciate and distil accordingly.

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9 Regional Significance: Comparative criteria

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The item or collection should be compared to similar items or collections, whether on any of the Memory of the World registers or not. The comparison should outline the similarities between the nominated documentary heritage has with others as well as the differences, and the reasons that make the nominated documentary heritage stand out. The comparative analysis should aim to explain the importance of the nominated documentary heritage in its national, regional and even international context (if applicable).

The purpose of the comparative analysis is to show that the nominator has tried to find any existing duplicates or other similar examples of the item or collection, and to demonstrate that there is room for this item or collection to be included on the MOWCAP Regional Register.

9.1 Uniqueness or Rarity

Provide the results of the comparative analysis. Can the documentary heritage be described as unique (the only one of its kind ever created) or rare (one of a few survivors from a larger number)?

Yes, some of the titles in this collection can be considered rare – they are either the only surviving or can be regarded as among the few surviving publications available. Given the climate in Southeast Asia and the materials used for a large number of earlier publications, most books published over 40 years ago are at high risk of deterioration. In addition, some of these books were put together using traditional book-binding methods or materials such as crepe paper or calligraphed and silk-screened on hand-made paper.

The collection looks at publications from the late 19th century through to 1990. It contains a mixture of fictional tales including historical fiction, folklore, fairytales, legends set in Asia, biographical stories of historical figures in Asia and books on travel, socio-cultural issues and customs in Asia. Many are published in Asia and / or written by Asians.

While the collection covers Asia, there is special emphasis on Southeast Asia. For the period up to the 1970s, there was, as far as can be determined, no comprehensive collecting effort in the region i.e. Southeast Asia, hence a large proportion of the collection residing at the National Library may very well be one of its kind and no longer available or in print elsewhere.

To our knowledge, there are two world-class research libraries with a comprehensive children's collection including Asian imprints; the International Youth Library in Munich, Germany which has over 300,000 books in 150 languages and the International Library of Children's Literature in the National Diet Library, Japan which has about 100,000 non-Japanese children's books. The former's collection is mainly on the Western titles while the latter's main focus is on titles published in Japan, or related to Japan. While they do have titles published in Asia, there is much less on Southeast Asia.

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In addition, there are other collections in the United States, in particular, with a strong children's collection. In particular,

- i. The Cotsen Children's Library at Princeton University Library which has an international research collection of illustrated children's books, manuscripts, original artwork, prints, and educational toys from the 15th century to the present
- ii. The Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature which has more than 130,000 books and serials published in Great Britain and the United States from the mid-17th century through the present.
- iii. The Miriam Snow Mathes Historical Children's Literature Collection which has over 12,000 children's books and periodicals published in the 19th century and up to 1960 with a strong concentration on neglected and forgotten works published in the United States, 1875–1950.

Hence, it can be surmised that The Historical Asian Children's Collection (1890 – 1990) at the National Library, Singapore would be quite unique firstly, because this is the only such special collection in Southeast Asia and secondly, one of the very few if not the only, with such a large number of South-east Asian imprints.

10 Gender

Gender equality is one of two global priorities of UNESCO. If there are any specific aspects of the nomination that relate to gender equality, please describe them in detail, explaining what the nominated documentary heritage tells us about the lives of women and girls in Asia and the Pacific, and any impacts on women and girls or on gender equality in the region.

While Asian folk stories form a large portion of The Historical Asian Children's Collection (1890 – 1990), stories that are considered as providing role models for girls and women in general are also included.

One such story is the popular tale of Mulan, a young lady who joined the army in place of her aged father. Believed to be over 1,500 years old, this story has been present in many versions from the time of the early Chinese dynasties to the present. The collection has different imprints of the tale, published in various countries such as the United States, China, Singapore and Indonesia. These different imprints are in English, Chinese and Malay and provide opportunities for comparative studies.

Besides promoting Chinese culture and history, the editors of some of the titles also expressed their wish of dedicating this particular story to women and girls. The collection also comprises many other tales and stories with female protagonists that have positive images, such as Madam White Snake and others.

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There are also stories of strong and independent women in Malay folktales. One popular story, that has seen many iterations from stage productions to movies is the legend of *Puteri Gunung Ledang* and how she outwitted the Sultan of Melacca who had sent a delegation to propose for her hand in marriage.

Likewise, amongst the Tamil language stories is a publication, கேள்வியின் நாயகி (Kelviyin Nayaki) which tells the story of a 10-year-old tribal girl in India who had never taken anything for granted until her doubts were cleared. This story has many messages that can resonate with both children and parents such as encouraging a sense of curiosity, having the courage to speak up, and female empowerment.

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11 Statement of Significance

Provide a summary of the points made under the primary and comparative criteria, and the test of authenticity and integrity. Why is the documentary heritage important to the world and what has its impact been beyond the boundaries of a single Asia Pacific state?

The summary should be about 300-600 words

The Historical Asian Children's Collection (1890 – 1990) at the National Library Singapore was developed in the 1960s to raise the awareness and understanding of Asian-centric children's literature. From an initial collection comprising mainly children's literature of British or American origin written by Western authors, the collection was later developed to reflect Asian children, backgrounds, and communities. The bulk of the collection is in the four official languages of Singapore – English, Mandarin, Malay and Tamil.

This collection also seeks to draw links to Singapore's rich multi-cultural heritage and historical connections to China, India and Southeast Asia. It is reflective of Asian cultural and literary heritage contains folk tales, fairy tales, myths and legends and selected non-fiction, largely materials depicting customs and socio-cultural practices and beliefs. It depicts particularly stories from Southeast Asia at a time when such documentation and library collection development was not common-place due to the more existential priorities and economic developments in the region.

As indicated earlier, these stories and folktales were much more than a children's tool but captured and articulated the cultural heritage and practices of communities prior to globalisation. These helped to permanently capture what had for generations been an oral tradition. Through this collection, including different renditions of similar stories or values told through the eyes of writers from different parts of Asia and Southeast Asia, one could glean very valuable insights into the norms and values of a community, country and ethnic group. These could at the same time, highlight subtle differences or similarities.

Adding a rich layer onto the stories are the actual illustrations that literally open up vistas into the physical landscape, flora and fauna, costumes, art and architecture. Safeguarding and celebrating this collection is very important as it tells the story of very diverse and unique communities.

The efforts of Eleanor Smith and children's librarians from the 1960s to the 1990s in Singapore, provide an important resource for researchers interested in Asian children's literature and comparative studies that are not limited to Asian myths and legends such as the evergreen mousedeer in Malay folklore, the Sang Kancil but also universal tales such as Cinderella. Collections such as these shed light on a range of topics such as education and upbringing, family roles, civic values, socio-cultural attitudes, literary styles and formats.

This collection contains rich and diverse content, interesting illustrations and unique

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formats and is an important heritage collection that needs to be preserved for future generations

12 Risk Assessment

12.1 Condition

Describe the physical condition of the documentary heritage.

Most of the books are in a relatively good condition as they have been kept onsite in the library as reference titles. For some titles, particular those that are unbound, hand-made and older publications e.g. published in the later 19th to early 20th centuries, these are kept in closed access in closed access section of the National Library. All titles have been catalogued and their records accessible in the NLB's catalogue.

12.2 Threat/Risk

Detail the nature and scope of threats to the nominated documentary heritage. For example, poor storage, climate, control of access.

It is important for the collection to remain in a stable environment with minimal fluctuations in humidity and temperature. Hence, housing them at the National Library which provides onsite reference will help ensure that the books are kept at an optimal condition. In addition, a selection of books that have unique characteristics in terms of how they are produced or bound as well as older publications that are at risk of deterioration are kept in closed access.

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13 Preservation and Access Management Plan

Management Plan

Are there management plans to preserve and provide access to the nominated documentary heritage?

YES

NO

If YES, describe or attach a summary of the plan or plans.

All books have already had a condition check, processed and are available for onsite reference at the National Library, Singapore. A large proportion of the books are on open shelves and have a designated section that also allows for regular curated showcases.

The ongoing collection management for the documentary heritage plan is aligned with the National Library's collection development policy and guidelines as well as the NLB disaster management plans.

If NO, provide details about any proposed preservation, storage and access strategies and plans.

14 Consultation with Stakeholders

Provide details of consultation with stakeholders about this nomination. Stakeholders include communities with an involvement in the documentary heritage, owners and custodians of the documentary heritage and scholars who research the documentary heritage

The following were consulted and/ or are aware about this collection and its significance.

- Dr Jo-Ann Shek
- Dr Loh Chin Ee
- Mr William Phuan

15 Other Information to Support the Nomination

Please provide any other information that supports the inclusion of this documentary heritage collection on the Memory of the World Asia Pacific Regional Register.