an understanding of the text, that in de Coutre’s time the Banda Islands were not considered as part of the Moluccas, that Bima denoted the whole of the island of Sumbawa and not just the port of that name on the north coast, that part of Timor was a Portuguese possession, that Minangkabau was a major source of gold and pepper, that the Portuguese had fortified the Ilha das Naus opposite Malacca as early as 1615, that Narsinga was one of the names used by the Portuguese to denote the kingdom of Vijayanagar, and that the island of Kishm was part of the sultanate of Ormuz.

Dr. Teensma warns us that de Coutre’s appendices are “in rough draught [sic] and the style is careless” (p. v). The same might be said of his own introduction and his work on the index. Later he says that “a systematic research into all known 16th and 17th century arbitrista-reponses on Portuguese India would be an interesting job” (p. xxvi). Indeed it would, and it is a pity that, by rushing into typescript with a work that will neither satisfy specialists who wish to use de Coutre as a primary source nor meet the requirements of those with a more general interest in the history of the Portuguese and Spanish empires in Asia, Dr. Teensma has missed a chance to contribute significantly to this research himself.

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In Search of Southeast Asia: A Modern History. By DAVID P. CHANDLER, WILLIAM R. ROFF, JOHN R.W. SMAIL, DAVID JOEL STEINBERG, ROBERT H. TAYLOR, ALEXANDER WOODSIDE, DAVID K. WYATT. Revised Edition. Sydney, Wellington: Allen & Unwin, and Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987. Pp. xi, 590. Maps, Notes, Glossary, Bibliography, Index.

Southeast Asia: An Illustrated Introductory History. Expanded Edition. By MILTON OSBORNE. Sydney, Wellington, London, Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1988. Pp. viii, 263. Illustrations, Maps, Graphs, Bibliography, Index.

Southeast Asia: Past and Present. By D.R. SARDESAI. Second Edition. Boulder: Westview Press, 1989. Pp. ix, 366. Maps, Tables, Chronological Chart, Notes, Bibliography, Index.

Each of the books under review is a history of modern Southeast Asia, and each tells a somewhat different story.

After its initial publication in 1971, In Search of Southeast Asia (hereafter Search) rapidly became a standard text for teachers of Southeast Asian history. It took into account new approaches that appeared during the 1960s, going beyond chronicling royal dynasties and imperial governorships to consider sociological and cultural features of the region, and it accomplished its objectives within the compass of a text of 413 pages, lean enough to be read comfortably by students enrolled in an undergraduate course. The revised edition, published in 1987 and expanded to 472 pages, provides a complete rewrite of the materials on Burma, contributed by Robert H. Taylor, and a substantial revision of the concluding part (“Southeast Asian Nations
in a New World Order"). The Bibliography, too, has been brought up to date.

Search begins with an evaluation of the eighteenth century world (peasants, religious life, traders, and rulers) and then examines how between the mid-eighteenth and late nineteenth centuries there were “new challenges to old authority” throughout the region, encompassing both internal and external economic, religious and political innovations. These challenges produced extensive changes, and the next section consider how these changes were accommodated by newly formed bureaucratic administrations and new economic arrangements. The book concludes with a discussions of social change and the nationalist challenge to colonial rule, and of the position of new Southeast Asian nations in the new post-independence world order.

By looking at the story that is told, it is sometimes possible to see the story that is not. The story Search tells is how modern Southeast Asia came into being, and it does this by tracing the antecedents of the 10 states found in the region after the end of colonial rule. Four of the book’s five parts reflect this division, and the arrangement creates an anomaly. Part II concerns Burma, Siam, Cambodia, Vietnam, the Malay Peninsula, the Archipelago, Java, and the Philippines. Part III begins with a sub-section on “The Making of New States”, but in Part IV the reader again finds accounts of Burma, Siam, Cambodia, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Vietnam, with Malaya instead of the Malay Peninsula, Indonesia instead of the Archipelago and Java, and the addition of Laos.

The subdivisions in Part II are based on foreknowledge of what was to transpire during the ensuing 200 years. The wealth generated by a growing export trade, the strength of bureaucratic systems of administration, and the military force available to the European powers active in the region during the nineteenth century, brought certain centres of power to the forefront — especially those which happened to lie near the sea at points where there was a safe anchorage, and eclipsed others. This story is well told in Part III, which deals with the region as a whole, and provides a satisfactory introduction to the events portrayed in Parts IV and V. Among the stories that are not told are those of the Mon and the Cham people, of Kedah, Kengtung, the Sulu Sultanate, the Sipsong Panna, Chiang Mai, and the 250-plus political entities in the Indonesian archipelago which had agreements with the Dutch government in the early twentieth century. These states did not become modern nation-states, but is it really sufficient to write of how the twentieth century came to be, and to neglect the nineteenth century that was except insofar as it contributed to that outcome?

The one history of the region which does attempt to examine the nineteenth century on its own terms is volume I of D.J.M. Tate’s The Making of Modern Southeast Asia (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1971; revised edition, 1977). In dealing with the Indonesian archipelago, for example, Tate discusses the fate of the five major powers ca. 1800 (apart from Java, fast coming under Dutch control), that is, Aceh, Minangkabau, Johore-Riau, Brunei and Sulu, and also gives brief accounts of what befell 16 “lesser states”. Most of these places are mentioned in Search, but it would be impossible to construct an adequate picture of what happened to them from the details provided.1

1Tate’s second volume examines the regional economy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A projected third volume, which would have dealt with political events during the twentieth century, has apparently been abandoned, and the work has gone out of print with little prospect of its being reissued.
This observation is not so much to point out an omission as to suggest another history which might be written. But it raises an intriguing question. Southeast Asia, which is now seen, and sees itself, as an example of nationalism triumphant, in this alternative history would appear as a region of lost traditions, vanished cultures and nationalisms *manqué*, a region where alien ideologies (such as nationalism and communism) overcame indigenous ways of thinking, where officials dressed in alien clothes formulate and execute policies of modernization that destroy the indigenous way of life. And which is the more accurate version? In any case, *Search* tells the story it does relate very well, and certainly deserves its high reputation.

Milton Osborne's account, a book of 205 pages when it first appeared in 1979, and expanded to 263 pages for the fourth edition published in 1988, shares the sociological perspective of *Search*, but is otherwise a very different sort of work. The story told here concerns Southeast Asia as a region; there is no attempt to assemble accounts of individual states, and Osborne provides selected illustrative detail rather than extended narratives of events. Like *Search*, the book opens with a cross section of Southeast Asian society. It then moves through chapters dealing with the European advance, the economic transformation, the role of Asian immigrants in the region, and finally takes up a chronological account that begins with the period after the first world war and concludes with Southeast Asia's "modern history". A new concluding chapter in the latest edition offers a brief introduction to the region through art and literature, covering monumental art, sculpture, ceramics, textiles, and novels. Various questions might be raised concerning the selections — the omission of Anthony Burgess, the inclusion of batik but not *ikat* cloth, and the failure to mention Southeast Asia's splendid music — but the chapter itself is a commendable idea and very useful as it stands.

D.R. Sardesai's book was first published in New Delhi by Vikas Publishing House in 1985. A second edition by Westview Press in 1989 reduced the text from 485 to 366 pages, apparently by condensing some passages and using a smaller typeface. Sardesai's account is in some respects the reverse of Osborne's. Where Osborne provides interpretations with minimal data, Sardesai offers data with minimal interpretation. The organization of the book is simple: a section on cultural heritage progresses from early kingdoms to the end of the eighteenth century, and is followed by a colonial interlude, a nationalist response, and the fruits of freedom. This is familiar ground, and reflects an outmoded preoccupation with political events. Commercial agriculture is almost totally neglected (neither the rubber industry nor the rice industry is considered), there is very little discussion of Islam, and the significance of social and cultural groupings in shaping historical events is not examined. The sociological and economic awareness that informs both *Search* and Osborne's work is lacking. Events march along, but are not explained.

Even coverage of political affairs is weak. For example, the (variable) appeal of communism within the region is not examined — and the account of the 1926 uprisings in Java and Sumatra (pp. 160–61) does not reflect the views of specialist studies of the events produced over the past 25 years. There is no discussion of the Padri Movement that initiated Dutch rule in Sumatra, nor of the Aceh war.
The reader of this book will not take away an accurate picture of Southeast Asian history as it is perceived by most scholars currently active in the field, and a glance at the bibliography suggests why. A majority of the sources listed pre-date 1980; not a single title from the substantial list published in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore by Oxford University Press is included, nor is there any sign of the rich scholarship on Southeast Asia being produced in Australia and the Netherlands. A few French titles appear, but nothing more recent than the 1950s.

What can be said about the state of Southeast Asian history on the basis of these three texts? It is clear that interdisciplinary research is bearing fruit, and the quality of understanding of the region that comes through in Osborne's book and Search is very impressive. There remain, however, matters which need to be addressed. Historians generally view Southeast Asian countries either as autonomous states, or in their relationship to dominant colonial powers, while relatively little attention has been given to two other sets of relationships.

Residents of Southeast Asian territories have long interacted with each other, but most accounts implicitly give the impression that such interactions ceased with the coming of colonial rule. It is true that colonial powers in the region took pains to avoid clashing with each other, fearing the repercussions colonial disputes might have for European politics, but no such cordon sanitaire could be drawn around the populations of the region. The borders imposed by colonial governments divided states, but not people, who flowed back and forth in cheerful disregard of European administrative divisions. Chinese trading networks transcended European colonial boundaries, as did Indian financial and trading operations. Rice from Burma and Siam and Cochin China fed Ceylon, the East Coast Residency of Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula and parts of the Philippines. Penang enjoyed a substantial trade with Aceh and Burma, while Singapore was an entrepôt for the entire region. These matters, of course, are mentioned in many historical accounts, but tangentially; most have yet to be considered in their own right, and they are a key part of a history of the peoples of Southeast Asia during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

A second area awaiting attention is relations between Southeast Asian colonies and the empires of which they were a part. European governments did not deal with their colonial territories in isolation, but also as part of a larger whole. Particularly in the 1920s and 1930s there were attempts to increase coordination within empires, an effort with lasting effects that have not been adequately explored. Too often historians have attempted to explain events with reference to benefits for the metropolitan power or for residents in a particular colony, without considering broader implications for an empire.

The writing of history moves by fits and starts as new information is discovered — sometimes because new archival collections have become available, and sometimes because scholars have asked fresh questions while re-examining older material. By now a very substantial proportion of the documentation for the colonial period in Southeast Asia has been opened to the public, but there are clearly new discoveries yet to be made.

One area currently attracting interest is social history, as researchers ask questions about historical demography and health and sanitation and the circumstances of everyday life. Closer scrutiny of the archives is also beginning to yield a significant
revisionist literature. One example is a reassessment of the cultivation system in Java, based on detailed examination of nineteenth century documents. There is certainly reason to anticipate that further exploration of the Thai and Malaysian archives, the India Office Library holdings on Burma, and archives in France will yield comparable results. (The recently opened French Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères at Nantes, for example, contain the local archives of French missions overseas and include extensive information about local conditions.)

It seems clear that within a few years the task of re-assessing Southeast Asian history will need to be done yet again on the basis of a still larger and more diverse literature, and the formidable task of incorporating the events of the last 50 years awaits attention. In the meantime, those in the field can be grateful to Milton Osborne for his lively and stimulating introduction to the history of Southeast Asia, and to the team of authors involved in Search for their effective synthesis of an already large literature.

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An Overview of Language Issues in South-East Asia, 1950-1980. By RICHARD B. NOSS (Editor), ANDREW GONZALEZ, AMRAN HALIM and ANGKAB PALAKORNKUL. Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1984. Pp. viii, 234. Bibliography, Index.

An Overview of Language Issues in South-East Asia, 1950-1980 describes language issues, policies, and planning activities in ASEAN (Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore) between 1950 and 1980. Although the authors — Richard Noss, Andrew Gonzalez, Amran Halim, and Angkab Palakornkul — highlight the successes of these countries’ language planning efforts, they point at a failure to extend planning into social domains other than education, identifying top-level language planners as responsible for this.

The book is divided into six chapters. Chapter One presents a historical sketch of official language policies and planning plus unofficial language planning in ASEAN. Chapter Two explains how provincial, national, regional, and international institutions have been developed to implement these policies. Chapter Three describes the responses of ASEAN nations to the multi-sided competition between foreign, national, official, provincial, minority, classical, religious, and court languages. Chapter Four looks at the challenges that bilingual education presents to language engineers as they attempt to devise effective programs for teacher training, curriculum development, academic testing and program evaluation. Chapter Five notes gaps in language planning in socioeconomic domains beyond education and argues that these gaps have resulted in ad hoc language planning activities. Finally, the sixth chapter outlines possible ways of bringing qualified language personnel into policy formulation and planning sequences both at the national and ASEAN region levels in order to extend official language planning to non-educational domains.

These six chapters present official language policies and planning as responses to contradictions which have the potential to intensify feelings of mistrust between