Introduction

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Introduction

This volume is an experiment of “reviewing” in the sense of “seeing again.” What is to be seen again? The subjective, but not subjectivist, dimension of the human experience in Asia is something which needs to be “reviewed.” The collection of articles in this volume offers the reader various aspects of the “Asian” experience. The hidden desires, the repressed anger, the spiritual quest, the consumerist dream are all but manifestations of human desires which are the springboard of all actions, deeply private or obviously political. These explorations are conducted through an investigation of memoirs, literature, philosophical texts, novels, religious scriptures, and political writings. All of these reflect a complex chain of conditions which leads our understanding from the intimately private to the historically political. Some articles are more directly related to the theme of “Desires and the Political” than others. I do hope, however, that together they are a mosaic of mirrors which provide scholars on Asia with thought-provoking insights and, perhaps more importantly, a glimpse of self-understanding.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to all the contributors who have been very patient and courteous, to Dr. Chris Baker our language editor, and to the Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, for making this volume possible.

Suwanna Satha-Anand
Guest Editor