ferences in entrepreneurial behaviour between Asia and Europe have to be "recon­sidered".

The last paper of the conference ("Putting Global Capitalism in its Place: Eco­
nomic Hybridity and Ritual Expenditure in Rural China") was presented by Mayfair
Yang (Dept. of Anthropology, University of California, Santa Barbara, USA). She
addressed the post-socialist "hybrid economy" emerging in the 1980's and 90's in
rural Wenzhou located on the southeastern coast of China, which combines eco­
nomic privatization, household industry, entrepreneurial expansion all over China,
some transnational capitalist linkages, the continued power of the state, and a re­
vived ritual economy of expenditures in popular religion, community ritual and fes­
tival. Borrowing from Georges Bataille's notion of ritual expenditure, she analyzed
how ritual economy in rural Wenzhou harbors an archaic economic logic which is at
once subversive of capitalist, state socialist, and developmental state principles.

The quality of the papers, the different viewpoints of the authors regarding the
conference subject (whom we might simply dichotomize into 'culturalists' and those
who interpret culture as being contingent upon time and space) as well as the
stimulating opening ceremony, conference setting and professional support ensured
interesting, lively and fruitful discussions (despite the almost tropical temperature in
the conference room) and thereby a successful conference outcome. Notwithstanding
conflicting perceptions of Chinese business issues, participants agreed that Chi­
nese capital will continue to play a prominent role in the consolidation and further
development of Asia despite the current tough business environment and that more
research is necessary to do justice to the complexity of the subject and rapid social
change. How ethnic Chinese entrepreneurs, their family businesses, conglomerates
and networks – which have played a significant role in the regional economic inte­
gration of East and Southeast Asia (and increasingly in the context of global market
expansion) – adjust to the crisis will be an interesting topic for further research pro­
jects. Common sense suggests that the issue of Chineseness and associated ideologi­
cal activities such as the construction of a Chinese variant of capitalism, the dis­
course on the 'Asianisation of Asia', the resurgence of the new Asian consciousness
and associated notions of Asia's moral and cultural superiority which surfaced dur­
during the pre-crisis years will resurface once the crisis is over. This would make the
need for more solid cross-cultural comparative research on Chinese (ethnic) entre­
preneurship and networks even more urgent.

The conference papers are to be published as a monograph in 2000.

Solvay Gerke, Hans-Dieter Evers, Thomas Menkhoff

4th ASEAN Inter-University Seminar on Social Development
Pattani, 11-16 June, 1999

The 4th ASEAN Inter-University Seminar on Social Development took place in Patt­
nani, Thailand, from 11 to 16 June. Over 200 scholars participated and more than
130 papers were given. The conference had been well organised by the Department
of Sociology of the National University of Singapore, and the Prince of Songkla
University was definitely a show of strength of a fast expanding Southeast Asian social science. Most participants came from Malaysia, Singapore, The Philippines and Thailand with only a few from Indonesia and Vietnam. The papers covered a wide range of topics though there was some emphasis on the social impact of the current Asian economic crisis, on environmental issues and on the search for identity in a globalized situation. The papers were generally of high quality and showed considerable theoretical sophistication. While most scholars stuck to standard concepts from Weber to Merton there was a clear trend towards postmodern theory and the attempt to find an own position in the global discourse. The two keynote addresses were given by Prof. Dr. Prawase Wasi (Prince of Songkla University): "Southeast Asia into the 21st Century: Critical Transitions, Continuity and Change" and Prof. Dr. Hans-Dieter Evers (University of Bielefeld): "Crisis and Beyond: Theorising Southeast Asia". The next conference will take place in Singapore in the year 2001. Further information can be obtained by writing to Dr. Hing Ai Yun (sochay@leonis.nus.edu.sg). As an ever increasing proportion of research on Southeast Asia is done by staff members of Southeast Asian universities themselves, scholars working on these areas would be well advised to pay greater attention to the locally published journals like the Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science (The National University of Singapore), Akademika (National University of Malaysia), PRISMA (LP3ES Jakarta) and SOJOURN (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore).

Hans-Dieter Evers

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC): The First Decade
Freiburg, 21./22 Oktober 1999
