

The Literature Association Cambodia – Sweden

Open board meeting 30 September 2005 to make long term plans for the Literature Association.

Present: Kho Tararith, Pal Vannarirak, Anna Mattsson, Chheng Hokkhim, Lay Neary.

Taking the minutes: Anna

One important long time plan for the Association is to rent an office. There is an offer at the Buddhist Institute in Phnom Penh: an office room will cost \$200 per month to rent. This includes all expenses as electricity, water, access to toilets, meeting rooms, library, seminar hall, etc. Preparation of the office including all equipments as furniture and computers will cost \$2.500 and can be made in the time of two weeks.

By the moment the Literature Association has no possibilities to rent any office like this, for economical reasons. The board in Cambodia suggests the Swedish part of the Association to apply for money to cover the costs for office rent from Statens Kulturråd in Sweden. More information can be found at: www.kulturradet.se/bidrag

There are two different long time suggestions for development of the Association. The Association can either go on as an association with no staff, but with an office with useful equipment as a base. Or it can be developed to become an organization that has not only an office but also staff. Which of the ways to choose depends on how much financial support the Association will get.

During next year Anna Mattsson will leave Cambodia, and since the meetings mostly have been held in her house in Phnom Penh, there is a risk that the Association will die when she leaves Cambodia. Due to this it is important to try to get a permanent meeting place.

Another solution would be to have a combined office / café in Phnom Penh. In the café we can sell not only coffee and food, but also books, and we can have poetry readings and other public events. The food sale can help to finance the activities.

With this the Cambodian part of the board asks the Swedish part to take this to discussion and maybe come up with more suggestions.

Long term activity plans:

A translation of “Pippi Långstrump” by Astrid Lindgren. A world famous book for children. Khmer will then be the 60th language that Pippi Långstrump has been translated to. This is a job that must be done during long time. The Swedish Institute is interested in supporting this project, but would like it to be done in cooperation with a Cambodian organization in the field of children’s literature. When the book is printed and published, the Swedish Institute would like to help us to arrange a seminar on children’s literature in Cambodia. We will have to estimate the costs for printing and translation and apply for money from the Swedish Institute.

Anthology with Khmer poetry rendered to Swedish. A selection of contemporary Khmer poetry will be rendered by Anna Mattsson in cooperation with Cambodian translators. After printing, Statens Kulturråd can possibly support the publication. Printing and transportation costs must be estimated.

To open a public library in the countryside in Cambodia, in cooperation with a Swedish public library.

Next year: Mekong poetry festival. The Literature Association will take part together with the Book Federation. Anna Mellergård, who is running a Nordic cultural centre in Kunming, China, has initiated this project. Poets from the Nordic countries will be invited to take part.

Swedish lessons in Phnom Penh. Materials will be required from the Swedish Institute.

Actual plans:

The book launch party for Kromom Tomnöp by Edith Södergran will take place at le Café du Centre at French Cultural Centre on Friday 21 October 6.30 pm. Meeting to plan the party will be on Sunday 9 October 5pm.

Distribution of books printed by the Association. Money that is left from the support from Statens Kulturråd for Det snöar i Kambodja can be used for distribution of books in Cambodia. Paul Saran and Heng Sambath will be asked to work with the distribution.

Poetry reading at Café Java. Maybe in November.

Phnom Penh Art Festival. We will maybe take part with poetry readings, December this year.

Pal Vannarirak wants to start working with the hiv/aids book "Dear you". According to her, 800 dollars will be enough to print a small edition in Cambodia. The book will then not include any Swedish translations, but only Khmer love poems and information texts on hiv/aids. The Association has been offered financing from Elise Ottesen-Jensen Foundation (Ottarfonden) and from Noaks Ark, that is a part of the Swedish Red Cross. The total amount is 6.000 SEK, that is approximately \$800. The money from Noaks Ark has not been paid to the Association yet. Anna Mattsson will ask Petra Quiding to find out of it, and to transfer the money to Cambodia. Pal Vannarirak will ask Ath Sopeseth to work with her.

Next open board meeting will be on Sunday 9 October 5 pm. Issue: to plan the book launch party.