



S. RAJARATNAM

A Bibliography

compiled by
Gandhimathy Durairaj
edited by
Linda Yip Seong Chun

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A Bibliography

The **Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS)** was established as an autonomous organization in 1968. It is a regional centre dedicated to the study of socio-political, security and economic trends and developments in Southeast Asia and its wider geostrategic and economic environment.

The Institute's research programmes are the Regional Economic Studies (RES, including ASEAN and APEC), Regional Strategic and Political Studies (RSPS), and Regional Social and Cultural Studies (RSCS).

The **ISEAS Library** is a regional centre which houses a unique collection of over 500,000 Southeast Asian materials on applied social sciences. The items are in English, European, and Southeast and East Asian languages. While its main emphasis is on contemporary Southeast Asia, it also has archival titles in microform and print, as well as invaluable primary sources of information in its Private Papers collections.

The Library supports the research programmes of the Institute, and serves in-house researchers, visiting scholars, researchers and specialists on the region from within and outside of Singapore. It is also open to Government officials, postgraduate students, professionals, the business and diplomatic communities, and any person interested to do research on Southeast Asia.

Foreword

After his retirement from active politics, Mr S. Rajaratnam, one of Singapore's Founding Fathers, honoured ISEAS by agreeing to serve as its Distinguished Senior Fellow from 1988 to 1997.

ISEAS is also a beneficiary of a large part of Mr Rajaratnam's personal book collection, which is on display in the Library as an ISEAS tribute to this outstanding citizen of Singapore.

This book entitled "S. Rajaratnam: A Bibliography" is yet another ISEAS tribute to someone who has given so much of himself to the founding of modern Singapore. At a time when the world is faced with an upsurge of intolerance, extremism, terrorism and sectarian conflicts, Mr Rajaratnam's unambiguous views on multi-culturalism, tolerance and dialogue remain pertinent and refreshing. These are the self-same values embodied in our National Pledge, which he crafted. Some of his other seminal ideas, such as the concept of the Global City and of 'asabiya' or social cohesion, deserve scholarly study.

ISEAS is happy to offer this bibliography, which is a labour of love by our Library staff, to all who seek a deeper understanding of Mr Rajaratnam and his immense contribution to the development of Singapore.

K. Kesavapany
Director
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
Singapore

May 2007

Preface

This *Bibliography* was compiled in honour of Mr S. Rajaratnam, the first Foreign Minister and first Minister of Culture in Singapore and also variously as the Senior Minister (Prime Minister's Office), Deputy Prime Minister (Foreign Affairs) from 1984 to 1988. Upon his retirement from politics, he assumed the post of Distinguished Senior Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies from 1988 to 1997.

This compilation has 912 entries, comprising speeches, journal and newspaper articles written by Rajaratnam from 1953 to 1994. It also includes biographies on and interviews with Rajaratnam and eulogies upon his death. The breakdown of content is as follows: 232 articles (25 per cent), 527 speeches (58 per cent), 58 eulogies and tributes (6 per cent), 26 interviews (3 per cent), 15 tributes (2 per cent) and other writings such as statements, personal notes, messages, etc. (6 per cent).

The entries are categorized by subject and arranged alphabetically by author and title. The records of this *Bibliography* are derived mainly from ISEAS Library's databases — *SEALion*, *SEAText*, *SEABase* — and its collection of Rajaratnam's private papers. The databases of the National University of Singapore Libraries, National Library Board (Singapore), Singapore Press Holdings Library, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Library and the National Archives of Singapore were also sources of reference. The entries denoted with SR, Doc, Jou or library call numbers indicate the location at the ISEAS Library and elsewhere. The press clippings (PCC) are available at the ISEAS Library. This *Bibliography* excludes newspaper reports of Rajaratnam's speeches. Most of his speeches can be found at the National Archives of Singapore (NAS), the list of which is on its website at <http://stars.nhb.gov.sg/stars/public/>. A list of recordings

of some speeches are also available at the NAS, accessible via <http://misas.nhb.gov.sg/avs/public/internetSearch/>.

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Gandhimathy Durairaj
Linda Yip Seong Chun

May 2007

Introduction

A Universal Gentleman

Mr S. Rajaratnam was a rare breed — he was the quintessential wordsmith. His quiet and charming demeanour belied a passionate writing style infused with compelling and combative yet rational arguments. A gifted orator, he had wanted to be a lawyer but worked as a journalist instead. When he became a politician, this powerful combination of natural talents served him well. He was a persuasive speaker and writer, a consummate politician.

He read voraciously, visiting libraries and bookshops wherever he went, acquiring immense knowledge of the world at large. This vast understanding of theories, philosophies, principles, empiricisms, history and current affairs was to inform his writings and speeches, driving his beliefs across to his audiences, political adversaries, and constituencies. As a visionary, his uncanny prescience is proven if you read his many works on race and ethnicity, the survival of Singapore without a hinterland as a Global City, ASEAN and regionalism, the causes of small states in the context of the Cold War and superpower rivalry, the non-aligned movement, the Vietnam and Cambodian conflicts, the post-cold war era, etc.

He was concerned for national unity in the face of ethnic diversity and potential divisiveness in light of Singapore's experience with race riots, its separation from Malaysia, and its survival as a city state in a backdrop of multi cultures, languages and religions. These challenges preoccupied his thoughts and dominated his obsessions as the years wore on, even after his retirement. He looked at many parallel situations such as the Sri Lankan ethnic and the Palestinian conflicts and tried to draw some lessons.

The Eclectic

Rajaratnam's interest in knowledge was eclectic. You sense it in the topics he chose to write about (as listed in this *Bibliography*) and the wide-ranging subject coverage of his book collection. With an insatiable appetite for books, he consumed five titles a week at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), where he was Distinguished Senior Fellow from 1988 to 1997. This was on top of reading his daily papers, journals and magazines, seeing visitors and writing. He was also one of the two editors-in-chief of *Trends* (opinion pieces published in the *Straits Times*, *Business Times* and later the *Sunday Times*). He had his own column called *The Singapore Sting*.

In a 1985 interview, he revealed that in reading widely he availed himself of many, even opposing, viewpoints. And he did not subscribe to any one theory, view or opinion. Rather, he would take his own position, *sans* theory, after deep consideration of every notable writings and thoughts of the sages and thinkers.

At ISEAS, serving his voracious need for books was a tremendous challenge, especially when the Internet and online library catalogues were then not as widely available. He would mention remote titles that one barely heard of. For one of his requests, we located the book at the Ohio University Libraries (OU) at Athens, Ohio, USA. Fortuitously, a Singaporean librarian friend Ms Quah Swee Lan working there was travelling home the following day, and the OU librarian Mr Kent Mulliner promptly handed the book to her to hand carry to Singapore. This happened on two more occasions!

The Optimist

Rajaratnam had many remarkable attributes. One of the most enduring was his unbridled faith in the indomitable human spirit and life itself. Undoubtedly an incurable optimist, in preparing his speech for his 80th birthday party in 1995 hosted by his close cousin Dr V.K. Pillay, he doodled, "I have been ageing in a creative fashion since my birth in Sri Lanka on Feb 25, 1915." He declared he wanted to live till 100 years old. Drafting the speech, he wrote, "Once I have successfully completed my 100th birthday, I start my life all over again by preparing to be born again."

His idea of 'rebirth' seemed anomalous to his earlier statement that he was an atheist; perhaps he had shifted his belief somewhat when he

qualified that "Later on, through the influence of two uncles, I became interested in Hinduism and theosophy." And thus it was fitting that he was accorded Hindu rites on his journey to 'reincarnation' on 25 February 2006, on what would have been his 91st year on this "planet earth".

The Universal Gentleman

In 1988, the year I joined ISEAS, when I was first informed that he would spend time at ISEAS, and that his office would be located in the Library, just across the main collection from my room, I had grave reservations!

Two negative perceptions that I formed were later proved to be unfounded. First was that his wife Piroska Feher who was said to be a perfectionist, expected high standards of decorum. But relatives and friends portrayed her as a humane, kind, generous and considerate private person. She, from all accounts, was said to be a person of integrity and intellect, clear-headed and objective — indeed a compatible match of the man she married. It was my loss not to have been acquainted with her as she died soon after in 1989.

Second, the Rajaratnam that I knew of then was only through his speeches and writings. That impression was of a man with an incisive, fiery and confrontational style, easily demolishing his opponents! This was the man I had to serve on a daily basis, and he would sit right opposite my office! In retrospect, it is tempting to wonder if the then ISEAS Director did share these disturbing thoughts, and was it why he had decided to locate Rajaratnam's office in the Library, across the road from the rest of the Institute?

Having psyched myself for what I thought would be a highly tense and difficult time, I was pleasantly surprised to encounter a mild-mannered and charming person. Indeed, Rajaratnam permeated a chemistry of humble friendliness, caring and egalitarian spirit amongst everyone. A true gentleman, soft-spoken with a winsome smile, one could not but find him endearing.

He had time for you. He made you feel comfortable and went out of his way to help you if you had a problem. He paid for an operation of his driver, whom he visited in hospital with his wife. He went to the wedding of one of our librarians. He invited us to his 80th birthday celebration. And more, just in case one thought he was a mere intellectual lost in his own world, he made a disarming remark when I passed by

him one day, he said, "You have lost weight!" Slightly embarrassed, but at the same time elated, I replied, "Oh, thank you, you noticed!" He nodded enthusiastically.

He was a forgiving and compassionate man, able to transcend personal animosities and differences in views without rancour. At his 80th birthday dinner, the then Senior Minister Mr Lee Kuan Yew paid tribute to this unique characteristic, noting the presence at the dinner of his past political opponents.

Take Mr David Marshall, first Chief Minister of Singapore (1955–56), and a fierce critic of Rajaratnam's political party. It was Rajaratnam who persuaded Lee Kuan Yew to appoint him as ambassador to France where Marshall excelled for fifteen years. Marshall and Rajaratnam went back a long way. When Rajaratnam could not get a job with the *Straits Times* upon his return to Singapore after the Second World War because he was an unrepentant and active anti-colonialist while in the United Kingdom, Marshall introduced him to Aw Boon Haw, the 'Tiger Balm King', owner and publisher of the *Tiger Standard/Singapore Standard*. He was appointed associate editor, from which position he used to write hard-hitting articles on the evils of colonialism. Lee Kuan Yew, looking for a platform to leverage his legal defence of the Postmen's Union was introduced to him by Dr Goh Keng Swee. Call it fate, call it destiny, but the three of them went on with others to found the PAP and independent Singapore. This is all well documented, and has been revisited in the eulogies, obituaries and tributes upon his passing.

As ISEAS Distinguished Senior Fellow

Rajaratnam came to ISEAS to write a book on the fusion of cultures, as he saw it in the multi-racial context of Singapore. We acquired a lot of books for him — the theories, philosophies, principles and case studies of large and small countries.

But he never seriously started to write for he was distracted by an endless stream of visitors, many of whom were scholars, students, journalists, diplomats and professionals — all seeking to benefit from his wisdom; the Southeast Asianist Michael Leifer was one of them. Rajaratnam never said no to anyone, always courteous in his responses and generous with his time. The then ISEAS Director knew that he was too nice to say no, and wanted him to focus on his book. In exasperation one day he asked me to help encourage him "to stop reading and start

writing!" The Director would also try to manage and organize his time, but to no avail. When Koichi Sato, a Japanese scholar, asked for an interview, he was given one hour, but it lasted three hours! Historian Mary Turnbull's interview went on from 11.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. with no lunch break! Rajaratnam did not take lunch, and Dr Turnbull was weak in the knees by the time she came out — I had to give her some biscuits and tea!

From 1990 to 1993, he wrote twenty-one articles for *Trends*, and as an editor-in-chief, helped to select and edit incoming articles. Also, he was in big demand to officiate at functions and to give speeches. There was no time to write what would have been his definitive book — *The Fusion of Cultures* — which would have synthesized and encapsulated all his thoughts and unshakable belief in multiculturalism, multilingualism and a multireligious society. Even then, more than most politicians, he committed his thoughts, convictions and opinions in many articles and speeches. He wrote and gave more than 500 speeches on a wide range of topics between 1953 and 1994, in a span of over four decades. An excellent selection of his political speeches and writings from 1959 to 1984 can be found in *The Prophetic and the Political, Selected Speeches & Writings of S. Rajaratnam*, edited by Chan Heng Chee and Obaid ul Haq. His views on leadership and his compatriots are supplemented in *Leaders of Singapore*, published and edited by Melanie Chew.

This comprehensive bibliography of his writings, speeches and works on him by D. Gandhimathy and Linda Yip is indicative of the need for Rajaratnam's thoughts on an enormous corpus of knowledge captured in his speeches and articles to be published not only to honour this 'Universal Gentleman', but also to share his timeless pieces with the younger generation of Singaporeans who missed living during Rajaratnam's greatest hours.

Ch'ng Kim See
Head, ISEAS Library
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
Singapore

May 2007

Biographical Outline

Sinnathamby Rajaratnam

Personal

- 1915 Born in Jaffna, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and raised in Seremban, Malaysia
- 1937 Enrolled for degree course in Law at King's College, University of London
- During the Second World War, he became a journalist in London and joined the Fabian Society and the Marxist Left Book Club where he met his wife
- 1941 Married Piroska Feher (deceased 1989)
- 2006 Died on 22 February

Career

- 1948-50 Journalist, *Malayan Tribune*
- 1950-54 Associate Editor, *Singapore Standard*
- 1954 Started his own weekly *The Raayat*
- 1955-59 Leader Writer, *The Straits Times*
- 1959-88 Member of Parliament for Kampong Glam
- 1959-65 Minister for Culture
- 1963-65 Member of the Malaysian Federal Parliament
- 1965-80 Minister for Foreign Affairs
- 1968-71 Minister for Labour (Second portfolio)
- 1980-85 Second Deputy Prime Minister (Foreign Affairs)
- 1985-88 Senior Minister (Prime Minister's Office)
- 1988-97 Distinguished Senior Fellow, ISEAS (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore)

Office

- 1950-54 Secretary, Malayan Indian Congress
1954 Founding Member, People's Action Party
1954 Founding Member and President, Singapore Union of Journalists
1955 Member, Malayanisation Commission
1956 Member, Minimum Standards of Livelihood Committee
1969-97 Member, Presidential Council for Minority Rights
Member, Staff Side Panel, Civil Service Arbitration Agreement
Member, Further Education Committee of the Singapore Council of Adult Education
1990-97 Editor-in-Chief, *Trends* (a monthly publication of ISEAS)

Awards

- 1990 Order of Temasek (First Class), Singapore
1990 Distinguished Service Medal (People's Action Party)
1997 ASEAN Heads of Government Citation Award

Hobbies

- Reading and Photography (Honorary Life Member, Photographic Society of Singapore)

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