The first Americans actually to live in the kingdom for extended periods of time were missionaries from the Christian and Missionary Alliance who arrived in 1923. Their primary concern was evangelization, but they had relatively little success until the 1970s. In the colonial years they often objected to the hostile attitude they encountered from the ruling French officials. They, like other American observers did, nevertheless feel that the French had brought important improvements to colonial society, and few of them thought that independence should be considered.


Taken together, these two books constitute a general history of the United States-Cambodian relationship from 1870 to 2000. They were recently awarded the Robert H. Ferrell Book Prize for 2005 from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations.

The United States-Cambodian relationship has been studied quite intensively during the period of the war in Vietnam. This study gives considerable attention to those years as well, but it goes well beyond that. In fact, together these books constitute the first comprehensive history of the relationship. They begin with the first American contacts with Cambodia in the late nineteenth century and conclude in 2000.

The first Americans to have contact with Cambodia arrived shortly after a French expedition “rediscovered” the Angkor ruins in the 1860s. They traveled by elephant, boat, and bullock cart to reach the fabulous and fabled temples, once home to the mighty Khmer Kingdom. All who encountered Angkor were moved by its grandeur. But given nineteenth- and early twentieth-century perceptions of colonial peoples as lazy and incapable - perceptions that were well nigh universal among white Westerners of that age - there was considerable debate about who had built the temples. Almost all of the early American visitors expressed serious doubts that anyone related to the current population could have built them. Assyrians, Persians, Indians, and even Greeks were suggested as the actual builders. The United States was uncomfortable with Sihanouk’s increasing resistance to French rule, but in 1953 and 1954 Sihanouk succeeded in wresting genuine independence from France, and the United States upgraded its representation in Phnom Penh to the ambassadorial level. Subsequently the Americans extended significant military aid to Cambodia, but they also became increasingly uncomfortable with Sihanouk’s neutral, nonaligned posture. By the late 1950s it became official American policy under certain circumstances to assist opposition forces in the country, and the United States was unquestionably connected to the Dap Chhuon plot in 1958-59.
After Sihanouk quickly crushed Dap Chhuon and proudly displayed clear evidence of South Vietnamese involvement in the rebellion, the United States revised its attitude and concluded that there really was no alternative to Sihanouk. Indeed, American policy could sometimes be surprising flexible despite the harsh Cold War rhetoric. Nevertheless, tensions remained, and in November 1963—shortly after the assassinations of Ngo Dinh Diem in Vietnam and John F. Kennedy in Dallas—Sihanouk denounced the United States and stopped accepting American aid. In May 1965, after a particularly lethal cross-border air raid on a Cambodian village, he broke diplomatic relations.

The deterioration in relations was due in good part to the war in neighboring Vietnam, a war that resulted in numerous attacks on Cambodian border villages, along with clandestine American and South Vietnamese incursions into Cambodia. These incidents only increased during the four years of no diplomatic relations. But in January 1968 efforts were made to improve the relationship, and Chester Bowles traveled to Phnom Penh. The discussions were productive, but diplomatic relations were not restored until Richard Nixon became president in 1969.

Nixon made the necessary concession to restore the relationship (namely a declaration respecting Cambodia’s borders). But he also initiated the secret bombing of Cambodia—bombing that administration officials contended Sihanouk privately approved. The book argues such approval is not at all clear. Sihanouk was willing to accept “hot pursuit” into unpopulated areas of Cambodia (he deeply resented Viet Cong and North Vietnamese occupation of parts of his country), but the bombing was not related to “hot pursuit.”

In any event, early in 1970 Lon Nol and Sirik Matak removed Sihanouk from office in a “constitutional coup.” To what degree the United States was involved in this operation remains murky. Most scholars do not think there was high-level involvement, but at the same time it seems likely that military intelligence officials based in Vietnam had at least foreknowledge of the coup and perhaps more than that. The book argues that, at the very least, some of Sihanouk’s actions provided an added rationale to those who wanted him removed, particularly American military officials in Vietnam. In any event, the Nixon administration was not sad to see Sihanouk removed, and shortly thereafter Nixon sent American and South Vietnamese troops into Cambodia. This resulted in outraged protests at home, including those at Kent State and Jackson State universities, where students were killed. American troops withdrew, but Nixon and Henry Kissinger threw their full weight behind the Lon Nol government, and assisted his military forces with air power.

The book argues that the main tragedy of American policy in the years from 1970 to 1975 was the unwillingness of the administration to talk with Sihanouk. Whether such a negotiation might have prevented the horrors of Khmer Rouge rule is not certain, but it is clear that Sihanouk desperately wanted to negotiate with the Americans, and the American ambassador in Phnom Penh, John Gunther Dean, kept urging his government to engage the prince. As it was, the United States agreed only in 1975, by which time it was much too late to accomplish anything.

In 1975 the Khmer Rouge took over Cambodia and turned the nation into one large slave labor camp. In the end, an estimated 2.2 million people died (out of a population of not much more than seven million). The United States was of course not at all supportive of the Khmer Rouge regime, but there was an inchoate sense that perhaps the regime served an American purpose: containing Vietnam, with which the United States was not on good terms.

Following Vietnam’s invasion of Cambodia late in 1978, which drove the Khmer Rouge out of most of Cambodia, what had been implicit in the American approach to Cambodia now became explicit (if highly secret): The United States encouraged Thailand and China to resuscitate the Khmer Rouge so that it could oppose the Vietnamese-dominated new government, the People’s Republic of Kampuchea (PRK). For the next decade, the United States secretly supported the non-Communist resistance movements that sprang up and encouraged them to join with the Khmer Rouge in the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea. Eventually this policy came under attack in the United States because it appeared, and was to an extent true, that the United States was supporting the murderous Khmer Rouge. The George H. W. Bush administration responded with a partial change in policy, making it clear that its first priority was to prevent the Khmer Rouge from returning to power.

The Bush administration then began to work with the other permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, as well as with Indonesia and others, to help craft a permanent settlement. This resulted, finally, in a democratic election in 1993 that discredited the Khmer Rouge, who had refused to participate. The United States then extended diplomatic recognition to the new government, headed by Norodom Ranarriddh and Hun Sen, the latter having headed the PRK. For the rest of the 1990s the United States was generally supportive of the Cambodian government and optimistic about its future.

Still, since Hun Sen has emerged as the most powerful person in the government, some in the United States have been waging a campaign to unseat him. The strongest opposition in recent years has come from the office of Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY), who has managed to limit American economic assistance to nongovernment groups working in Cambodia. Only in very limited ways can American funds go directly to the Cambodia government. McConnell has also been opposing American funding of a tribunal to try the Khmer Rouge officials.

- Kenton Clymer
Katrina and the Displaced Lao, Khmer, and Vietnamese of New Orleans

Over the weeks of September 9-18, 2005, the Elgin and Rockford Lao communities in Illinois came together to assemble food and necessities to deliver to Louisiana where a group of 150 Lao and Cambodian evacuees from Hurricane Katrina were gathered, living at the temple in Broussard, LA west of Baton Rouge. During the weekend of September 16-18, three Lao-American NIU grads and one of their friends and I drove down in two vans to deliver 80 bags (2 tons) of glutinous rice, a variety of dried and canned foodstuffs, and other essentials to the temple that serves as shelter. There we found entire families making a temporary home on queen-sized mattresses donated by local churches and residents. A Red Cross worker, who found them by chance after the first week following Katrina, referred to them as “the forgotten” because neither the Red Cross nor FEMA had come to their aid until she discovered them. By the time of our delivery, a team of doctors and nurses had come in to treat rashes on the skin of children who had been exposed to the flood waters and elders who had diabetes, high blood pressure and other medical problems, some of which required hospitalization. One elderly male had to have his foot amputated because of an infection.

Many of the evacuees are from the “bottom of the bowl” at the lowest point in New Orleans, and made their living as shrimpers. With their boats destroyed and not having the funds to insure their shrimp boats, they are not at all certain where the next step will be. One had just paid off his $160,000 loan. They were clearly in a state of post-traumatic stress. The evacuees had their lives shattered 30 years ago when they fled Indochina for extended stays in refugee camps and eventual resettlement in the U.S. Many had moved from job to job before coming to Louisiana to work as welders, shrimpers, or menial laborers. The tombstones placed in the wall surrounding the temple record the names of those who, in general, did not live long once they settled in the area. A life that was hard has been made harder once again by Katrina. Putting lives together once more will take a long time and much assistance.

For those who would like to contribute to the relief effort, you can send a check directly to the temple at the address below. Make your check payable to Wat Thammarattanaram. In the memo write “Evacuees of Hurricane Katrina.” The temple has established an account at a local bank for the evacuees.

Wat Thammarattanaram
7913 Champa Avenue
Broussard, Louisiana 70518
Tel.: (337) 364-3403
Donations received will directly benefit the Lao, Cambodian and Vietnamese evacuees taking refuge there.

- John Hartmann

New Web Course on East Timor

- New Web Course by Prof. Andrea K. Molnar, Anthropology

East Timor: An Introduction to the History, Politics and Culture of Southeast Asia’s Youngest Nation (www.seasite.niu.edu/easttimor/)

NIU Cambodia/USA Scholarship

Cambodia is a country emerging from thirty years of revolution, war, and devastation. There are reasons to believe that the years of poverty and hopelessness might be receding and stability and an improved standard of living might be possible after the “killing fields.” These reasons include the clearing of land mines, the rebuilding of infrastructure, and economic growth. Perhaps one of the most hopeful signs is that a new generation is graduating from high school and college. If given more educational opportunities in Cambodia and abroad, Cambodia can replace the generation of educated people lost in war.

Since 1997, six Cambodians have received graduate degrees from Northern Illinois University. It is our goal to raise the funds necessary to bring additional students to NIU for advanced studies. The student will be chosen from those screened each year by the American Embassy in the competition for Fulbright fellowships. Each year perhaps a dozen students are selected through a very competitive process, but only about half can usually be funded to attend American universities through this program. A committee at the NIU Center for Southeast Asian Studies will select the recipient of this new Cambodia/USA Scholarship from the list of Fulbright alternatives, matching the student’s interests and background with available programs at NIU. The costs for this new program are minimal because the NIU Graduate School has agreed to provide a tuition waiver to the student. However, funds will be needed for health insurance, transportation costs, and living expenses.

If you are interested in assisting with this new program, please send your tax-deductible contribution to:
Northern Illinois University Foundation
Attn: Jon Salvani
Division of University Advancement and Development
Altgeld Hall
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

Please be sure to note in the memo line that your contribution is for the “Cambodia/USA Scholarship Fund.” You may also use the form found on page 11 of this newsletter.
New Faculty and Staff

Welcome to James Ockey who joins the Center and the Department of Political Science beginning Spring semester 2006 from Canterbury University in New Zealand. He is accompanied by his spouse Naimah Talib (Ph.D.), who will teach courses in history and political science, and their daughter, Aminah. He obtained his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Cornell University, Department of Government (1992). His dissertation dealt with the ways in which different groups in Thailand had begun to support the parliamentary form of government. One of his recent publications is Making Democracy: Leadership, Class, Gender and Political Participation in Thailand. His current research concerns the history of popular participation in Thailand, including the political integration in the southernmost provinces.

Liz Poppins Denius is the part-time Assistant Editor in the Center’s Publications Program during academic year 2005-06. During this year’s analysis and renovation of the program, Liz has been providing invaluable assistance in a variety of ways: getting the publications back on schedule; revamping the business operations; updating inventory of books and journals; and coordinating book reviews with Crossroad’s new book review editor, John Marston. Liz holds a B.S. in Journalism from the University of Illinois/Urbana and has been a professional writer, editor, and copy editor since 1977. Liz has stepped into the breach to assist the Publications program in the past. In summer 2004 she updated the index for the second edition of Clark Neher’s textbook, Southeast Asia: Crossroads of the World. This past summer of 2005, Liz took on the challenging task of learning and performing the program’s complicated business operations to such a proficient level that she was then able to train the new Publications Business graduate assistant. We are extremely glad to have Liz on board to help the Publications program in its transition to a more efficient and professional publishing arm of the Center.

Faculty News

Judy Ledgerwood (Anthropology) is serving as Chair of the Department of Anthropology. She published a review of Justin Corfield and Laura Summers’ Historical Dictionary of Cambodia, for the Journal of Asian Studies 2004, 63(3): 842-843. She is involved in a number of writing projects, including co-editing a volume in honor of David Chandler, acclaimed Southeast Asia historian and an essay on current Buddhist practice in rural Cambodia in honor of May Ehibara (who passed away in 2005). It will be presented at the conference, Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Moral Order in Cambodia, in Sweden.

The Henry Luce Foundation has awarded a grant of $115,000 over three years to NIU in support of the Cambodia Cultural Heritage Project, directed by Judy Ledgerwood and Ann Wright-Parsons (director of the NIU Anthropology Museum). NIU will collaborate with the Cambodian American Heritage Museum and the Killing Fields Memorial in Chicago to produce several new museum exhibits and a collection of oral histories from survivors of the killing fields who now live in Illinois. Under the direction of Ledgerwood, NIU graduate students will be enlisted to work with museum volunteers on collecting the stories of survivors of the killing fields. Also as part of the project, Wright-Parsons and a representative from the Cambodian American Heritage Museum will travel to Cambodia to purchase artifacts that will bolster the collections of both institutions.


Catherine Raymond (Art History/Center for Burma Studies) and Alan Potkin (CSEAS Associate) traveled to Vientiane, Laos, in August to assist in launching a one-month training course for the restoration of the mural paintings at Sisaket temple in central Vientiane, the only historical wall paintings remaining in Vientiane. The training involved twelve Laotian officials and was financed by the U.S. State Department’s Ambassador’s Fund.

Susan Russell (Anthropology) is spearheading the Southern Philippines Conflict Resolution Projects. The Center for Southeast Asian Studies and International Training Office conducted a second year (2004-05) of the ACCESS Philippines program of the Youth Exchange Division, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State. Funded by a grant of $200,000 per year for a period of three years, the ACCESS Philippines project is designed to recruit and train Muslim, Christian and indigenous Lumad youth ages 15-17 years from Mindanao, Basilan, Tawi Tawi and Sulu in the southern Philippines in inter-ethnic and inter-faith dialogue as well as conflict resolution. Joining Russell as project co-director is Lisa Davide-Ong (International Training Office). The country coordinators are Dr. Nagasura Madale and Dr. Noemi Medina, both of Capitols University in Cagayan de Oro City in Mindanao. A diverse group of 26 youth and 7 adults attended a one-month institute at Northern Illinois University from April 3 to May 6, 2005. In addition to a wide variety of training activities held on campus, participants interacted with representatives of the Peace Learning Center in Indianapolis and the Inter-Faith Youth Core of Chicago. They also spent time with students from various high schools in the nearby region and visited different religious places of worship. Student and adult leaders also stayed with host families in DeKalb County during the last two weeks of their stay. A follow-on program was held from July 28 to August 3 in Davao City, Mindanao, where participants from both the Year 1 and Year 2 ACCESS programs presented their various action plans and peace-related activities to program staff and a range of experts from civil society, local government and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines peace negotiating team with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. Participating partners in the project include the International Visitor Program - Philippines (IVP-Phils) Alumni Foundation, Inc., and the U.S. Embassy in Manila. The program has been funded for a third year.
Russell and Davide-Ong have also been awarded a new, second grant focusing on Mindanao by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State. This second project concerns majority-minority conflict resolution in Mindanao, and is being conducted in collaboration with Eric Jones (History), the International Visitors Program-Philippines (IVP-Philis) Alumni Foundation, Inc., the Caucus on Muslim Mindanao Affairs, and the U.S. Embassy in Manila. The project is funded for $167,560 and is designed to build the capacities of local leaders in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao so as to strengthen the foundation of peace and development through a comparative understanding of majority and minority cultures and religions in the U.S. The project will run from August 2005 through May 2007.

Greg Green (Curator, Donn V. Hart Southeast Asia Collection) and Drew Vandecreek (Founders Memorial Library) are co-project directors for a U.S. Department of Education (DOE) awarded grant of $780,000 over four years to Northern Illinois University Libraries, which will lead a consortium of institutions from across the world in the creation of an Internet-based digital library on Southeast Asia. The grant is being distributed through the DOE’s Technological Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information Access Program, which supports projects that use innovative electronic technologies to collect information from foreign sources. The Southeast Asia Digital Library is expected to debut online as a project in development early next year. It will give researchers, students and the general public free access to unique and rare materials related to Southeast Asian history, scholarship and contemporary culture. The virtual library’s resources will include: rare early-printed works in languages of the region and historical photographs covering a century of life in Cambodia, which is being developed by Judy Ledgerwood (Anthropology) and Kheang Un (Political Science). A video archive, known as the Living Memory Project, with interviews of former political prisoners in East Timor will also be included. Rare images of fragile palm-leaf manuscripts from northeastern Thailand will also be digitized. Palm leaves were used for centuries throughout much of Southeast Asia as a writing material to record Buddhist scriptures, laws, and literature.

Top U.S. centers on the study of Southeast Asia will provide support for the Southeast Asia Digital Library. Participating institutions include the University of California at Berkeley, UCLA, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Michigan, Cornell University, Harvard University and Yale University. International partners will include the University of San Carlos in the Philippines and Khon Kaen University and Thammasat University both of which are in Thailand.

Online digitization projects reach audiences inside and outside of academe. In its simplest terms, the digitization process requires scanning or photographing artifacts and research documents. Special software is used to put text into searchable word-processing files and to catalogue materials, which are then downloaded into databases on the Website.


Danny Unger (Political Science) is on sabbatical doing research in Thailand (and possibly Cambodia) during the 2005-2006 academic year. He is teaching Philosophy of Social Sciences in Bangkok at the National Institute of Development Administration (involving a rather lengthy and fragrant commute on a long-tailed canal taxi) and Current Political and Socio-Economic Issues of Thailand’s Development at Thammasat University. He will be living opposite Thammasat, on the Chao Phraya River, with a view of The Temple of Dawn and, across the river, the Royal Palace. His research is focused on political participation in Thailand, particularly among “marginalized” (poor, ethnic minority, and geographically remote) populations.

Kate Wiegele (Anthropology) was invited as one of five speakers to a one-day conference in Manila, Philippines sponsored by the Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC) at Ateneo de Manila University on September 16. Kate gave two presentations at the conference which had the overall theme of “Pentecostalism and Charismatic Christianity in the Philippines.” She was also invited to have her book republished in the Philippines by Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Ann Wright-Parsons (Anthropology) has just received word that the Anthropology Museum was awarded a major Illinois Humanities Council grant (total funding is $9,800) to install an exhibit titled “Islam in Southeast Asia” for 2006. Dr. Nagasura Madale is the co-planner of the exhibit.

Robert Zerwekh (Computer Science) and George Henry (Computer Science) presented a paper entitled “Language Learning Software with Microsoft .NET” at the CALICO 2005 Annual Symposium held May 17-21, 2005 at Michigan State University.

New Book
The Ninth International Conference on Thai Studies was held at NIU on April 3 - 6, 2005 and was attended by over 300 scholars from around the world. The conference was organized around a broad definition of Thai studies with 185 papers submitted for the event. Kasit Piromya, the Thai ambassador to the United States and Darryl Johnson, former U.S. ambassador to Thailand were among the attendees. The conference also drew nearly two dozen NIU alumni who hold scholarly posts in Thai studies here and abroad. Organizations providing funding included the Rockefeller Foundation, Toyota Foundation, The Asia Foundation, the U.S. Department of Education, the Association for Asian Studies at the University of Michigan, the University of Wisconsin at Madison and the Royal Thai Consulate General in Chicago. (The Tenth International Conference will be held at Thammasat University, Thailand, in 2008.)

The First International Conference on Lao Studies took place at NIU on May 19-21, 2005. Over 350 people registered for the meeting: 80% were from the U.S.; 20% were international scholars. Of the latter, half were from Laos itself, including Mrs. Douangdeuane Bouvyavong who has become the sixteenth recipient overall and the first Laotian recipient of the Fukuko Asian Culture Prize for her artistry in weaving and textiles. The Laotians' participation was funded by grants from the Henry Luce Foundation, the Asia Foundation, the U.S. Embassy in Vientiane, and the United Laotian Community Development, Inc. Over 100 scholars gave presentations. The first evening was devoted to a film festival. The evening of the second day, conference participants were bussed to the nearby town of Elgin where they enjoyed a lavish buffet of authentic Lao dishes prepared for a crowd of over 600 by the Lao-American community who live there. A culture show featuring a traditional performance of khaen (reed mouth organ) and mohlam (courtship songs) closed the evening. The next conference will be hosted by Arizona State University in 2007. Vetted papers from the conference will be published. A CD of conference presentations is available upon request.

The International Ramayana Conference was held at NIU on June 4-5, 2005. This was a joint project of the NIU-CSEA and the Illinois-based community organization, International Ramayana Institute of North America. Keynote speakers included Sally Sutherland Goldman, University of California, Berkeley, who spoke on “The Not So-Perfect Wife: Valmiki’s Construction of Gender” and Kathy Foley, University of California, Santa Clara who spoke on “Churning the Sea of Milk and Masking the Monkey: Permutations of the Ramayana in Southeast Asia and Indian Repercussions.” Other highlights included performances by dancers from the Thai Cultural and Fine Arts Institute, the Anila Sinha Foundation, and the Consulate of Indonesia – Chicago. The conference drew 85 scholars, students and teachers from the United States, India, Thailand, Trinidad, and Indonesia.

Religious Resurgence and New Religious Movements was the topic examined in a conference on which NIU and Ohio University collaborated and which was held on the OU campus March 4-5, 2005. Friday’s session focused on new religious movements and sects, power and leadership, nationalism, identity and conflict. Saturday’s sessions concerned social development and civil society, media and communication. Susan Russell, representing NIU, observed “that the intertwined and ever-shifting relationships between religious movements, ethnic conflicts, the state and civil society in the very culturally diverse countries of this region require interdisciplinary perspectives and international view that area studies programs in the United States are uniquely qualified to provide.”

The Council on Thai Studies (COTS) held its annual conference at NIU on November 4-5, 2005. Kevin Hewison, professor of Asian Studies at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, was the keynote speaker. Professor Hewison spoke on “The Exploitation of Migrant Workers in Thailand.” COTS is an informal organization of scholars interested in all aspects of Thai studies. COTS provides scholars with a venue for reporting preliminary findings, opportunities to receive prepublication feedback and a forum to discuss field and archive challenges.

In 2006 and 2007, the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison will host COTS. For more information, please contact Larry Ashmun, 2006 COTS chair at lashmun@library.wisc.edu.

Updates
Faculty Development Seminar
NIU-CSEA hosted a one-day faculty development seminar in November entitled “Building Bridges to Asia: Integrating Southeast Asia into Your Curriculum.” Eleven faculty from NIU and other universities and colleges attended the seminar which was co-sponsored with NIU’s Faculty Development & Instructional Design Center and the U.S. Department of Education Title VI National Resource grant program.

The seminar was designed to offer ideas and practical suggestions on how to integrate Southeast Asia into new or existing courses. The seminar featured a presentation by Clark D. Neher (Political Science, emeritus) on “Geopolitical and Current Issues in Southeast Asia.” Another session also focused on the unique Southeast Asian language and culture resources available on the web through SEAsite and through the Center’s website.

During spring and summer, CSEA organized faculty development seminars and workshops on bringing Southeast Asia into the community college curriculum at two local community colleges, Illinois Valley Community College and Joliet Junior College. Both colleges are key feeder schools for undergraduates transferring to NIU. Faculty, staff, and graduate students affiliated with the CSEA provided resources and they will provide continuing assistance throughout the year.

Advisors Workshop
In an effort to assist on-campus advisors in advising about the various international options available at NIU, the CSEA, International Programs Division and the
Foreign Languages and Literatures Department hosted a one-day workshop emphasizing the importance of early advisement of students concerning international study opportunities. Eleven advisors from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the College of Business, the College of Health and Human Sciences, and the College of Education attended the workshop. The workshop included presentations by Susan Russell, Deborah Pierce (International Programs), and Anne Birberick (Foreign Languages and Literatures). Another highlight was a student panel including three students affiliated with CSEAS: Jennifer Gelman, graduate student in the College of Law (Burma); Jennifer Weidman, graduate student in anthropology (Thailand); and Joseph Perkovich, undergraduate student in anthropology (Indonesia).

MIIE Conference Presentations
CSEAS faculty and staff gave presentations at the 12th annual conference of the Midwest Institute for International/Intercultural Education (MIIE) in April 2005. MIIE is a self-funded consortium of two-year colleges located in the Midwest.

Its primary objective is to support curriculum and professional development by organizing curriculum workshops, fall and spring conferences, overseas projects for faculty and students, assistance with grant development, provide faculty mentoring and professional networking. Community college faculty members from throughout the Midwest attended the workshops which were focused on internationalizing the community college curriculum.

GlobalFest 2005
2005 marked the third year CSEAS has participated in GlobalFest. GlobalFest is a statewide celebration of the languages and cultures of the inhabitants of Illinois, geared towards students studying foreign languages and international affairs at the junior high and high school levels. GlobalFest provides opportunities to experience culture and languages from around the world. Francisca Ivone, visiting Fulbright Teaching Assistant in Indonesian at NIU, provided beginning Indonesian immersion classes throughout the two-day Fest. Over 1000 students and teachers from throughout Illinois participated. GlobalFest is sponsored by the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois International High School Initiative, Rotary International, and the Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

Southeast Asia Tour
NIU (CSEAS and LAS External Programs) sponsored an educational tour of Vietnam and Cambodia in August 2005. The faculty leader was Presidential Teaching Professor, Clark D. Neher (Political Science, emeritus) and highlights of the tour included Vietnam’s central highlands (DaNang, China Beach, Nha Trang) and Angkor Wat. There were 25 participants.

Asia Foundation Study Tour
The Center for Southeast Asian Studies hosted a delegation of eight emerging religious and lay leaders from Thailand and the Philippines in November 2005. Delegation members included a journalist, student activist and university professor from Thailand as well as a Catholic priest, community health worker, Chamber of Commerce director and community organizer from the Philippines. Tours included visits to a local mosque, Hope Haven Homeless Shelter, the NIU Center for Southeast Asian Studies, the NIU Center for Burma Studies, the NIU Anthropology Museum, and the Donn V. Hart Southeast Asia Collection at Founders Memorial Library. The visit from the delegation was part of the Observation Study Tour on Religion and Society in the United States arranged by the Asia Foundation, a non-profit, non-governmental organization committed to the development of a peaceful, prosperous and open Asia-Pacific region. The Asia Foundation has arranged a series of exchanges for selected Southeast Asians and Americans to examine the role of religion in society.

NIU graduate student, Dom Pelletier demonstrates Indonesian shadow puppets at Jefferson Elementary School.

In Our Neighborhood
NIU students, staff and faculty visited Jefferson Elementary School in DeKalb for a day of puppets, stories, music, language and food from South and Southeast Asia. It was part of a program honoring Jefferson Elementary School students who raised funds for the Red Cross to help children affected by the December 2004 tsunami in Asia. NIU graduate students participating were Dom Pelletier (Anthropology), Jennifer Gelman (Law), Chia-Pao Hsu (Music Education) and visiting FLTIA in Indonesian, Francisca Ivone. Professor Judy Ledgerwood (Anthropology) read Southeast Asian children’s books. Outreach Coordinator Julie Lamb also brought toys, maps and books from Southeast Asia to show to the children. The 450 students and 20 teachers in the school raised over $700 for tsunami relief through their Read for Relief Program.

The Genocide and Human Rights Summer Institute for Middle School and High School Educators will be held at NIU and Washington, DC June 19-30, 2006. This institute introduces teachers to the intertwined issues of genocide and human rights. Although the terms were not coined until the 20th century, there is a long-standing historical and philosophical heritage to both. Explore the historical and political dimensions of genocide and human rights, investigating the causes, courses, and consequences involving Armenia, the Holocaust, Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, Cambodia, Indonesia, Iraq, Bosnia, Rwanda, Sudan, and others. Significant attention will be devoted to the complex methodological issues concerning the integration of these studies into the K-12 curriculum, as recently required by the Illinois legislature. For more information, see www.niu.edu/clasep/genocide/index.html
Speaker Series

FALL 2004

September 10
Noel Morada, Political Science, University of the Philippines, Diliman: “Philippine-U.S. Relations and the Post-Election Political Environment”

September 17

September 24
Abdul Rahman Omar, Visiting Research Scholar, Malaysia: “ABIM or the Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement”

October 1

October 8
Muddathir Abdel-Rahim, Political Science and Islamic Studies, The International Islamic University, Malaysia: “The Islamic Roots of Malaysian Pluralism”

October 15
Chotlitha Satyawadhana, Rangsit University, Thailand: “Mahachon and Alternative New Political Parties”

October 22
David Steinberg, Asian Studies, Georgetown University: “Burma/Myanmar and the Dilemmas of Foreign Policy”

October 29
Eric Tagliacozzo, History, Cornell University, “Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mecca: The Economics of Hajj” (Graduate Colloquium Speaker)

November 5
Courtney Johnson, Spanish & Portuguese, University of Wisconsin-Madison, “Renewing the Future: La Independencia and (Ant)colonial Writing in the Philippines (1895-1898)”

November 12
Danilyn Rutherford, Anthropology, University of Chicago: “Why Papua Wants Freedom: Third Person Nationalism and the Media of Merdeka”

November 19
Nicolaus Harjanto, Graduate Student, Political Science, NIU: “Indonesian Presidential Elections”

SPRING 2005

February 4
Nagasura Madale, Capitol University, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines: “On the Concept of Bansya/Bansu, Mindanao Conflict and Filipino Nationhood”

February 11
Craig Etcheson, Foreign Policy Institute, Johns Hopkins University, S.A.I.S.: “The Politics of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal”

February 25
Saroja Dorairajoo, Anthropology, National University of Singapore: “I Don’t Know What MSG Means but I Know What NGO Means: Discourse of Environmentalism and the Socio-Politics of Muslims Living in Southern Thailand”

March 4
Jenn Weidman, Graduate Student, Anthropology, NIU: “Working Together? Examination Results from a Multicultural Thai Office”

March 25
Boike Rehbein, Sociology, University of Freiburg, Germany: “Configuration of Globalization in Laos and Cambodia”

April 15
William Cummings, History, University of South Florida: “Embodying Islamization: Creating an Islamic Social Order in Early Modern Makassar”

April 22
Michael Ross, Political Science, UCLA: “Resources and Rebellion in Aceh, Indonesia” (Graduate Colloquium Speaker)

April 29
Abdul Rahman Omar, Visiting Research Scholar, Malaysia: “Tabung Haji: the Pilgrim’s Fund”

FALL 2005

September 9

September 16
Kenton Clymer, History, NIU: “American Relations with Cambodia in Historical Perspective”

September 23
Debra Mubashshir Majeed, Philosophy and Religious Studies, Beloit College: “Teaching Gender and Islam in Island Southeast Asia”

September 30
Grant Olson, Foreign Languages and Literatures, NIU and Chalermse Olson, Founder’s Library, NIU: “Cataloging Cremation Volumes at Wat Bovornives: A Cosmology of Thai Biographies”

October 7
Bacoai (Francis) Wu, China Association for International Understanding in Beijing, Associate Director of Division on Southeast Asia: “The Relationship of China and Southeast Asia”

October 21
Michael Feener, Religious Studies, University of California, Riverside: “Religious Legitimacy and Political Authority: Modern Indonesian Islamist Transformations of a Classical Sunni Paradigm”

October 28
Priwan Nanongkham, Graduate Student, Musicology/ Ethnomusicology, Kent State University, “Aesthetics in Khaen Music of Lao Culture in Northeast Thailand”

November 4
Kevin Hewison, Director, Carolina Asia Center, Asian Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: “Organized Labour Under Thaksin”

November 11
Delegates from Southeast Asia, Asia Foundation Observation Study Tour on Religion and Society in the United States: “Public Policy and Religion in Southeast Asia”
November 18
Shaun Levine, Graduate Student, Political Science, NIU: “Why Indonesia? A Look into Military Financing and the Uneven U.S. Role”

Scholarships
Foreign Language and Area Studies Scholarship (FLAS)

Pending funding, awards will be given for the 2006-07 academic year for the Foreign Language and Area Studies Scholarships (FLAS) for graduate students as part of its Title VI National Resource Center grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The Southeast Asian languages that are taught at NIU and for which FLAS awardees may enroll are Burmese, Indonesian, Khmer, Tagalog, and Thai. All applicants must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents who are accepted into a graduate program at NIU. Each award will carry a stipend of $15,000 for a nine month period, as well as payment of tuition and fees. FLAS applications are due March 1, 2006.

Clark and Arlene Neher Scholarship

The Clark and Arlene Neher Scholarship for Southeast Asian Studies provides $2,400 towards educational expenses to a graduate student in good standing with the University who is able to demonstrate a commitment to a career involving Southeast Asian studies. This award competition is open to any person regardless of national origin. This award shall also be granted without regard to citizenship, race, ethnicity, religion, age, gender, or sexual orientation. This award will be routed through the Office of Student Financial Aid and applied directly to the students’ Bursar account. Applications are due March 1, 2006.

Application forms for both scholarships are available on the Center’s website at: www.niu.edu/cseas/scholarships.shtml

In September and October 2005, selections from the vast Burmese collections of Denison University, Ohio and the Center for Burma Studies at NIU were featured at the NIU Art Museum in Chicago. The exhibit highlighted sculpture and tapestries, dating from the seventh through the nineteenth centuries, that examined the transmission, protection and sponsorship of Burmese Buddhism and the nature of collecting cultural art and artifacts in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The NIU collection was on exhibit for the first time in Chicago thanks to generous support provided by the Sally Stevens Fund for Excellence in the Arts.

Gods and Demons, Monkeys and Men:

The Anthropology Museum at Northern Illinois University featured an exhibit of about 80 performance masks from Thailand, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Malaysia. Made of wood or papier-mâché, brightly colored and sometimes beaded, the masks depict the people, animals, clowns, and demons portrayed in traditional dance dramas performed during religious rites or as entertainment. Most of the masks are owned by guest curator Kathy Foley, a professor of theatre arts at the University of California-Santa Cruz. Foley interviewed, viewed and studied performance traditions with major artists in Southeast Asia. The Anthropology Museum added its own collection of Thai masks, altar furniture, and costumes to the exhibit. The exhibit ran from April to June 2005.

This exhibit, which was housed in the newly renovated Altgeld Hall on the NIU DeKalb campus, examined the diversity and complexity of Burmese Buddhism through artworks made both for the palace and monastery environment and dating from the seventh through the nineteenth century. Catherine Raymond, Director of the Center for Burma Studies and Curator presented several different lectures which included: “Donors and Protectors,” “Treasures from the Court of Mandalay,” “Burmese Buddha Images,” and “Treasures from Manuscript to Tapestry.” The exhibit ran from October 2004 to June 2005.

UPCOMING
Islam in Southeast Asia

In late February 2006, an exhibit on Islam in Southeast Asia will open in the Anthropology Museum at NIU. Focusing on the historical as well as cultural aspects of Islam, the exhibit will examine the spread of Islam in the region, the tenets of Islam, and current Islamic practices. The ordinary activities around worship and ritual in community social life will be discussed. The exhibit will also discuss the common elements in Islam to the region as well as the unique expression in cultural practices in countries of Southeast Asia.

The Anthropology Museum at NIU is located on the first floor of the Stevens Building on the main NIU campus in DeKalb. The exhibit will run from February to August 2006 and is being funded with an Illinois Humanities Council grant. The exhibit is being designed through a joint collaboration between NIU Anthropology Museum Director Ann Wright-Parsons and Dr. Nagasura Madale from Capitol University in Cagayan de Oro City in Mindanao, Philippines.
FLAS Fellowship Recipients, 2004-2006

Sarah Belcarz, M.A. student in Anthropology (Indonesian). She would like to teach English in Indonesia.

Carolina Bodner, M.A. student in Art History (Thai). Carolina's area of study is religious artifacts and iconography of mainland Southeast Asia. She has worked alongside Professor Raymond in Vientiane, Laos, on a project to inventory and preserve Buddhist sculptures found in Sisaket. She also dabbles in the Lao language.

Mary Byker, M.A. student in Political Science (Thai). A seasoned world traveler, Mary has assisted Khon Kaen University's Globalization and Grassroots Development Program in Thailand. Her thesis focuses on the impact of free-trade agreements on the Prae Pan Weaving Co-operative located in Khon Kaen, Thailand.

Jason Connerly, M.A. student in Anthropology (Thai). Jason has spent considerable time in Southern Thailand doing research and plans to return for the completion of his research.

Michele Duffy, M.A. student in English Education (Tagalog). Michele is especially interested in the oral tradition of the Philippines, specifically the oral tradition of Balagtas. The Balagtas is a spontaneous verbal debate in rhyming poetry popularized in the colonial and post-colonial periods. She has taken two years of Tagalog at Northern Illinois and is continuing her studies.

Jennifer Gelman is a law student at NIU and a former editor of the Law Review. She studied Burmese under the tutelage of U Saw Tun. Her main interest is in refugee law and the sorrowful plight of those cast from their native lands in Southeast Asia and abroad.

Michael Hawkins, Ph.D. student in History (Tagalog). Michael has experience living in northwestern Luzon, Philippines where he began learning Tagalog and Ilokano. He is especially interested in Philippine nationalist and independence movements.

Benjamin David Lemon, Ph.D. student in History (Burmese). Benjamin's main area of interest and study is crime and criminality, specifically smuggling or "undertrading." This naturally led him to early encounters between the Dutch and Portuguese empires with the dynasties of the Arakan and Tungoo. He is proficient in Dutch and Portuguese and is studying Burmese under U Saw Tun.

Shaun Levine, M.A. student in Political Science (Indonesian). Shaun is looking for a career with the U.S. intelligence services abroad.

Thea Lim, M.A. student in Public Health (Khmer). Thea is preparing for a career in community service to Cambodians in Cambodia and the United States.

Tiffany Reed, M.A. student in Anthropology (Thai). During her undergraduate studies at Trinity College, Tiffany studied in Thailand and engaged in anthropological fieldwork. She aspires to join the U.S. Foreign Service.

Kristina Saldi, M.A. student in Political Science (Indonesian). Kristina aspires to work for an international NGO that is involved with humanitarian issues.

Suzanne Shovlin, M.A. student in History (Thai). Having already studied Indonesian both at SEASSI and in Indonesia, she wants to continue her linguistic education with Thai. Her research will have her scrutinizing both the Thai and Indonesian governments response to violence.

Susan Speigel, M.A. student in Anthropology (Khmer). Susan's country of focus is Cambodia, with an intense focus on the changing perceptions of Buddhist monks. She hopes to return to Cambodia soon.

Gregory Sweedberg, M.A. student in History (Indonesian). His research interest is colonization and the American role in Southeast Asia.

Jennifer Weidman, M.A. student in Anthropology (Thai). Jenn recently completed her master's degree with the successful defense of her thesis on the organizational hierarchy of a multinational Thai office. She is currently employed by Rotary International.

Student News

Tsunami Benefit Surpasses Goal
The Southeast Asia Club was the driving force in a Tsunami Relief Benefit held at NIU on February 27, 2005. The event featured authentic Indian and Thai cuisine, traditional dances from India, Indonesia, and Thailand, a silent auction of regional items, a museum display, tsunami information and documentary displays. More than 300 people attended and $4,747 was raised, easily surpassing the initial goal of $3,000. All proceeds and contributions were donated to Habitat for Humanity International, which is helping tsunami survivors rebuild their homes and communities.

2006 Southeast Asia Student Conference
The Southeast Asia Club of Northern Illinois University will be holding its annual Southeast Asia Student Conference on Saturday, February 25, 2006. All interested undergraduate and graduate students are invited to submit papers on any subject related to Southeast Asia. Monetary awards will be given to the best undergraduate and graduate papers submitted. Abstracts are due January 20, 2006 with final papers due January 30, 2006. Keynote speaker for the conference will be Tamara Loos, Associate Professor of History at Cornell University. Please send submissions to:

Center for Southeast Asian Studies
412 Adams Hall
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois 60115
FAX: (815)753-1776
cseas@niu.edu

All Southeast Asia Cultural Night will be held Friday, February 24, 2006 in conjunction with the conference.
# Let Us Hear From You

Keep up with friends, classmates, and events by sending us information about yourself.

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Thank you for your support.
Publications

New Publications in Spring 2006


Crossroads: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, Vol. 17, No. 2:
- "Modernity, Agency and Lam Sing: Interpreting 'Music-Culture Contacts' in Northeastern Thailand" by Pattana Kitiarsa;
- "Cerpen: How Indonesian Short Stories Represent Urban Space and Public Discourse" by Julie Shackford-Bradley;
- "Has Everything Changed in Thai Politics Under Thaksin? Political Factions Before and After 2001" by Paul Chambers;
- "House, Kampung, and Tamun: Spatial Hegemony and the Politics and Poetics of Space in Urban Malaysia" by Seng-Guan Yeoh; and
- "New Winds in Economic History? A Look at Writings on the Great Depression in Southeast Asia" by Loh Kah Seng

Publications News

2005 was a busy year for Southeast Asia Publications. In the midst of readying for publication two monographs and Crossroads Vol. 17, No. 2, the center published the second edition of Clark D. Neher’s survey of Southeast Asia, Southeast Asia: Crossroads of the World, reorganized business and inventory operations, and produced a new CD for Spoken Vietnamese for Beginners, one of the Center’s bestselling language texts.

Upcoming in 2006


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