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Letter from the Director

2006 will go down as an extraordinarily memorable year. Good news began flowing into the Center in April when Kenton Clymer (History) won a Presidential Research Professorship and John Hartmann (Foreign Languages and Literatures) a Presidential Teaching Professorship for excellence in research and teaching, respectively. Much coveted and highly competitive, these are the university’s highest awards for faculty achievement.

Causing the most collective excitement was the award we received from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) under Title VI, which will support a portion of the Center’s activities over the next four years. Anyone interested in reading the narrative of our proposal is invited to visit www.niu.edu/cseas/titlevi/. External reviewers of our grant proposal gave the university high marks, citing its “dedicated and cohesive faculty,” “exceptionally strong ties with institutions in Southeast Asia,” and “innovative language teaching.” Importantly for our graduate students, the federal grant will allow us to award nine fellowships each academic year under the USDE’s Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships Program. As with the prior grants under Title VI, teacher training is an absolute priority. Over the next four years, Julia Lamb, our well-known Outreach Coordinator, will engage secondary and post-secondary educators in developing international curricula for their students through workshops and other forums with the focus being on genocide and human rights in Southeast Asia.

This new round of Title VI funding will also enable us to continue building SEAsite, our internationally acclaimed interactive Web site that offers language and culture training programs in Burmese, Indonesian, Khmer, Lao, Tagalog, Thai, and Vietnamese. It will support the creation of new, Web-based methods for teaching and assessing proficiency in five of these languages. It will enable us to expand our interdisciplinary curriculum; to strengthen our linkages with teachers in other institutions and K-16 constituencies; to collaborate with other NRCs and with universities in Southeast Asia; to organize and host several conferences on issues in Southeast Asia; and to carry out a variety of supporting activities such as scholarly publishing and research-related faculty travel.

The center added some long-sought staff positions funded primarily through cost-sharing between USDE and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Dr. Kheang Un, new half-time Assistant Director, will focus on curricular matters, such as keeping our gateway center interdisciplinary curriculum; to strengthen our linkages with teachers in other institutions and K-16 constituencies; to collaborate with other NRCs and with universities in Southeast

Assisted by this team, Publications Manager Caroline Quinlan could look back over a banner year: two monographs (Schafer and Haines), two issues of Crossroads (17.2 and 18.1), and a festschrift book for M. Ladd Thomas. They also reorganized the inventory and streamlined the order fulfillment process. The combination of increased production and improved infrastructure were factors helping to raise our publications revenue above that of the previous year.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of my job is making new international friends. This is particularly the case with regard to our Foreign Language Teaching Assistants (FLTAs). Through the Fulbright program, we welcomed Maria Bicbic (The Philippines), Ywon Bustiono (Indonesia), and Piyathida Erebenjapol (Thailand). Their assistance in our Tagalog, Bahasa Indonesia, and Thai language classes ensures that our students are exposed to native speakers of those three languages, not to mention the cultures and personalities of three delightful and fun-loving individuals.

Several Center Associates were successful in obtaining individual grants. The ACCESS Philippines project under the direction of Professor Susan Russell continued in its third year. It is designed to recruit and train Muslim, Christian, and indigenous youth aged 15-17 years from the southern Philippines in inter-
The Mindanao Conflict: Some Recent Bangsamoro Views of the Peace Process

Susan Russell, Anthropology

Since 2003, Dr. Lina Ong, Director of International Training, and I have been directing projects in the southern Philippines—funded by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. These projects are designed to help build peace in the war-ravaged regions of Mindanao and Sulu through capacity building and empowerment of Muslim, Christian, and indigenous youth and adult leaders in the areas of inter-ethnic and inter-faith dialogue, conflict resolution, and collaborative networking.

In summer 2006, while in Mindanao and with financial support from the U.S. Department of Education’s Title VI National Resource Center award to the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at NIU, I was able to interview a range of people who have not directly participated in these projects, but who are aware of them and have a vested stake in the outcome of the ongoing peace negotiations between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP). Assisted by individuals who have participated in our program—and aided by Mindanao State University (MSU), with which NIU now has a new memorandum of exchange agreement—I talked about the peace process with a range of Moro individuals.1 Collectively, their ideas offer insights into a variety of ways that the peace process in Mindanao can be enhanced in addition to some equally interesting views of the role of the United States.

The peace talks between the MILF and the GRP are being brokered by Malaysia and a cease-fire is now in effect. An international cease-fire monitoring team has helped reduce the number of armed skirmishes in the past couple of years. Decades of war and rebellion, however, have left the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) deeply impoverished. More than 120,000 people have died since the late 1960s and millions have been displaced. Lawlessness, proliferation of firearms, and the presence of criminal elements including terrorist groups such as the Abu Sayyaf, contribute to the widespread image of Mindanao as a dangerous and unruly place.

While peace has been elusive, there are many ongoing efforts by ordinary citizens from religion, academia, and the NGO sector to help resolve one of Southeast Asia's longest-running armed separatist movements. Certainly, not all of the violence in the region can be attributed to war between the MNLF and the MILF against the GRP. Land conflicts and political rivalries also are major causes of lawless acts, and recent studies of clan conflicts note the need for more effective ways to resolve land disputes. In addition, a stronger educational system in the ARMM is desperately needed, as are stronger health care institutions and livelihood projects. Such projects are the focus of much international aid today, although it is predicted that far more development aid will be forthcoming if a peace agreement is reached. Many countries, including the United States, have a vested interest in peace and development in Mindanao—partly owing to localized and regional security concerns, but also for humanitarian reasons.

In my conversations with MNLF and MILF representatives, it was clear that they felt that ongoing informal peace talks are proceeding in an atmosphere of mutual respect with the GRP, but that the issue of ancestral domain is still the biggest stumbling block. The MILF wants to include approximately 1,000 communities with a predominantly Muslim population outside the boundaries of the ARMM in a new Bangsamoro homeland, whereas the GRP so far has agreed only to 600 or so communities and insists on following a constitutional requirement that a plebiscite of residents in such communities must first be held to determine if they wish to be included. Yet part of the understanding that brought the MILF and the GRP to the peace talks in the first place, according to Ishak Mastura, head of the ARMM Department of Trade and Industry, was that the MILF would give up its quest for independence as one outcome and the GRP would give up its insistence on following perceived constitutional guidelines. Other ideas expressed in my conversations included broadening the range of institutions (national and international, government and non-government, academic and religious) and individuals seeking to help reach more meaningful compromises and understandings on both sides. For example, the indigenous non-Muslim, non-Christian peoples of Mindanao, who are generically referred to as Lumads, are not represented in the peace talks.
Yet their support and participation in any new Bangsamoro Juridical Entity will be crucial to the overall goal of peace in the region.

Polarized viewpoints or non-flexible, so-called tried-and-true perspectives that are continually revisited throughout the history of the armed conflicts in Mindanao will not move the peace process forward. Building peace is about building relationships, being flexible and willing to listen to new, creative solutions, and acknowledging past injustices or wrongdoing. That kind of dialogue takes time and a wider range of participants. One aspect that came out in virtually all of my interviews is a passionate desire among non-governmental actors to be more directly involved in assisting both sides (MLF and the GRP) to achieve a permanent, socially just and mutually beneficial resolution to the Bangsamoro struggle.

So, what can be done? The highly educated men and women of the 28 Royal Ranao Sultanates with whom I spoke pointed out their traditional role in conflict resolution. They expressed a strong desire to be involved in the peace talks and an interest in forming a Council of Sultans, perhaps similar to the Malaysian model wherein they would work in partnership with the national government to maintain peace in their jurisdictions. The titled women, all of whom are highly educated, of the Maranao royalty expressed similar desires, noting that they also play an important role in solving local conflicts.

The MILF representatives passionately expressed their hope not only for a socially just resolution to the grievances of the Bangsamoro, but also a willingness to explore all options for a future Bangsamoro Juridical Entity, including the possibility of a federated system (wherein the Bangsamoro homeland would be the “first state,” followed by the Cordillera Autonomous Region as a “second state”), a special protectorate status such as Puerto Rico has with the U.S., or even other options. The MILF would like to reverse the current situation in which the ARMM (a peace dividend granted by the GRP to the MNLF) depends on the GRP for their budget. Instead, they would like to keep 60 to 70 percent of all revenues from a new Bangsamoro Juridical Entity and give the GRP a 30 to 40 percent share. The MILF representatives also agree with Abhoud Syed Lingga on the need for a transitional period of five to ten years before holding a referendum on political solutions in the Bangsamoro homeland in order to prepare the Moros for serious voting and discussion on the style of governance of the region. They also noted that any future Bangsamoro Juridical Entity would be a democracy, but one with a progressive view of the role of Islam. One proposal calls for a combined MILF/MNLF review of the problems of the ARMM as a governance structure, and most people I talked to acknowledged the weakness of the ARMM. These weaknesses include the fact that many aspects of governance are fully controlled by the GRP, including yearly budget allocations, finance and taxation, national security, foreign affairs, and the exploration and exploitation of natural resources within the ARMM. Hence, autonomy and the right to self-determination for the Bangsamoro remain as elusive as peace in recent history.

The final topic that arose in my interviews focused on the role of the United States. In particular, all felt that the U.S. is sympathetic to the fact that the Moro peoples have "serious legitimate grievances." They also expressed the desire for a stronger show of sincerity from the U.S. through direct State Department involvement in the peace negotiations and cease-fire monitoring — even as an observer. Most directly, they argued the need for a sustained and consistent U.S. policy toward the Mindanao problem in general and the Bangsamoro peoples in particular — especially given the history between the U.S. and the Mindanao region. Several people also suggested that the U.S. and the United Nations, as well as other countries, should consider seriously the idea of an international intervention through the human security framework based on the notion of a 'responsibility to protect' and reterritorialization involving external oversight of budgetary and human security needs. More general issues, such as a willingness to cooperate with the GRP in security operations related to terrorist actions or groups, as is happening occasionally now, were also expressed by the MILF. Finally, one knowledgeable individual expressed the need to consider the alternative of compensation for the loss of ancestral lands as opposed to demanding the return of lands once controlled.

As of now, the peace talks between the MILF and the GRP are only exploratory. Formal peace negotiations were broken off by the GRP in 2003 after the storming of the MILF-controlled Buliok complex in Maguindanao. The informal talks have focused on maintaining the cease-fire, humanitarian aid and rehabilitation, capacity building, and on ways to heal social wounds and assist conflict-affected areas. The past two years have witnessed sustained regional economic growth amid mixed expectations, and there has been increasing international and grassroots support and participation in the broader peace process. While the long-term outcome is still uncertain, these are all positive developments toward building peace and a brighter future for the many diverse peoples in the southern Philippines.

1 Abhoud Syed Lingga, Executive Director of the Institute of Bangsamoro Studies; Ambassador Datu Haji Abul Khayr Alonto, Chairman of the Bangsamoro National Unification Council and co-founder of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF); Dr. Saffrullah Dipatuan, Vice Chair, Bangsamoro Development Agency; Ishmael Disuma, member of the MILF Technical Negotiating Panel; Eid Kabalu, official spokesperson for the MILF; Jamail Kamilian, a historian and professor at MSU-Iligan; and a variety of other professors at MSU-Marawi, including Mochtar Matuan, Cosain Umpa (also Sultan of Unayan), Taha Sarip (Sultan of Pualas), Amina Domato-Sarip, bai alibi a nomi of the sultanate of Boribid, and Minang Dirampatan-Sharief.
New Faculty

Hao Phan, curator of the Donn V. Hart Southeast Asia library Collection at Northern Illinois University since October 2006, was born in South Vietnam. Prior to coming to the U.S. in 1991, he graduated from the Teachers' College of Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) with a B.A. in Vietnamese Literature. He received another undergraduate degree in American Literature (1998), and then a Master's degree in Library Science (2000) from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). After school, he worked briefly for a research company in the Silicon Valley and then returned to Vietnam to work for an advertising agency. He returned to the United States in 2003 to accept the position of Librarian for Southeast Asian Studies at UCLA before coming to NIU.

Besides library work, he enjoys creative writing and has published two collections of poems in Vietnamese. His bilingual poetry collection “Night, Fish, and Charlie Parker,” selected and translated by Linh Dinh, was released by Tupelo Press in 2006. He also co-translated a book of American poetry into Vietnamese, published by the Center for East-West Cultures and Languages, Hanoi, 2004, and co-edited a Vietnamese poetry anthology.

Faculty News

Dwight King (Political Science and Director, Center for Southeast Asian Studies) traveled to Indonesia in February and March for Democracy International, Inc. and the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID). King was one of a four-member bi-national evaluation team evaluating the Center for Local Government Innovation, a four-year project funded by AID. The overall objective of the project was to improve district level governance, which is urgently needed due to a host of decentralizing policies. The team interviewed district-level officials and leaders in Pontianak, Makassar, and Gorontalo, in addition to central government officials and project managers in Jakarta. While in Indonesia, King enjoyed a dinner organized by NIU alumni that included Ahmed Nasution, Andi Mallarangeng and Vitri, Anies Baswedan and Ferry, Nurliah Nurdin, Ryaas Rasyid, and Yolanda Panjaatan.

Judy Ledgerwood (Anthropology) continues as Chair of the Department of Anthropology. This year, work is underway on the Cambodian Cultural Heritage project funded by a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation. The project is a collaboration between the NIU Anthropology Museum and the Cambodian American Heritage Museum (CAHM) in Chicago. Ann Wright-Parsons, NIU Anthropology Museum Director, Kheang Un (Political Science and Assistant Director, Center for Southeast Asian Studies), and Mr. Ty Tim, archivist at the CAHM traveled to Cambodia and purchased works of art and ethnographic artifacts that will be displayed in two exhibits in fall 2007, one at NIU and the other at CAHM. The research component funded by the grant is also underway—during the summer of 2007 four researchers conducted life history interviews with Cambodian elders in the Chicago area. These interviews will be archived at the CAHM’s library. NIU graduate students Katie Hale and Thea Lim were among the interviewers. Ledgerwood also served as Panel Chair at the Midwest Conference of the Association for Asian Studies Meetings in October. She also presented a paper at the Chicago Humanities Festival as part of a panel on Buddhism: the Search for Internal and External Peace. Ledgerwood is also leading a cultural field school to Cambodia this summer. For more information, visit www.niu.edu/


In 2006, Susan Russell (Anthropology) received a curriculum development award from the Title VI, USDE award to the Center to fund interviews and field study on peace initiatives and indigenous forms of conflict resolution among Filipino Muslims in Mindanao. She and Tina Ong (International Training Office) also received a new award from the U.S. State Department, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (BoECA) for continuing the ACCESS Philippines project: “Bridging the Gap: Engaging a New Generation in Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Resolution in the Southern Philippines,” which began in 2003. They are also in the process of completing a second grant from the U.S. State Department entitled “The Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao and Majority-Minority Relations in the Philippines: Religion, Education, Community, and Political Process.” In 2006, they published Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution: Access to Community and Civic Enrichment (with Reynaldo Ty and April Gonzalez), a BoECA report for the U.S. State Department, published by Northern Illinois University. In 2006 Russell also published “Labor Discipline, Debt and Effort in a Philippine Fishing Community” in Labor in Cross-Cultural Perspective, ed. E. Paul Durrenberger and Judith Marti (Lanham, MD: Altamira Press), and a book review of Between Hills and Plains: Power and Practice in Socio-Religious Dynamics among Karen by Hayami Yoko in the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 12 (1). Russell
presented talks on peace initiatives and conflict resolution in the Philippines at the following: International Week Forum, NIU; Midwest Conference of the Association for Asian Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Center for Southeast Asian Studies Friday Lecture Series, NIU; and the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School, Hurlburt Field, Florida. In the Philippines, she presented "Prospects and Challenges for Higher Education Partnerships in the 21st Century" at Mindanao State University, Marawi City, Philippines.


In summer 2006, Daniel Unger (Political Science) visited the Hat Yai and Phuket campuses of Prince of Songkla University (PSU), Thailand. While there, he met with Dr. Chatchai Ratanachai, the Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs and Dr. Wichien Chatupote, the Assistant President for International Affairs. The purpose of his visit was to discuss the possibility of lecturers at PSU's Faculty of Political Science furthering their PhD studies at NIU. Unger also affirmed his commitment to enhancing cooperation with PSU, particularly in the area of Peace Studies, Environmental Studies, and Business Management.

Alan Potkin (Team Leader, Digital Conservation Facility Laos and NIU Adjunct Faculty) and Catherine Raymond (Associate Art History and Director, Center for Burma Studies) were involved in a project to improve the Ho Phrakeo Museum in Vientiane, Laos. The project was supported by the Ambassador’s Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP), U.S. Department of State. Consider the curatorial implications for a museum attracting nearly 100,000 visitors annually, of which more than half are religious pilgrims—Lao and Isan Thai—who consider Ho Phrakeo primarily a house of worship.

The Museum’s main building, the vihaar or image hall, is actually the third such hall since the original was erected in c. 1560 AD by the Lao King Sethathirath to shelter two of the most important Buddha statues in Southeast Asia then in Sethathirath’s possession; neither of which resides now in Vientiane. The Phrakeo Morakut, or Emerald Buddha (carved out of jadeite), has been in the Royal Palace compound in Bangkok, Thailand since c. 1780. The solid gold Phra Bang was eventually returned to its namesake city, Luang Prabang, in the mid-19th century, when it was the Lao royal capital. The vihaar of Ho Phrakeo dates only to 1939-1944, and its world-class collection of mostly Lao Buddhist art was first opened to public view in the 1970s. Presently, there is almost no explanatory material at Ho Phrakeo, and its development under the latest couple active in this discussion was assassinated in Nongkhai, Thailand.

Meanwhile, the project is focusing on less-problematical museological improvements for Ho Phrakeo: lighting; display stands and cases and in-situ storage; revising the out-of-date inventory and catalogue; and creating a poster portfolio for the museum shop.
Festschrift Presented to M. Ladd Thomas

A large group of faculty, students, and friends gathered for a dinner at Arlene and Clark Neher's home on August 27 to honor M. Ladd Thomas who last year retired from more than 40 years at NIU, building the CSEAS and NIU's consistent strength in Southeast Asian studies. He was presented with a Festschrift of essays, most of them contributed by his former students, including Bidhya Bowornwathana, Proserpina Tapales, Noel Morada, Ross Marlay (co-authored with Lesley Pruitt), Narayanan Ganesan, and Paul Chambers. Chapter 2 by Raymond Scupin provides a comprehensive bibliography and analysis of Thomas' contributions to understanding Southern Thailand. The volume is co-edited by Daniel Unger and Clark Neher and is titled *Bureaucracy and National Security in Southeast Asia*. It is available for purchase from CSEAS Publications office.

(1 to r) Naimah Talib, M. Ladd Thomas and Susan Russell

30th Anniversary of the Cambodian Association of Illinois
Chicago
November 2006

Professor Kheang Un was the keynote speaker at this event where he spoke about the need to strengthen education for future generations of Cambodians both in the United States and Cambodia searching for ways to ensure that poverty is not a barrier to education and that education is a way out of poverty and ignorance.

Professor Un (center) was also accompanied by (1 to r) NIU Khmer instructor, Kheang Leang and NIU Cambodian graduate students, Sovatha Ann (MA, Anthropology), Soveacha Ros (EDD, Education) and Kheang Kang (BA, business).

Scholarships

Foreign Language and Area Studies Scholarship (FLAS)

Scholarships will be awarded for the 2007-08 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, fees and insurance for the academic year (fall and spring). FLAS applications are due at the Center March 1, 2007.

Clark and Arlene Neher Graduate Scholarship

Through an endowment established by Clark and Arlene Neher, this scholarship for the study of Southeast Asia will pay $3,400 towards educational expenses. This award competition is open to any person regardless of their national origin, citizenship, race, ethnicity, religion, age, gender, or sexual orientation. Applicants must be 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 will be routed through the Office of Student Financial Aid and applied directly to the students' Bursar account. Applications are due in the Center March 1, 2007.

Application forms and information for both scholarships are available on the Center's website at:
www.niu.edu/cseas/scholarships.shtml
The first U.S. exhibit devoted to Nats — Burmese anthropomorphic spirit images — was held at the NIU Art Museum during the fall 2006 semester. The exhibit was designed to display the Nats within their ritual context as an example of contemporary art and practice. Catherine Raymond, Director of the Center for Burma Studies and curator of the exhibit, commissioned the Nat images from a workshop in Amarapura near Mandalay, making several visits over two years to ensure the Nats were completed, packed, and shipped to NIU. The exhibit also included watercolors by Paw Oo Thet and woodcarvings of guardian figures from the new Southard donation provided by the Center for Burma Studies. Relevant tableware was provided by the NIU Anthropology Museum. A related symposium on the Nats and their unique role in the practice of Burmese Buddhism was well-attended. A similar exhibit will be mounted during the International Burma Studies conference to be held at NIU in 2008. The exhibit was partially funded by the Illinois Arts Council, Arts Fund 21, and at NIU: by the Friends of the Art Museum, the Graduate School, and the School of Art. NIU Professor U Saw Tun and Assistant Librarian Sandar Wynn provided invaluable assistance.

Benjamin David Lemon
Co-Curator
PhD candidate, NIU Department of History; President, NIU Burma Interest Group
2006 LECTURE SERIES

February 3
Jeb Barzen, Director of Field Ecology, International Crane Foundation, Baraboo, Wisconsin
The Conservation of Wetlands and Waterbirds of Southeast Asia

February 17
Prof. Dan Slater, Department of Political Science, University of Chicago
Ordering Power: Contentious Politics, State-Building and Authoritarian Durability in Southeast Asia

February 24
Prof. Tamara Loos, Department of History, Cornell University
Self-Reflexivity on Southeast Asia from the Frozen Tundra

March 2
Prof. Linda Lim, Corporate Strategy and International Business, University of Michigan
Globalization: The End of a ‘Golden Age’?
GRADUATE COLLOQUIUM SPEAKER

March 3
Prof. Linda Lim, University of Michigan
Business in Southeast Asia’s Economic Development: Help or Hindrance?

March 24
Dr. Panitan Wattanayagorn, Assistant Professor of International Relations, Chulalongkorn University and C.V. Starr Distinguished Visiting Professor of Southeast Asia Studies at Johns Hopkins University, SAIS
Thailand’s Political Crisis: Problems and Prospects

April 7
Prof. Nagasura Madale, Visiting Research Scholar, Vice President for Research and Extension, Capitol University, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines
Current Issues in the Philippines: Charter Change, GRP-MILF Peace Talks and the Cartoons on Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

April 14
Kristen Knapp, MA Student, Department of Anthropology, NIU
Thai Theravada Buddhists’ Perceptions of Women’s Roles at the Temple

April 21
Prof. Martin Manalansan IV, Associate Professor of Anthropology, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Homecoming Spectacles: The Politics of the Body in Filipino Return Migration

April 28
Prof. James Ockey, Department of Political Science, NIU
From Mecca to Pattani: The Religio-Nationalist Pilgrimage of Haji Sulong Abdulkadir al Pattani

September 8
Prof. James Collins, Institute of the Malay World, National University of Malaysia
Language Ecology and Language Communities in the Malay World

September 21
Prof. James Warren, Southeast Asian Modern History, Murdoch University, Australia
Broken Birds: An Epic Longing

September 22
Prof. James Warren, Southeast Asian Modern History, Murdoch University, Australia
Typhoon: Climate, History and Society in the Philippines

September 29
Prof. Dwight King, Director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, NIU
Building Permanent Peace in Aceh

October 6
Prof. Susan Russell, Department of Anthropology, NIU
Recent Bangsamoro Views of the Progress of Present and Past Peace Negotiations with the Philippine Government in Mindanao

October 13
Htun Htun Soe, Graduate Student, Department of Political Science, NIU
After Eighteen Years of Political Impasse: What is Next in Burma?

October 20
Prof. Danny Unger, Department of Political Science, NIU
Thai Leadership in 2006: Five Years and Five Cycles

October 27
Shaun Levine, Graduate Student, Department of Political Science, NIU
Return to Normalcy: An Analysis of the U.S. Decision to Renew the Military Relationship with Indonesia

November 2
Prof. Brantly Womack, Department of Political Science, University of Virginia
China and Vietnam in an Era of Normalcy
GRADUATE COLLOQUIUM SPEAKER

November 3
Prof. Brantly Womack, Department of Political Science, University of Virginia
Beyond Love and Hate in International Relationships: The Lessons of China and Vietnam

November 10
Prof. Eric Jones, Department of History, NIU
Kept Women?: Slavery and Concubinage in the Malay World

November 17
Laura Iandola, Graduate Student, Department of History, NIU
U.S.-Indonesian Relations in 1964-65: the Nuclear Dimension
February 2
Michael Hawkins, Graduate Student, Department of History, NIU
*Imperialism and Notions of Indigenous Inadequacy in the Philippines*

February 9
Francis J. (Chuck) Theusch, Founder/Chairman, Library of Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia
*Triumphs of Hope in Southeast Asia*

February 16
Prof. Dato' Mohamad Abu Bakar, Tun Abdul Razak Chair in Southeast Asian Studies at Ohio University
*UMNO and the Malays of Malaysia*

February 23
Sokhieng Au, Graduate Student, Northwestern University
*Lost in Transliteration: Scientific Medicine in Colonial Cambodia*

March 2
Prof. Anne L. Foster, Department of History/Director, Center for Local History and Culture, Indiana State University
*Opium and the Civilizing Mission in Colonial Southeast Asia, 1900-1940*

March 30
PENDING: Han Giang Tran, Fulbright Visiting Scholar

April 5
Muhammad Haji Salleh, Visiting Scholar in the Harvard Yenching Institute
*A World in Four Lines - the Universe of the Nusantara Poetry: The Pantun*

April 6
Muhammad Haji Salleh, Visiting Scholar in the Harvard Yenching Institute
*Rowing Down Two Rivers: A reading by Muhammad Haji Salleh of his Poems in Malay and English*

April 12
Prof. L. Shelton Woods, Associate Dean & Professor, East/Southeast Asian History, Department of History, Boise State University
*Christian Fundamentalism in Southeast Asia*

April 13
Prof. L. Shelton Woods, Associate Dean & Professor, East/Southeast Asian History, Department of History, Boise State University
*Protestant Fundamentalism in Southeast Asia*

April 20
Prof. Shoua Yang, Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
*Hmong Social and Capital: The Formation and Maintenance Organizations*

April 27
Carolina Bodner and Stephanie Sposito, Graduate Students, Department of Art History, NIU
*Exploring the Traditions of Burmese Art in Contemporary Burma/Myanmar*

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**SEASSI 2007**

*June 18 to August 10*

The Southeast Asia Studies Summer Institute (SEASSI) is an eight-week intensive language training program for undergraduates, graduate students, and professionals. It has been held since 1983 and hosted for the last 6 years by UW-Madison. This coming summer will be the 25th Anniversary of SEASSI. Instruction is offered for academic credit in nine languages at the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year levels. The nine languages include Burmese, Filipino, Hmong, Indonesian, Javanese, Khmer, Lao, Thai, and Vietnamese.

For more information, see seassi.wisc.edu or contact:
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Mekong Actual Outcomes

International Conference on Post-Facto Evaluation of Official Development Assistance in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS)

October 5-7, 2007

The Mekong River catchment encompasses most of Laos, much of Cambodia, and parts of China, Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, and Vietnam. In the three decades since the close of the Second Indochina War, hundreds of millions of dollars in multinational and bilateral contributions were allocated to projects within the Mekong basin. Supported projects have included biodiversity conservation; social and gender equity; and sustainability in natural resources management, cultural preservation, and institutional development or "capacity building" of national and regional environmental agencies and NGOs.

Although these projects have had widely varying outcomes, formal initiatives and transparent mechanisms for comparing intended with actual results continue to be the exception, rather than the rule. Post-facto evaluation or "downstream" review could render unexpected and negative outcomes positive by enabling learning from mistakes and suggesting corrections.

The Center for Southeast Asian Studies (NIU), the Center for International Studies/Southeast Asian Studies (Ohio University), and the Asian Institute of Technology (Bangkok) are pleased to announce sponsorship of a Mekong-focused international conference yielding methodologies for assessing actual outcomes and achieving downstream learning. The conference will take place at Northern Illinois University, October 5 - 7, 2007. The deadline for both panel proposals and individual paper abstracts is June 20, 2007.

For more information, see www.niu.edu/cseas/outreach/mekongconf/ or contact Alan Potkin at apotkin@niu.edu.

Student Conference
February 16-17, 2007

The Southeast Asia Club of Northern Illinois University will hold its annual Southeast Asia Student Conference on February 16-17, 2007. Keynote speaker for the conference will be Prof. Dato’ Mohamad Abu Bakar, Tun Abdul Razak Chair in Southeast Asian studies, Ohio University. His keynote topic is "Islam in a Globalizing Southeast Asia." In addition to the Saturday panels, Prof. Bakar will present a Friday noon lecture, "UMNO and the Malays of Malaysia."

For a preliminary program, see www.niu.edu/cseas/outreach/seacclub/stconf07/. For more information, please email the Southeast Asia Club at seacclubniu@yahoo.com.

Second International Conference on Lao Studies
May 3-6, 2007

Arizona State University

The Faculty of Southeast Asian Studies, Center for Asian Research at Arizona State University, and the Center for Lao Studies, CA are pleased to announce the Second International Conference on Lao Studies (ICLS) to be held on May 3-6, 2007 in Tempe, Arizona. The main objective of this conference is to promote Lao studies by providing an international forum for scholars to present and discuss various aspects of Lao studies.

For more information, see the Center for Asian Research at Arizona State University at www.asu.edu/asian or the Center for Lao Studies at www.laostudies.org.

The Mandala

Teachers Institutes

The Second Genocide and Human Rights Summer Institute for K-12 Educators will be held at NIU and Washington, D.C. June 17-29, 2007. This institute introduces teachers to the intertwined issues of genocide and human rights. Although the terms were not coined until the 20th century, they share a long-standing historical and philosophical heritage. K-12 educators will explore the historical and political dimensions of genocide and human rights, investigating the causes, courses, and consequences involving Armenia, Bosnia, Cambodia, the Holocaust, Indonesia, Iraq, Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, 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. The institute is sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences External Programming, the Department of History, and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Northern Illinois University. For more information, see www.niu.edu/cseas/outreach/KMaley/CGindex.pdf. Additional lesson plans and teaching materials may be found at www.niu.edu/cseas/outreach/teaching_modules.htm.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign will be hosting an International Summer Institute for K-12 Teachers from June 25-29, 2007. World Cultures through Literature and Film is the theme for the 2007 institute that is organized jointly by the thematic and area studies centers at the University of Illinois and Northern Illinois University. This intensive institute will address contemporary issues and concerns, including rural and urban change; immigration; globalization; and geographies of social, economic, and political life. This year the seminar will explore these issues using the media of film and literature to gain greater understanding of the issues and to engage audience members in a dialogue over a wide variety of topics. For more information, contact Renata Johnson (UIUC) at (217) 244-2790.
Alumni News

John Brandon (MA, Political Science, 1985)
Prior to attending NIU, Brandon taught English in Thailand for the Princeton-in-Asia program at Srinaharinharinwirot University, Prasammit campus, in Bangkok. After living and working in Bangkok from 1978 to 1980, he moved to Songkhla and taught English at the university's southern provincial campus for one year.

In 1990, Brandon joined the Asia Foundation in Washington, D.C. He is currently director of the foundation's international relations programs. He manages the foundation's "America's Role in Asia" project which examines U.S.–Asian relations in-depth and makes recommendations on U.S. policy. His other responsibilities include monitoring U.S. policy toward the Asia-Pacific region and managing program activities in Washington.

Although his expertise is Southeast Asian politics and government, Brandon's programmatic responsibilities span from Japan to Afghanistan. His opinion pieces in the region have appeared in The International Herald Tribune, The Christian Science Monitor, The Los Angeles Times and other newspapers around the United States. He has also commented on political currents in the region for CNN International, The British Broadcasting Company, National Public Radio, and Voice of America.

Brandon is the editor of Burma/Myanmar Toward the 21st Century: The Dynamics of Continuity and Change (1997), a contributor to Burma: Prospects for a Democratic Future (1998), and co-author of The 1990 Election in Myanmar (1990). He has served on a number of task forces and study groups that examine U.S. policy towards Southeast Asia that have been supported and organized by the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations, the Stanley Foundation, and Georgetown University.

Rob Dayley (PhD, Political Science, 1997) is currently Associate Professor of Political Economy at Albertson College in Idaho. Dayley was awarded a 2006 Fulbright grant to conduct field research in Chiang Mai, Thailand and to consult with Payap University on the creation of a new graduate program in Southeast Asian Studies. His research project, "Thai Farmers and Globalization," explores how multinational corporations and non-government organizations (NGOs) compete to influence the choices of Thai farmers. Dayley was invited to Payap University by its president to work with the College's Food Service and Technology Department and Payap Research and Development Institute. He previously lived in Thailand for 3 1/2 years and this will be his sixth stint and second as a Fulbright recipient. Dayley's wife, Carrie and their three children, Mara (10), Molly (7) and Eliot (3) will accompany him for the six-month grant period. The award is one of only five given in an all-discipline national competition for scholars at all ranks.

Starting in January 2007, Shaun Levine (MA, Political Science, 2006) will be working in Indonesia for PT Media Nusa Pradana as a Special Advisor to the International Affairs and Politics section of their daily newspaper, Jurnal Nasional. His responsibilities will include advising the international journal section, developing relationships with foreign organizations and institutions, bridging the relationship between Jurnal Nasional and the U.S. government and its institutions in Indonesia as well as conducting international news investigations.

Levine received his MA in Political Science in December 2006 with a Graduate Concentration in Southeast Asia. He received a BA in Political Science with a minor in Southeast Asia Studies in May 2004. He is also a graduate of the United States Indonesian Society (USINDO) Summer Studies Program at Gadjah Mada University (2005) as well as the Consortium of Teachers in Indonesian and Malay held at Sam Ratulangi University in 2006. Levine was also the NIU student representative to the Student Conference on United States Affairs held at West Point in 2003. He is also a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Fraternity and the International Golden Key Society.

Susan Speigel (MA, Anthropology, 2006) is teaching two cultural anthropology courses at the College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, Illinois. In her Cultural Anthropology class, students will participate in an international negotiations project with other college classes. Each class represents a separate country that will attempt to put forward their country's respective position on such issues as state sovereignty, human trafficking, and the "brain drain." Speigel's other class is a comparative study of a variety of non-Western cultures, including Southeast Asia, Iraq, and Mali.

In Memoriam

Riswandha Imawan

Riswandha Imawan, alumnus (Political Science, 1989) and Professor at Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, suffered a fatal heart attack on August 4, 2006 at the age of 51. He enjoyed a national reputation as one of Indonesia's foremost critical and outspoken intellectuals. He published hundreds of op-ed articles in mostly vernacular newspapers, signing them either "from the foot of Mt. Merapi," an active volcano he loved to climb, or "the Eagle flies alone." He is survived by his wife and three children.
Sarah Belcarz is working on her MA in the department of anthropology at NIU. With a concentration in Southeast Asian studies, Sarah is focusing on the anthropology of gender in the region. She hopes to use her language training to conduct fieldwork in Indonesia.

Katie Hale received her BA in anthropology from Illinois State University in 2004. Hale is now an MA candidate in anthropology, with a concentration in Southeast Asian Studies and a certificate in Museum Studies. In the summer of 2006, she participated in a project funded by the Henry Luce Foundation conducting life history interviews of Cambodian refugees living in Chicago at the Cambodian American Heritage Museum. She is using these data in her MA thesis. Her thesis focuses on how the Cambodian community in Chicago has maintained its cultural traditions in the context of the United States. Hale will graduate in May 2007.

Michael Hawkins is a second-year PhD student in the Department of History. He is a two-time FLAS Fellow studying Tagalog. Mike received his BA in History from Brigham Young University (Provo) in 2002 and his MA in History from Boise State University in 2004. Mike is working on completing the requirements for doctoral candidacy and is engaged in the preliminary stages of dissertation research. His fields of study include Southeast Asia, the Philippines, Islam, imperialism, and modern China. His dissertation topic is “Muslim Integration in the Philippines, 1898-1946.”

Benjamin David Lemon is a doctoral student in the Department of History. He has received four FLAS awards for the Burmese language, including one for summer study at SEASSI at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Benjamin received his BA in history from the University of Nevada, Reno in 2001 and his MA in world history from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2003. He is currently president of the Burma Interest Group (BIG-NIU), a student organization that promotes cultural and educational awareness of Burma related issues. In fall 2006, he was the co-curator of the exhibit From Heaven to Earth: A Ritual to the 37 Nats at the NIU Art Museum. He is interested in long-term cultural history, in particular, cultural exchanges including commercial, intellectual, and symbolic. Benjamin plans on conducting fieldwork in Burma in summer 2007.

Tiffany Reed is a second-year MA student in the Anthropology Department. She is a second-year FLAS recipient for Thai language. Tiffany received her BA in anthropology from Trinity College in Hartford, CT in 2003. In 2002 Tiffany studied abroad with the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) program in Khon Kaen, Thailand. While there she worked with the NGO ENGAGE on their Koh Chang project and completed field research on the prominence of mixed-race Thais in Thai music and media. In 2004 Tiffany returned to Asia and toured Singapore, Malaysia, Burma, Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, Hong Kong, China and Mongolia for six months. She plans to continue her research on mixed-race Thais in summer 2007 and complete her master’s thesis in 2008.

Jacob Ricks is an MA student in the Department of Political Science. As a FLAS fellowship recipient, he is studying Indonesian and is fluent in Thai. His research focuses on politics of Southeast Asia, specifically on the areas of democratization, local government, religion in politics, and national identity. Currently he is working on his MA thesis, “Sacred Symbols and National Souls: Religious Symbols and National Identity in Thailand and Indonesia.” Jake hails from Idaho, and took detours through Thailand and Utah State University on his way to NIU. He plans on finishing his MA degree in May 2007.

Greg Swedberg completed his MA in American and Global History from NIU in 2006 and is a PhD candidate in the Department of History. He became interested in the history of colonial Indonesia early in his career at NIU. His work on American culture and empire, including research for his MA thesis, “The Djambi Affair: American Cultural Perceptions of Colonial Indonesia, 1900-1930,” inspired him to apply for a FLAS fellowship in Indonesian, and to enter the PhD program in Southeast Asian history.

**FLAS Fellowship Recipients, 2006-2007**

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BURMA/MYANMAR

In the summer 2006, Stephanie Sposito (i) and Carolina Bodner (r), graduate students in the Art History Division, had the opportunity to study in Burma/Myanmar under the tutelage of Prof. Catherine Raymond, Professor of Art History and Director of the Center for Burma Studies. Over the course of three weeks the students visited various pagodas, temples, monasteries, museums, and national monuments where both students conducted research for their master’s theses.

The first week was spent in and around the capital city of Yangon. From Yangon the group made a day trip to the former Mon capital of Pegu where they visited Shwedaw Pagoda and had the opportunity to witness an authentic Nat Pwe or festival honoring the local spirits and to collect information related to their research.

A thirteen-hour bus trip to Mandalay brought the group to the last royal capital located in Central Burma/Myanmar. The students had an opportunity to immerse themselves in the rich culture, climbing the Mandalay and Sagaing hills, exploring ancient Buddhist caves by candlelight at Monywa (a city a few hours from Mandalay), attending a marionette show, visiting several craft workshops, and mingling with the locals.

After a ten-hour boat trip down the Irrawaddy River, the group arrived in the extraordinary and well-known ancient capital of Pagan. The students spent several days under the knowledgeable guidance of Prof. Raymond, visiting a variety of temples, via horse cart. Among the famous pagodas visited were the Shwezigon, Ananda Temple, Nagayon Temple, That Byin Nyu Temple, and Bupaya Pagoda, dating from the 9th century onward.

Both Stephanie and Carolina are FLAS fellowship recipients and are working on their theses using information gathered during this trip. Carolina will graduate in May 2007, and Stephanie will graduate in May 2008. Both students are active members of the NIU Burma Interest Group and have assisted Prof. Raymond in numerous exhibits of the NIU Burmese art collection.

Malaysia

As a student who has focused on Indonesia, I was witness to the usual debate between hardcore Indonesianists and the relatively few Malaysian-focused scholars – which country is the one that really matters? While I had the opportunity to spend a summer in Indonesia, Malaysia was still an unknown quantity to me. I was finally able to get a taste of life in Malaysia during my first year at NIU, when Professor Eric Jones created a Malaysia Study Abroad program for Winter Intersession. This study-abroad class is now being expanded into a larger program and is an available option for undergraduate and graduate students this summer.

While I was in Kuala Lumpur, I was lucky enough to stay with a host family of NIU alums, Dr. Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, his wife Dr. Ratna, and their four daughters. Both are professors at nearby universities, one focusing on Islam and the other on Islamic education. All the Malaysia Abroad students were able to live with NIU alums, many of whom were similarly well connected in Malaysian society or focused on issues that coincided with the focus of the students. Living with alums was a surreal experience, as questions concerning whether or not the restaurant ‘Its Greek to Me’ is still operating in DeKalb were of the utmost importance.

During the program, we trekked all over Malaysia, visiting Malacca, Cameron Highlands, Langkawi, and Penang to mention just a few. During each stop we visited important historic sites and interviewed local residents who could add their knowledge to that of Prof. Jones. I also was able to spend an extra week by myself visiting Islamic schools in the Kota Bharu area of Kelantan province, talking to people about the province’s rift with the Kuala Lumpur government and problems faced by their neighbors in Southern Thailand. Kota Bharu had just started its “Kota Bharu: The Islamic City” campaign a few months prior to my arrival, so all the museums were geared towards that theme and everyone I met wanted to talk about it. As I was staying in one of the city’s Muslim hotels, there was plenty of opportunity for me to chat about it with others.

Malaysia was wonderfully accessible; although my language background was certainly helpful, it was completely unnecessary as English is used so widely there. So it was easy to interact with other Malaysians, chatting and asking questions relevant to what we were studying during the trip. This was lucky, because each day we had a question related to our lesson that we were required to discuss with at least three different people, bonus points if they were from different ethnic groups. Each of the participants also researched heritage and historical sites at the location we were in, providing the other students with a report and tour of those sites. Students were also expected to keep up with a topic in the Malaysian newspaper, using daily clippings to assist with a research project that was completed upon return to the U.S.

And as to the great debate? I think I need at least a year or two more in each country before I would be willing to make a choice!

Suzy Shovlin, History
Publications

Southeast Asia Publications News

SEAP released two new monographs in spring 2006:


Võ Phień and the Sadness of Exile (Monograph No. 8, ISBN 1-891134-29-9, $28).

In other monograph news, Clark Nehre's Southeast Asia: Crossroads of the World (Monograph No. 2), the second edition of which was published in 2005, recently crossed the 3,000 sales mark and continues to be a popular textbook choice for colleges and high schools around the world. SEAP received word in 2006 that Monograph No. 5, David Holm's Killing a Buffalo for the Ancestors: A Zhuang Cosmological Text from Southwest China, had won the Excellence in Translating Award from the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators. In November, Monograph No. 6, Vietnamese Voices: Gender and Cultural Identity in the Vietnamese Francophone Novel, received the honor of being reviewed in the premiere issue of the University of California's Journal of Southeast Asian Studies. Both the Haines and Schafer monographs are scheduled to be reviewed in later editions of JVS.


SEAP is in the process of upgrading the audio technology for its bestselling Vietnamese and Burmese language texts, which began in late 2005 with the conversion to CD of the tapes for Spoken Vietnamese for Beginners. The University of London School of Oriental and African Studies Language Centre's Web site currently is posting a link to the course on SEASite, describing it as an "excellent beginners Vietnamese learning site." In 2007, SEAP plans to convert to audio and MP3 CD the tapes for Contemporary Vietnamese and Activities Manual I and II with the assistance of Grant Olson, Coordinator of Information Technology for the NIU Foreign Language Multimedia Learning and Training Center. The entire 34-tape set that accompanies John Okell's Burmese: A Course in Four Volumes, will be converted in 2008.

New in Fall 2006

Crossroads Vol. 18.1 is a special theme issue featuring "A Community of Spirits: People, Ancestors, and Nature Spirits in Java," an extended essay by Robert Wessing with commentaries by five other scholars: "Supernatural Topography of the Southern Sumatran Highlands" by Bart Barendregt; "Burmans, Others, and the Community of Spirits," by F.K. Lehman (F.K.L. Chit Hlaing); "Are Java's Spirits a Community or Where Disparate Discourses Meet?" by Richard A. O'Connor; "A Community of Spirits...and Mead's Highland Balinese: An Ethnological Thought Experiment" by Gerald Sullivan; and "A Spirited Game?: Comments on 'Community of Spirits: People, Ancestors, and Nature'" by Nicola Tannenbaum, followed by a response by Wessing and 23 pages of book reviews.

Forthcoming in 2007


Journal of Burma Studies, Vol. 10
Crossroads, Vols. 18.2 and 19.1
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STUDY ABROAD: MALAYSIA
May 13 - June 1, 2007

This study abroad program is coordinated by the NIU Study Abroad Office (SAO), in cooperation with the NIU College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Department of History.

The program seeks to provide participants with the opportunity to learn and experience the history of Malaysia and the Malay world, on site and in a living laboratory. Because of its unique history, Malaysia, unlike any other country, is comprised of significant Malay, Chinese, and Indian populations. For example, students interested in religion can interact with large Islamic, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, animist, and syncretic groups.

Application deadline is March 15, 2007. The cost of $2,550 includes room and board while the group is in Malaysia, program-related land transportation in Malaysia, admission fees to cultural and historical sites, International Student ID, NIU tuition for undergraduate or graduate credit, and NIU major medical insurance for the duration of the program. Airfare is not included. The Malaysia Study Abroad program will be led by Prof. Eric Jones, Department of History.

Application form and more information may be found at www3.niu.edu/niuabroad/Malaysia-Sum.07.htm.

NIU CULTURAL FIELD SCHOOL in CAMBODIA
June 15 - July 15, 2007

The NIU Department of Anthropology in cooperation with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Division of International Programs is pleased to announce a summer 2007 Field School for NIU and visiting students.

This field school is offered in conjunction with the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUFA) Department of Archaeology in Phnom Penh. The training is in ethnographic field methods as applied to the topic of the rebirth of Cambodian Buddhism. Participants spend the first week at RUFA being introduced to Cambodian culture and religion as well as the ethnographic methods to be used. Field work comprises the following weeks with participants working in three-person teams: two Cambodians and one American on each team.

Application deadline is March 30, 2007. The cost of $3,800 includes six undergraduate or graduate credit hours in anthropology, instructional materials, field school room & board, International Student ID, and major medical insurance. Airfare is not included. The field school will be led by Prof. Judy Ledgerwood, Department of Anthropology.

Application form and more information may be found at www.niu.edu/clas/fieldschool/cambodia/index.shtml.

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