The Mandala
Newsletter of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies

Northern Illinois University
520 College View Court
DeKalb, IL 60115

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Spotlight on Burma

Three Buddhist monks from the Ratanaram Buddhist Temple in Rockford chant the Metta Sutra, a scripture of unconditional love, at the beginning of the Burma Teach-In held October 2 at the Martin Luther King Jr. Commons on the NIU campus. More than 100 faculty, students, and community residents attended the educational event organized by Professor Eric Jones (history) in the aftermath of the violent events that took place in Burma (Myanmar) in September. The teach-in was held to help explain the complex relationship in which religion and military rule in Burma are intertwined, in addition to expressing concern for the situation and its consequences. Speakers included Jones, Kenton Clymer (history), Marlee Clymer, Clark Neher (professor emeritus, political science), Danny Unger (political science), Kikue Hamayotsu (political science), and graduate student Tyler McKellar (politic science). Later that same week, the Burma Interest Group and the Southeast Asia Club co-hosted a Burma Culture Night in the Chandelier Room at Adams Hall (see page 18). Ingrid Jordt, assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and former Buddhist nun, was on campus in the fall to speak at the center’s weekly brownbag lecture on the meaning of the monks’ role in Burma and the political situation there (hear her interview on the NPR show “Speaking of Faith” at speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/burma/index.shtml). NIU will be hosting more Burma scholars in the fall; see page 18 for information on the upcoming Burma Studies Conference. (Photo by Kate Weber/Daily Chronicle).

We Remember

Since February 14, NIU has been recovering from the tragic deaths of five students in a geology class in Cole Hall who were shot by an assailant who then took his own life. Words cannot describe how deeply the entire NIU community has been affected by this tragedy, and how much it has meant to receive calls and letters from the center’s extended family around the world. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

NIU has established the February 14 Student Scholarship Fund to honor the memory of the students who died February 14: Gayle Dubowski, Julianna Gehant, Catalina Garcia, Ryanne Mace, and Daniel Parmenter. The fund will work through the NIU Scholarship Committee to distribute scholarships to deserving students in the name of those who lost their lives in the shooting. If you are interested in participating, call 1-877-GIV2NIU (1-877-448-2648) or visit NIU Foundation Online Gifts at www.niufoundation.org/give.

Dwight King, Director
Center for Southeast Asian Studies Council

Kenton Clymer
Department of History
Rhodalyne Gallo-Crut
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
Kiku Hanaumura
Department of Political Science
John Hartmann
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
George Henry
Department of Computer Science
Patricia Honry
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
Eric Jones
Department of History
Dwight King
CSUAS, Department of Political Science
Judy Ledgerwood
CSEAS
Ann Wright-Parsons
Department of Anthropology
Jui-Ching Wang
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Caroline Quinlan
Alan Potkin
Department of History
Barbara Posadas
Division of International Programs
Deborah Pierce
Founders Memorial Library
George Henry
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
Kikue Hamayotsu
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
Rhodalyne Gallo-Crail
Kenton Clymer
Asian Studies Council

The outcome of the strategic planning process will be a prioritized set of strategic imperatives: 1) to preserve, strengthen, and extend NIU’s teaching and learning environment; 2) to develop a strategy for investing in multi-disciplinary scholarship and artistic clusters to complement NIU’s focus on individual scholarly and artistic achievement; 3) to strengthen and extend NIU’s global/regional impact; and 4) to make NIU an institution of “first choice” for faculty, students, and staff.

The next step was to develop specific goals and implementation strategies. Invited to do so, the university community submitted nearly 300 concept papers to help illuminate the opportunities available in pursuing the above strategic imperatives. However, these concept papers did not address resource requirements or evaluation plans. In spring 2008, the university moved to develop more formal proposals. Despite the terrible interruption of February 14, university administrators have decided not to lose the momentum that had been generated for the planning process and are continuing to move forward.

The outcome of the strategic planning process will be a prioritized set of goals and strategies for achieving those goals. Those priorities will in turn inform decisions-making and resource allocation for the university.

Footnote to a tragedy

In the late afternoon of February 14, 2008, a terrible tragedy occurred on the NIU campus. Five students attending a geology lecture were shot and killed by a former student and 16 others were wounded. The rest of the class fled or were spared. The shooting took place in one of the lecture halls in Cole Hall. The campus was closed through Tuesday of the next week. Faculty and staff returned for grief counseling that week; students returned the week after.

This sad event has permeated the campus, as everyone has been touched in one way or another. One student who died had just registered as an anthropology major; others were in classes or were known by students and faculty. Like a rock thrown in a pond, the ripples reach out and affect us all.

A poignant footnote to this tragic affair is that it happened in the building named for Fay-Cooper Cole, a well-known and well-regarded anthropologist who spent several years in the 1920s studying cultures in the Philippines and Indonesia. He also founded the anthropology department at the University of Chicago. Our hunch is that some of the NIU faculty from the early 1960s may have been influenced by Fay-Cooper Cole and, like him, pursued field work in Southeast Asia.

Cole Hall was opened in 1968. Half of the basement, about 3,200 square feet, was designed to house storage, offices, and laboratories for NIU’s anthropology collection. The bulk of the collection, even from its inception in 1964-65, is from Southeast Asian cultures: the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Burma. The collection has grown to about 12,000 to 15,000 ethnographic and 50,000 archaeological artifacts, all of which are stored in cabinets and shelves in secure, climate-controlled spaces.

Cole Hall was closed immediately after the shooting and has been closed since then. At the time this issue of The Mandala goes to press, no decision has been made about the future of the building itself or the anthropology collection that remains in the basement.

Ann Wright-Parsons
Director, NIU Anthropology Museum

Center Visitors

In April 2007, representatives from Payap University (Chiang Mai, Thailand) came to NIU to renew their cooperative agreement with NIU and to explore more areas of cooperation, in particular with international programs. From left are Director Dwight King, Deborah Pierce (associate provost, International Programs), Arlene and Clark Neher, and Payap representatives Pradit Takerngrangsarit (president), and John Butt (senior vice president for international affairs at Payap).
Observing Elections in East Timor

by Dwight King

In 2007 I was invited to observe the June 30 parliamentary elections in East Timor as a member of a delegation sponsored by The Carter Center, a non-governmental organization founded in 1982 by former President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, to advance peace and health worldwide. The center has observed 67 elections in 26 countries to date. In 1999 the citizens of East Timor voted overwhelmingly (79 percent) for independence from Indonesia, thereby ending 25 years of foreign occupation. This referendum, as well as every election since, was monitored by The Carter Center. The vote was followed by horrific carnage as the retreating Indonesian Army and militias they had armed laid waste to the country until an Australian-led international peace-keeping force restored stability. Thirty-two months later, Independence Day was held resulting in victory for Xanana Gusmao, an Independent who garnered 83 percent of the popular vote. Finally, on May 20, 2007, East Timor achieved full independence, becoming the country’s first national parliament. Presidential elections were held in accordance with the Constitution of East Timor and the 191st member of the United Nations.

Our delegation concluded that the elections were peaceful, orderly, and in accordance with established election procedures.

by the host government. Second, they must be invited to affect the overall success of the vote. For example, polling officials examined the proper forms of voter identification in most cases; however, they did not always check fingers for indelible ink prior to issuing a ballot.

One of the most interesting aspects of the election was a last-minute change in counting procedures two weeks before Election Day. Party representatives in the Parliament passed a law shifting the counting of the ballots from polling stations to district centers in order to better protect voter anonymity. Instead of being counted at the polling station where they were cast, ballots were transported under escort to the district capital where ballots from multiple polling stations were intermingled before they were counted. In countries transitioning to democracy such as East Timor, elections give rise to high expectations. Usually they are considered the most effective mechanism for political elites to use in setting their differences. Yet the recent experiences of East Timor seem to run counter to the conventional wisdom. Despite a “free and fair” election five years ago, violence broke out on several occasions. Let us hope that history does not repeat itself.

Our delegation concluded that the elections were peaceful, orderly, and in accordance with established election procedures. Election workers carried out their responsibilities professionally and with impartiality. Witnesses (party agents) from more than two political parties and non-partisan domestic observers were present in nearly all polling stations visited. Station layout respected voter secrecy. We found only isolated irregularities, and they were unlikely to affect the overall success of the vote. For example, polling officials examined the proper forms of voter identification in most cases; however, they did not always check fingers for indelible ink prior to issuing a ballot.

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Building dialogue in the Philippines

The U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs awarded two grants in 2007 to center council members Susan Russell (anthropology) and Lina Davide Ong (International Training Office) for two NIU projects focused on building civic participation and mutual understanding among diverse groups in the Philippines.

The first, a two-year, $368,370 grant entitled “Cultural Citizens and North-South Dialogue: Building the National Identity and Civic Participation in the Philippines,” builds on the Philippines’ ongoing partnership with the International Visitors Program of the Philippines Alumni Foundation and previous ECA-funded projects for the Philippines. The project involves a national competition for leaders from the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, the (northern) Cordillera Administrative Region, and the central Visayan and central or southern Luzon region, with the goal of attracting a diverse group of indigenous, Muslim, and Christian participants, aged 25 to 35, from throughout the country. This phase of the project was completed in February 2008.

The project will come to NIU on May 31 to attend a four-week institute on the responsibilities of citizens in a democratic, plural society. Participants will visit ethnic communities in the Midwest and meet with citizen advocacy groups, media, and members of Illinois government in Springfield and Chicago. Group members are expected to develop action plans to implement upon their return home, as well as host a national seminar on responsible citizenship. NIU faculty and other leaders involved in the program will travel to the Philippines for the seminar and conduct site visits of projects developed by the Philippine government. For more information, visit www.csas.niu.edu/culturalcitizens/.

The grant ends in December 2009.

The second project, the Philippine Youth Leadership Program (formerly known as ACCESS-Philippines), is beginning its fifth year with $220,000 in funding from the State Department. The program this year is bringing 22 youth and five adult leaders from the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao and surrounding areas to NIU to interact about conflict resolution and to learn peace-building and conflict transformation strategies. The five-week training program began April 5 and includes educational workshops, inter- and intra-ethnic dialogue, tours of different religious institutions and other organizations in Chicago, as well as visits to Amish communities and the Peace Learning Center in Indianapolis. The participants will also experience a two-week home-stay immersion with American families in DeKalb and surrounding communities.

Over the years, alumni from this program have created a wide array of projects in their home communities in Mindanao that encourage peace and facilitate social justice. In October 2007, Deborah Pierce (associate provost, Division of International Programs) and Carolyn Lantry, program officer of the Youth Exchange Division of the State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, joined project director Susan Russell during a site visit with the alumni in Mindanao. The partner institutions include Capitol University in Cagayan de Oro City and the International Visitors Program Alumni Foundation in Manila. The website for the project is www.csas.niu.edu/PhilAccess/default.htm.

Digital Library Project in Third Year

Still under construction, the NIU Southeast Asia Digital Library (sea.lib.niu.edu) has already made available many excellent digital resources for Southeast Asian studies. Among the recently added materials to the website are:

- Two collections of Cambodian historical photographs
- New interview videos of former political prisoners in East Timor
- Videos of three popular TV programs from Indonesia
- A few hundred Thai palm-leaf manuscripts from Khon Kaen University
- A database of Thai journals from Thammasat University
- Digitized reference books from the Center for Research Libraries (Chicago)
- An extensive collection of selected Internet links related to Southeast Asian countries
- An online survey feature for user feedback about the project.

New materials, among them three sets of books in Nom (the ancient Vietnamese script), will soon be added to the project.

The Southeast Asia Digital Library project, which has been under way for the past three years with the support of a $780,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education, is managed by Northern Illinois University Libraries, with a consortium of U.S. institutions represented by the Committee on Research Materials on Southeast Asia (CORMOSEA), and several partners in Southeast Asia. Funding began in October 2005 and will conclude in October 2009. A new grant application is expected to be submitted to the Department of Education by fall 2009.

This collaborative digital project collects library materials from Southeast Asia and provides free access to the resources for students, teachers, scholars, and those with interest in the region. It employs standards developed and approved by U.S. and international library organizations to digitize texts, still images, and videos covering both historical and current information from the region.

On Display

Cambodia Born Ance: Kannmot Khmea Tiney

September 2007–May 2008

NIU Anthropology Museum, Stevens Building, DeKalb

Khmer Spirit: Arts and Culture of Cambodia

September 2007–May 2008

Cambodia American Heritage Museum, Chicago

Two exhibits. Two museums. Two years. This cooperative project between the NIU Anthropology Museum and the Cambodia American Heritage Museum explores the rebirth of Cambodian culture in the aftermath of the Khmer Rouge genocide (1975-1979).

The NIU exhibit, Cambodia Born Ance: Kannmot Khmea Tiney, covers the disruption of social, political, and economic life during the Khmer Rouge period and the renewal since that time. The Chicago exhibit, Khmer Spirit: Arts and Culture of Cambodia, explores the fine arts: painting, sculpture, wood carvings, and musical instruments. Funded by a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation, the exhibits will switch places after one year. In conjunction with both exhibits, there have been speakers, films, and a K-16 teachers workshop (see page 16) in November on genocide, organized by center outreach coordinator Julia Lamb. A number of these additional programs have been funded by the Center for Southeast Asian Studies through the U.S. Department of Education Title VI grant. A short video, Cambodian Life, made by Vitharin Chan of the Royal University of Fine Arts and the Reyum Institute, and funded by the DeKalb County Community Foundation, will be shown in area schools as part of the community outreach effort surrounding this project.

Project co-directors are Drew VandeCreek, director of digitization for NIU Libraries, and Hao Phan, curator of the Southeast Asia collections. Since 2000, Phu Phong (M.A. candidate, anthropology) has been assisting with the project. In addition to NIU, participating U.S. institutions include Arizona State University, Ohio University, the University of Hawaii /Manoa, the University of Michigan, the University of Washington, and Yale University. International partners are Khon Kaen University and Thammasat University in Thailand, the University of San Carlos in the Philippines, the Living Memory Project in East Timor, TV producers in Indonesia, and the Vietnamese Neon Preservation Foundation in Vietnam.

In April, the Southeast Asian Digital Library project met with its partners and CORMOSEA members at the Association for Asian Studies conference in Atlanta.

Materials from the NIU Anthropology Museum exhibit “Cambodia Born Ance” combine photographs and objects in some of its displays. In this display, the photograph shows farmers preparing bundles of rice seedlings for transplant. In another display, a fishmonger in his market stall readsies fish for sale. (Photos by Chan Vitharin)
Grants:

U.S. Dept. of Education. Part of four-year Title VI grant to CSEAS. Project scope: On SEAsia, develop Web page for Business Thai (in first and second year) and e-dictionary of Lao (in third and fourth year).

Mahidol University. Travel grant to deliver three lectures Feb. 15–March 1, 2007.

Theses Supervision:


Judy Ledgerwood (Professor and Chair, Anthropology)

Book Chapters:


Edited Book:

Exhibits:

Field School:
Conducted summer field school in Cambodia in 2007, sponsored by NIU and the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUAFA). Research topic was rebirth of Cambodian Buddhism; instructional focus was ethnographic research methods. Participants included six international students and twelve Cambodian students from RUAFA.

Books:

Conference:

Andrea A. Molnar (Associate Professor, Anthropology)

Conferences:
“Annu, phi and nat: Comparative Notes on Modes of religious’ habits’ construction among Southeast Asian Cultures.” Presented at the international conference of SSEASR (South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion) under the auspices of UNESCO, Mahidol University, Bangkok, May 24–27, 2007.


Presentation:
“Grassroots Peace Initiatives and Women’s Role in East Timor and Southern Thailand.” Presented on Stories from the Field panel at Beyond Hotel Rawanda: Peace Initiatives, NIU, Nov. 12, 2007.

Grant:
NIU Lillian Cobb Faculty Travel Fellowship for International Teaching and Service ($947), along with $3250 grant from Department of Anthropology, to teach at Naesun University, Phitsanulok, Thailand.

Hao Phan (Southeast Asia Curator, Founders Library)

Edited Book:

Barbara Possadas (Professor, History)

Book Chapter:

Presentation:
“Restoring the Phralak-Phralam to Vat Oup Mong, Vientiane.” Presented at 2nd International Conference on Lao Studies, Arizona State University, April 2007.


E-books:


Catherine Raymond (Professor, Art History, and Director, Center for Burmese Studies)

Article:

Conference:

Presentations:


Exhibits:
Aesthetic on Metal: Travel to Burma in the Nineteenth Century
Recaptured through Contemporary Imaging technologies: The Dagoneturquoise, the Ambrotypes, and the Stereograph; and Lantern Slides of Traditional Nineteenth Century Burmese Architecture.

Assisted by Stephanie Sposito, M.A. candidate in Burmese art history

“Chin Textiles: New acquisitions to the NIU Burma Art Collection,” September 28, 2007, Altgeld Hall. Exhibit of collection of twenty antique textiles in silk and cotton from Chin State in Burma/Myanmar (offered by the late Nancy Roberts) and pieces of Chin jewelry (donated by Professor Emeritus Richard Cooiker). Reception sponsored by the Center for Burma Studies, the Graduate School and NIU Foundation.

E-book:

Sue Russell (Professor, Anthropology)

Edited Book:

Book Chapter:

Board:
Invited to be board member of Build Cambodia, a U.S.-based not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping Cambodians to build their lives and society and to ensure that this corner of the world is not forgotten (www.BuildCambodia.org).

Book Chapter:

Danny Unger (Associate Professor, Political Science)

Papers:

Kate Wiegele (Assistant Professor, Anthropology)

Book:

Ann Wright-Paterson (Director, NIU Anthropology Museum)

Exhibit:


Hamayotsu received her Ph.D. in political science and international relations from Australian National University (ANU) in 2006 after spending two years conducting research primarily in Malaysia and some in Indonesia. Her research interests and teaching emphasis are on politics in the Muslim world with special interest in Islamist mobilization and regime transitions in Southeast Asia. Early in her career, she was a research assistant for Jennifer Amyx at ANU and Arief Omar at Science University of Malaysia in Penang.

Hamayotsu holds master’s degrees in international studies (University of Sydney) and area studies with emphasis on Southeast Asia/politics (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London), and a bachelor’s degree in foreign language and culture/international relations (Sophia University in Tokyo). Besides English, she speaks Japanese (her native language), Malayalam, and Indonesian.

Current projects include the publication of her dissertation, “Demobilizing Islam: Institutionalized Religion and the Politics of Co-optation,” and several articles. She also is expanding her dissertation research to investigate further the impact of cross-border linkages of Islamic movements on governmental behavior and strategies dealing with Islamic groups, and how those affect the religious activism of local non-governmental Islamic organizations.

In her free time, Hamayotsu enjoys opera and would like to take voice lessons someday.
Kheang Un (instructor, political science), assistant director of the center since 2000, will take a leave of absence beginning in 2009 academic year to become a visiting scholar at the Center for Asian Democracy at the University of Pennsylvania.

Kikue Hamayotsu (assistant professor, political science) served as moderator for an April 10 panel on Muslim peace building in Southeast Asia. The event, hosted at the International House Assembly Hall at the University of Chicago, focused on ongoing conflict resolution efforts in Thailand and the Philippines. Participants included Kriya Lanphut of Yale University, Abdulghoni Suintar of Prince of Songkla University, Shahana Abdulwahid of the Institute for Islamic Studies at the University of the Philippines, Mindanao State University, and Pattama Hanningma of the Asian Muslim Action Network and Asian Resource Foundation. The event, funded by the U.S. Department of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, was part of The World Beyond the Headlines, a collaborative project of the UC Center for International Studies, the international House Assembly Hall, the Seminary Co-op Bookstores, and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

Northern Illinois University Press has published an abridged and updated version of Presidential Research Professor Kenton Clmyer’s prize-winning history of relations between the United States and Cambodia since the mid-nineteenth century that won the Robert H. Ferrell Book Prize in 2005. In Troubled Relations: The United States and Cambodia since 1875, Clmyer (department chair, history) examines American policy toward the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1979 and the Vietnam War drew the country into the war and eventually into a civil war led by the Khmer Rouge’s genocidal of nearly a third of the country’s population. He also documents the American role in the Cambodians’ eventual brokering of a resolution to the conflict. The Pacific Historical Review has called Clmyer’s work “traditional diplomatic history at its best.”

Professor Kate Wiegle (assistant professor, anthropology) received word that her book, Investing in Miracles: El Shaddai and the Transformation of Popular Catholicism in the Philippines (University of Hawai‘i Press, 2005), was the runner-up for the prestigious 2007 Harry J. Benda Prize given by the Association for Asian Studies (the winner was Secret Traders Porous Borders: Smuggling and “Illicit Trade Along Southeast Asian Frontier, 1865-1935 by Eric Tagliacozzo, Yale University Press, 2005). Wiegle reports that her book was published in the Philippines by Ateneo Manila University Press and is in Manila bookstores. The book’s title, or a variation of it, means “a much-needed contribution to the growing literature on popular religiosity in the Philippines.”

Professor Danny Unger (associate professor, political science), who married NIU alumna Chantaddilai Mahakhanjan in Thailand in 2006, welcomed a child into the family in 2006. Prior to his departure. “This means I will be spending time in the Philippine state during the American colonial period,” Hawkins said shortly before his departure. “This means I will spend two or three months in Manila collecting documents in the National Archives, National library, and various other locations, and then six or seven months in Mindanao traveling throughout the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao conducting interviews and searching for more documents.” During his time in the Philippines, Hawkins has been affiliated with the University of the Philippines-Diliman while in Manila, and with Mindanao State University while in the southern Philippines. He has also taught sociology and anthropology at the University of the Philippines-Diliman while in Manila, and with Mindanao State University while in the southern Philippines. He has also taught sociology and anthropology at the University of the Philippines-Diliman while in Manila, and with Mindanao State University while in the southern Philippines. He has also taught sociology and anthropology at the University of the Philippines-Diliman while in Manila, and with Mindanao State University while in the southern Philippines. He has also taught sociology and anthropology at the University of the Philippines-Diliman while in Manila, and with Mindanao State University while in the southern Philippines.

Anies Baswedan (PhD, political science, 2007) was named one of the 100 top public intellectuals to take a look at the world by Foreign Policy magazine in its May-June 2008 issue. The list includes such notables as Pope Benedict XVI, Noam Chomsky, and Fareed Zakaria. Foreign Policy magazine notes that the list includes “some of the world’s best minds—voices from academia, think tanks, the media, and the business world.” Baswedan, a sociologist at the University of Surabaya in Indonesia, was honored for his work on “the cultural and political dynamics underlying Indonesia’s economic development.” Baswedan, a sociologist at the University of Surabaya in Indonesia, was honored for his work on “the cultural and political dynamics underlying Indonesia’s economic development.”

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FLAS Fellowship Notes

**FLAS Fellowship Recipients, 2007-08**

The center awarded Foreign Language and Area Studies Scholarships (FLAS) to nine NIU graduate students for the 2007-08 academic year. The $15,000 individual fellowships are funded by the center’s Title VI National Resource Center grant from the U.S. Department of Education. They provide for students to study one of five Southeast Asian languages currently taught at NIU: Burmese, Indonesian, Khmer, Tagalog, and Thai. This year’s nine FLAS students have diverse research interests and career goals.

**Nathan Blank** is a Ph.D. candidate in political science. The seeds of Blank’s current research interests and career path were planted while living and working as a volunteer service representative in the Philippines for two years between 1998 and 2000. When he returned to the U.S., Blank changed his major from business to history and took every opportunity to research both Philippine and Southeast Asian topics. After completing his B.A., he worked for a few years, but found he missed the academic environment and made plans to go to graduate school. After receiving his M.A. in international affairs from Missouri State University, Blank decided to take his studies to the next level by pursuing a Ph.D. in political science at NIU. His research interests include Philippine politics, Southeast Asian transnational migrants, the politics of immigration and race, political and economic development strategies, and maritime terrorism in Southeast Asia.

**Sean Dolan** is working toward master’s degrees in both philosophy and anthropology. He holds bachelor’s degrees in anthropology (The American University in Cairo, 1998) and philosophy (Saint Cloud State University, 2004). Dolan’s current research explores aspects of globalization through examination of the halal foods industry. This research focuses specifically on the creation of an industry hub for halal foods in Malaysia and its effects on production and consumption of halal products in the United States. Dolan plans to spend the summer in Malaysia conducting research.

**Stephanie Sposito** is a master’s candidate in anthropology. Her research interests include cultural anthropology, ritual, religion, the Philippines, and the history of the peoples of the Southern Philippines and Northern Laos.

**Lily Ann B. Villaraza** is a first-year Ph.D. student in history. She completed her M.A. in history from NIU in May 2007. Her research interests revolve around cultural production and the articulation of nationalism in Southeast Asia, with a primary focus on the Philippines. Villaraza’s prospective dissertation research will examine how theater was used to articulate national identity in the Philippines through the twentieth century. She also holds a master’s degree in education, with a specialization in literacy and language arts, and bachelor’s degrees in history and Asian American studies. In addition to her academic work, Villaraza is an active member of the Southeast Asia Club and works for the International Training Office on the Philippine Youth Leadership Program (formerly ACCESS-Philippines), a summer-long training program on peace advocacy and conflict resolution that brings youth and adult peace advocates from the southern Philippines to NIU. She is also an advisor to the Philippine American Youth Organization (PAYO)-San Diego and is one of the lead organizers of the Filipino American Arts and Culture Festival, or FilAmFest, in San Diego.

**Clark and Arlene Neher Graduate Fellowship for the Study of Southeast Asia**

Through an endowment established by Clark (professor emeritus, political science) and Arlene Neher (former director, external programming, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences), this scholarship for the study of Southeast Asia pays $3,000 toward educational expenses. Pisith Phlong (M.A. candidate, anthropology) received the fellowship for the 2008-09 academic year.

**Stephanie Sposito** (M.A. candidate, anthropology) and **Scott LaDeur** (M.A. candidate, anthropology) also received the Neher fellowship for the 2008-09 academic year. The Neher fellowship is open to anyone regardless of 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. The award is routed through the Office of Student Financial Aid and applied directly to the student’s Bursar’s Office account. Applications for the 2009-10 academic year are available through the center’s website at www.cseas.niu.edu.

**FLAS fellows for 2008-09**

FLAS fellowship recipients for the 2008-09 academic year will be: Carol Carbon, Ph.D. history (Klimer); Sean Dolan, M.A. anthropology (Indonesian); Theodore Eckard, Ph.D. political science (Indonesian); Philippa Edmunds, M.A. anthropology (Indonesian); Michael Hawkins, Ph.D. history (Tagalog); Matthew Jorg, Ph.D. history (Khmer); Jessica Marchetti, M.A. anthropology (Indonesian); Daniel Pojar, Jr., Ph.D. political science (Thai); and Lily Ann B. Villaraza, Ph.D. history (Tagalog).

All FLAS fellows must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents who are accepted into a graduate program at NIU. Each award carries 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). Applications for the 2009-10 academic year are available through the center or on the center’s website at www.cseas.niu.edu.

**Clandestine Survivor and Activist**

**Speaks at Student Conference**

Keynote speaker Thida Mam, center, with, from left, Kristin Sarama (B.A. candidate, history), Tiffany Reed (M.A. candidate, anthropology), Stephanie Sposito (M.A. candidate, anthropology), and Julie Edmonds (M.A. candidate, anthropology). Sarama won the conference award for best undergraduate paper presented, while Edmonds took the honors for graduate paper. Reed and Sposito helped organize the conference.

**Jessica Marchetti** (M.A. candidate, anthropology), “Islam, Politics, and Culture as They Contribute to the Making of Gender in Indonesia from Pre-Colonial Kingdoms to the New Order Era.”

**Julie Edmonds** (M.A. candidate, anthropology), “Education for All: Conviction & Feminism.” In addition to the opportunity to present their ongoing research in the field of Southeast Asian studies, the students had their papers evaluated by a panel of three faculty members—with the author of the best paper awarded prize money for his or her work. Graduate and undergraduate papers were evaluated separately, and awards went to Sarama (undergraduate) and Edmonds (graduate).

Out of the Poison Tree was shown after a performance of Mam’s keynote speech. Mam, a software developer for eBay in San Jose, California, and mother of two, was introduced by Judy Ledgerwood (anthropology). A reception in the NIU Anthropology Museum followed the conference. The event was funded and supported by the center, the Department of Anthropology, and the Southeast Asia Club with funds from the U.S. Department of Education Title VI program and the NIU Student Association.
Outreach Update

Upcoming Conferences and Teachers Institutes

Genocide and Human Rights
Summer Institute, June 15-27, 2008
The Genocide and Human Rights Summer Institute for K-12 educators will be held June 15-21 at NIU and June 22-27 in Washington, D.C. This two-week residential institute introduces teachers to the intertwined issues of genocide and human rights. Participants will begin by defining the terms, learning about the philosophical and historical antecedents, and the common characteristics of genocide and human rights violations. The sessions will then turn toward exploring the historical, political, sociological/anthropological, and contemporary dimensions of specific case studies of genocide and human rights violations by focusing on the causes, courses, and consequences of the events. Other sessions will discuss how to approach these subjects in the classroom, from the elementary to the high school level.

The institute’s final sessions will be in Washington with visits to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the National Museum of the American Indian, and sessions with various national, international, and non-government agencies.

The institute is sponsored by the Illinois Humanities Council and NIU (the Center for Liberal Arts and Sciences External Outreach), in cooperation with the Humanities Council and NIU (the Center for Liberal Arts and Sciences External Outreach), and the Department of History. It is open to any teacher—elementary through high school—currently employed in a full-time teaching position or to advanced teacher-certification candidates. The program is offered as an undergraduate and graduate course or as a continuing professional development institute which will be certified to the Illinois State Board of Education. For information, call (630) 753-5200, e-mail LASEP@niu.edu, or visit www.niu.edu/ claspe/conferences/institutes/genocide2/index.shtml.

Third International Ramayana Conference, October 18-19, 2008
The center, in cooperation with the International Ramayana Institute of North America (IRINA), is organizing the Third International Ramayana Conference, set for October 18-19, 2008, at NIU’s Naperville campus. The conference will include both presentations on various themes and a Ramayana-based workshop. The general theme is “Ramayana Worldwide: Past, Present, Future.”

The conference organizing committee invites scholars and artists to submit abstracts for presentations on the following proposed themes:

• The effect of Ramayana on family relations.
• Ramayana-related education and research efforts.
• The inception of Ramayana in various countries.
• The literary and poetic forms of Ramayana.
• The effect of Ramayana on various cultures and civilizations.
• The gender and political aspects of Ramayana.
• Extrapolating Ramarajyai (peace and happiness) in today’s environment.

The conference will also offer a Ramayana workshop specially designed for teachers. The workshop will focus on the art and dance forms of Ramayana and will feature various dance styles and Ramayana paintings. Deadlines for submitting abstracts is May 1, 2008.

The Third International Ramayana Conference will be hosted by NIU in collaboration with IRINA. The first and second conferences were held September 2001 and June 2005, respectively. These conferences attracted scholars from various U.S. universities and worldwide, including India, Indonesia, Thailand, France, Holland, and Myanmar (Burma). For conference details, see www.csea.niu.edu/outreach/ramayana08/.

Conference Notes

Teachers attend “Cambodia Born Anew” workshop
The NIU Anthropology Museum exhibit “Cambodia Born Anew: Kamnoet Khmea Timexy,” opened October 5. In conjunction with the exhibit, 25 educators attended a teachers’ workshop which explored the exhibit’s four themes: agricultural life, which is the primary occupation of the people of Cambodia; fishing and marine ecology; Theravada Buddhism, which is the religion of some 90 percent of Cambodians; and the revival of traditional silk weaving. In addition, there was a discussion of the Khmer Rouge period (1975-79), during which 2 million people were killed, starved to death, or fled the country.

Socheat Nhean, NIU anthropology graduate student and employee of the Documentation Center of Cambodia, discussed researching the Cambodian genocide in Cambodia.

In the afternoon, there was a showing of the film Out of the Poison Tree, as well as a short introduction to the history of Cambodia to put the exhibit in context. Judy Ledgerwood (anthropology), noted authority on Cambodia, guided this discussion. Nancy Keiser, professor of education at North Central College and education consultant for the center, discussed issues of teaching genocide in the K-12 classroom as mandated by the state of Illinois. There was a walk through the exhibit, followed by hands-on activities and materials for teachers to use in the classroom presented by museum director Ana Wright-Parsons.

Lamb Receives NIU Award for Excellence
CSEAS Outreach Coordinator Julia Lamb was one of four recipients of the Presidential Supportive Professional Staff Award for Excellence on April 10, 2007. This award recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the university and is the highest campus award SPS staff can receive. Awards are based on the following criteria: significant contributions made to the university; evidence of excellent performance the individual has demonstrated in his or her position; evidence of commitment to his or her professional development; and involvement in committees or organizations.

Lamb has been the outreach coordinator for the center since the position was created in 1997. She helps to develop, promote, coordinate, and evaluate programs and activities that link and extend NIU’s Southeast Asian studies resources and faculty to public groups and individuals. Lamb spent three years teaching English at a university in Thailand through the Princeton-in-Asia Program, and has an M.S.Ed. degree with specialties in adult continuing education and English as a second language from NIU. Her current interests include genocide and human rights issues in Southeast Asia; peace building and conflict resolution in Southeast Asia; LGBT issues in Southeast Asia; Southeast Asian children’s literature; and refugees from Southeast Asia.

Conference proceedings published
The proceedings of the Southeast Asian Linguistics Society XII conference, which was co-sponsored by the center and held at NIU in May 2002, have been published as an e-book. It is also available in hard copy ($30). Thirteen papers from the conference are included in the volume edited by Raytree Wayland, John Hartmann, and Paul Sidwell. Languages discussed include Vietnamese, Lao, Thai, Khmer, Zhuang, Chin (Lai), Jru’ (Laven), Tiat, Gam-Tai, Go-Yang, Chamic, Austronesian, Bahnarnic, and Katucic. See www.pacling.com/catalogue/E4/SEALS.html.

The selected papers of the First International Conference on Lao Studies are in the final editing stages. Both volumes acknowledge support from the Henry R. Luce Foundation.
Burmese Studies

October 3-5, 2008

NIU to host Eighth International Burma Studies Conference

The Center for Burma Studies will host the International Burma Studies Conference on October 3-5 at NIU. The conference will emphasize all aspects of Burma studies, including anthropology, art history, environment, health, history, literature, linguistics, music, political science, popular culture, religions, and area studies. Panels and papers will be devoted primarily to new research, including recent events in Burma.

The conference is sponsored by the center, the Graduate School, and the College of Visual and Performing Arts. The center will host a series of cultural events in conjunction with the event, including exhibitions and performances.

The center, the Burma Studies Foundation, and the Association of Asian Studies’ Burma Studies Group invite papers on all aspects of Burma studies to be presented at the conference. Those interested in submitting a paper or panel proposals should send a 250-word abstract to the Center for Burma Studies by April 15. Proposals should include the presenter’s name, affiliation, address, the title of the paper, a list of any equipment needed for presentation, the time required for presenting (between 15 and 20 minutes), and a e-mail address. Materials should be sent by mail to the Center for Burma Studies, SDO College View Court, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115, or via e-mail to bsc2008@niu.edu.

Fall 2007 / Spring 2008 Lecture Series

The center attracted a wide variety of speakers for both its Friday brownbag luncheon lecture series and other lectures on campus during the 2007-08 academic year. The presentations, which covered topics as diverse as mass media in Indonesia to Karen refugee resettlement in Illinois, are partially supported with funds from the center’s U.S. Department of Education Title VI grant.

September 6-7
Graduate colloquium. Kamal Sadiq, assistant professor of political science at the University of California-Lrvine, on “Voters Across Borders: Illegal Immigrants as Citizens in South and Southeast Asia.” He also spoke at the September 7 Friday brownbag on “Searching for Citizenship in Southeast Asia.”

September 14
Anies Baswedan (Ph.D. political science 2007), director of Paramadina University, Jakarta, Indonesia, on “The Politics and Leadership of President Yudhoyono.”

September 20
Public lecture. U Nyunt Han, former director of the Archaeology Department, Yangon, Burma/Myanmar, on “New Archaeological Discoveries from Surannabumi: the Golden Land.” He also spoke at the Friday brownbag on September 21 on “Situation of Archaeology in Myanmar and its New Discoveries.”

September 28
Linh Dinh, bilingual (English and Vietnamese) poet, fiction writer, essayist and translator, on “Straddling Cultures: The Writings of Linh Dinh.”

October 5
Alan Potkin, adjunct consultant at NIU, on “The Debacle at Nongchanh, Vientiane.”

October 19
Mark Rosenbaum, assistant professor of marketing at NIU, on “The Selling of Birth Control Products in Myanmar.”

October 26
Leon Lam, chair of the board of directors, Cambodia American Heritage Museum and Killing Fields Memorial, Chicago, on the history of the museum and museum, including a discussion of the current exhibit Khmer Spirit: Arts and Culture of Cambodia.

November 2
Judy Lederwood, associate professor and chair of the Department of Anthropology at NIU, on “The Rebirth of Cambodian Buddhism.”

November 9
Hnin-chau Taw La, Ph.D. candidate in ethnomusicology at UCLA, on “Festivalizing Thingyan, Negotiating Ethnicity: Politics and Performance in a Burmese Community in Taiwan.”

November 16
Ingrid Jordt, assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, on “Burma and the Moral Politics of Renunciation: What ‘Turning Over the Rice Bowl’ Means for the Juntas, the Monkhood and the Buddhist Laity.”

January 25
Coral Carlson, NIU graduate student in history, on “Food for Thought: Cylindrical Jars of the Bayon Bas-reliefs.”

February 1
John Hartmann, Presidential Teaching Professor (Thai), and Saw Tun, associate professor (Burmese), both of the NIU Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, on “A Chain of Chiang: From Kengtung, Burma to Xiang Khuang, Laos and Beyond.”

February 8
Catherine Raymond, associate professor of art history at NIU, “The NIU Burma Art Collection: A New Approach for Teaching Burmese Culture.”

March 21
Venerable U Bodhinyana, Yangon, “On the Interaction Between the Buddhist and Muslim Communities.”

March 27-28
Adam Kwon, assistant professor of film at Ohio University, on “Southeast Asia Horror Cinema: Local Specificities, Transnational Contexts.” He also spoke at the March 28 graduate colloquium on “Thai Horror Cinema’s Continuing Evolution.”

April 11
Kim Sedra, Ph.D. candidate in political science at Gothenburg University, and research fellow at the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI), on “Where Decentralization Meets Democracy: Civil Society, Local Government and Accountability in Cambodia.”

April 18
Gerry P. Dyck, ethnomusicologist at the University of Massachusetts, on “On the Trail of the Vanishing Pin Pbia.”

April 25
Vasa Sivrinathob, Ph.D. candidate in political science, NIU, on “Controlling Migrant Workers: Thailand’s Experience.”

May 2
Angelene Nwe, associate professor of history at Judson University, on “Karen Refugees in Thailand: The Settlement, the Challenges and Adjustment.”
New Zealand with her husband, former University of Canterbury. She returned to New Zealand, where she is teaching at the

Catherine Raymond (art

Dwight King

languages and literatures). They join center

Grant Olson

Kenton Clymer

Committee members

Welcome Aboard

SEAP welcomes new Publications Committee members Kenton Clymer (history) and Grant Olson (foreign languages and literatures). They join center director Dwight King and returning members Catherine Raymond (art history) and Naimah Talib.

Crossroads: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

Historian Naimah Talib is serving as the editor of Crossroads from Christchurch, New Zealand, where she is teaching at the University of Canterbury. She returned to New Zealand with her husband, former

NIU political science faculty member James Ockey. In June 2007 after a year at NIU. She gets up early in the morning (5 a.m. NZ time) to meet by conference call with the Publications Committee. Her first issue as editor, Vol. 18.2, was published in December and featured articles from Laos, Malaysia, and Singapore, followed shortly thereafter by Vol. 19.1 (out this spring), a special issue guest-edited by Ockey and devoted to the politics of post-Thaksin Thailand. Vol. 19.2 is due out in fall.

The Journal of Burma Studies

Alicia Turner is now working with Catherine Raymond as the managing editor of the journal. She is completing her dissertation on Buddhism and colonialism in Burma at the University of Chicago and will join NIU’s history department in the fall as a visiting assistant professor. She replaces Christopher Miller (M.A. music 2002), curator of audiovisual resources and musical instruments at the Musical Instrument Museum in Phoenix, Arizona, who served as managing editor for the past four years. Volume 11 of the JBS was published in March. Volume 12 is due out in late fall 2008.

Easy listening

SEAP completed the upgrade of the audio components of its best-selling Vietnamese language courses, Spoken Vietnamese for Beginners and Contemporary Vietnamese. Cassette tapes were converted to CDs with the assistance of Grant Olson, director of the NIU Foreign Language Learning Center. Both courses, including the two activity manuals for SYB, may be ordered with audio in MP3 or audio CDs (CD-ROM for SYB).

In 2008, again with Grant Olson’s assistance, SEAP is working on converting the audio CD the 34-tape set that accompanies John Ockel’s Burmese: A Course in Four Volumes. Catherine Raymond, Saw Tun, and Caroline Quinlan traveled to the University of Wisconsin-Madison in August 2007 to consult with author John Ockel on updating the audio for his respected course. Professor Ockel, who recently retired from the University of London School of Oriental and African Studies Language Centre, was on campus to teach at SEASSI. Special thanks go to Mary Prochnial and the rest of the team at the UW language lab, who digitized the entire set of tapes in June 2007 for limited use by SEASSI students and sent the files to SEAP and Grant Olson to use in producing the CDs. Considering that the center has been receiving an increasing number of orders for the Ockel course in the past six months, upgrading the audio could not be timelier.

The Amazon Advantage

SEAP has signed on with Amazon.com’s Advantage marketing program on a trial basis. This relationship now means SEAP sends batches of books on consignment to Amazon, and they handle the order fulfillment for orders that come through them. We are trying out this arrangement for one year, but already we have noticed that we are selling considerably more books through Amazon than before.

Forthcoming in 2008

• Crossroads Vol. 19, No. 2
• JBS Vol. 12

Royal Mekong River Basin: Studies in History and Culture

The Middle Mekong River Basin: Studies in History and Culture, a collection of essays edited by Constance M. Wilson (professor emeritus, history). As current economic policies in the middle Mekong River Basin are fundamentally changing the life of the people living there, this book considers the history, art, literature, religious beliefs, and cultural dancers from the Indonesian Consulate, Thai dancers, and a Vietnamese songstress. The evening included delicious homemade Southeast Asian food. The club also co-sponsored the Burmese Culture Night with the Burma Interest Group. Club member Suervui Yanthukj (political science major) organized a screening of a Thai horror film, Art of the Dead II, with the Kappa Phi Beta fraternity. Another member, Rebecca Chapella (M.A. candidate, anthropology), created a Facebook page for the organization. We invite you to join us online at www.facebook.com/.

This year’s Southeast Asian Studies Student Conference in March (see page 15) was an exciting departure from previous conferences. The keynote address by Thida Mam, a survivor of the Cambodian holocaust and international advocate for a Cambodian Genocide Tribunal, drew a larger crowd than expected. The conference also featured papers presented by a number of graduate and undergraduate students from NIU on a wide variety of topics relating to Southeast Asia.

Bridging Cultures with the Southeast Asia Club

The Southeast Asia Club has always taken an active part in promoting understanding and appreciation of Southeast Asia at NIU. This year was no different. In the fall, the SEA Club hosted the first of the year’s two Southeast Asian Culture Nights, featuring cultural dancers from the Indonesian Consulate, Thai dancers, and a Vietnamese songstress. The evening included delicious homemade Southeast Asian food. The club also co-sponsored the Burmese Culture Night with the Burma Interest Group. Club member Suervui Yanthukj (political science major) organized a screening of a Thai horror film, Art of the Dead II, with the Kappa Phi Beta fraternity. Another member, Rebecca Chapella (M.A. candidate, anthropology), created a Facebook page for the organization. We invite you to join us online at www.facebook.com/.

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In spring, the SEA Club hosted another Southeast Asian Culture Night, this time focusing on the music of the region, including a performance of NIU’s own Gamelan troupe. Philippine Culture Night, a collaborative effort between the International Training Office, the Southeast Asia Club, and the Philippine Student Association, was held April 25, with participants of the Philippine Youth Leadership Program as special guests. An end-of-year picnic/barbeque is planned for May.

Motivated and enthusiastic individuals with a passion for learning about the 11 countries of Southeast Asia (Brunei, Burma [Myanmar], Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) are always welcome to join the SEA Club or participate in its activities. The club’s twin goals are to promote awareness and understanding of Southeast Asia in the entire NIU community in addition to building relationships and fostering the exchange of information between Southeast Asians and those interested in the region. For information about the SEA Club or any of the events it sponsors, contact the club at seaclubniu@yahoo.com.

Lily Ann Villaraza, Treasurer

SEA Club members danced and dined at the May 2007 end-of-year SEA Club picnic, which was held outside the center’s new home (since 2006): the Pettengil House on the north end of campus.

The Southeast Asia Club helped the center represent Southeast Asia in April 2007 at a Multicultural Family Fun Night event at the DeKalb County Farm Bureau in Sycamore. Pipathida Sererepaenjapol, a 2006-07 FLTA student (Thai), above, demonstrated classical Thai dancing.

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Cambodia: Revisiting Buddhism’s rebirth

Professor Judy Ledgerwood, center, with students from the 2007 Cambodian field school and several Buddhist monks at a local temple.

“Having experience abroad is essential. It’s a life-changing experience,” says Professor Judy Ledgerwood (anthropology). In her senior year as an undergraduate student at the University of Puget Sound in 1981-82, she traveled to nine Asian countries in nine months in a study-abroad program.

She became deeply interested in Theravada Buddhism and Cambodia and went on to get her Ph.D. in cultural anthropology. And over the years has returned to Southeast Asia often in the course of her profession.

But that first in-depth exposure to societies different than her own was the key, says Ledgerwood, who has been at NIU since 1996.

“It is another reason I’m an anthropologist.”

Ledgerwood was back in Cambodia for a month in summer 2007, leading a field school in ethnographic methodology for 18 students, a dozen of them Cambodians from the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUEA) in the capital city of Phnom Penh. The other students were from the U.S., Canada, and France.

The field school, a cooperative project with RUEA’s Department of Sociology and NIU’s Department of Anthropology, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Division of International Programs, was a repeat of a successful field school in 2003. The program began with a week of classes at RUEA taught by Ledgerwood and various guest speakers, including former NIU student Sedana Kim (M.A. anthropology 2003). The students covered Cambodia’s cultural religion, and study methods.

Professor Judy Ledgerwood, center, with students from the 2007 Cambodian field school and several Buddhist monks at a local temple.

Ledgerwood said. In conducting their research, students were grouped in three-person teams, two Cambodians and one non-Cambodian. The teams traveled to the countryside and visited Buddhist temples.

The research topic was the resurgence of Buddhism in Cambodia since the fall of the Khmer Rouge, a radical Marxist regime that outlawed any practice of religion, in the late 1970s. Prior to the revolution, Buddhist temples were the source of learning and literacy for many young men, who ordained as monks as part of their schooling. “It was considered a rite of passage,” Ledgerwood said.

“In the old days, it was the common way for men to get education….they learned to read and write, then learned chanting prayers.”

After the fall of the Khmer Rouge, the practice of religion was allowed, but only men over 50 years old were allowed to ordain. This limited the total number of monks and nuns. Under the Nations-sponsored elections of 1992-93, those restrictions have loosened and Buddhist temples are again thriving, according to Ledgerwood. While Buddhism is still the pathway to education for the poor, the entire society is changing and what impact that will have on Buddhism is in question, Ledgerwood said.

In conducting their research, students were grouped in three-person teams, two Cambodians and one non-Cambodian. The teams traveled to the countryside and visited Buddhist temples within a 30-mile radius of Phnom Penh, returning at night. In each community, teams interviewed monks, nuns, novices, and community members about the history of rebuilding their community temple since the end of the Khmer Rouge. The results of this research will be compared with the 2003 field school's data.

For information, call (815) 753-0304. The program is coordinated by the NIU Study Abroad Office in the Emerald Buddha, archeological sites, former U.S. military bases, and educational backgrounds.

American students are invited to join a team (the Cambodians also served as translators on the teams). Teams traveled daily to communities and their respective Buddhist temples within a 30-mile radius of Phnom Penh, returning at night. In each community, teams interviewed monks, nuns, novices, and community members about the history of rebuilding their community temple since the end of the Khmer Rouge. The results of this research will be compared with the 2003 field school’s data.

Malaysia: Learning history through experience

A team of students will spend time in the capital city of Bangkok, while also visiting cities and acquaintance in universities, medicine, politics and government, and educational backgrounds.

This summer has returned to Southeast Asia often in the course of his profession.

Assistant Professor Eric Jones (history) sees it, there is no substitute for experience when it comes to learning about Southeast Asia. “My philosophy is that the country is the classroom,” says Jones, an expert on Malaysian and Indonesian history.

Jones, who is a fluent Malay speaker (among other languages) and has years of experience with the region including having lived in Malaysia and Indonesia, took 12 NIU students to Malaysia for nearly a month in summer 2007. Only two, he said, had been to Southeast Asia before.

The group included Coral Carlson, Sean Dolan, Allison Guedes, Megan Henke, Rebecca Suhajda, William Ippen, Brett McCabe, Glenn Oba, Elaine Phillips, Rebecca Subahja, and Brent West.

Jones said he tries to make a trip like this a “complete immersion learning experience.” In addition to visiting historical sites, museums, and numerous other locales, students interviewed people and talked to experts in each location in order to make a meaningful connection with the topic at hand, said Jones, who first visited the area when he was 21 years old.

To learn about the migrant labor situation in Malaysia, for example, Jones’ group visited a tea plantation. To understand how Islam and commerce are connected, Jones took the group to the Sultan’s Palace in Melaka. Malaysia’s long history of being at the cultural and commercial crossroads of Southeast Asia offers students a unique opportunity to interact with many aspects of Asia in one place: different populations (Malay, Chinese, and Indian); different religions (Islamic, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, animist, and syncretic); and different races and cultures (Arab, Indian, Chinese, and Malay).

Jones will follow this summer’s trip with another to Malaysia, again returning in the summer of 2009. And, he said, “I get to see it all again through their eyes.”
Let Us Hear From You
Keep up with friends, classmates, transitions, and events. Send us your latest information by e-mail to cseas@niu.edu (put “Alumni News” in the subject line) or by regular mail to the center. Make the Alumni News section of The Mandala the place to post and be posted!

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SEAsite: Language and Culture Resources on Southeast Asia
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Southeast Asia Publications www.cseas.niu.edu/seap/

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