

CENTER FOR
SOUTHEAST
ASIAN
STUDIES



W I N T E R 2 0 1 5



N E W S L E T T E R

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear CSEAS Community,

It's been another busy, stimulating, and successful year at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies. As you will read in the pages to come, our faculty, staff, and students have been involved in numerous activities that have brought positive attention to SEA at U-M and to our university wherever they have traveled around the globe. As the academic year draws to a close, I am happy to report that we had another full slate of speakers who are experts in different fields and countries of Southeast Asia. We hosted several visiting scholars who made use of our museum and library collections, and we continued to strengthen our partnerships with professional schools at U-M. We also welcomed our first ever undergraduate intern as well as a new academic program specialist, both of whom are featured in the page that follows.

U-M is a leader in its broad regional expertise encompassing most of the countries of Southeast Asia. Our long history in Filipino, Indonesian, Thai, and Vietnamese studies is reflected in the specialty areas of our faculty and in the languages that we support on campus, and recent conferences on Malaysian studies spearheaded by U-M students are a welcome and needed expansion of SEA programming. Our faculty have also done research in Burma/Myanmar, and this past winter we welcomed a visiting scholar who resides in Brunei. In order to bring attention to these areas, in this newsletter, and in future issues, we will present concise information about the history of SEA studies at U-M. The write-ups are not meant to be comprehensive, but are useful in reminding us all of U-M's long and active commitment to SEA studies.

Finally, I hope that as you read through this newsletter you will feel as proud of our students as we already do. From the beloved tradition of cultural nights to the achievements of our doctoral, MA, and language students, their energy and efforts have enriched campus life. CSEAS has done its best to provide support to the various student groups and to assist students with their research.

Christi-Anne Castro

CSEAS Director

Associate Professor of Ethnomusicology

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AN INTERVIEW WITH NAYIRI MULLINIX, CSEAS ACADEMIC PROGRAM SPECIALIST

By Fikri Fisal

Can you share with us a bit of your personal background?

I was born in Boston, Massachusetts, to Armenian parents. At the time, my father was a professor at Harvard. When I was eight years old, he accepted a position at the University of Michigan as the Marie Manoogian Professor of Armenian Language and Literature. Moving to Ann Arbor was a big change for my family. The Boston area has a huge Armenian community, and Ann Arbor does not. We grew up speaking Armenian and suddenly we lived someplace where very few people spoke our language. My older sister always missed Boston and moved back as soon as she graduated from college. I, on the other hand, felt very much at home in Ann Arbor and, aside from four years in East Lansing, have lived here ever since. My husband and I currently live on the west side of Ann Arbor with our tiny Pomeranian, Albi.

What did you study in school?

I obtained my first degree in journalism from Michigan State University with a focus on religion. I took every religion class available to me, mostly because I had many personal questions and was interested in learning about world cultures and history. I had always been fascinated by the role of religion in people's lives. The classes I took included Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Native American religions. After I graduated from MSU, I worked as a radio producer at Michigan Radio (the NPR affiliate in Ann Arbor) for a few years. There came a point of transition in my job at the radio station, and I decided to use the opportunity to return to school and pursue another path I had always been intrigued by: education. I went to the University of Michigan and obtained a second bachelor's in elementary education. I earned a teaching certificate and, for nine years, I worked as an elementary school teacher while simultaneously earning a master's degree in early childhood education from Eastern Michigan University. I also attended intensive Montessori training during those years. Needless to say, it was a very busy nine years!

Are you a Wolverine or a Spartan fan?

I'm not a huge sports fan, so I'm happy if either



team wins. I will say, though, that I hold a special place in my heart for the U-M men's basketball team. When I was in middle school, my father had a student who was an assistant coach, and he'd hold tickets for us at will call on a regular basis. We got to attend many games during the Fab Five era and it was very, very exciting.

Between Ann Arbor and East Lansing, which one do you prefer?

I love Ann Arbor! No matter how much fun I had while I was in school at MSU, no matter how many good things I discovered in East Lansing, it never quite compared to Ann Arbor. I am proud to be part of a community that offers an array of opportunities ranging from events such as the Ann Arbor Film Festival to great music, fantastic food, and beautiful parks.

Being around children must produce a lot of great memories. Is there any unforgettable experience in your teaching career that you wish to share?

Yes, being with children is always entertaining and soon after I started teaching I realized that I had to keep record of the things the children would say to me. One of my recent favorites was when my student told me that his father told him that "beer and steak are the two most important things in life." Needless to say, it took me a moment to respond to my eight-year-old friend, and when I finally did say, "Oh, he was probably only joking," he lifted an eyebrow and said, "No, Mrs. Mullinix. He is dead serious." How could I not laugh?

After nine years, you're with the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Michigan. What are you looking to discover here?

I am a person of many hobbies and interests. My interest in world cultures includes many facets of life and, in particular, music. I have worked in a variety of record stores (usually part-time and in the evenings) for a combined total of 13

years and, for the last eight, I was responsible for organizing and categorizing the world music section at Encore Recordings in Ann Arbor. In doing so, I was able to deepen my love for music from many parts of the world including that of Southeast Asia. I am especially fond of Vietnamese rock, pop, and soul from the 1960s and 70s, and shadow music from Thailand. I enjoy hearing folk music and music of ethnic minorities whenever possible, and paid a great deal of attention to such recordings when I came across them at the record store. I also love to explore cultures through food, and I am very enthusiastic about the cuisine of Southeast Asia. Currently, my favorite dish is #52 from Dalat Vietnamese Restaurant in Ypsilanti. Pretty specific, I know. It's that delicious! I look forward to traveling to the region to experience and learn about the cultures of Southeast Asia first hand. ■

MEET FIKRI FISAL, CSEAS STUDENT FELLOW

By Nayiri Mullinix



Fikri Fisal is CSEAS' first student fellow. He is an undergraduate senior majoring in actuarial math and history. Fikri is from Malaysia and was sent to the University of Michigan by the Malaysian government to study actuarial math (the math used in the operations of private and social insurance and employee benefit plans) but discovered in the process that he has a passion for history. Hence, the double major.

During the summer of 2014, Fikri got some real-world math and problem-solving experience during a two-month internship at the Prime >>

PHILIPPINE STUDIES AT U-M

>> Minister's Department in Malaysia. He worked in the Performance and Management Delivery Unit, which oversees the implementation of key government projects. Essentially, the unit acts as a consultant to the government (in addition to those in South Africa, Tanzania, and India). In his role, Fikri had the opportunity to learn about the algorithm used by the unit to analyze problems and present solutions, and then had to apply the knowledge to conduct research on Peru. At the end of his internship, Fikri had to present his findings on Peru to the minister of the Performance and Management Delivery Unit. He was intrigued by and wants to learn more about solving problems in this way in order to better understand how to provide effective solutions.

Fikri stays connected to the SEA community at the University of Michigan in a variety of ways. As the former president of the Malaysian Student Association, he led his team in organizing the 2013 Malaysian Cultural Night. Fikri also sat on this year's committee in planning their 2nd Malaysian Studies Forum, which took place April 4, 2015. Fikri also attends many of the CSEAS Noon Lecture Series and has provided write-ups for the website.

We sat down together recently and got to know each other a bit. He told me that he has enjoyed his time in Ann Arbor, a "hip" city. He appreciates the city's food offerings and, in particular, the variety of ethnic food options available. He doesn't so much appreciate the cold as, compared to the weather in Malaysia, these temperatures are quite harsh. Fikri feels that his greatest strength is the fact that he is curious and always looking to learn new things. As he graduates from college, his hope is to maintain this curiosity and to continue to strive to learn new things about parts of the world that he's not familiar with. This is something that Fikri and I have in common, and I encouraged him to maintain this trait in his post-college life.

As someone who has never visited Malaysia, I asked Fikri to share some things about his country that are not-to-miss. He explained the emphasis placed on preserving the cultural heritage of different ethnicities, and three in particular: Malay, Chinese, and Indian. The country works to preserve their heritage by offering public holidays for each, circulating newspapers in each language as well as offering a public education that embraces various cultures. I also learned that Malaysia is known for top talents in badminton and squash, grows rafflesia (the largest flower in the world), and has a lot to offer tourists including eco-tourism and beautiful islands and beaches.

The last question I asked Fikri was, "If I were to travel to Malaysia tomorrow, what is the first thing you'd recommend I do?" As a food enthusiast, I loved Fikri's answer. He told me to eat as many things as possible. In particular, he recommends Malaysia's Mamak restaurants. Mamak refers to Tamil Muslims of Malaysian nationality whose ancestors came from South India. He told me that Roti canai and the drink Teh tarik are not to be missed. Fikri also encouraged me to learn how to speak Malay as, he says, it is an easy language to learn. ■

U-M has a long history of research dating back to the emergence of the U.S. as a global power in the late nineteenth century. These resources are located in the U-M Library Special Collections, Michigan Bentley Historical Library, and the Anthropology Museum. Filipino scholars attended the university throughout the early part of the twentieth century as *pensionados*, Barbour scholars, and through other means, while students and faculty from U-M continued to travel to the Philippines to undertake specialized research. Through its museum and library collections, faculty exchanges, and institution of programs at prominent academic institutions in the Philippines, U-M rose to prominence as a center for Philippine studies.

In the 1970s, activists engaged in consciousness-raising activities about martial law and human rights abuses in the Philippines, strengthening ties between community members, U-M faculty and staff, and students. The pioneering effort of Philippine language study began in 1977 with a Luce Foundation Grant to hire Paz Buenaventura Naylor, a faculty member in linguistics, to teach courses in Tagalog. Monthly lectures and workshops, community events, and other activities based on topics related to the Philippines were actively promoted from the 1980s onward, and the Philippine Studies Group (PSG) was formally organized by graduate and undergraduate students, faculty, and Filipino community members in the late 1990s. In 1994, Adelwisa Agas Weller took over language instruction, and the course was formally changed to Filipino in 2000, following the national language name in the 1987 Philippine Constitution.

The Philippine Studies Endowment Fund Initiative started in the early 2000s and became a Philippine Studies Endowment Fund in 2007. That same year, Deirdre de la Cruz was hired to teach Philippine studies through the Departments of History and Asian Languages and Cultures. She regularly offers a survey course on the history of the Philippines for undergraduates, and has seen enrollments in this course consistently grow, not only drawing students of Filipino heritage, but also those interested in a number of different historical and regional fields. She also teaches a variety of courses on Southeast Asia that include Philippine content.

Based on this success and the outstanding human and material resources at U-M, Philippine studies is poised to expand its role, initiate new programs of study, and play a lasting and positive role in U.S.-Philippine relations. ■



The study of matters Vietnamese at U-M began with research on ceramics collected in the Philippines during the 1920s and then housed in the Dean Frasche Collection of the 1940s. The Vietnamese pieces in these collections are studied to this day, guided by Carla Sinopoli. Vietnamese Studies gained its foundation in the 1960s as John Musgrave, curator of the SEA materials, started to build the library collection. His successor, Fe Susan Go, has made frequent collecting trips to Vietnam. In the early 1990s, Go brought the international Vietnam Union Cataloging Project to campus, setting up the well-cataloged collection we have today (almost 20,000 Vietnamese language works, over 1,500 in French, and about 12,000 in English). In addition, other materials relating to Vietnam exist in the radical materials of the Labadie Collection in the Special Collections section of the Graduate Library, organized by Julie Herrada.

John K. Whitmore arrived in 1971 and proceeded to teach the history of Vietnam. The 1972–73 Vietnam Curriculum Project, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and organized by Whitmore, Huynh Sanh Thong (Yale), and Keith Taylor (U-M), developed teaching materials and culminated in an undergraduate course. In the summer of 1992, both Thong and Taylor participated in a major workshop on translation held at U-M. Thong, Taylor, and Whitmore all went on to produce important publications on Vietnam. Norman Owen developed the first Vietnam War course on campus, one that continued for decades under the auspices of Tom Collier, Victor Lieberman, and others. The general history of Vietnam continued in the Southeast Asian history courses of Victor Lieberman, Whitmore and Rudolf Mrazek.

The 1980s saw a shift to the contemporary study of Vietnamese peoples and their situation in the U.S. In 1979, CSEAS organized a workshop to inform refugee sponsors in Michigan on these Southeast Asians and their cultures, producing a collection of essays edited by Whitmore. This decade also saw the beginnings of what would become the Southeast Asia Summer Studies Institute (SEASSI) at U-M. The university began to offer courses in Vietnamese in the early 1990s, taught first by Ms. Nguyen Thi Nga, and then more recently by Nguyen Thi Thuy Anh, who has led student groups to Vietnam on summer trips as well as a short winter trip. Through a generous gift from Larry and Phyllis Miller, the Miller-Tran Endowment has been providing support for the teaching and learning of Vietnamese at U-M. With the opening of Vietnam to U.S. scholars, a number of U-M anthropologists have spent time studying Vietnamese society, and the U-M Center for Population Studies has included Vietnam in its demographic research.

The twenty-first century brought with it a strong interest in the music of Vietnam. In 2008, visiting professor Nguyen Phong offered a performance course with over 20 students. Shortly thereafter, two doctoral students graduated with dissertations on music topics of Vietnam. At present, there is a spark of interest in Vietnam within the Schools of Public Health and Nursing.

Over the years we have granted doctoral degrees to scholars of Vietnam in anthropology, comparative literature, history, and musicology, among other fields. Through CSEAS, Vietnam has, over the past five decades, been the subject of community outreach and teacher workshops involving the country, the war, and the spread of Vietnamese people throughout the globe. ■

VIETNAMESE STUDIES AT U-M



Stacey Kartub

CSEAS PARTNERS WITH GEEO TO SEND EDUCATOR ABROAD

CSEAS is proud to partner with Global Exploration for Educators Organization (GEEO) this year to offer a \$1,000 travel award to help fund one educator's travel to Southeast Asia. Congratulations to Stacey Kartub, this year's award recipient! Currently an English teacher at Henry Ford Community College, Stacey has extensive experience teaching at the community college level and was also an elementary school teacher earlier in her career. Teaching English to a large English as a Second Language (ESL) population has inspired Stacey to explore as many different cultures as possible. As she plans for her trip to Bali and Lombok this summer, Stacey expects that her travels in Southeast Asia will expand her understanding of the culture, literature, and religions of the region which, in turn, will deepen her connection with the students she teaches. ■

2015 ASIA BUSINESS CONFERENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN ROSS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Into its 25th anniversary, this year's Asia Business Conference took place January 30–31 at the Ross School of Business and brought over 30 prominent business executives and government officials to participate in 11 different panel discussions and interactive sessions that provided first-hand insights from industry experts about the challenges and opportunities across industries in Asia. ■



Left: ASEAN panelists and student organizers, left to right, Linda Lim (professor), Guna Nadarajan (Dean of School of Art and Design), Ashok Kumar Mirpuri (Singapore's Ambassador to the U.S.), Chung Owyang (professor), Irinia Aristarkhova (professor).

Below: Keynote Speaker Ashok Kumar Mirpuri, Singapore's Ambassador to the U.S.; conference participants.





UPDATE FROM SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH COHORT

Cynthia Darling-Fisher and Laura Rozek traveled on a CSEAS-sponsored trip to Denpasar, Indonesia, in November, 2014. They made the trip to establish partnerships with institutions for future research collaborations and student clinical experiences and spent a portion of their time at the Polytechnic Institute of Health, Denpasar.

Cynthia Darling-Fisher is a clinical assistant professor and family nurse practitioner at the U-M School of Nursing (UMSN). Laura Rozek is an associate professor with the Department of Environmental Health Sciences at the U-M School of Public Health (U-M SPH) and the associate director of U-M SPH Office of Global Public Health.

While there, Darling-Fisher and Rozek, along with faculty from the Polytechnic Institute of Health, presented at the institute's first international seminar, "Issues of Global Health Challenge." They spoke to an audience of over 400 students and faculty from the institute's educational programs including nursing, midwifery, nutrition, public health, dentistry, and others. Following their presentations, Darling-Fisher and Rozek had a lively question and answer period with the audience.

The visit also included discussions with the director of the institute, the director of nursing, and nursing faculty about possible collaborative experiences for nursing and public health students. They were also able to tour a local hospital, a public health center, and a nurse-managed clinic. In addition, Darling-Fisher met with the dean of the medical faculty, the dean of students, and School of Nursing faculty at Udayana University in Denpasar, who were also interested in possible collaborative experiences with UMSN. Rozek continued her travels to Jakarta, Indonesia and Hanoi, Vietnam to explore potential partnerships with schools of public health and local research initiatives to develop global field experience opportunities for students at U-M. ■

From left to right. **Row 1:** Kathryn Demanelis, NLP Yuniarti Suntari, Laura Rozek, Katie Rentschler, Cynthia Darling-Fisher, Anak Agung Ngurah Kusumajaya. **Row 2:** I Nyoman Gejir, I Wayan Suardana

CSEAS hosted four guest lecturers for the winter 2015 Fridays at Noon Lecture Series.

February 20

Ward Keeler, professor of anthropology at the University of Texas at Austin
"Masculinity, Autonomy and Attachment in Buddhist Burma"



March 13

James Siegel, professor emeritus of anthropology at Cornell University
"War Versus Holy War: The Literature of a Sumatran Jihad"

March 20

Pierre Landry, associate professor of political science at the University of Pittsburgh
"Dispute Resolution in Vietnam"



April 10

Kale Fajardo, associate professor of American studies and Asian American studies at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
"We Heart Malolos: Cultural Heritage Preservation/Tourism in Malolos, Bulacan, Philippines"



Rommel Curaming (Brunei) was selected as one of three CSEAS Library and Special Collections Fellows for 2015. He spent the month of March working with the collections at the Bentley Historical Library and gave a talk at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. Our third fellow, Patricia Dacudao (Philippines), will be here in July.

CSEAS FELLOWSHIP AND AN ENCOUNTER WITH AN ARCHIVE

By Rommel Curaming

The politics of knowledge production and consumption is the overarching theme that runs through my research. I explore scholar-scholar and state-scholar relations in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia, to demonstrate the political processes that underpin the formation and use of knowledge. I am particularly interested in ways by which scholarly practice conceals, aestheticizes, enables, validates, or justifies political interests, by reconstituting or repackaging them, calling them by another name, and making them appear like something other than what they may actually be.

When I came across a call for applications to the CSEAS Special Collection Fellowship at U-M, I proposed to use the extensive collection in the Bentley Historical Library to examine the life of Joseph Ralston Hayden (JRH). My interest in his life was fueled by my hunch that he may be an exemplar of the mutually reinforcing relationship between knowledge and power. JRH was a professor of political science at U-M from the 1920s to 1945. He had had extensive experience in the Philippines, having lived and served there in various capacities in the 1920s and 1930s as a visiting professor, a member of the exploratory team that assessed conditions,

and as the Vice Governor and Secretary of Public Instruction in colonial government. His prodigious editing and updating of Dean Worcester's book *The Philippines: Past and Present* (1930), and his monumental 800+-page book *The Philippines: A Study of a National Development* (1942), cemented his reputation as the foremost authority on Philippine affairs during that time. An invitation for him to join the elite team of analysts in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in the 1940s and his later service as adviser to General Douglas MacArthur were testaments to his expertise.

The JRH Collection is well-known among those interested in Philippine-American relations. I had heard how rich the collection was, so I expected it would occupy much of my limited time of four weeks in Ann Arbor. Despite the foreknowledge, I was still floored by the wealth of materials therein. Not only did I find an enormous amount of primary sources useful for my predesigned research purpose, but there were a wide range of other sources that can easily fire up a researcher's imagination. JRH, for one, is an inveterate letter-writer, so were all members of the Hayden family. Personal letters with friends, acquaintances, and family were regularly exchanged, spanning decades in many cases. These personal letters offer a fascinating glimpse at JRH's life as father, husband, friend, in-law, traveler, colleague, professor, and bureaucrat. Along with Mrs. Hayden's absorbing diary that provided rich detail of their daily life and travels in the Philippines in the 1930s, the letters offered a fascinating peek at the *zeitgeist* or the *mentalité* in the pre-war decades.

I was also delighted to realize that an interesting book history could be written based on over a decade-long letter exchange between JRH and Macmillan Press and other stakeholders, regarding, first, the editing and updating of Dean Worcester's *The Philippines: Past and Present* and, more importantly, the making of JRH's magnum opus *The Philippines: A Study in National Development*. Seldom can one find such rich documentation of the progress and delays in a book project.

The JRH Collection is particularly rich in materials relevant to Muslims in Mindanao. His travels in Sulu and other parts of Mindanao since the 1920s developed in him a deep and



Dr. Rommel A. Curaming is a lecturer in history and Southeast Asian studies. He serves as programme

leader (Chair) of the Historical and International Studies Programme at the University of Brunei Darussalam (UBD). Recently, he was at U-M to undertake archival work at the Bentley Historical Library as a grantee of the CSEAS Special Collection Fellowship. He completed a PhD at the Australian National University with a thesis that compares the state-historian relations in Indonesia and the Philippines during the Suharto and Marcos periods. Prior to joining UBD, he was a postdoctoral fellow at the National University of Singapore and La Trobe University under the Endeavour Australia Award. His research interests include the history and memory of political violence, the politics of writing and public consumption of history, comparative historiography, and knowledge politics and state-intellectual relations in Indonesia and the Philippines. He has published articles and reviews in international refereed journals such as *Critical Asian Studies*, *South East Asia Research*, *Time and Society*, *Sojourn*, *Philippine Studies*, and *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, among others.

lasting connection with the place, which he cultivated long after his stint as Vice Governor of the Philippines ended in 1935. Up to the 1940s, the flow of letters, reports, and other materials relevant to Mindanao continued. It is, for example, possible to produce a nuanced social history of Japanese occupation of Mindanao

based on reports submitted to JRH from various provinces. There are also documents about the Sultan of Sulu's claim to Sabah as well as ethnographic-like descriptions of aspects of everyday life, in addition to high-level intrigues among officials. Based on my initial impressions, despite having been frequently used before, there remains so much in the JRH Collection that can add something new or refine existing historical knowledge about the Philippines and the American presence there.

Aside from my very productive work at the archive, I was also given an opportunity to visit and deliver a talk entitled "Why Southeast Asia Matters" at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. It was truly a welcome break from my archival work. I treasured the opportunity to meet and engage with very welcoming faculty, staff, and students of the college.

I cannot be thankful enough to CSEAS under the leadership of Dr. Christi-Anne Castro for this fellowship grant. Aside from over 7,000 photos of archival documents that will make me preoccupied and productive for the next two years, I bring home wonderful memories of making new friends and seeing new places. The whole experience was as transformative as it was defining. ■

ON THE PATH TO REFORM SEMINAR IN THAILAND

Allen Hicken, associate professor of political science and former director of CSEAS at U-M, attended a seminar in Thailand titled "On the Path to Reform" on December 3, 2014. The seminar was organized by the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the Secretariat of the House of the Senate and the Secretariat of the House of Representatives with the hope to learn from experiences and lessons on the reform processes of various countries. The seminar focused on three areas: political reform, public administration, and local governance. Seen as an important start by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in support of the Thai government's reform process, the seminar was attended by members of the National Legislative Assembly, National Reform Council, representatives from government agencies and academic institutions, and members of the diplomatic corps, as well as relevant international organizations. Hicken was invited to participate in the seminar as the author of key research on political parties, political institutions, and the formulation of Southeast Asian political policies. ■



From left to right: Thitinan Pongsudhirak, Allen Hicken, José Francisco Pavia, Michael Vatikiotis



MALAYSIAN STUDIES FORUM

The second annual Malaysian Studies Forum, sponsored by CSEAS and other U-M units and organized by the Malaysian Student Association, was held on April 4 at the Rackham Amphitheater and featured the following speakers: Shad Saleem Faruqi, professor emeritus of law at the Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Malaysia; Meredith Weiss, professor of political science at the University at Albany, State University of New York; and Ziad Razak, master in public administration candidate at the Harvard Kennedy School.

The all-day forum featured talks, group discussions, and a panel session geared toward addressing the pertinent issues concerning Malaysia's constitutional law, economy, and student activism. The event attracted nearly 100 attendees including students from The Ohio State University, Drake University, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, The University of Iowa, as well as Malaysian government officials from Chicago and Washington, D.C. ■

Top, left to right: Fikri Faisal, Ziad Razak, Meredith Weiss, Shad Saleem Faruqi, Rasyad Razin
Middle: Meredith Weiss; Zayad Razak
Right: Students at Malaysian Studies Forum



ASIA

THROUGH THE DECADES

J. Stapleton Roy is the former U.S. ambassador to China, Indonesia, and Singapore, and founding director emeritus of the Kissinger Institute on China and U.S. Relations at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Ambassador Roy visited U-M in October 2014 and was interviewed by CSEAS Student Fellow Fikri Fisal.

Can you share your past involvement in Southeast Asia and how it began?

I was born in China to American missionary parents, and joined the U.S. Foreign Service right out of university. I was assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok (1959–61) and Taiwan (1962–64). I later spent two years in Bangkok (1981–84) as deputy chief of mission. After that, I was ambassador to Singapore (1984–86), China (1991–95), and Indonesia (1996–99).

How would you describe Southeast Asia in the 1960s?

It was very beautiful. When I drove down to Malaya, I visited Penang. Penang was a quiet place very different from Bangkok. I remembered staying in the Eastern & Oriental Hotel, and the bathroom was much larger than what I was used to having in a hotel room. I also stayed in the Raffles Hotel in Singapore, which was a sleepy colonial-style hotel. Jakarta was way behind compared to other Southeast Asian cities back then in terms of development, but it was beautiful. I also toured extensively in Bali and was amazed by the physical beauty of Indonesia.

There is enormous diversity in the area, and I had the advantage of seeing it during the late colonial period as the countries were rapidly modernizing. The contrast in the area between those days and now is immense.

What should ASEAN countries focus on to maintain solidarity amongst themselves?

They need to do what other successful countries have done—compromise. This is the fundamental key to political success. ASEAN countries have to balance themselves between China, the U.S., and other great powers. Thailand prefers to go along with China. Vietnam is sometimes a little bit feisty in dealing with China, but for historical reasons tends to go along with China, too. The Philippines tends not to agree with China. What's

important is that ASEAN countries do not let this difference of stance affect their unity.

Do you think religious diversity in Southeast Asia plays a role in relations with other countries?

Southeast Asia has always been a diverse region. We have Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, and Hinduism, as well as ethnic differences. Despite these challenges, there exists an internal force that was successful in creating ASEAN amid some external pressure. This was an amazing feat in itself. I think religion and ethnicity would not matter much in the dynamics with East Asia. There is a long-embedded value of tolerance in Southeast Asia and this value will always help the region for the greater good of maintaining peace and stability both internally and externally. Although there has been occasional unrest that threatened unity, like the Ambon unrest and others, they are not the driving factor in determining the politics of ASEAN towards China or other great powers.

What do you infer from political developments in Singapore and Indonesia currently?

In Singapore, there is a trend of a generational transition. Since the time of independence, living and education standards have risen greatly. They want more openness and democratization, and Singapore has not yet found an answer to this.

Indonesia had taken great shifts since the times of Soekarno, when Indonesia was highly nationalistic up to the point of launching a military campaign of *Konfrontasi* against Malaysia, and this made the creation of ASEAN very difficult. Soeharto changed that and led Indonesia to be a more inclusive country that allowed for the creation of ASEAN. The question now is whether Jokowi will be able to maintain Soeharto's effort by controlling Indonesian nationalism and preserving regional harmony.

Another challenge for Indonesia is that it has not received the respect it deserves from outside of ASEAN, because its economy is considered underdeveloped and the country still greatly depends on natural resources. Indonesia is trying hard to gain international recognition by earning a G20 membership, and they made a strong point by declaring that they are there as Indonesia, not as a representative of ASEAN.

Do you think ASEAN countries would benefit from stronger nationalism or regionalism like the European model?

I think that regionalism is definitely better. Nationalism is a really dangerous force. There are only certain times when you resort to nationalism such as when facing an external threat. Nationalism can easily spill over to chauvinism, the desire to push the "national agenda" at the expense of others. The U.S. has faced this and so have other countries. Moreover, nationalism gets very tricky in countries like Malaysia where the definition of nationalism itself is unclear because of multi-ethnic citizens.

What did you enjoy most during your period in Southeast Asia as an ambassador?

I liked the region and its geographical diversity. Best of all, I liked the fact that the region, not the individual countries, showed the determination and the drive to better their lives and conditions. The improvements in health standards, education, roads, buildings, tourism, and so on are glaringly great compared to earlier times. More importantly, they accomplished this growth through their own efforts. I was impressed by the countries in Southeast Asia. ■





Malaysian Cultural Night

TECHNI-CULTURE



The University of Michigan Malaysian Students' Association (MiMSA) organized Malaysian Cultural Night (MCN) 2015, which took place on March 22 at the Power Center. It was a night full of performance and food, showcasing the unique culture of Malaysia to the Ann Arbor community. Students performed a play that combined traditional and contemporary Malaysian culture, whilst incorporating a wide range of cultural performances which showcase the different ethnic groups in Malaysia as well as a fusion between cultures. The name of the evening, Techni-Culture, is meant to represent the merging of the three primary cultures found in Malaysia. Following the performance, attendees were treated to a buffet-style dinner serving a variety of authentic Malaysian delicacies. ■





INDONESIAN CULTURAL NIGHT

PERMIAS (Indonesian Student Association) hosted the annual Indonesian Cultural Night event on March 21, 2015 at the Modern Languages Building. The annual event, which aims to introduce the U-M community to authentic Indonesian culture, featured performances of traditional dances and musical performances that showcased the many traditions, cultures, and festivals in Indonesia. Guests were also treated to traditional entrees, desserts, and drinks. ■



THAI NIGHT

2015

The Thai Student Association's Thai Night 2015 took place on March 29. The event included authentic Thai food and live performances of Thai dances, Thai kick-boxing, classical Thai instruments, and other Thai traditions all woven into one cohesive play adapted from Thai folklore.



ĐÊM VIỆT NAM

The Vietnamese Student Association's annual culture show, *Đêm Việt Nam*, took place at the Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre on February 1. *Đêm Việt Nam* aims to display the effect of two cultures (Vietnamese and American) on university students. This year's event, with over 100 performers, featured traditional and modern dances, singing, and instrumental performances.



GAMELAN NEWS

By Susan Walton

Ethnomusicologist, Lecturer, and Gamelan Director at U-M

The University of Michigan gamelan will soon be the proud recipient of several new gamelan instruments from Java. Prominent among them is the *gong ageng*, or big gong, the largest and deepest-sounding instrument in a gamelan. This instrument is crucial as it marks the end of the longest musical phrases. In some pieces, the phrases could be several minutes long, meaning that the gong player could go out and have a cigarette between stokes on the gong! Musicians that play eight times as fast as the main beat depend on the gong to orient themselves, especially since there is no conductor and, at least in the traditional ensembles, no notation. The spirit of the gamelan is thought to reside in the *gong ageng*, which explains why offerings of a cooked chicken, flowers, and incense are often placed by it during performances. I am sure our gamelan, *Kyai Telaga Madu* (The Venerable Lake of Honey), will be delighted with its new gong.

We will also receive two smaller gongs, called *kempul*, or “*pul*” for short, as well as a few smaller instruments. Each gamelan has from one to 10 *kempuls*, tuned to different pitches. Ours has seven.

Bronze is the preferred metal for gamelan instruments, due both to its longevity and beautiful clear sound. We are fortunate to have a bronze gamelan. Forging gamelan instruments requires great skill. It is thought that gong smiths have occult mystical powers and that working with bronze protects them from dangerous spirits. The gamelan maker for our new instruments, Pak Tentrem Sarwanto of Surakarta, is the most famous gamelan maker in Java. I happened to be in Java last summer and was able to watch as one of our *kempuls* was cast, pounded, and forged.

Kyai Telaga Madu was probably about 50 years old when the university acquired it in 1967, so it is not surprising that some of the instruments need to be replaced. I am so grateful that CSEAS graciously agreed to pay the expenses. These new acquisitions show that the U-M Gamelan is still alive and well!

GAMELAN CONCERT UPDATE

By Megan Hill

U-M Graduate Student, Ethnomusicology

The U-M Javanese Gamelan Ensemble was thrilled to welcome visiting guest director, Roger Vetter, professor emeritus of music at Grinnell College, for the first half of winter term 2015. The group thrived under his expert leadership and deep enthusiasm. He led the ensemble through a rigorous practice schedule, leading to a well-attended and successful concert on February 15, which was enjoyed by the ensemble members and the audience alike.

GIVING TO THE GAMELAN

As always, we would like to thank our regular donors to the gamelan endowment. The concert in the winter semester was as mesmerizing as always. This coming fall, there are plans afoot for a large event featuring a dance and gamelan troupe from Indonesia playing alongside our students. Because of the large scale of this event, the U-M Gamelan Ensemble may require a separate donation campaign, and we will alert everyone about the possible concert and the fundraising efforts as soon as we have more information. In the meantime, the gamelan endowment continues to provide crucial funding for the upkeep of the gamelan and for visiting artists.

HOW TO GIVE: To donate online, please visit: <https://leadersandbest.umich.edu/find/#!/give/basket/fund/731164>. To donate by mail, please send a check made out to “The University of Michigan” with a note on the memo line that says “For Javanese Gamelan Endowment 731164” to:

Center for Southeast Asian Studies
3603 SSWB/International Institute
1080 S. University Avenue
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1106





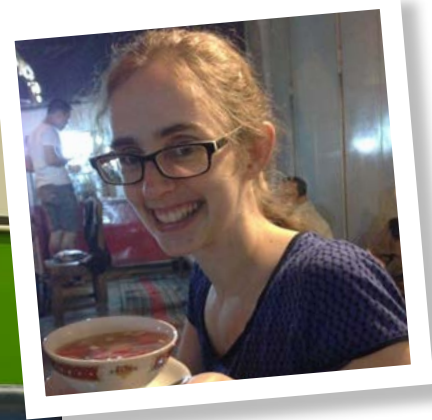
HELP KEEP OUR LANGUAGES GOING STRONG!

CSEAS supports the Southeast Asia language courses at U-M. While we have offered language scholarships for the past several years to encourage students to enroll, we do not have a consistent source of funding for all of them and rely upon your generous donations. Likewise, in what is becoming a wonderful annual event, **“Taste of Southeast Asia”** (shown here) promotes our language programs to students and has been successful in recruitment, but it also has no reliable funding stream. Please help us in our goal to raise enough money in this cycle to support language-related initiatives at U-M in the coming academic year, as they directly and positively impact enrollment in each language section.



Thank you for your generosity past, present, and future. To donate to our language initiatives online, please visit: <https://leadersandbest.umich.edu/find/#!/give/basket/fund/365095>. To donate by mail, please send a check payable to “The University of Michigan” with a note on the memo line: “For CSEAS Strategic Fund 365095” to:

Center for Southeast Asian Studies
3603 SSWB/International Institute
1080 S. University Avenue
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Congratulations to our CSEAS MA student, **Danna Jo Matsuki**, who is graduating this year. Danna Jo completed her MA thesis with guidance from her adviser, Nancy Florida. Included below is a summary of her thesis, titled “Drawing Lessons from the Past: Indonesian Curriculum on 1965-66 and the Purposes of Studying History.”

The essay explores issues of truth in history education in Indonesia by examining curriculum materials on a particular event in Indonesian history, that is the “attempted coup” of 1965 and its aftermath. This is a key event in Indonesian history, and yet in current history curricula it appears to be downplayed, and it is presented in a politically biased manner. The Indonesian education system is guided by a national curriculum which is set by the central government. Therefore, the material that teachers use is fairly standardized. This research involves a close reading of some of those materials, namely curriculum guides and high school textbooks, from the 2004, 2006, and 2013 national curricula. In each curriculum, we can find some information about the purposes or goals of studying history. This essay looks at how the events of 1965–66 have been taught in view of the stated purposes of the study of history in each curriculum. Some questions that it asks are: How has the account of 1965–66 in history curricula changed over time as the stated purposes of the study of history have changed? And, if the events of 1965–66 are not taught truthfully in the history curriculum, what are the implications for the study of national history in Indonesian schools? How does that lack of truth reflect on the attempts to fulfill the stated “purposes” of the study of history?

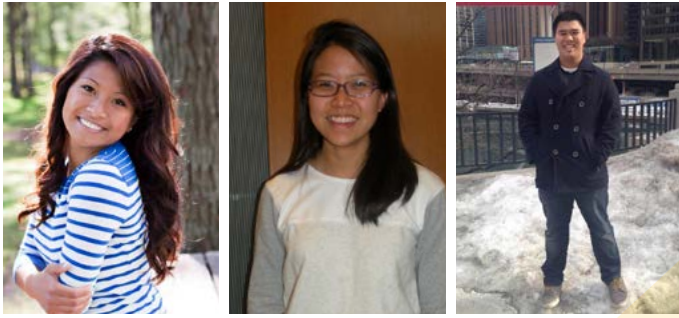
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN - UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO AREA STUDIES SYMPOSIUM

CSEAS MA students Nicole Smolinske and Zoë McLaughlin, with funding support from CSEAS, had the opportunity to attend the U-M-University of Puerto Rico (UPR) area studies symposium on March 6 and 7. This conference brought together graduate students from U-M and UPR to present and discuss papers investigating the negotiation of gender, race, and ethnicity in today’s ever more connected world. The conference also focused on ways in which scholarly work could be brought into K–12 classrooms, providing new perspectives and comparative examples for situations that the students already experience. The symposium was a fantastic opportunity for interdisciplinary collaboration, as the research presented brought to light issues from several different localities and academic disciplines.

Nicole presented on gendered political discrimination in Myanmar. Myanmar has one of the world’s lowest percentages of female

representation in parliament. Through examining Myanmar’s constitution, examples of implicit and explicit structural discrimination were examined and helped to explain the low level of female participation in political processes. Nicole’s presentation highlighted areas of improvement for gender participation in politics, and invited discussion of cultural and structural barriers that bar full political participation of women.

Zoë presented on the recent “jilboobs” debates in Indonesia. In August 2014, the Indonesian Ulema Council passed a fatwa banning the wearing of a hijab, known as a jilbab in Indonesia, along with tight clothing. This fatwa sparked a variety of discourse and debate on women’s clothing and its regulation. Her presentation explored some of this discourse and the various and sometimes surprising issues which arose, illustrating the complex state of veiling and ideas about veiling in Indonesia today.



LANGUAGE AWARDS

Each year, CSEAS language lecturers nominate one person from their classes to award as the best language student. Congratulations to this year's award recipients, who were recognized at the CSEAS end-of-year celebration on April 17, 2015.

Filipino: **Tiffany Jane Valencia** (left)

Tiffany is pursuing a bachelor's degree in neuropsychology with a minor in Southeast Asian studies.

Indonesian: **Samantha Chua** (middle)

Samantha is pursuing a master's degree in applied economics.

Thai: **Peter Sajjakulnukit** (right)

Peter is pursuing a bachelor's degree in neuroscience.

Vietnamese: **Phu Ho**

Phu is a student in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

JUDITH BECKER AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH ON SOUTHEAST ASIA

The Office of the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs established in 2010 this yearly prize in honor of this distinguished professor emerita from the School of Music, who has long ties to the Center for Southeast Asian Studies. The award is \$1,000.

A self-nominating competition open to graduate students at any level and in any program, students submit either a completed paper or a description of research they are currently working on, including field notes or other pertinent material.

CSEAS selected two recipients for the award this year due to the superior quality of this particular pool of applicants.

Kathryn Demanelis (left) received the award for her paper "Differences in Childhood Leukemia Incidence and Survival between Southern Thailand and the United States: A Population-Based Analysis."

Tina Le (right) received the award for her paper "Is That...Art? Shop 6 and 1970s Philippine Conceptualism."

THANK YOU TO OUR MOST RECENT DONORS.

Without you, our work would not be possible.

Asterisks indicate faculty, emeriti, and staff

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Cover image: Unidentified traditional Khmer Cambodian dancers perform ramayana epic. Siem Reap, Cambodia. February 27, 2013. DC_Aperture / Shutterstock.com

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