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About the Center

CSEAS seeks to promote a broader and deeper understanding of Southeast Asia, its people, histories, practices, and languages. Founded in 1961, the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) at the International Institute is one of the oldest centers in the U.S. devoted to the study of the region. Designated a National Resource Center by the U.S. Department of Education, CSEAS supports the teaching of several languages less commonly taught, critical to areas of national need, and increasingly important in today’s workforce. From its inception, the Center has been committed to creating a supportive environment where scholars, educators, students, and community members engage in dialogue related to Southeast Asia and interact with peoples of the region.

We support students in the field, with resources for study, research, service, and employment; we are especially pleased to support PhD students’ field research related to dissertations. Some of our awards include the Judith Becker Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Research on Southeast Asia, the Thai Studies Awards for Undergraduate and Graduate Research, SEA Language Scholarships, and Fulbright and FLAS Fellowships. We also support faculty research grants and bring scholars based in Southeast Asia to the University of Michigan.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear CSEAS Community,

What an extraordinary first year I have had as director! The 2019–2020 year was marked by COVID-19’s disruption of our daily and normal lives, regardless of geographic location, institutional rank, and disciplinary focus. Beginning in March, we cancelled our programming for the safety of all community constituents. Our students and faculty quickly pivoted to online remote learning and teaching, and some researchers prematurely left Southeast Asia, their fieldwork interrupted. In the face of continuing restrictions, students have adjusted their thesis work and language training, and faculty have sought ways to continue projects while supporting students’ success. I remain impressed by how CSEAS faculty and students have figured out how to thrive in this unprecedented and singular age.

We kick off the 2020–2021 academic year by welcoming Mary Gallagher, the new International Institute director, and our second cohort of Masters in Regional Studies students. The “new normal” mode of remote and virtual presents an opportunity to connect in innovative ways with our partners in Southeast Asia and at other institutions. Despite the turbulence, in this prospective year, CSEAS will still offer the usual regional, national, and international programming that you have come to expect, taking advantage of our community’s resilience and boundless spirit and of the rapid development of remote technology.

On the following pages, we proudly highlight our 2019-2020 faculty and student accomplishments and our academic and cultural programming, including the Friday Lecture Series, the Gamelan performance, the MENA-SEA Teacher Program, and the public discussion of the Washtenaw Reads book choice, Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen.

Our times are marked by loss of varying kinds. In the grip of this pandemic, one thing is certain: we are all in this together. COVID-19 has reminded us of the interconnectedness of our lives and the shared responsibilities toward wellbeing. Throughout the year, we will keep you informed about how our students, faculty, and stakeholders are making sense of and responding dynamically to our new and fraught times. Stay engaged with us, reach out, and “lean into” these uncertain times.

LAURA ROZEK
Director, Center for Southeast Asian Studies
Associate Professor, Environmental Health Sciences, Global Public Health and Nutrition
The Faces of the Southeast Asia Unit in the Library

While Susan Go is the public face for the Library’s Southeast Asia Unit, it would not be possible for her to run the unit efficiently without the cadre of people that is behind the scene.

Sujiro Meesanga Prayoonchong (Soji) received her BA degree in Architecture from Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok, Thailand. After practicing architecture for a number of years, she came to Eastern Michigan University (EMU) for both BS and MA degrees in computer science. She began to apply her technical knowledge to the library when she received an NEH grant to catalog the Thai Gedney Collection of books in 1987. She provided the unit with the most professional service in this project. She has continued to do so for over three decades in a wide variety of much-needed support regarding Thailand, Laos, and Southeast Asia broadly—quite an accomplishment.

Lien Dang hails from Hanoi via Belgium and France. She is a graduate of the Academy of Finance in Hanoi, Vietnam and did her U.S. schooling at EMU in Ypsilanti, Michigan. She has been our Vietnamese language cataloguer for the last five years.

Hery Budiman was born in Purwokerto in Central Java, Indonesia. He moved to Yogyakarta to pursue his BA at Sanata Dharma University in the English Education Program. Since 2017, he has worked in the Southeast Asia Program, International Studies, as an Indonesian language informant.

Alyssa Chua comes from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and is a student of computational cognitive science in the College of Literature, Sciences, and the Arts. She is our Malay expert and handles material primarily originating from Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore. She is the person who knows the ins and outs of the library’s computer system and makes sure that the titles are inputted correctly and sent to labeling.

Robert Aung is a junior student studying computer science. He has been working at the Southeast Asian department at the library for over one year. His work consists of transferring Burmese book titles to English and summarizing the books to input information into the database.

A Glimpse of Southeast Asia Titles

Acquired Before COVID-19

VIETNAMESE BOOKS


Cà Khúc mà tôi thấy của XX và những năm đầu thế kỷ XXI / many authors; published in 2010. Collection of Vietnamese popular songs on Hanoi capital, Vietnam, and biography of Vietnamese components.


Burmese BOOKS


Si cap’ mraṅ’ nham = Ethnic Chinese and sojourn Chinese community in Asia / author, Trân Khánh; published in 2016.


Ma Ma E’ tū te’ uyāl / authors, Ta’ ôn’ Dīl, Buñ’ ka’ “(and others)” / author, The Biography of Burmese singers.

INDONESIAN BOOKS

Aristo-modemes darī Timur : Paka Alam V, westernisers, and paraoida Kebudayaan / authors, Suadzii (and others); published in 2018. Account of Paku Alam V, prince and ruler of Kingdom of Pakualaman, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.


41 Warsan Kebebasan Gus Dur / author, M. Harif Dakhari; published in 2010. Thoughts of Abduhman Wahab (Gus Dur), a Muslim scholar and the 4th president of the Republic of Indonesia.

Pak Hasto, Saya dan Kontainer medik / authors, Raman Ramayana Saman, and Imelda Bachtler; published in 2018. Biography of Marsma TNI (Pur. Dr.) H. R. Ramayana Ramayana Saman, SPd. He is a military doctor in Indonesia Air Force who initiated and embodied human surgical efforts in the air.


SINGAPOREAN BOOKS

Qing qian shi dào, xin xi min jiang = Ubin our heart and soul = Ubin/ Chinese and Malays (Asian people) living in Ubin Island (Singapore) / edited by Felix Guan; published in 2018.


Tao sheng yì jù : Huai Ying yì jiù / author, Huai Ying; published in 2013. Literature and poems of Singaporean author.


Uncovering Salater / authors, Eugene Wijiningaya (and others); published in 2018. Pictorial works about the history of Salater (Singapore).

MALESIAN BOOKS


Neofusional UMNO: politik dan persiapan pemilihan luar bandar / authors, Mazil (Budi & Dr. Jamale Ahmad); published in 2018. Political, social conditions, and rural development in Malaysia.


PHILIPPINE BOOKS


Cebuano folk song (Pakinig-Kitong): Magindanano folk song (Kaisa-Isa niyan); Hilango Folk song (Ed-Eddoy); published by Felicidad A. Liau; published in 2019. Folk literature of Philippines.

Malaysian BOOKS


40 pāi thāi āñkābān: lāng bōrāmmāhādāi tāi nām Rābā Kāchāi 2 + 400 years beneath the Chanthaboon sea: Thangkăci na rākkē site / author, Yipp’en Watthanakorn; published in 2017. Antiquities, Underwater archaeology in Chanthaburi province of Thailand.


Thāt forn rān Krung Rattanakām / author, Sàhāthā Khātsāwākām; published in 2019. History of Thailand and the impact of foreign relations with the West during the early nineteenth century.

FULBRIGHT FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING ASSISTANTS

An-Hien Doan

An-Hien Doan has been an English instructor at the Department of Foreign Languages at Quy Nhon University (Quy Nhon City, Vietnam) since 2012. Her academic interest is Multiple Intelligences in English Language Teaching, which is her major for her bachelor’s and master’s degrees. Currently, An-Hien assists Vietnamese classes at the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures as a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant. She also enjoys participating in plenty of workshops related to multicultural communication, feminism and climate change on the campus. Throughout the Fulbright program, the workplace culture of the Southeast Asian Language Program gives An-Hien a strong impression. She thinks her supervisor and coworkers are remarkably professional, supportive and caring. After the FLTA Program, she plans to resume her teaching career in Vietnam. An-Hien hopes to apply and share the insights gained at the University of Michigan (U-M) with her students in her hometown.

Lidya Pawestri Ayuningtyas

Lidya Pawestri Ayuningtyas is from Jakarta, Indonesia. She has taught English and Indonesian to foreigners at State Polytechnic of Jakarta since 2011, from which she graduated in 2011. She then continued her studies at the University of Indonesia for a bachelor’s degree and University College London for a master’s degree. She loves going to cultural events at U-M which she thinks are unparalleled. In Ann Arbor, people are exceptionally kind and fun to be around. The lectures are inspiring and the lecturers are so passionate about what they teach. After completing the FLTA Program, she hopes to continue her career as a lecturer and continue to study at a doctoral level in another continent.

The Vietnamese Student Association

CSEAS is proud to feature one of the university’s Southeast Asian student groups, the Vietnamese Student Association (VSA), which celebrates and shares Vietnamese culture with the U-M community. To learn more about this engaging student org, we spoke with Jason Ngo, one of VSA’s public relations representatives, and Marilyn Padua, a recent U-M graduate and VSA alumna.

VSA hosts a variety of events that focus on culture, community service and advocacy, and interaction between members of the organization. For instance, VSA members, as well as other students outside of the organization, can participate in and/or watch the annual culture show, Đêm Việt Nam (A Night in Vietnam, or DVN for short). Historically, VSA has held its show at the Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre, but in 2020 was fortunate to perform at the Power Center. According to Marilyn, DVN is “a way for members “to showcase, with the performing arts, the beauty and transformation of Vietnamese culture over time, from traditional Vietnamese songs to the modern-day V-pop. Through the skit that is incorporated throughout the culture show, we try to showcase the experiences of Vietnamese Americans to shed light on the common struggles that many of us face in our day to day lives. The skit is a way for us to open up dialogue and bring the community closer together.”

Considerable planning and preparation go into VSA events. The process for planning DVN is year-long, starting as soon as the new DVN executive board members are elected. Smaller events, such as Phi Night, fundraising events, and collaborative events with other student organizations, usually take 3–4 weeks of active planning. Since reserving campus spaces is highly competitive, VSA strives to create a timeline at the beginning of each semester to reserve rooms well in advance.

Overall, VSA offers students the opportunity to come together and share their cultural backgrounds and experiences. Jason joined VSA because he came from an area where Vietnamese representation was very low and he wanted “to interact with other people who shared a similar heritage.” Interaction within the VSA community not only promotes an embrace of Vietnamese culture but often results in strong and lasting friendships. Marilyn will remember most the belonging and joy whenever she spent time with VSA members. “From pulling all-nighters in the UGLI, to running around frantically trying to serve pho as fast as we could during Phi Night, the memories I’ve made with the VSA community are unforgettable.” She also made some of her best friends through VSA at U-M and even friends from VSA in other states, such as Indiana and Illinois.

Both Jason and Marilyn explained that VSA positively shaped their experiences at U-M. VSA helped Jason grow as an individual and “has helped me find a second family away from home.” He’s been happier on campus because of it. This year will be his second year on the executive board, which “has helped me grow as a leader.” Meanwhile, to Marilyn, VSA was a community that made her “become comfortable with being uncomfortable”: it pushed her to the limit, made sure to support her throughout her journey, and offered a safe space for her to be vulnerable. She also noted that she loved “seeing friendships develop at our events” and was happy that she made people feel welcomed and appreciated in the community, just like she had been welcomed.
Josh Chun Wah Kam Remembers

To connect marginalized histories and see my scholarship, then, reflects this attempt to remember my own saints, inscribe my own heroes.

What kind of research did you do for your book?

Much of it came about organically from research in both Indonesia and U-M. I’ve received funding in my undergraduate studies—thanks to some lobbying by amazing professors—to do research in Ann Arbor about Hikayat Hang Tuah, the iconic Malay epic, and that work certainly has inspired many of the characters and discussions in the novel.

How long did it take you to write the novel? How did you balance responsibilities while working on this book?

Four months writing, eight months editing. I actually had a brief summer between graduating and the Fulbright award, so it worked out perfectly to write daily for that period.

You are the youngest winner of the Epigram Books Fiction Prize, one of Singapore’s largest literary prizes. How does that feel? What was your reaction when you won it?

More shock than anything. It’s a lot to take in. I’m honored, but glad the ancestors get a chance to speak (I hope!) through me.

Your book concerns itself with the communist and LGBT communities of Malaysia. Why was this focus important to you? What inspired you to write your novel, How the Man in Green Saved Pahang, and Possibly the World?

Reading about these alternative heroes of Malaysian history moved me deeply. I think something about Sufi literature and Maoist women’s memoirs from 1950s Malaysia were also incredibly influential. I’m from a Christian tradition that dwells very deeply on the saints—on the idea that the human body and human actions matter enormously and deserve to be inscribed as models and sources of hope. Orthodox Christians dwell on iconography as a way of hopeful remembrance, and perhaps mine is an attempt to remember my own saints, inscribe my own heroes.

Tell us a little about yourself.

That’s a big question! A lot of my work as a scholar, at least, is tied to the ways I’ve had to challenge myself to build solidarities to engage with my own identity, and have been thinking,Electrical Engineering, in 2019. I also received $12,000 from the University of Michigan’s Office of Undergraduate Research and an additional $12,000 from an individual donor. I’m excited about the possibility of writing future books, and to see what else I can do.

What inspired you to become a scholar?

I’ve always been interested in historical subjects and have a background in the study of music. However, my interest in Southeast Asian studies came later in my life. I first became interested in this region during my undergraduate years at Cornell University. I was drawn to the region’s rich cultural heritage and its diverse economies. I was also interested in the region’s political and social dynamics.

What was your most memorable experience as a scholar?

One of my most memorable experiences was when I received the Fulbright Program fellowship to conduct research in Indonesia. This opportunity allowed me to engage with the vibrant academic community in Indonesia and to gain a deeper understanding of the country’s complex society.

What kind of research did you do while at U-M?

While at U-M, I studied the ways in which Southeast Asian classical literary traditions push back at boundaries of gender, sexuality, and faith, subverting both indigenous and colonial aristocracy. Here, Josh shares about his personal and academic experiences.

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In February 2020, prior to COVID-19’s freeze on international travel, I had the opportunity to visit three institutions in two different countries in Southeast Asia. The purpose of the trip was to visit with different researchers whom I had only met electronically but with whom I had already started working on joint research projects. My trip itinerary included:

February 19–20
Banda Aceh, Indonesia—Syiah Kuala University

February 21–24
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia—Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)—Universiti Tun Abdul Rahman (UTAR)

In Banda Aceh, Indonesia, I met with two colleagues (Dr. Harapan and Dr. Amanda Yufika) with whom I’ve previously published research on vaccine decision-making in Indonesia. On the first day in Indonesia, we discussed, along with a group convened by the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, potential future research projects and grant opportunities. A large focus would be on religious barriers to vaccination. Aceh Province is an autonomous region in Indonesia that has sharia law, and many Muslims in the area believe that some vaccines contain haram (i.e., forbidden) material.

On the second day, Syiah Kuala University convened a mini-symposium entitled “Infectious Disease Updates: From Molecular to Public Health.” Several individuals from Syiah Kuala University presented on their own research areas—from arboviruses to vaccine-preventable diseases in Indonesia—and I gave a talk entitled, “Vaccination: Struggles Worldwide.” The talk was attended by faculty and students from the medical school.

I then flew to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to visit a researcher, Dr. Yogambigai Rajamoorthy. I made presentations at two universities in the Greater Kuala Lumpur area—Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), where Dr. Rajamoorthy was a student, and Universiti Tun Abdul Rahman (UTAR), where Dr. Rajamoorthy is currently on faculty in the Department of Economics.

At UPM, I presented on the “Effectiveness of influenza vaccine and Tamiflu” and on “Constructing epidemiology studies during outbreaks.” And at UTAR, I presented on “Degradation of maternal antibodies in infants.” For both sets of presentations, there was an audience of faculty and students from the university.

I appreciate CSEAS for funding this trip with support from their Title VI National Resource Center grant. It was my first time in this corner of the world. The hospitality of my hosts and the food and culture of this region were wonderful, and I hope to visit again after the current COVID-19 pandemic passes.

In the meantime, I am continuing my research work with collaborators from these regions. Currently, I am engaged in an internet-based survey of attitudes towards vaccination in several countries, including Malaysia and Indonesia. My collaborators from these regions are consultants on this project, funded through the National Science Foundation. Additionally, I am seeking funds from the Fulbright Foundation to continue (remote) work on the relationship between religion and vaccination in Indonesia, which may become more important as the COVID-19 vaccine is introduced in the near future.
Hughes Fellow Mia Baguisi’s Archival Research in the Time of COVID-19

Mia Margarita (Mia) Mercado Baguisi is a graduate student in history, working on her master’s thesis at De La Salle University in Manila, Philippines. During Winter 2020, she spent several months at U-M as a CSEAS Hughes Fellow, conducting archival research. This interview occurred in May.

What is your research about?
My research is about the Guardias de Honor of Manila, a confederation that was established by the Dominicans in the Philippines during the colonial era and turned into a religious movement between the late 19th and early 20th centuries, at the height of political turmoil in the Philippines and across Southeast Asia. To address the problem of turmoil in the Philippines and across the region, I had the chance to review the contents of the aforementioned collections. As a history student/researcher, it also feels quite surreal to be living through a pandemic; such events are deemed “historical moments” because they deeply affect and change societies. This all the more puts into focus what we can learn from past pandemics in order to be better prepared for whatever lies ahead.

What has been your experience at the Bentley Historical Library?
I was ecstatic to conduct historical research at the Bentley Historical Library. Through my research, I have the opportunity to explore documents, and constantly revise my work. Now I consult digital sources while holed up in my apartment, try to keep myself healthy, and take the occasional stroll along the neighborhood with a mask on. Vulnerability to the virus and its high mortality rate have made me terribly anxious and afraid. However, I’ve been incredibly lucky to call IHHA my shelter throughout this ordeal. Despite being a thousand miles away from home, I never felt alone because I’ve been surrounded by my kind, caring, and open-minded peers from all over the world who looked out for each other. Although my time here has honestly been a mix of both pleasant surprises and unexpected twists and turns, it has been very memorable in a largely positive way.

What has the COVID-19 outbreak seemed to do research during COVID-19?
When it was announced that the university would move forward with my research since it is extremely difficult for Puerto Rican teachers to take off to conduct research at the Bentley Historical Library, I was extremely fortunate to have gained the support of this program for providing Southeast Asian scholars the opportunity to conduct research at the Bentley Historical Library, Hatchers Graduate Library, and all the other repositories. Thank you so much for believing in me and for having me at your institution.

What have you enjoyed the most about the Hughes Fellowship?
My experience as a Hughes Fellow this year strengthened my motivation and inspired me to push forward with some of my future career goals. I have gained a lot of perspective about the historical research I want to pursue in the near future. If not for this fellowship, I would not have gained enough insight on how to improve, but also overall knowledge and capacity for historical research and writing. I cannot thank enough the U-M, CSEAS, and everyone else who supports this program for providing Southeast Asian scholars the opportunity to conduct research at the Bentley Historical Library, Hatchers Graduate Library, and all the other repositories. Thank you so much for believing in me and for having me at your institution.

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Michigan Teachers “Journey” to Southeast Asia and the Middle East

By Rima Hassounen
Outreach Coordinator

The MENA-SEA Teacher Program is a teacher-outreach collaboration funded largely by a Title VI National Resource Grant awarded from the U.S. Department of Education. To recruit from across the state and region, the program usually pays for the overnight lodgings of cohort teachers traveling long-distance. In its inaugural year the program attracted a dedicated and passionate cohort of six Grade 6-12 educators admitted in a competitive application process.

The teachers were: Greg Dykhouse (History, Black River Public School, Holland), Kirsten Gwansinski (English, Saline High School, Saline), Gabi Kaliski (English, All Saints Catholic School, Canton), Amy Perkins (A.P. World and A.P. U.S. History, Lake Shore High School, Stevensville), Gabrielle Popp (Special Education English, Beacon Day High School, Stevensville), and Alison Zeanah (World Geography and World History, Traverse City East Middle School, Traverse City).

The program gave Kaliski “the opportunity as a teacher to step back into the role of learner, reflect upon my teaching practice, and incorporate the experiences and perspectives of my fellow educators as I think of ways to bring this new knowledge back to my classroom.” Starting in September 2019, every month on a Saturday, the teachers assembled on U-M’s Ann Arbor campus to enrich and revitalize their teaching together around the topics of religious and cultural diversity in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and in Southeast Asia (SEA). Together they participated in workshops with U-M faculty and graduate students who were area specialists, engaged with readings and multimedia resources, toured the Arab American National Museum in Dearborn, and visited Yemeni- and Hmong-owned family businesses. The Center for Education Design, Evaluation and Research at the School of Education also partnered with the program to lead pedagogical discussions with the teachers about how to integrate the new content knowledge and skills into their teaching while meeting state standards. By the end of the program on June 25th, the cohort had 25 trainings by scholars, artists, and community leaders, and qualified for 22 State Continuing Education Clock Hours from the Michigan Department of Education. An invaluable component of the program was world-class artistic performances. In January, for instance, cohort teachers experienced “As Far as My Fingertips Take Me,” a one-on-one encounter through a gallery wall with

The eighth session held on May 29th focused on graphic literature about the two regions. The teachers met with Leila Abdelrazaq, Palestinian artist and author born in Chicago and currently living in Detroit. The group discussed her debut graphic novel, Baddawi, which presents the story of a refugee camp in northern Lebanon after his Palestinian family, like thousands of others, fled their homeland in 1948 after the establishment of the state of Israel. On that day Maya Barzilai also presented about how these topics speak to her in the classroom.

Barzilai’s research focuses on twentieth-century postwar Hebrew and Yiddish literature, German Jewish thought, translation theory, and visual culture.

The program also equipped each teacher with The Best We Could Do, a memoir that visually documents author Thi Bui’s family’s escape after the fall of South Vietnam in the 1970s and their painful new lives as refugees in the U.S. Teaching with graphics can promote empathy and understanding of the experiences of migration, and Popp was eager to do so with both texts. "Immigration is a topic that comes up often in my classroom through my students’ personal stories as well as the literature we are reading,” she noted. "I am looking forward to the session because we will be delving more into resources my students can directly use.”
CSEAS EVENTS

Co-Sponsored Events

OCTOBER 16
Roundtable on Current Events in Thailand
SPEAKERS: Dr. Peerasit Kamnuansilpa, Dr. Supawat Pholphayakorn, Dr. Sirisak Pathumvanit, Dr. Sirisak Pathumvanit, Khon Kaen University

NOVEMBER 8
The Vietnam War: What Happened and Why It Still Matters
SPEAKERS: Professors Keith W. Taylor and Olga Dzvon, University of Michigan

NOVEMBER 20
Why Are Buddha Statues So Big? Space, Time, and Unusual Human Bodies in Buddhism
SPEAKER: Reko Oghuma, Chair and Professor of Religion, Dartmouth College

DECEMBER 6–7
2019 World History and Literature Initiative: Empires, Decolonization and Independence in Global History & Literature
SPEAKER: Jessica Hill Rogers, CSEAS academic program specialist, University of Michigan

January 27
Book Discussion of Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen by Filipino-American journalist Jose Antonio Vargas
SPEAKERS: Marlon James Sales, postdoctoral fellow in critical translation studies, Comparative Literature, and Romi Hassounah, CSEAS outreach coordinator

FEBRUARY 5
PICs Film Screening. Becoming Labrador
DIRECTOR: Rihan Fernandez, Tamara Segura, and Justin Simms

FEBRUARY 13
The Rohingya Crisis and Future of Democracy in Myanmar
SPEAKER: Wai Wai Nu, Women Peace Network, Yangon Youth Leadership Center

FEBRUARY 24
International Institute Conference on Migration
SPEAKER: Cheryl Yin, Anthropology, Doctoral Candidate, University of Michigan

Funded by the Annmary Sammoni Vivian Endowment, the 2019 Thai Studies grants were awarded to ten students and faculty for summer research and work in Thailand. The awards and their affiliations (as of 2019) were: Kristen Gilley (global health epidemiology MPH candidate); Lenta Benjakul (undergraduate student majoring in economics and minor in Asian-Pacific Island Studies); Yusaao Lei (research assistant at the School of Public Health); Alexander Atkinson (undergraduate student in civil engineering); Lauren Bacari-Grounds (graduate student at the School of Public Health, specializing in health management and policy); Erin McNallie (doctoral student in the Department of Sociology); Madeline Bernard (global health epidemiology MPH candidate); Chantal Courteau (PhD candidate in social cultural anthropology); Jasdeep Kler (global health epidemiology MPH candidate); and Catherine Walker (clinical associate professor of music, School of Music, Theater & Dance).

To an audience of fellow faculty and students, a number of these awardees shared their experiences and photographs at the symposium on the afternoon of September 27 in Weiser Hall, to an audience of fellow faculty and students.

Professor Walker, for instance, told the audience about her experience teaching voice in a school setting to teachers and youth. Courteau reported on her research on food belonging and the social politics of commodity in southern Thailand. And Atkinson spoke about his team’s work in the BLUElab project, which collaborates with U-M’s Center for Socially Engaged Design and with Chiang Mai University on flood mitigation technologies in the partner district of Mae Chan, Thailand.

In a sign of radically different yet not distant times, CSEAS afterwards hosted a light reception for guests to mingle, without consideration of masks or six feet of distance!
Indonesian Diplomats visit U-M and attend Gamelan

In October 9th, 2019, an esteemed delegation from the Indonesian Embassy in Chicago visited U-M Ann Arbor, to commemorate 70 years of formal diplomatic partnership between Indonesia and the U.S. The diplomats were Rosmalawati Chalid, Consul General, and Miranda Ekawaty Mukhitas, Consul for Information, Social and Cultural Affairs.

Amongst the activities was a luncheon hosted at the Stephen M. Ross School of Business and attended by 20, who included: Laura Rozek, CSEAS director and associate professor of environmental health sciences; Pak Widodo, gamelan instructor appointed by the Indonesian government; Henry Rahardja, president of the U-M Alumni Association of Indonesia; Bu Agustini, Indonesian language instructor and director of the Southeast Asian Language Program; John Cienciarri, associate professor of public policy and director of International Policy, and Allen Hickm, professor of political science and research professor at the Center for Political Studies.

After lunch, Bu Rosmalawati, Bu Miranda, Director Rozek, Professor Susan Pratt Walton (ethnomusicologist at the Residential College and director of the U-M Gamelan), and Mr. Rahandja met with LSA Dean Anne Curzan. The focus of the conversation was the renewed commitment to robust relations between the College and Indonesian alumni and to support for the gamelan ensemble at U-M.

Later that evening, the diplomatic guests attended a performance by the gamelan, a traditional instrumental ensemble featuring bronze percussion instruments and the angklung, a bamboo instrument varying in size and producing different resonances and pitch. About 185 people packed the Stern Auditorium of the Museum of Art to enjoy the performance, which was directed by Widodo. Three traditional dances were performed for their delight: (1) The Giring-Giring, from the Dayak tribe in Kalimantan. Expressing joy, its dancers carry one or two pieces of grain-filled bamboo sticks. (2) The Leungang Nyai Dance, from the Betawi ethnic group in Jakarta. It was inspired by the legend of Nyai Dasimah, famous for her beauty and grace. (3) The Peafowl, from West Java. It is performed by female dancers to illustrate the beauty in appearance and movement of peacocks.
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PHOTOGRAPHY
Morning sunrise on the plain of Bagan, the first kingdom of Myanmar. By Boyloso via iStock.

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