

SOUTHEAST ASIA PROGRAM

FALL 2022 BULLETIN



Cornell University

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about the covers

VISITING ARTIST HIGHLIGHT: Min Ma Naing

Personal documentary photographer from Myanmar
Extracted from the personal project “of so-longs and ashes”

Min Ma Naing who was based in Yangon until recently, coming to SEAP as a visiting artist. Starting out as a press photographer, she realized that short-term assignments were not for her and she decided to focus on stories around love and hatred. She co-founded a photographer collective for women in Myanmar and makes photobooks as art objects for herself and the collective. She has adopted the temporary pseudonym “Min Ma Naing” (meaning “The King Cannot Beat You”) because of the political situation in Myanmar.



LETTER from the DIRECTOR



I AM VERY PLEASED TO WELCOME THE SEAP COMMUNITY to the 2022-23 academic year. Although I write these words in the hot summer months, I am already excited by the opportunities that a new semester brings. The COVID-19 pandemic remains with us, and so are the uncertainties that come along with it, but with a full schedule and a renewed sense of optimism and possibility, our SEAP community stands to return to an academic life that feels more familiar to those of us who remember with fondness those pre-pandemic days.

I am mindful that a return to something more normal for SEAP and our community does not mean that life has returned to normal in Southeast Asia. COVID-19 is also still with us here in Ithaca and in Southeast Asia, and vaccination rates across much of Southeast Asia still remain lower than government targets. From my perspective as a scholar of politics and government, though, the non-COVID-related changes in Southeast Asia have been striking: the Philippines has elected a new president, Indonesia is about to embark on the construction of a new capital city in East Kalimantan, and Vietnam’s rapidly growing conglomerate VinGroup has launched a series of initiatives that hope to transform Vietnamese society through tech, education, electric vehicles, and other endeavors.

Yet amidst these changes we also see continuities: Thailand remains deeply divided over the country’s political future and the possibility of democratic reform, UMNO has returned to power in Malaysia after a brief period of opposition rule, and the military once again holds power in Myanmar. As members of our community gear up for new research projects, develop new courses, and reengage with the region through travel and scholarly exchange, we find ourselves in the familiar position of simultaneously learning what’s new in the region and reflecting on the weight of history in Southeast Asia.

This theme of change and continuity, of course, also describes SEAP itself. Last year’s SEAP grad co-chairs, E Badiqué and Nikita Sukmono, led us through a wonderfully engaging year of Gatty lectures and community events which culminated in a wonderful Spring Banquet—the first that we were able to hold in person since spring 2019. Together with Brian Sengdala they also led our annual SEAP graduate student conference, with the theme of “(De)Constructing Southeast Asia,” managing a difficult hybrid format with such ease that we are prone to forget just how much planning and coordination is needed to make such events a success.

I was especially fascinated by the keynote lecture delivered by SEAP’s own Christopher Miller, from the Department of Music, who delivered a talk entitled “(Re)Producing Knowledge: Gamelan and Southeast Asian Music within and without Academe.” This lecture posed a very interesting question for thinking about “performance” in Southeast Asian studies. Most academic disciplines teach students to engage with Southeast Asia through appreciation and understanding and critique, but certainly not through imitation. When it comes to performance, however, we do think it important to teach students how to produce music, dance, puppetry, and other forms of artistic expression—in the case of the gamelan ensemble, how to produce the sounds that comprise a gamelan performance from instruments wielded by our own students. This tension between the logic of critique and an engaged practice of performance is certainly not unique to Southeast Asian studies, but I had never heard it expressed so succinctly and in conversation with our mission as an area studies program.

Looking ahead, next year’s SEAP grad co-chairs, Harry Dienes and Tamar Law, have assembled a dynamite Gatty lecture series for this fall, featuring scholars from across the social sciences and humanities, and with several virtual seminars (delivered at 8pm Ithaca time) that will increase our reach in Southeast Asia. And plans are already underway for the next SEAP grad conference in Spring 2023.

We were pleased to learn in early August that SEAP was selected again as a Title VI National Resource Center for Southeast Asia. Federal government support has always been important to SEAP, and this will allow us to continue to build our teaching, research, and outreach activities across the next grant cycle. I, along with all of SEAP, am thankful to Thamora for her leadership and grant-writing skills, and to James and Ava for all of their support in pulling together all the materials for the grant.

In addition to our regularly scheduled Gatty lecture series that welcomes scholars from around the world to share their research with our Ithaca-based community, we also have planned a Fall Reception and events to welcome our new and returning graduate students into the SEAP community. For me, though, a special highlight is our Golay Lecture this November, featuring Brenda Yeoh from the National University of Singapore. A world-renowned geographer and social scientist, Professor Yeoh holds the distinguished title of Raffles Professor of Social Sciences, and she also directs the Asian Migration Cluster at the Asia Research Institute at NUS. Her Golay lecture promises to be a uniquely engaging event that brings together SEAP scholars with others in the Einaudi Center for whom Professor Yeoh’s work on migration and integration will be of particular interest.

There will be plenty of other activities to keep the SEAP office busy in fall semester, from grant-writing to new teaching initiatives that will hopefully include restarting the CU-in-Cambodia program for this coming January. Although I will be spending the fall semester on sabbatical, busy working on a book project on identity in the Malay world, SEAP will be in Professor Andrew Willford’s most capable hands.

—Tom Pepinsky, Professor of Government

The Musics of SOUTHEAST ASIAN AMERICA



by Brian V. Sengdala,
PhD student,
Performing and Media Arts



'Maayong gabi-i sa imong tanan' ('Good evening to you all,' in Cebuano)

Tonight is a celebration of struggle and survival.

Tonight, we bring together two communities who have endured wars and colonialism, genocide, and extrajudicial killings, forced migrations.

And we are still here.

Through it all, music has been our sword and our sanctuary. We can think of no two better artists to remind us of this than the Southeast Asian American sisters we have with us tonight.



PROFESSOR CHRISTINE BACAREZA BALANCE INTRODUCED THE MUSICS OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN AMERICA WITH THIS RALLYING CALL.

Together in conversations with Tita Thess, Neak Kruu Hannah, and Professor Chris Miller, Professor Balance wanted to organize a concert featuring Filipino and Cambodian communities. The bridges between these communities were experienced in Balance's own familial life in Southern California. When I came to Cornell as a graduate student, we both further appreciated how these communities could and do work together through shared Southeast Asian American sensibilities. Two artists came to mind to each of us: Ruby Ibarra and Bochan Huy.

This spring, we hosted musical artists Bochan Huy and Ruby Ibarra at Cornell University through the Musics of Southeast Asian America event co-organized by Associate Professor Christine Bacareza Balance (PMA, SEAP, and AASP Program Director) and myself, PhD Student Brian Veasna Sengdala (PMA, SEAP). I was excited at the possibilities of what this could mean for my fellow Asian American students—and I knew that Professor Balance wanted as much for her students and the community, broadly. It was a busy period at SEAP: The event took place during Cambodian New Years and the water festivals celebrated throughout much of Southeast Asia in April; and though this meant that there were other events elsewhere both in Cornell and central New York, we were excited to be able to welcome the New Year with everyone.

Both of us came to this project through our own relationships—personal and academic—to music. Balance almost always teaches Ruby Ibarra's music video "Us" as a powerful example of Asian American (and specifically, Filipino American) anti-imperialist critique and cultural resistance. Sung in both Filipino and Waray (to honor the artist's mother's native Bisayan tongue), Ibarra's song spoke directly to a shared heritage with Balance's own Bisayan immigrant parentage. Likewise, Bochan Huy's "Chnam Oun 16" is a music video I often present on and teach. In fact, it is very likely because of Bochan's music that I am here at Cornell (and by extension, SEAP). I was studying for a PhD in (Ethno)Musicology at Rutgers on a very different topic and in my first seminar, I wrote a paper on "Chnam Oun 16" and Bochan's use of language and aesthetic. Writing and presenting that paper in a few conferences inspired a new project on Cambodian America which eventually led me to performance studies and then to Cornell.

The evening was conceived as a celebration of Southeast Asian American women in music. Ruby Ibarra is a Filipina American hip hop artist born in Tacloban, Philippines before moving to the San Francisco Bay Area where she now resides. She wrote her own raps when she was younger and broke out with a viral YouTube video in 2012. From there, her career continued to grow with her mixtape debuted on Eminem's Sirius XM radio station, her music was featured in Ramona Diaz' documentary featuring Nobel-laureate Maria Ressa called *A Thousand Cuts*, and on the Fox television show, *The Cleaning Lady*. Likewise Cambodian American singer-songwriter Bochan Huy comes from the Bay Area—namely,

Oakland—to which she fled from Cambodia in the 1980s with her family. She grew up learning and playing music with her father, a Cambodian rock musician. Her cover of "Chnam Oun 16" became a large piece of Cambodian musical discourse with her additions of lyrics in English and the artistic direction of the videography using many Cambodian icons. Bochan has remarked on the negative feedback she received in the past from people who disagreed with any changes to beloved songs like "Chnam Oun Dop Phram Muy," but noted that now, comments on her videos (including "Chnam Oun 16") have been positive, especially from younger Cambodian Americans who find themselves in her songs.

The concert was in two acts. Bochan started the night with her set and performed with her longtime collaborator, Arlen Hart Ginsburg. Using the audiovisual capacities of the Kiplinger Theatre, Bochan told her story from out of the Khmer Rouge period, laying out the context of the United States bombing campaigns in the region, making ties to the current refugee crisis out of Ukraine, and moving through a hopeful journey. She says, "I hope they connected with the story of loss and love as well as experience the healing and unity behind the music." Bonnie Chung, a PhD Student in Literatures in English, says about the concert, "The vibe was great, and I was especially struck by how the concert brought people from the Cornell community together. It was palpable! All the songs were great, but the video/visual presentation alongside the sonic performance was moving."

Bochan also reflected on the performance: "Doing the narrative and creating the visuals that I did for last night's show was really an amazing experience for me because I got to deliver, and history of the fact checks with my mom and go through it. And I think when I was growing up, my parents did such a good job of making us feel like everything's okay... I couldn't imagine having your family all executed. My mom at the time of the war was in college, she was in university, she would remind me of the 70s. It was the height of Cambodian music at that point, too, as we see in the documentary Don't Think I've Forgotten. And my mom's like, 'I have to go grab my bell bottoms and my baby dresses.' And then, boom, her whole life changes.

I don't think I was able to grab that magnitude of trauma... until I did this project. I thought, 'Gosh! I need to give thanks to my parents so much more.' ...We knew that we were war survivors, which kind of changed everything for me growing and it made me proud of it. And that's why [in] a lot of music... I can make a huge emphasis on being able to shift that paradigm from being not just the victim but the survivor. Because if you can view yourself in that way, it's so much more empowering. And yeah, so I think it just kind of taught me to really appreciate not just by parents' journey but most refugees. People come here and really struggle, and they start in a new country. And yeah, those are the joys that music brings in strange ways outside of people."

Ruby Ibarra performed with her longtime collaborator, DJ ET IV (Eduardo Daza Taylor IV). Her set also told a narra-



Bochan Huy (right) singing with her producer Arlen Hart (left) accompanying on keyboard.

tive of her own story through the creative process writing her own raps and using her words to make a sense of her history, her narrative. Keeping the screen projection simple with her stylized icon "Ruby Ibarra," she opted to use lighting effects and wove in her own narrative, even with a special shout-out to the *titas* of Ithaca (including SEAP faculty, Maria Theresa Savella, aka Tita Tess to her students and community). Audience members were especially engaged, joining in when Ibarra taught them audience responses to her lyrics.

The next morning, guests were invited to an in-person conversation with both artists and the co-organizers. Audience members included, importantly, students in Professor Balance's *U.S. Cultures of War and Empire* which was a large motivating factor in the organization of the Musics of Southeast Asia event. Both artists spoke to how they used music to make sense of the world around them. Ruby Ibarra, echoing a poignant remark she made at the concert, pointed to the importance of Ethnic Studies and Asian American Studies for her and asked the students to think on this space:

"Now, thinking about as an artist after taking courses like ethnic studies, I think I now am equipped with the vocabulary to be able to say, 'Now, okay, here are myself, reflections. But here are words. Here are things that I've learned after taking these educational courses of how it can kind of tie in my experiences with factual things that happen, and also providing myself with the knowledge to be able to analyze why I feel the way I feel sometimes.' And now, as an artist after I think so consciously having music and lyrics that you do insert history into the songs..."

So, you know my, my hope is like with my music and Bochan's music that it'll inspire the next generation of artists to also share what their experiences are like...We're still at a time right now

where it's still not common to see ethnic studies on campus. It's still not common to see you know Filipino and Cambodian Americans in the media that we consume. So we are on stage, too. So I think that you know, having those conversations with our parents our family members, and learning about what it was like for them—you know, the experience in Cambodia and the Philippines. Those are important things that we need to continue through oral history, whether it's through the arts or even just you know, continuing those conversations and our families, because it keeps those experiences alive. I feel like when we write ourselves and our music, or we write over our own historians. We are making our existence known, and we're kind of giving some sort of permanence."

The Southeast Asian American sisterhood celebrated that night is not celebrated enough. We were proud to be able to host this space where students could rock out to these artists and see themselves. I, as a Khmer and Lao student at Cornell, look forward more events like this on campus and made accessible to our communities. Given the response and what I learned from the mere presence of the people there, I am not alone. We are not alone. "And we are still here." 🌸

The co-organizers are also grateful for our co-sponsors who supported this event: Performing & Media Arts (PMA), Music, Asian American Studies Program (AASP), and Southeast Asia Program (SEAP). With generous funding from the Cornell Council for the Arts (CCA) and Society for the Humanities (SHC) Humanities Impact Grant. The Musics of Southeast Asian American is also part of the ongoing *Critical Moves: Performance in Theory and Movement* series.

REFLECTIONS ON Theorizing the Southeast Asian Archive

For six weeks in Spring 2022, I ditched my usual Wednesday night routine to attend a GETSEA mini-course on “Theorizing the Southeast Asian Archive.” Designed and taught by Dr. Judith Henchy, Southeast Asian Studies Librarian at the University of Washington, the course was a space for grad students like myself to think in community about the complexities and complicities of archives in Southeast Asian studies.

I dwell on archives quite a lot, maybe too much. I took an extended major in history as an undergraduate and am now a PhD student in a history department. There is a lot to say about archives, lots of questions we need to ask about this weirdly omniscient, sometimes romanticized, but always oh-so-flawed repository of sources. How do archives get made, for what purposes, and who makes decisions about what is collected or discarded? In what ways are particular archives complicit in systems of power and extraction, past and present? And what do we do with all that, how do we read archives with care?

I have studied archives in the abstract. I talk often with colleagues about the logistical headaches, emotional highs and lows of archival research. But I had never been in a class devoted entirely to archives and archival knowledge in relation to Southeast Asia. Our readings and class discussions gave me a new appreciation for both the racist colonial investments of official archives and the potentials for

justice-driven archiving practices being taken up by activists, political dissidents, and vulnerable groups in Southeast Asia and in diaspora communities.

Our class was made up of graduate students zooming in from across the US and Southeast Asia. It was rewarding to have a range of graduate experiences in the room, from those who had spent more time theorizing archives like me to those who had worked extensively with existing archives as part of their research projects. I gained important insights from listening to others describe and critique archival practices and method. Throughout the discussion we shared additional readings and examples of digital archives that I then incorporated into my final project for the class, which was a syllabus for a first-year undergraduate seminar using digital and physical archives to teach students about evidence-based analytical writing.

For me, one of the most impact discussions came from reading the scholarship of Doreen Lee, Marika Cifor,

and others. These scholars position the archive as a space of affect, a potentially radical repository of feelings, emotions, and lively connections to the past that resonate within the present. Our class discussions drew out the idea that attuning to the affective relations that archivists, activists, and historical researchers cultivate with archives can help reorientate archival research and practice towards forms of emotional and social justice.

While making space for this innovative theorization of the potential of affective archives, our class discussion also considered the archive's limits and restrictions. The archive, particularly when created by and for the state, determines what should be valued. Its desired subjects and objects are preordained with significance, while undesired voices or materials are deemed irrelevant by the fact of this exclusion. Something I appreciated about this class is that we were able to identify this pattern of value and exclusion while still acknowledging that it is up

to scholars and practitioners to make critical decisions about how we use, present, and engage with archives.

In addition to thinking about what voices and objects are most desirable to certain kinds of archives and official narratives, we also discussed what we, as researchers and professionals, desire from archives. We were fortunate enough to have a visit from Dr. Temi Odumosu, Assistant Professor and Curator at the University of Washington Information School. Dr. Odumosu, in discussing the racialized and gendered components of colonial photography and the ethics of digitizing historical images, pushed us to think about what we want from our encounters with archival material. What kinds of expectations or value systems do we as researchers carry with us into

by Emi Donald,
PhD candidate, history

Emi Donald playing mancala
in Phatthalung province,
southern Thailand.



the archive? How might our desire to tell certain stories or produce a certain narrative influence how we read and engage with archives?

These questions are important to me because I think they can help researchers, archivists, and anyone engaging or working within archives to scrutinize their motivations and build new, justice-orientated approaches to the collection, preservation, and presentation of historical actors and events. Such questions about positionality and power will keep me company as I begin

my own archival research this fall. I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to learn from my grad student colleagues and from our instructor, Dr. Henchy, and guest professors and postdocs as part of this class. 🌱



The Graduate Education and Training in Southeast Asian Studies (GETSEA) consortium aims to enhance graduate education in Southeast Asian studies across North America. For more information, visit: <https://get-sea.org/>

JOURNEY INTO JINGHPAW: The Mother-Tongue of a Mountain People

Ngwīpyāw hkām kājā ngà mù gā.

Ngwī-pyāw hkām kājā ngà mù gā
happiness health good exist see be

“Be in good health and be happy.”

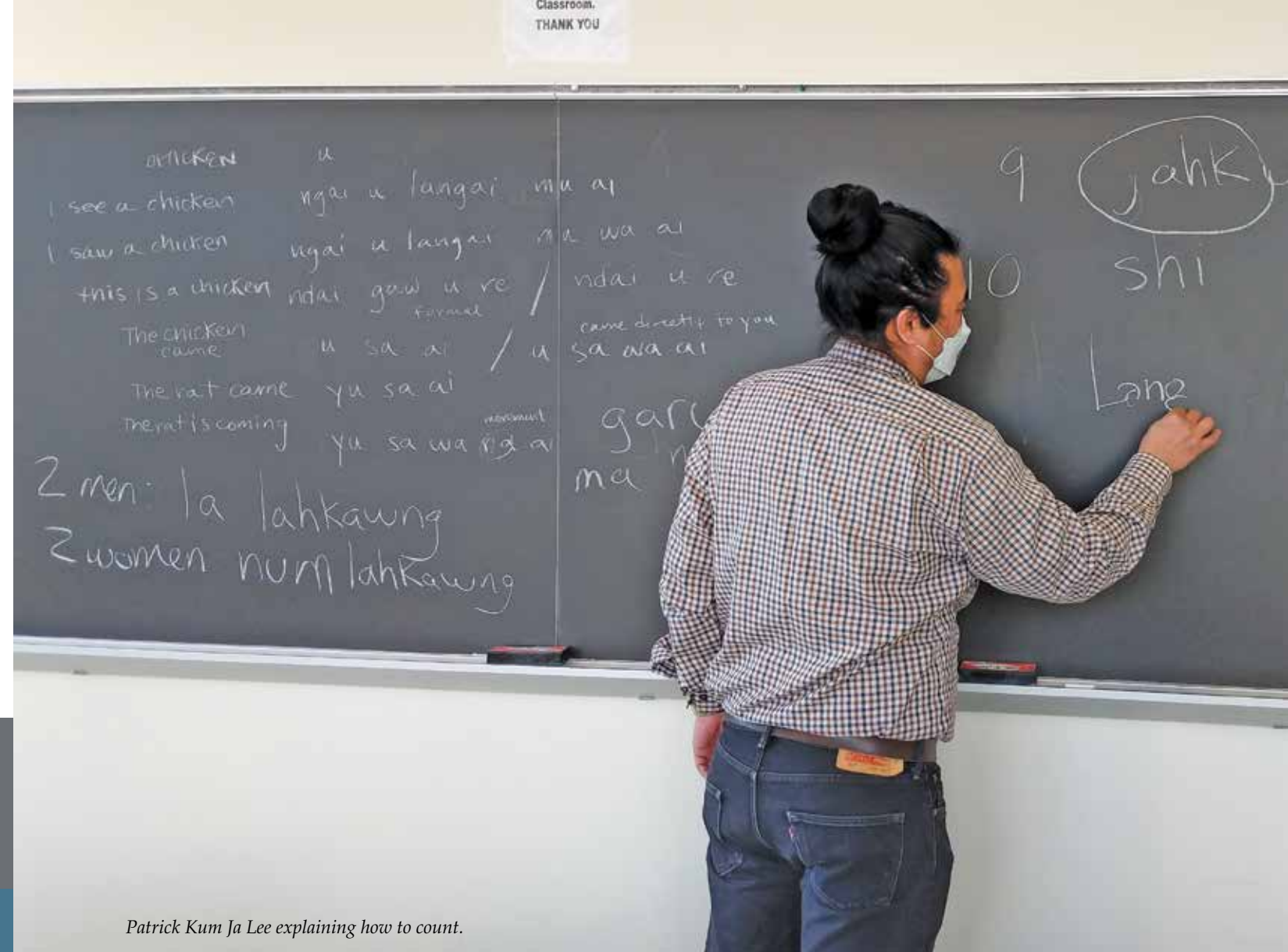
by Evelyn Fettes
PhD candidate,
Linguistics



This is how Patrick Kum Ja Lee begins telling the story of his life, speaking solely in Jinghpaw, his mother-tongue. He speaks into a microphone in the sound booth set up in the phonetics lab in the basement of Morrill Hall, as the entire Field Methods class cram themselves into the studio to listen. It is not the first class; the seven students and two professors have worked diligently for several months on learning the Jinghpaw language. It is, however, their first time hearing a story in the language and there is a power and beauty that comes with engaging with stories that disjointed words and random sentences – such as

ngā`i u` hkye`ng kāba` lāngā`i mu` a`i ‘I see one big red chicken!’

– does not convey. For the final month of semester, dozens of hours will be spent transcribing and translating this recording.



Patrick Kum Ja Lee explaining how to count.

Jinghpaw is the native language of the Kachin people. It is spoken by approximately 900,000 people in Kachin State of Myanmar and by over 100,000 in the Yunnan Province of China. As Myanmar’s northernmost state, Kachin is bordered by China to the East and India to the West. Language however, cares little for political boundaries. The mountain people are united by a shared language and through its songs and stories as a distinct culture. While the majority language of Myanmar is Burmese, around a hundred minority languages belonging to at least six different language families are spoken in the country. Jinghpaw, a Sino-Tibetan language, is one of the most widely spoken minority languages of Myanmar.

Cornell was extremely fortunate to have two proficient Jinghpaw speakers join our community in the Spring 2022. May Sabe Phyu is a notable women’s rights activist, currently hosted by Dorothea S. Clarke Program in Feminist Jurisprudence at the Cornell Law School. She has given numerous talks on conflict in Myanmar and its cost, including a talk as part of SEAP’s own Gatty lecture series. Her family was

forced to flee their home and build a new one here in America. Patrick Kum Ja Lee, her husband, is a jack-of-all-trades – a father, taxi-driver, hunter, song-writer, chef, and teacher. They were employed as language consultants for LING6600 Field Methods.

The Field Methods class, taught by Professors Abby Cohn and Sarah Murray, was comprised of seven students ranging from senior undergraduates to 5th-year-PhD candidates. The purpose of the course is to train linguists to do fieldwork on a language which they have never encountered before by eliciting and compiling data. For documentary and descriptive linguists, these are indispensable skills. There are over 7,000 languages spoken across the world today, but some predict that within the century over half of these languages will cease to exist, supplanted by more widely spoken majority languages. Jinghpaw itself is in no immediate danger, however there aren’t many reference materials (dictionaries and grammars) that are readily available, both to native and foreign learners. The creation of such resources, including the gathering and

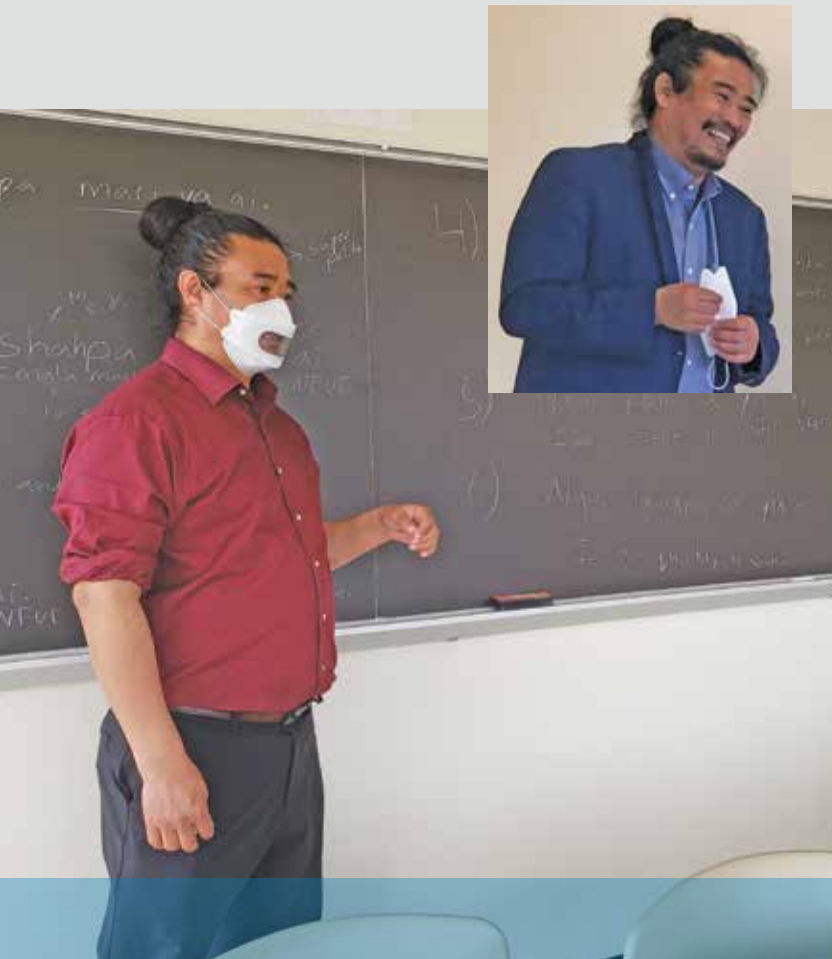
translation of texts, also falls within the purview of linguistic fieldwork.

Having Patrick as a language consultant was an amazing experience for the class. One reason for this was his skilled usage of a standardized orthography (writing system) of Jinghpaw. For centuries, Christian missionaries have been working in the Kachin State, and therefore needed to translate the Bible into Jinghpaw language. Rather than using the Burmese script (an abugida, or 'syllabic alphabet', that many minority languages have also adopted/adapted), these missionaries developed an orthography based on the Latin alphabet. For the first several weeks, students elicited singular words/short phrases from Patrick in order to analyze the sounds of Jinghpaw, a tonal language, and to modify the standard orthography to represent them more clearly.

The next several weeks were spent eliciting sentences in order to understand how the morphology (words) and syntax (more complex structures) are constructed in Jinghpaw. For many, myself included, this is the most interesting and challenging part of fieldwork, because languages differ so greatly in their methodology of expressing the time frame in which an event took place, or the intention of the subject, the distance between two objects, etc. There is immeasurable variety and when a student found something new and unique, which was nearly every session, we would follow that thread down

the rabbit-hole. Patrick often exclaimed that he very much liked the way we were learning his language; the classroom was permeated with gleeful curiosity. I recall many pieces of chalk accidentally being snapped in half by the effort of writing on the blackboard as quickly as possible so that more could be elicited. By the end, a sprawling excel sheet had been created, documenting hundreds of sentences.

The last few weeks were spent creating a recording of and transcribing the story of how Patrick and May met, fell in love, married, and moved here. It would be a romantic story – one with undercurrents of Lady Sybil Crawley and Tom Branson, or Disney's Aladdin – in any language. The fact that it was told in Jinghpaw gave it a particular potency, as they met and fell in love while speaking to each other in their mother-tongue. Although they have moved to America and speak English with great fluency, Patrick insists that their children – two girls in college and a boy who is a senior in high school – speak Jinghpaw at home because it is the language of their family. It is stories like theirs that occupy the heart of linguistic fieldwork. We do more than just elicit data, we elicit the expression of stories in ways that could never truly be translated into another medium. Language allows us to share our souls. It was a true gift to be permitted to share Patrick and May's via Jinghpaw. 🌿



Patrick Kum Ja Lee and May Sabe Phyu.



by Christopher J. Miller
senior lecturer, music

THE 2022 GRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE KEYNOTE

(Re) Producing Knowledge: Southeast Asian Music and Academia

How do musical Southeast Asianists contribute to the construction of Southeast Asia (to respond to the theme of the 24th SEAP Graduate Student Conference, "(De)Constructing Southeast Asia")?

LIKE MOST OF US IN ACADEMIA, we do so by producing knowledge, in written scholarship whose themes and tone will be familiar to anyone who reads in the humanities and the more qualitatively-oriented social sciences. Take, for example, chapters from *Sounding Out the State of Indonesian Music (SOSIM)*, the volume I co-edited with my colleague Andrew McGraw and published by SEAP Publications (see page 15 for the full table of contents). Some contributors offer relatively straightforward documentation, like I Nyoman Catra on the evolution of performing arts patronage in Bali, or Philip Yampolsky's characteristically completist survey of the presence and absence of different regional musics on video compact disc. The majority take a more theoretical tack, relating music to other aspects of society: Jennifer Fraser on "interactive intimacies" in performances of "pornographic" song; Anne Rasmussen on "aesthetic disobedience" and the politicization of religious melody; Rebekah Moore on the "vernacular cosmopolitanism" of a Balinese rock band. My own contribution, on experimental gamelan composition, spoke of Indonesian "acoustemologies," employing a somewhat more esoteric concept from sound studies.

As central as researching and writing are, especially for those in tenure-track positions, what distinguishes us musical Southeast Asianists from our peers in other disciplines is the extent of our involvement in what might better be characterized as the "reproduction of knowledge." In addition to lecture and seminar courses that draw on our collective research and writing, many of us also teach studio courses. For Indonesianists like myself, this is invariably one or another style of gamelan. In such courses, rather than guiding the development of original thought, there is more exploration and discovery of what already exists. This emphasis puts us at odds with some influential maxims from related disciplines. For instance, Clifford Geertz, in his oft-cited article on "thick description," remarked "We are not, or at least I am not, seeking either to become natives . . . or to mimic them," adding "only romantics or spies would seem to find point in that."¹ Mimicking is, however, central to the process of learning how to play music, especially a traditional music like gamelan. Those of us non-Southeast Asian Southeast Asianists with a serious involvement in the performance of such musics mostly do not seek to go fully native, but we do strive toward

book overview

Sounding Out the State of Indonesian Music showcases the breadth and complexity of the music of Indonesia. By bringing together chapters on the merging of Batak musical preferences and popular music aesthetics; the vernacular cosmopolitanism of a Balinese rock band; the burgeoning underground noise scene; the growing interest in *kroncong* in the United States; and what is included and excluded on Indonesian media, editors Andrew McGraw and Christopher J. Miller expand the scope of Indonesian music studies. Essays analyzing the perception of decline among gamelan musicians in Central Java; changes in performing arts patronage in Bali; how gamelan communities form between Bali and North America; and reflecting on the "refusion" of American mathcore and Balinese gamelan offer new perspectives on more familiar topics.

Sounding Out the State of Indonesian Music calls for a new paradigm in popular music studies, grapples with the imperative to decolonialize, and recognizes the field's grounding in diverse forms of practice.



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18. "Fix Your Face": Performing Attitudes between Mathcore and *Beleganjur*, *Putu Tangkas Adi Hiranmayena*
19. *Wanbayaning*: Voicing a Transcultural Islamic Feminist Exegesis, *Jessika Kenney*

See the link, QR code, and 30% discount code on page 18.

native proficiency. This requires painstaking attention to minute physical actions, such as the position of one's hand holding a *rebab*, the way one pivots one's wrist, and precisely wiggles one's fingers, in order to sound the way our teachers do—to sound like a native.

Learning music, or teaching it, as many of us musical Southeast Asianists do, is not exclusively about the development of kinesthetic and aural intelligence. My course "Gamelan in Indonesian History and Cultures" includes a good deal of rote-learning of gamelan pieces, but through the innovative design of my predecessor and longtime SEAP-member Marty Hatch, in which hands-on learning is combined with a seminar component, I also lead my students to a more conceptual understanding of how the music works, and to link it to our study of other aspects of culture. I present Judith Becker's argument that the greatly elongated gong cycles of court gamelan pieces, where several minutes may pass between strokes of gong, are musical portrayals of a "cosmic cycle,"

serving to bolster the legitimacy of the Javanese monarchy. I'm careful not to overemphasize this, wishing to avoid too strong a construction of Southeast Asia as other. Instead, I

"Mimicking is, however, central to the process of learning how to play music . . . to sound the way our teachers do—to sound like a native."

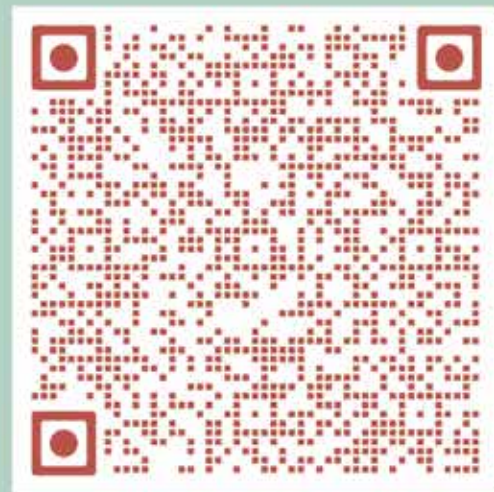
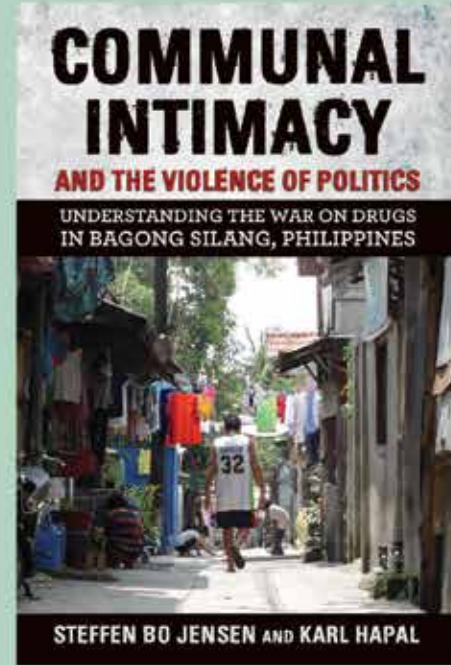
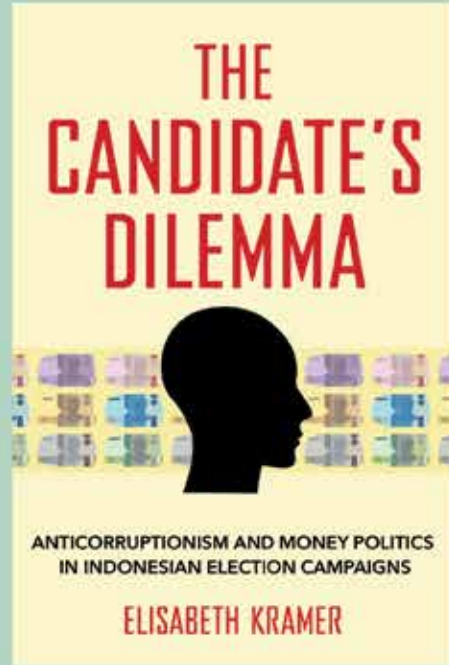
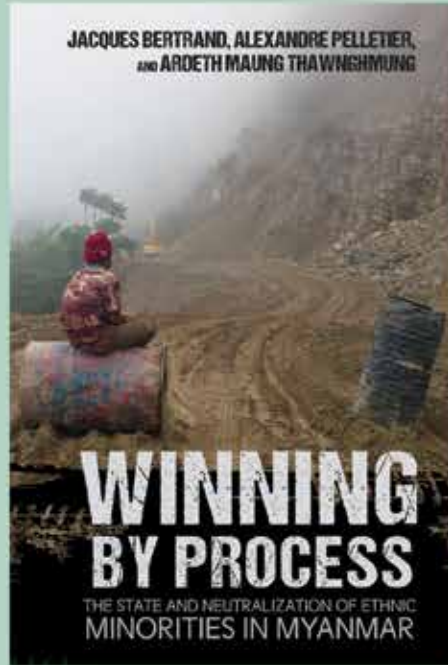
focus on the importance of an awareness of cycle in practice, expressed by Becker in her assertion that "a Javanese musician must at all times know exactly where he is in relation to the approaching gong."² This is not a matter of keeping track of every single beat, but more a felt sense. I work to instill this in my students through repeatedly playing actual patterns from actual pieces, engaging them in the reproduction of an almost embodied knowledge of a particular variety of Javanese temporality.

I have managed, at least to some extent, to interweave knowledge from practice and knowledge from research in my other work as well. A favorite compositional example is my piece "Monggang Manis," which juxtaposes fragments of the archaic gamelan piece "Monggang," played live, with the inexplicably but deliciously distorted recording of the patriotic Indonesian song "Rayuan Pulau Kelapa," by Ismail Marzuki, that would play on RRI, Indonesian national radio, before the hourly news. I time-stretched the recording, revealing the grain of the grit, as a parallel to the large-scale changes in tempo, or *irama*, that are another fundamental and ubiquitous feature of the temporality of gamelan. The focus of my dissertation and most of my published writing, contemporary art music in Indonesia, or *musik kontemporer* as it is called there, stems directly from my encounter as an undergraduate composer with the compositional approach pioneered by gamelan musicians from the traditional performing arts academy ASKI Surakarta.³ I was especially inspired by the



Still from an instructional video by the author, playing rebab.

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Looking down from Lion Gate, Wat Phra That Dôl Kông Mû.

อนุสรณ์ (Remembrance of) Charles “Biff” Keyes

October 3, 1937 – January 3, 2022

by Thamora Fishel
 SEAP Associate
 Director

We mark the passing of one SEAP’s most distinguished alumni in the field of Thai Studies, Charles “Biff” Keyes (PhD 1967). A student of SEAP’s founding director, anthropologist Lauriston Sharp, and G. William Skinner (PhD 1954) who ran Cornell’s Thailand program in the 1960s, Keyes conducted his initial field research in Mahasarakham province of Northeastern Thailand. His wife Jane regularly accompanied him and assisted in the research. He also maintained a life-long friendship and intellectual conversation with Cornell anthropologist Tom Kirsch who did field-work in Thailand in the same period.

In an interview with Nicholas Farrelly in *New Mandala* Keyes said, “Cornell in the 1950s and 1960s was truly a very exciting place to be a graduate student in anthropology and Southeast Asian studies. ... At the time, Cornell anthropology was at the vanguard of anthropology departments in the U.S. in preparing students to study peasant communities that were undergoing ‘modernizing’ transformations rather than to study peoples who were deemed to still be ‘tribal.’ ... During the 1950s and early 1960s Southeast Asian studies at Cornell was also strongly influenced by US government policies in Southeast Asia. In the immediate post World War II period, American policy had looked favourably on the anti-colonial and nationalist movements which had emerged. After



A farewell celebration: sūkhwān for Biff (Charles Keyes), Jane, and Nick Keyes.



Jane and Biff Keyes sharing a meal in Mae Hong Son, Thailand.

the success of the Communist revolution in China in 1949, however, American policy shifted radically towards supporting governments or parties which could contribute to the containment of Communism. At the time I studied at Cornell, the emphasis of the Southeast Asian Studies Program on learning how to understand the world from the cultural, social, linguistic, and political perspectives of Southeast Asians was much more in tune with the former US policy – a consequence of the experiences that Lauriston Sharp and George Kahin,

Keyes saw himself as part of “the second generation of scholars trained at Cornell” in the 1960s who “took our lead from Skinner whose very significant work on the Chinese in Thailand demonstrated that the ‘Thai’ were far from being an homogenous people.

the founders of the program, had had during and immediately after World War II.”

Keyes saw himself as part of “the second generation of scholars trained at Cornell” in the 1960s who “took our

lead from Skinner whose very significant work on the Chinese in Thailand demonstrated that the ‘Thai’ were far from being an homogenous people. Much of my own research has aimed at pursuing the ‘de-construction’ of Thailand, to provide detailed accounts of some of the significantly different regional, ethnic and religious communities in Thailand. I owe my approach to my training at Cornell under Lauri and Bill Skinner.” (*New Mandala* interview)

Keyes was a prolific scholar. He authored, edited or co-edited 16 books, monographs or special issues of journals and published over 90 articles. *The Golden Peninsula: Culture and Adaptation in Mainland Southeast Asia*, (1977, reprinted 1995) and *Thailand: Buddhist Kingdom as Modern Nation-State* (1987) are classics, and frequently assigned reading, in Thai Studies and Southeast Asian Studies more broadly.

Three edited volumes shaped the field in his focal areas of inquiry: *Cultural Crisis and Social Memory: Modernity and Identity in Thailand and Laos* (edited with Shigeharu Tanabe, 2002); *Asian Visions of Authority: Religion and the Modern States of East*

and Southeast Asia (edited with Laurel Kendall and Helen Hardacre, 1994); and *Karma: An Anthropological Inquiry* (edited with E. Valentine Daniel, 1983). In *Finding Their Voice: Northeastern Villagers and the Thai State* (2014) he applied his deep familiarity with *Isaan* to an analysis of the red-shirt movement that has outlasted Taksin and his *Thai Rak Thai* party. His final book *Impermanence: An Anthropologist of Thailand and Asia* (2019) reflects on his own career through a Buddhist lens.

Keyes spent his career as Professor of Anthropology and International Studies at University of Washington, where he served as chair of the department of anthropology (1985-1990, and 2007) and was the founding director of the Southeast Asian Center (1986-1997). Keyes helped establish and secure funding for the Northwest Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies (NWCSEA), which included University of Washington, University of Oregon, as well as the Canadian Universities of British Columbia and Victoria. In addition to institution-building, following in the footsteps of Sharp, Keyes served as president

of the Association for Asian Studies in 2001, forty years after his mentor served in the same position.

Keyes was a dedicated teacher and advisor. In 2003 he was awarded the Graduate Mentoring award by the University of Washington in recognition of his work supervising the PhD committees of 44 students (nearly a third of whom came from Thailand or Vietnam) and 20 MA students. As SEAP alumna, Judy Ledgerwood noted in the online memorial, “He was tremendously supportive of junior colleagues.

...“He was tremendously supportive of junior colleagues. His close friendship with my mentor A.T. Kirsch and their scholarly conversations provided a model for how academics could disagree and be respectful to one another. Thank you for being a role model in so many ways.”

His close friendship with my mentor A.T. Kirsch and their scholarly conversations provided a model for how academics could disagree and be respectful to one another. Thank you for being a role model in so many ways.” 🌸



FAR FROM HOME: An Indonesian Fulbright FLTA at Cornell

Lower Left: Myself near Libe Slope. Above: Bringing Pencak Silat to Yale University. Right: With my supervisor Ibu Jolanda M. Pandin.



by Ryan Julianda, FLTA 2021-2022



Having traveled 15,000 kilometers on my first journey outside of Indonesia, I was both excited and anxious when I arrived as a Fulbright scholar at Cornell University. My main objective was to support and reinforce the teaching of Indonesian at Cornell University, with Ibu Jolanda M. Pandin as my supervisor. In Indonesia I had worked as an English teacher for over seven years, but I was quite nervous to teach alongside an accomplished professional like Ibu Jolanda M. Pandin. Her sensible supervision helped bring out the best in me, and soon I was teaching my own class in intermediate Indonesian, with six students ranging from undergraduates to PhD students. Ibu Jolanda's constant feedback was very helpful, and I felt myself improving as an instructor – and through that process, it became clear to me that teaching my own language is not as easy as I thought it would be!

As I became more comfortable in my new role, I began to engage more with other opportunities on campus. I devised an after-class speaking program for the students, arranging a regular time for students to speak casually with me in Indonesian. The students found it entertaining, and it gave them an opportunity to explore and use Indonesian more naturally. I also experimented with using memes to introduce vocabulary in Indonesian, making lessons a bit more exciting. One of my favorite experiences at Cornell was running a weekly language table, another way for students to practice outside of class. It was open to all, and it gave me the opportunity to bring the culture of my hometown in West Kalimantan to a new group of people.

As a Fulbright scholar, I hoped to serve as an intercultural bridge between Indo-

nesia and the United States – which included sharing my expertise in Pencak Silat, a legendary traditional martial art from Indonesia which has been recognized by UNESCO as an article of Intangible Cultural Heritage. First, I coordinated with the Cornell's Muslim Chaplaincy and got in touch with Brother Yasin Ahmed, Muslim campus minister. After coordinating with him, the first ever Pencak Silat class at Cornell was born, with over fifteen students attending the first of our weekly meetings. I was honored to share my passion for martial arts and my culture with these Americans and with other international students. Classes included some of the basic movements of Pencak Silat, the philosophy of the movements and fighting stances, fighting move sets, and the "Jurus" or a set of art movements for public demonstrations.

Beyond an immediate Cornell audience, I offered my skills to a broader assortment of students via my outreach work. I volunteered to give a one-day Pencak Silat class to the Indonesian class at Yale University. Working with the Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies and with Postsecondary Outreach Coordinator Kathi Colen Peck, we hatched a scheme to introduce Pencak Silat to students at community colleges across New York. I asked my friends from Indonesia (including Rahayu Nurul Reski, who at that time a visiting scholar of Hasanuddin University from South Sulawesi) to tag along; and we taught not only Pencak Silat but also the dance "Paduppa" from South Sulawesi, and also a game from Indonesia called "Tabak." We brought our program to Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) and even as far as Rochester's Monroe Community Col-

lege (MCC). I had an absolute blast in bringing my culture to these students. I feel that my presence does something for the betterment of the mutual understanding and intercultural experience between Indonesia and the United States.

I am grateful to everyone that I bonded with in Ithaca starting from my landlord, the Larson's family, my supervisor Ibu Jolanda, my colleagues at the Southeast Asia Program, and finally all my Indonesian friends studying at Cornell. Being an FLTA was an unforgettable experience, a journey for me which will resound throughout my life. 🌱



During the fall semester of 2022, Cornell librarians had the opportunity to bring on two students to work on the Southeast Asia Digital Library (SEADL) project. Emily Vo, a Cornell first year planning to major in Information Science and to minor in Southeast Asian Studies joined the SEADL team through the RAD Public History Fellowship--a program which pairs Cornell undergraduates with Cornell University Library employees to collaborate on archives-based public history projects focused on the Library's Rare and Distinctive collections. A second student, Ling O'Donoghue, joined the SEADL team as a graduate student intern, completing a field study for her Master's of Library and Information Science at the University of Maryland.

Students Get Their Hands Dirty with Archival Management



by **Emily Vo**, Undergraduate, Information Science,
Ling O'Donoghue, M.A. Student, Library and Information Science,
University of Maryland, and
Emily Zinger, Southeast Asia Digital Librarian.



Angkor Wat, steps on west causeway to the cruciform terrace. From *Then and Now: Historical Photographs of Cambodia*.

SEADL is a cooperatively managed digital library which holds 26 collections containing nearly 10,000 unique digital items from and about Southeast Asia. The repository is hosted online by Northern Illinois University and is managed by a consortium of 15 other institutions, including Cornell. SEADL requires daily work to keep its resources as useful and discoverable as possible for researchers. Incorporating student workers into this labor proved to be an excellent means of improving SEADL as a resource, and of introducing interested students to the fields of archives and librarianship.

Emily's work primarily focused on enhancing legacy descriptions for the online collection *Indonesian Illuminated Manuscripts*. Images in this collection were derived from photographs taken for the book *Illuminations: The Writing Traditions of Indonesia*. By matching SEADL's digital images with those in the publication, Emily researched

the contexts and histories of the manuscripts pictured in SEADL's collection and added this information to the SEADL website. Emily found data such as creation dates, places of origin, authors, subjects and more and added them to SEADL items according to the digital library's description standards. Sometimes legacy digital collections are not described to the level that best practices of today require. Without the information mentioned above, digital items are easily lost in the immensity of the internet, lacking the keywords that enable the items to show up in search results. Think of the descriptions as a word bank. If someone searches for "Jakarta" in SEADL, a manuscript from Jakarta will not show up in the search

results unless the word "Jakarta" is recorded somewhere in that manuscript's description. By explicitly recording that information, Emily's work will dramatically improve users' ability to search for and find the SEADL items that answer their research questions.

In addition to conducting research on the Indonesian manuscripts depicted in SEADL, Emily also geolocated photographs from the collection *Then and Now: Historical Photographs of Cambodia*. A challenging project, this work involved using context clues in item descriptions and the images themselves to pinpoint photographs on a map and assign each geographic coordinates. Some of the photographs (the

Incorporating student workers into this labor proved to be an excellent means of improving SEADL as a resource, and of introducing interested students to the fields of archives and librarianship.



Steps on Western Approach to Angkor Wat. From *Then and Now: Historical Photographs of Cambodia*.

“Then” images) date from the 1950s and 60s. The other half of the collection (the “Now” images) date from 2007. The photographs often detail the same location separated by decades—cars and scooters replace pedestrians, flip flops and plastic toys appear alongside produce in market stalls. In the future,

the website are recorded in the same format) and generating new pieces of information (such as the names of scripts depicted in textual materials, or subject terms describing the content of television shows).

Ling describes the importance of this work, saying, “I was most surprised by

that cover topics ranging from travel shows to religious talk shows. The archive did not have relevant searchable subject metadata. A user would be unable to conduct advanced searches within the archive. A simple search would return the entire archive, but the user could not search for a television episode discussing beauty standards in Indonesia.”

Think of the data in a digital archive like a word bank. If the word you are searching is not recorded in this bank, it will not turn up in your search results, even if a relevant item exists. By analyzing the subjects of each episode and recording that information in SEADL, Ling’s work enables users to more accurately and directly search for the subjects they seek.

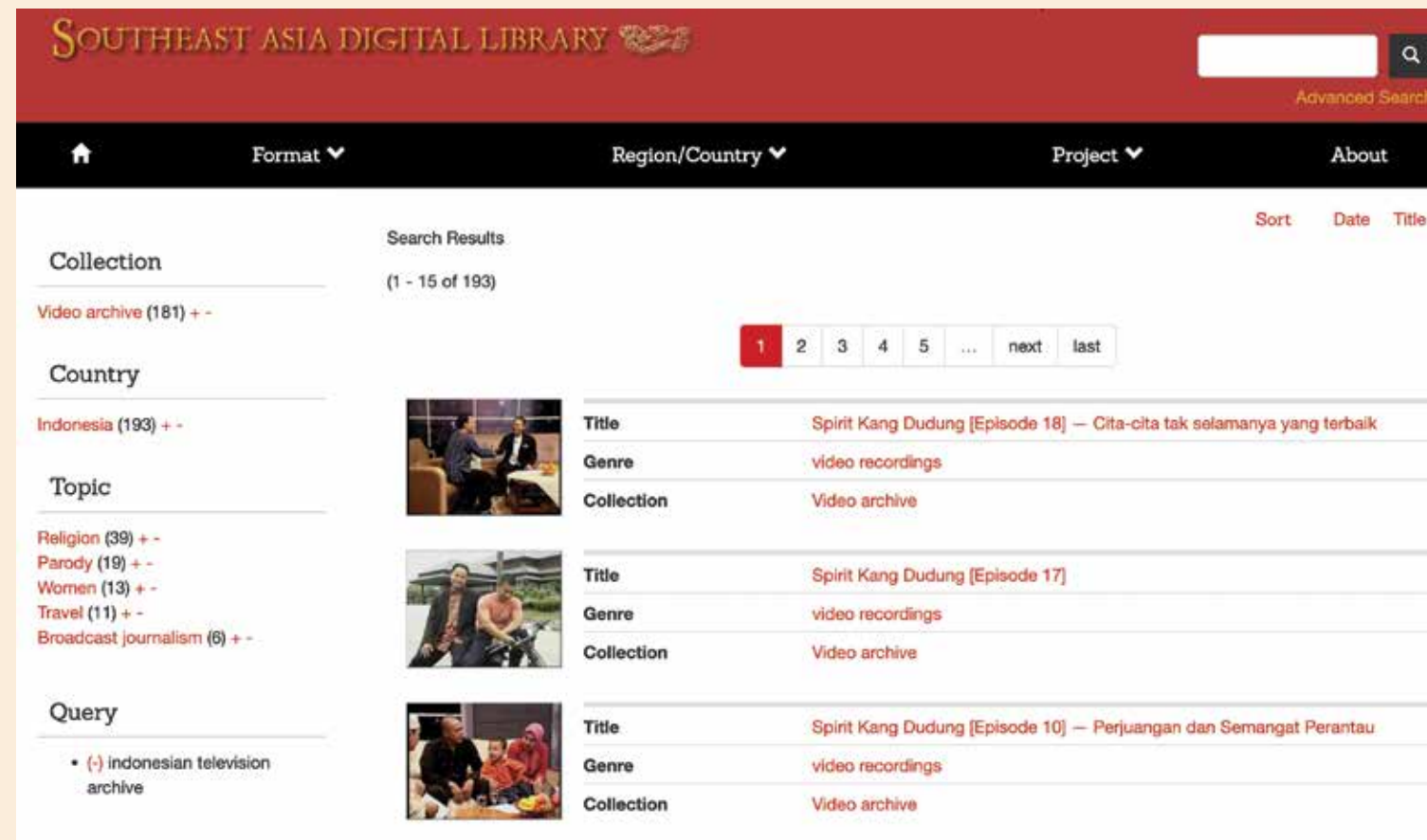
Although working separately on different tasks, both students identified similar challenges in their projects. Emily described the difficulty of whittling down her research to include only the most useful information in an item record. “I wanted to include every

A simple search would return the entire archive, but the user could not search for a television episode discussing beauty standards in Indonesia.

these coordinates will feed into a map interface allowing SEADL users to browse items based on location.

Ling paved the way as SEADL’s first ever intern and helped prepare the website and its collections for an upcoming migration to a new online platform. Ling’s work included standardizing existing pieces of information (such as ensuring that all dates on

the impact of correct metadata on user experience notably on item discovery and retrieval. As a researcher, I often enjoyed using comprehensive filters to identify relevant research items. As a metadata intern, I understand that items with limited descriptions inevitably result in lowered discoverability. For example, one of SEADL’s collections is the Indonesian Television Archives. This archive contains episodes



Search results from the Indonesian Television Archive with newly added subjects listed on the left of the screen.

detail,” she said. But she worked hard to condense her findings to the most relevant data about each manuscript that would aid SEADL users in effectively searching for items within the digital library’s database. Ling also encountered the difficulty of selecting which information to privilege in an item record. She describes a situation where she was deciding whether to label an item with a name in Khmer or with the English translated name.

“Choosing the Khmer helps researchers who know Khmer but excludes researchers who only speak the English language or only know the English term. On the other hand, if I chose to only include the translated term, I would exclude the word in its original form in Khmer.”

As Ling explains, the words that librarians choose to describe the items in their collections has a direct effect on how—and if—researchers find these items when searching online. Creating

more specific metadata helps surface SEADL items in search engine results and connects these collections with users across the world, whether they are academics looking for sources for a research paper or a curious individual hoping to learn more about their own culture. The students learned first-

...the words that librarians choose to describe the items in their collections has a direct effect on how—and if—researchers find these items when searching online.

hand how conversations with other library and archives professionals and input from Southeast Asia Studies subject experts helps guide librarians in making these critical description decisions.

These student work opportunities not only introduced Emily and Ling to the foundations of digital library work, but also submersed them in the field of

Southeast Asia Studies. Emily’s favorite part of her fellowship was learning about the cultural and religious aspects of Indonesian manuscripts. In completing her research, she learned about the history of Islamic manuscripts and palm leaf manuscripts, of Javanese writing and the influence of Dutch imperialism

on Indonesian art. These were histories she might not have encountered otherwise, but she was able to explore them through SEADL collections.

Interested in pursuing Southeast Asia digital librarianship yourself? Please contact Cornell’s Southeast Asia Digital Librarian, Emily Zinger, at emz42@cornell.edu to inquire about openings for student workers. And if



you are considering an internship in this field, student worker Emily Vo has advice for those interested in exploring Southeast Asia librarianship. She emphasizes the importance of quality over quantity when it comes to library description and highlights the impact of library work.

“I learned this the hard way, but it takes time and effort to research keywords and descriptions. Remember that this work is going to help someone else in the future. You never know who will need this information, who will come across it in the future and use it in interesting research, or even explore the collection just for the fun of learning.”

Left: Babad Blambangan Purwasastran. From Indonesian Illuminated Manuscripts.

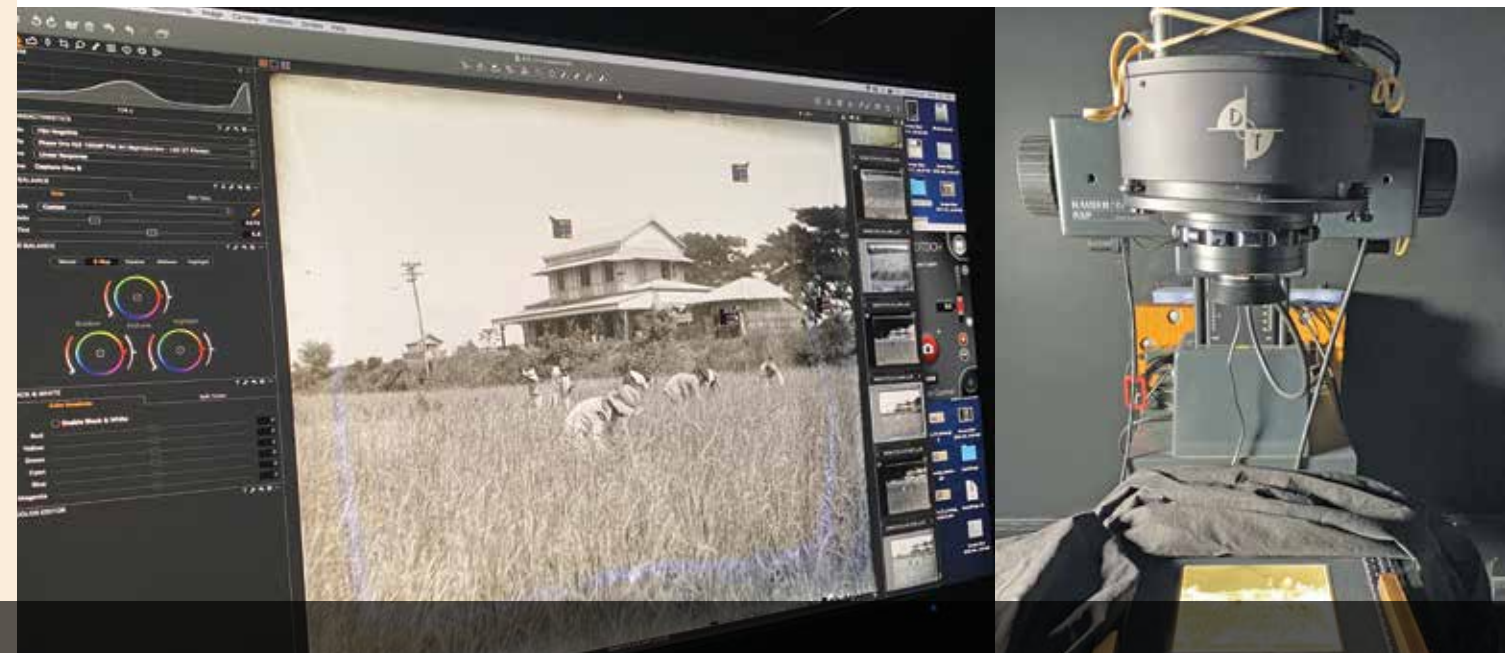
Right: A glass plate negative prepared to be photographed by Cornell University Library digitization staff.

Far Right: The positive image of the glass plate rendered on a Digitization Lab computer.

Digitization Pushes Ahead

by Emily Zinger, Southeast Asia Digital Librarian

A selection of photographs of the Philippines from the early 20th century will soon be freely available online through Cornell University Library Digital Collections. Part of the Gerow D. Brill Papers at the Library’s Rare and Manuscript Collections, these glass plate negatives were originally taken by Brill during his service as a scientific explorer for the United State Department of Agriculture. Claire Cororaton, a Cornell PhD Candidate in History, was awarded funding from the Library’s Grants Program for Digital Collections in the Arts and Sciences to curate and describe a selection of Brill’s photographs. These delicate plates will be scanned by Cornell’s digitization staff and then converted to photographic positives. Digitized images will include photographs of duck farms, sugar mills, rice plantations, and other agricultural themes. The collection will be useful to scholars interested in the Philippines and Southeast Asia, visual depictions of colonialism and US Empire, and more.



The Southeast Asia Program and Olin Library would like to extend their warm thanks to the incredible work of Yên Bù upon her recent retirement.

by William Noseworthy, Southeast Asian Materials Specialist

Yên Bù served the library for four and a half decades as a Vietnamese language bibliographer and built one of the most distinctive Vietnamese language collections in the world, outside of Vietnam. At first, she began by returning to Vietnam, physically carrying original language material back with her to the U.S. to add to Cornell’s Asia Collection (Kroch Library – then called the “Wason Collection”). She built personal relationships with vendors in Huế, Hà Nội, and H’ò Chí Minh City, who would ship materials directly to Cornell. She was also active in CORMOSEA where she supported the development of standards for cataloging Burmese language materials, participated in a Library of Congress workshop on standardization of authority records, and served as a guide/translator for a Vietnamese language documentary on Cornell.

Libraries often measure the distinctiveness of special collections by their “unique holdings.” Cornell’s Metadata Services conducted a statistical analysis of print monograph acquisitions between 2001-2018, and we can examine a portion of those findings to highlight the contributions of Yên Bù. Of all of the books acquired in that period, more titles were acquired in Vietnamese than any other language, except English. Indeed, only English and Vietnamese topped 14,000 acquisitions each, although Southeast Asianists should be proud that Thai and Indonesian acquisitions were also in the “Top 5.” Of titles per 1,000 held “only at Cornell,” Vietnamese was again in the top five, along with Thai, Lao, and Khmer.

It is safe to say that Yên Bù’s work is one of the reasons why CORMOSEA librarians look to Cornell as a working model of best practices.

We can also measure the “Mean Ivy” distribution for a sense of how unique holdings are, which is another area where we see Yên Bù’s contributions shine. A “Mean Ivy” distribution of “1” equates to a given set of titles held at only one Ivy League institution. The mean Khmer, Thai, Lao and Vietnamese titles are held at just 1.1-1.3 Ivy League institutions, compared to say, Ancient Greek titles, which are held at around six of eight Ivy League schools. What this means is: the vast majority of the Vietnamese language title acquired between 2001 and 2018 is held only at Cornell. Furthermore, these titles did indeed circulate, as data indicates that Vietnamese holdings circulated at about the same rate as Burmese, Sanskrit, and Urdu language collections. We should also recognize “circulation” does not necessarily reflect total use. There is no statistical method to measure when researchers read through titles, remove them from the shelves, use them in the library, and return them to the shelf, which the most honest Vietnamese Studies researchers confess, “happens!”

Although describing the Vietnamese language collection Yên Bù built for Cornell would be impossible in an entire issue of the bulletin, her efforts are the main reason why Cornell’s Vietnamese language holdings became the collection of record in the United States. It is safe to say that Yên Bù’s work is one of the reasons why CORMOSEA librarians look to Cornell as a working model of best practices. We hope that all will join us in celebration of her career and her next stage of life: *Cám ơn Di nhiều nhé!*

ABRAHAMIC FAITHS IN INDONESIA:

An International Dialogue

When I received a forward of an email from Rachel Safman (SEAP alumna '02) about some Indonesian women coming as part of an interfaith dialogue project, I was intrigued. At the time I didn't know who Rachel was, not that she had done stunning research on AIDS in Thailand during the 90s, nor that she had recently moved back to Ithaca during the pandemic and is now the rabbi at Temple Beth-El.



by James Nagy,
SEAP Administrative
Coordinator

Rachel explained that in her capacity as rabbi she was involved in the 1000 Abrahamic Circles Project, an interfaith dialogue bringing together Muslims, Christians, and Jews to live in each other's communities and to get to know one another through structured and unstructured interactions. Though several such groups had met in Indonesia, this was the first one to be solely composed of women, and the Christian and Muslim participants would soon be on their way to Ithaca to spend time with Rabbi Safman. The group was led by Meisha Marsella, managing director of 1000 Abrahamic Circles; with her came Ustadzah Anis, who teaches at Islamic State University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, and Reverend Kristi, pastor of *Gereja Kristen Jawa Gondokusuman* (Christian Church of Java, Gondokusuman). Through a series of phone calls and emails, Rabbi Safman and I realized we had a wonderful opportunity to foster discussions of not only religious pluralism and identity but also of frequently attendant interreligious prejudices and, at times, even hatred.

One could say that the timing could not have been better, as the visit of these Indonesian faith leaders coincided with Ramadan, Easter, and Passover. Moreover, as Cornell and SEAP did not factor whatsoever in the dialogue group's coming to Ithaca, it was quite serendipitous that we would be able to help them feel at home with the substantial Indonesian student community here, which greatly surprised them. Their first impression of Ithaca, though perhaps *unsurprisingly*, turned out to be snow, with Meisha commenting "When we arrived in Ithaca, we were greeted with snowfall in April. For those of us who come from a tropical country, being able to see and touch the snow directly is a privilege and an unforgettable memory."

The day after they arrived, SEAP arranged an iftar dinner to meet members of the SEAP community and other interested students across campus. With approximately a dozen in attendance, we had a robust discussion, and I think that it was the most impactful religious dialogues that I have ever been a part of. Having personally participated in interreligious dialogue during both undergraduate and graduate



Top: Some attendees of the iftar dinner, with Reverend Kristi, Meisha, and Ustadzah Anis (l to r, center) at the Kahin Center.

Above: Reverend Kristi, Rabbi Rachel, and Ustadzah Anis at Stewart Park, Ithaca.

school, the level of frankness, generosity, and goodwill that these faith leaders displayed was unmatched—and this was while they were still very much suffering from the compounding effects of jetlag and a very full stomach of food from the local Thai restaurant Tamarind. The engagement was not one-sided, however, and members from the SEAP and campus community brought their experiences of growing up in interfaith households, their own experiences of growing up in Indonesia, and their own wrestling with what it means to live in a society that claims to be pluralistic. No one wanted to leave until quite late, even though everyone's exhaustion was quite evident. Many connections were made at that first dinner, and the women were also able to attend iftar dinners later on in their visit with the Cornell Muslim community at Anabel Taylor Hall.

Meeting again with the women towards the end of their visit, they expressed to me how welcome they felt in Ithaca, from the beautiful gorges, to the vibrant Muslim community, to the earnest questions from students, to the warm congregation of Temple Beth-El, the unexpected connections to Indonesia through SEAP, and the welcoming congregation at the First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca. Though SEAP's role in their overall visit was small, Meisha agreed that the purpose of the dialogue project was achieved, saying that "tolerance will not arise without us being able to learn and understand each other and empathize without prejudice and suspicion."

Indeed, their visit reminded me that it is not just interreligious dialogue itself that is of value but also the opening of oneself to the unique religious (and human) experience of these women as religious leaders in male-dominated faiths that opens a way forward. As these women showed, dialogue begins with coming to the table and creating a safe space to discuss misunderstandings, to talk openly about harm both felt and done to others, and if nothing else, to experience—often over food—the joy of getting to know others. ♣

NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS



SEAP Graduate Student Committee Co-Chairs

Tamar Law is a second year PhD student in Development Studies, studying the political ecology of climate mitigation. Specifically, Tamar examines the social dynamics of nature-based solutions to climate change, with a focus on blue carbon ecosystems and soil carbon sinks. She is delighted to be co-chair of SEAP's graduate committee and is excited to foster the social and academic dimensions of the graduate community in Southeast Asian studies at Cornell.



Harry Dienes is a third year PhD student in the Government Department, studying the political economy of development. In particular, he is interested in how political processes – whether through elections, non-electoral participation, or in internal organizational dynamics – impact public services and government responsiveness. He is very excited about being a co-chair of the graduate committee, and wants to use the fantastic space at the Kahin Center to help strengthen the sense of community amongst Southeast Asianists at Cornell. He's looking forward to a compelling roster of speakers for Gatty 2022-23.



Gatty Rewind Podcast Host

Francine Barchett is a second-year PhD student in Natural Resources and the Environment at Cornell as well as a Research Fellow at the African Wildlife Economy Institute at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. Her dissertation focuses on trophy hunting and legal/illegal wildlife consumption patterns in both Southern Africa and Southeast Asia, hinging on the intersections of sustainable development, wildlife conservation, and private enterprise.

Francine has received two degrees from Cornell: a B.S. in International Agriculture & Rural Development (2019) and M.P.S in Global Development (2021). Her projects and studies have led her across the US and to over 20 countries, from index-based livestock insurance program evaluation at ILRI in Kenya to wild bird trafficking research in Bali, Indonesia. She received the World Food Prize Elaine Szymoniak Award for her work at ICRISAT in India, where she studied the nutritional and health outcomes of the government's Swacch Bharat sanitation campaigns and was later recognized as a Rawlings Presidential Research Scholar. She is also a 3-time FLAS recipient and has represented the US at numerous Indonesian government functions.

During her time in the Cornell community, Francine has remained active in youth engagement, food security, and prison reform. At a state level she has authored a healthcare journal article that became the basis for a law making menstrual hygiene products free-of-charge in prisons. Her most rewarding experience, however, has been serving as the World Food Prize New York Youth Institute's associate, where she is able to give back to the organization that ignited her passion for human development and educating youth.

Outside of podcasting and researching, Francine fills her time running ultra-marathons, playing the accordion, and tasting spicier foods than she thinks she can handle!

"I love Southeast Asia and I love engaging with diverse perspectives, so the Gatty Rewind Podcast is 100% up my alley! I am also honored to be taking the reins from longtime host Michael Miller — look out for our inaugural, passing-of-the-torch podcast!"

CU in Cambodia

Heritage, History, and Identity in Cambodia

Magnus Fiskesjö

Winter Session 2023
Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, Cambodia

CU in Cambodia: Heritage, History, and Identity in Cambodia

- Magnus Fiskesjö
- Winter Session 2023
- Phnom Penh, Cambodia
- This course will focus on Cambodian heritage — how it has been created in the past, including the city of Angkor, and how that heritage and history is understood and engaged today. We will visit historical sites as well as museums and other relevant sites, including performances, where history is remembered and engaged.
- Funding available!
- Some opportunities are need-based, others give priority student students who have taken 3+credits of Southeast Asia-related courses.





By default, all talks will be held at 12:30pm on Thursdays at the Kahin Center. Lunch will be served before the talk. Several talks will take place on a different day, at a different time, or in a different place - see notes below.

August

25 Charnvit Kasetsiri, Thammasat University//Pridi Banomyong International College
Amnat and Barami: Chulalongkorn and Bhumibol: The Two Longest Reigns in Siam and Thailand

September

1 Evyn Lê Espiritu Gandhi, UCLA//Department of Asian American Studies
Toward an Archipelagic Southeast Asian Studies: Vietnamese Refugee Settlers and the Decolonial Politics of Nước

15 Ruth Toulson, Mayland Institute College of Art//Department of Anthropology
The Gift of a Corpse: Notes from a Singaporean Mortuary on the Necropolitics of the Ordinary

22 Nicholas Kuipers, National University of Singapore//Department of Political Science
Meritocracy Reconsidered: Bureaucratic Selection and Nation-Building in Indonesia

29 Meredith Talusan, Condé Nast author and editor
Unbecoming: Exploring Filipinx Trans Identity Through Literary Fiction

October

14 Victoria Reyes, UC Riverside//Department of Gender & Sexuality Studies
Academic Outsider
*Note: Held on Friday at 12:30pm, 102 Mann Library

20 Hitomi Fujimura, York University//York Centre for Asian Research
Claiming Karen as National Identity: Transnational Experiences of Karen Baptists in Nineteenth-Century America and British Burma

27 Eddy Malesky, Duke University//Department of Political Science
Who Wants to Learn about Globalization? A Field Experiment in Vietnam

November

3 Tania Li and Pujo Samedi, University of Toronto and Universitas Gadjah Mada
Plantation Life: Corporate Occupation in Indonesia's Plantation Zone
*Note: Held on Thursday at 8pm, Kahin Center

7 Sunisa Manning, Writer
Translated History: Thai Revolution Reborn in Fiction
*Note: Held on Monday at 12:30pm, Kahin Center

17 Miles Kenney-Lazar, National University of Singapore//Department of Geography
The Future of Land in Myanmar
*Note: Held on Thursday at 8pm, Kahin Center

FACULTY UPDATES



New directorship to focus on sustainable cities

SEAP faculty member Victoria Beard has been appointed the inaugural director of the Cornell Mui Ho Center for Cities. The center is housed within the College of Architecture, Art, and Planning (AAP), and aims to advance research, teaching, and partnerships dedicated to fostering more sustainable and just cities. It seeks to address the most complex challenges facing global cities, which are both vibrant centers of productivity and creativity, generating 80% of the world's gross national product—but also major contributors of greenhouse gases and rising inequality. The new position will tie in well with Beard's work on urban inequality and poverty in the Global South, including Southeast Asia.



Golay Lecture: November 15, 2022

SEAP is pleased to announce that Professor Brenda Yeoh will be giving a Golay Lecture on November 15, 2022.

TOPIC:
Transnational Families and the Temporary Migration Regime in Southeast Asia

BACKGROUND:
Brenda S.A. Yeoh FBA is Raffles Professor of Social Sciences at the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Research Leader of the Asian Migration Cluster at the Asia Research Institute, NUS.



Taking charge in CALS

SEAP Faculty Member Shorna Allred has been appointed senior associate dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Allred will expand on her previous service experience to aid faculty searches, support development, and coordinate projects, along with other key responsibilities. Incorporating insights from the social sciences, her research focuses on the relationship between human behavior and natural resource management. Her work in Southeast Asia includes cultural resilience research in Malaysian Borneo and a recent sabbatical in Bangkok, Thailand, where she investigated flood resilience.

Remembrances of ...

John Badgley (1930-2022)

and

Randolph Barker (1929-2022)

will be featured in the Spring Bulletin 2023.

VISITING FELLOWS



May Sabe Phyu is the Dorothea S. Clarke fellow of feminist jurisprudence with the Cornell Law School and affiliated with the Southeast Asia Program. A long-standing woman's human rights defender from Myanmar, she is the Director of the Gender Equality Network (GEN), a coalition of more than 100 organizations collaborating to advocate for women's rights and working to end discrimination against women and ethnic and religious minorities in Myanmar. She works actively in the areas of the prevention of violence against women, law reform and women's engagement to bring peace.

She graduated from the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) Thailand in 2011 with her first master's degree in Gender and Development Studies, and obtained her second master's degree in Public Administration from Harvard Kennedy School of Government in 2018. Less than 48 hours after the 2021 military coup, she organized many women's groups to form a Women's Human Rights Defenders network to collectively counter the country's urgent state of affairs. That network has transformed itself into a coalition and now stands as one of the independent voices for the plight of women and girls in Myanmar, advocating to power-holders and policy makers so that humanitarian efforts will be gender-conscious and include the most affected communities, addressing the gendered needs arising from the post-coup violence. In recognition of her work, she has been honored by many international awards including "International Women of Courage" Award by the United States in 2015, and "Franco-German Human Rights and Rule of Law Prize" by Germany and France in 2021. She relocated to the United States after the military's disastrous coup in 2021. During her fellowship, she is conducting research on "Marital Rape" and the "International Accountability Mechanism for seeking justice of human rights violations and war crimes in Myanmar."



Zhaohui Wang is an Associate Professor at the School of International Relations and Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Xiamen University. His research lies in the fields of International Relations, Comparative Politics, Political Economy and Asia-Pacific Area Studies. He has published a monograph *International Political Economy of China's Exchange Rate Policy Making* (Springer 2021) and articles in various journals such as *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, *Globalizations*, *Asian Studies Review*, *Asian Survey* and *Journal of Contemporary China*. As a Visiting Scholar in the Southeast Asia Program during the 2022-2023 academic year, he will be working on a research project on China's Belt and Road Initiative in Maritime Southeast Asia. He is also keen to know about the state of the art of area studies at Cornell University and to reflect on how area studies shall be conducted in China in the near future.



Kirsten Kamphuis is a gender historian of late-colonial and decolonizing Indonesia. She is currently affiliated with the Cluster of Excellence for Religion and Politics at Münster University, Germany, as a junior researcher. Her postdoctoral project deals with women's print cultures and religion in Indonesia between 1920 and 1960. During her stay at Cornell, from mid-August to mid-December 2022, Kirsten will be working with Dr. Chiara Formichi. She is looking forward to becoming an active member of the SEAP community.

Originally from the Netherlands, Kirsten studied history at the University of Groningen and Leiden University before joining the PhD program at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. She obtained her doctorate from EUI in 2019 with a thesis on the history of girls' education in four regions of colonial Indonesia. A monograph based on her thesis is planned to appear with Leiden University Press. Among other outlets, Kirsten has published in *International Review for Social History*, *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review*, and *Journal for the History of Childhood and Youth*.

Sachiko Ohno is a Visiting Fellow at SEAP from 2022 to 2023. Her expertise is in Marketing and Consumer Behavior. She received a Ph.D. in Business Administration in 2014 from Keio University in Japan with a thesis on how emotions of guilt can motivate consumer behavior. Currently she is an associate professor at Wako University in Tokyo, Japan, where she instructs courses on Japanese Marketing Communications and Marketing Research. She also collaborates on projects with the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research society in Japan. One of these projects concerns how emotions can stimulate preventive consumer behavior in Japan, the United States, and Indonesia post-COVID-19. At SEAP, she is focusing on Indonesian consumer habits and emotions that motivate preventive behavior against diseases such as COVID-19 and influenza. For example, Japanese media coverage of COVID-19 often uses words that invoke emotions of guilt, while American media more often uses words with fearful connotations. In contrast, Indonesia is a multicultural nation with more diverse consumer habits. Dr. Ohno is excited to explore these topics with other SEAP members.



DEGREES CONFERRED

CORNELL UNIVERSITY SOUTHEAST ASIA — DOCTORAL DEGREES

AUGUST 2021

Mariangela Jordan

Anthropology
Chair: Magnus Fiskesjö
You Are Not My Brother: Mizo Nationalism at the Edge of the Indian Empire

Sneha Kumar

Development Sociology
Chair: Lindy Williams
The Hidden Costs of Mobility: changing Patterns of Labor Migration and Health Implications for Left-behind Families in Indonesia

Mary Moroney

Linguistics
Chair: Miloje Despic
Definiteness and Quantification: Evidence from Shan

Anissa Rahadiningtyas

History of Art
Chair: Kaja McGowan
Islam and Art in the Makings of the Modern in Indonesia

DECEMBER 2021

Alexandra Dalferro

Anthropology
Chair: Marina Welker
Shimmering Surfaces: An Ethnography of Silk Production in Surin, Thailand

Ekarina Winarto

Linguistics
Chair: John Whitman
Word Order: Case Study of Scrambling and Object Shift in Indonesian

MAY 2022

Vinh Pham

Comparative Literature
Chair: Andrea Bachner
Writing Other Times: On Postcolonial Temporalities in Vietnamese Francophone and Fil-Hispanic Novels

Darin Self

Government
Chair: Tom Pepinsky
Bounded Democracy: How Authoritarian Civilian-military Relations Shape Democratization and Democratic Development

CORNELL UNIVERSITY SOUTHEAST ASIA — MASTER'S DEGREES

AUGUST 2021

Muhammad Ash Shidqi

Regional Science
Chair: John Carruthers
The potential economic loss of 1965-66 communist massacre: lessons from Central Java and East Java

Rukmini Chakraborty

History
Chair: Durba Ghosh

Nadine Gutierrez

City and Regional Planning
Chair: Victoria Beard
Dual vulnerability to climate change and violent conflict: The case of Lanao del Sur, Philippines

Kania Pradipta

City and Regional Planning
Chair: Stephan Schmidt
Ecotourism Planning in Labuan Bajo: Analysis on Socio-Economic Impact and Community Coalition

Juhwan Seo

Sociology
Chair: Filiz Garip

Brittain Sluder

Regional Science
Chair: Kieran Donaghy
Private land conservation, regional environmental governance, socialsheds, and social network analysis: Theory and applications in western North Carolina

Emi Donald

History
Chair: Tamara Loos

Brianna Douglas

Global Development
Chair: Lori Leonard
The mitigation of sex trafficking from rural Cambodia via women's empowerment programming: A comprehensive and proactive approach based on human centric, systems-based sustainable development methodology

DECEMBER 2021

Connor Rehtzigel

Anthropology
Chair: Marina Welker

Jaynel Santos

City and Regional Planning
Chair: Yuri Mansuri
Why a Dike? Why Not a Paradigm Shift from Flood 'Control' to 'Adaptation' Along the Cagayan De Oro River, Philippines

Sarena Tien

Romance Studies
Chair: Imane Terhmina

Meita Estiningsih

History of Art
Chair: Kaja McGowan

Shorna Allred, associate professor, natural resources

Christine Bacareza Balance, associate professor, Asian American studies, performing and media arts

Victoria Beard, professor and associate dean of research, city and regional planning

Anne Blackburn, Old Dominion Foundation professor in the Humanities, Asian studies

Thak Chaloehtiarana, professor, Asian literature, religion, and culture; and Asian studies

Abigail C. Cohn, professor, linguistics

Magnus Fiskesjö, associate professor, anthropology

Chiara Formichi, associate professor, Asian studies

Arnika Fuhrmann, associate professor, Asian studies

Jenny Goldstein, assistant professor, global development

Greg Green, curator, Echols Collection on Southeast Asia

Martin F. Hatch, professor emeritus, music

Ngampit Jagacinski, senior lecturer, Thai, Asian studies

Yu Yu Khaing, senior lecturer, Burmese, Asian studies

Sarosh Kuruvilla, Andrew J. Nathanson Family professor, industrial and labor relations

Tamara Loos, professor, history

Kaja M. McGowan, associate professor, history of art and visual studies

Christopher J. Miller, senior lecturer, music

Stanley J. O'Connor, professor emeritus, art history

Jolanda Pandin, senior lecturer, Indonesian, Asian studies

Juno Salazar Parreñas, assistant professor, science and technology studies; and feminist, gender, and sexuality studies

Thomas Pepinsky, Walter F. LaFeber Professor of Government and Public Policy and director of the Southeast Asia Program

Hannah Phan, senior lecturer, Khmer, Asian studies

Maria Theresa Savella, senior lecturer, Tagalog, Asian studies

James T. Siegel, professor emeritus, anthropology

Eric Tagliacozzo, John Stambaugh Professor of History

Keith W. Taylor, professor, Asian studies

Erik Thorbecke, H. E. Babcock professor emeritus, economics and food economics

Thúy Tranviet, senior lecturer, Vietnamese, Asian studies

Marina Welker, associate professor, anthropology

John Whitman, professor, linguistics

Andrew Willford, professor, anthropology

Lindy Williams, professor emeritus, global development

John U. Wolff, professor emeritus, linguistics and Asian studies

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