Grants

We are pleased to announce a Henry Luce Foundation award of $50,000 to the Center to support graduate students. This will surely continue the momentum built up by the Center for attracting excellent students in Southeast Asian studies. Combined with FLAS fellowships, there should be approximately 10 graduate student fellowships available for competition in the academic year 1992-1993 for those concentrating in Southeast Asian studies and/or taking Southeast Asian languages.

The Library has also been invited to participate in sharing $160,000 in a cooperative acquisitions program with several other Illinois libraries. The staff of the Southeast Asian collection is currently working on this program.

Acquisitions

Whenever our faculty and graduate students conduct research in Southeast Asia or pertinent European countries, it is Center policy to try and provide funds that would enhance their ability to obtain research material, copies of which are then deposited in the Donn V. Hart Southeast Asian Collection. Thus, in the Fall of 1991, Joselito (Jo Jo) Fornier conducted research at the National Archives in Manila, using primary Tagalog and Spanish sources pertinent to his dissertation, entitled "19th Century Antique: A Social and Economic History of a Philippine Province." Copies of these materials were subsequently deposited in the library. Similarly, our editor, Grant Olson, was in Thailand during the Fall semester on a Fulbright award completing a translation of a modern Buddhist text. He returned with several interesting works on Buddhism that are difficult to obtain through normal channels. The Center encourages faculty and students planning to conduct research abroad to discuss their projects with the Center—not only to supplement one's research funds but so that this kind of informal acquisitions program can continue and help our regular acquisitions efforts.

The Center has also purchased a CD-ROM unit with printer and software on the Vietnam War for the Donn V. Hart Southeast Asian Collection. In anticipation of the efforts of the AAS and other professional societies related to our disciplines and country areas converting their bibliographies to CD-ROM, not to mention similar software on the market already in Southeast Asia, this research tool will go far in helping our faculty and students to better access source material. It is located outside the curator's office on the fourth floor of Founders Library and is designed specifically to help those using the Donn V. Hart Southeast Asian Collection. Sam Huang, the curator of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Collection, will announce further developments shortly.

Currently our total (cataloged) holdings on Southeast Asia number around 52,500 volumes (nearly 83,000 including uncatalogued titles), which we hope to increase to 100,000 titles during the next several years. Friends, alumni, and colleagues in Southeast Asian studies continue to donate to the Donn V. Hart Endowment Fund. If you wish to do so, please see enclosed form.

Visiting Scholars

This year, several visitors from Southeast Asia will spend some time at the Center involved in research or teaching. Suntharee Komin, associate professor, National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA), arrived recently on a Fulbright to pursue her research on "Thai Value Systems and Implications for Intercultural Management." The renowned Sulak Sivaraksa spent four days on campus and lectured in our Friday speaker series and in several classes on campus, including the new course "Southeast Asian Literature in Translation" (see article below). In addition, an organization called Asian Cultural Council located in New York and Washington, has invited NIU's Center to participate in their artist-in-residency program. The Council invites Southeast Asian teachers, scholars, and artists to conduct seminars, lectures, and workshops at designated universities in the United States interested in the expertise of the guests. If their most recent requests are successful, U Ko Ko, a renowned classical musician of Burma specializing in the traditional Burmese harp (who performed at the Nobel Peace Prize ceremonies), will be hosted by several universities, including NIU. Muhammad Salleh, at Berkeley on a Fulbright, will visit DeKalb towards the end of March, lecturing on modern Malay literature. Sontaya Nakasiri, associate dean of the
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Prince of Songkhla University in Pattani, will visit NIU in spring as part of the NIU-PSU exchange program funded by USIA. The dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Chiang Mai University, Chakrapand Wongburanaart, will also visit in April to discuss future exchange relations with NIU and present a seminar on “Thai Politics After the Election.” Prosperina Tapales from the Philippines will visit in April to present a lecture on the upcoming elections in her country.

Donations

Syracuse University's Arents Library informed the Center last summer that its Philipiniana collection begun by Donn V. Hart when he was professor there will be donated to the Donn V. Hart Southeast Asian Collection at NIU. It includes typescripts of several novels by the famous literary figure Magdalena G. Jalandoni, who wrote mainly in Hiligaynon, original sketches of political figures by the famous cartoonist artist Aguila Darn, and probably most important, over 4000 (transcribed) letters of Manuel Quezon.

Publications

Welcome back to our editor who was on research leave in Thailand last term (see activities section for faculty below). Fortunately, before departing DeKalb last Fall, he completed the latest issue of Crossroads. It features articles on writers and activists in Southeast Asia.

Faculty

Several of our faculty were abroad last term: Ron Provencher, Clark Neher, Robert Zerwekh (better known as “Z”), Kuo-Huang Han, Sam Huang, Richard Cooler, Hsin Yi Ling, Robert Albritton, and Grant Olson. Virtually all have returned, but, alas, one is still there: Susan Russell continues to conduct research with an NFS grant on her favorite fishing village in the Philippines.

I should add that the University of Oslo invited me to present several lectures on Burmese history and leadership institutions (along with journalists Martin Smith and Bertil Lintner) in connection with the Nobel Peace Prize ceremonies held in Norway in December when Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded the Prize in absentia. (Her eldest son, Alexander, accepted the award on his mother's behalf, with a very moving and perceptive speech that belies his 18 years.) The occasion was quite an experience, and my thoughts on it are elaborated below as "Reflections From Oslo."

Beginning with Clark Neher's reflections on the Philippines, we will continue this trend. We wish to encourage faculty and students just returned from trips abroad to write about their experiences.

Students

We continue to retain current and attract new students interested in Southeast Asian studies (see section below on their interests). Two of our graduate students, Michael Egan and John Baker, attended the Washington Conference on Burma. Applications and/or inquiries from new students continue to arrive, some as far as the Peoples' Republic of China, others from the east and west coasts. There will be a student colloquium on Southeast Asia on March 21st. The current research interests of NIU's students in Southeast Asian studies will be presented to interested faculty, students, and guests. Topics concerned with any discipline with a focus on Southeast Asia are welcome. The finalized program will be announced later.

Southeast Asia Courses

Last term, the enrollment for "Crossroads," our Southeast Asia survey course, numbered 80 students. Fourteen faculty members contributed lectures to make the class successful. It is divided into three parts. Part I deals with the Material and Human Environment of Southeast Asia; part II with the Cultural and Historical Background; and part III with Southeast Asia in the Modern World. Those outside NIU interested in receiving the syllabus may contact the Center to receive a copy.

One of the new courses being offered this term is "Southeast Asian Literature in Translation." Our three language and literature wallahs, John Hartmann, Pat Henry, and U Saw Tun are team-teaching this course. Muhammed Salleh will also contribute his knowledge of modern Malay literature to this class in March. I have offered a new reading seminar for graduate students entitled "Issues and Problems in Burmese History." One of our history courses "History of Malaysia and Indonesia," taught by Constance Wilson, has been divided into two separate courses: "History of Indonesia" and "History of Malaysia and Singapore."

Michael Aung-Thwin
Reflections From Oslo
by Michael Aung-Thwin

When I walked up the cordoned-off path leading to the City Hall in Oslo on that cold, gray, and drizzling Tuesday in December, where the Nobel Peace Prize was to be awarded to Aung San Suu Kyi in just a few minutes, I felt ambivalent. That sentiment was not the result of any intellectual assessment I had about Suu but stemmed from more personal reasons: a fellow Burmese and colleague for nearly a year while we were in Kyoto University’s Center for Southeast Asian Studies was about to receive one of the most prestigious international awards. Yet, everyone knew that she was under house arrest and that one of her sons, Alexander, who had not seen her for a couple of years, would accept the award on her behalf. My feelings in part reflected this dilemma.

But it was more than empathy for the family whom we knew well—an estranged husband, a courageous and sensitive elder son, nearly the same age as my own, and a younger, more carefree one who was the same age as my daughter, both of whom played together in Kyoto for almost a year without a care in the world and a clue to what was to come. Rather, my mixed motions also stemmed from the public lectures held the night before. That event encapsulated, writesmall, Burma’s problems of the past and present, boding ill for the future.

Burmese expatriates and exiles from Germany, the United States, Norway, and England had gathered at the hall where Martin Luther King, Desmond Tutu, and other previous peace prize winners had received their awards. The panel included the exiled leader of the National League for Democracy, U Sein Win, as well as four other specialists on Burma. It was the “exchange” at the end of the presentations that was disturbing, reflecting the extreme factionalism in Burma that ultimately derives from its inability to unite around ideas instead of personalities. This makes it unlikely that the future as a legitimating concept will become acceptable to most, particularly when the shape of that future is not shared—and for the losers, uncertain.

In what is probably typical of Burmese “discussions” of emotional issues, two expatriate Burmese from the United States stood up at the end of the presentations, stating in effect that those not towing their line were apologists for the Burmese government. Then, with righteous indignation, they demanded that I publically retract something written a couple of years ago in an academic work, which they had garbled into something else more self-serving. The Norwegian moderator interrupted to suggest that the topic of the night and the talks just given be addressed, rather than something irrelevant to the panel’s purpose, one about which nobody else was familiar. This was ignored, and the occasion became a political rally for what was essentially a private and personal agenda.

The behavior of the two illustrates why Burma has had and is having problems not only with unity, but with democratic institutions. Here stood two self-appointed “leaders,” who had lived for years in the West, loudly proclaiming “democracy” for Burma and acting as spokesmen for the Burmese expatriate community; and yet they behaved as if they were, according to one Norwegian colleague who confided later, “opium warlords.” These two, I concluded, are cut from the same cloth as those they are trying to overthrow. They are as intolerant of views even remotely different from theirs, as paranoid about ideas that (vaguely) seem wrong to them, and as self-righteous about their monopoly on the “right” path for Burma, as those in the inner core of the Burmese government.

Several Norwegians who came up and talked to me about my lecture focusing on charismatic leadership in Burmese history—which stated in part that rebellion under certain circumstances in Burmese political culture is legitimate—said that apart from our presentations, the events in the hall themselves were a learning experience. They came to realize that if overseas Burmese, supposedly gathered around a united purpose on safe and neutral territory, were so emotional and factionalized, how really divided the country must be. Indeed, factionalism prevails, along with this kind of character assassination, in the United States among expatriate Burmese, even those ostensibly united around Aung San Suu Kyi’s cause.

More serious, many expatriate Burmese “leaders” seem unaware of, or are deliberately ignoring, the distinction between lip service given to the principle of “freedom of expression,” and an honest, shared belief in the value of that principle and its process. During one of the long, private discussions I had with Martin Smith and Bertil Lintner, the latter told me about an incident, I think in 1988, where one of the students involved in the negotiations with the government (I presume this was when Dr. Maung Maung had briefly taken the helm) drafted a demand that stated, in effect, that “all political trials will be open,” without a hint of contradiction. Bertil had asked incredulously: “political trials?” The student was totally unaware of the implications of that statement.

A desire for real democracy on the one hand, and democracy being used as a rallying cry to attain power (with financial support from the West) on the other, is becoming more and more obvious. The Norwegian Government had just announced monetary support, about two million kroner, for the government in exile; and the sticky fingers had begun to emerge. The U.S. Government had contributed funds earlier to help those Burmese students affected by the crackdown of 1988 that has created other factionalism. And the Canadian Government has recently added approximately the same ($200,000) to the Canadian branch of the Burma expatriate movement.
It was after that evening's session that my cautious optimism turned to sadness about Suu Kyi's plight and cause. All these people with their "free Suu" buttons on their shirts and blouses, all sincere I am sure, yet are being led by "chieftains" who are no more democratic than the army colonies they want to replace—and with a personal agenda unrelated to the cause that the Western public thinks is being pursued. If successful, Suu Kyi will have more than SLORC to contend with.

Yet it is not only the Burmese elite who exhibit this attitude. It reminds me of the early 1960s with the Vietnam War when all objectivity was thrown out the window, and it became a case of "if you're not for us, you must be against us," and one was told to "love it or leave it." It also reminds me of more recent events at Tiananmen Square, depicted in CNN's worldview as "democracy versus dictatorship" and little else. Such "good versus evil" explanations of complex problems, particularly by Western media, and especially of cultures as unfamiliar as Burma, have helped distort the real issues stemming from Burmese history, culture, and politics. Indeed, democracy, ethnic nationalism, market economics (capitalism really), human rights, and feminism—although perhaps desirable in themselves—have nevertheless become the "politically correct" stances to advocate and the sine qua non for defining legitimate government. They have become part of an American jihad.

One of the victims of this "good versus evil" simplification is Burmese history itself. I had participated in another panel at the International Peace Research Institute of Oslo a few days earlier. The audience, more academically inclined, was far more neutral and objective about Burma. However, there were several Burmese in the audience, and one of them came up to me after the talk and said something that puzzled me initially. "You know," he said, "King Aniruddha and Bayinnaung also killed thousands of monks as part of their unification of Burma." I waited for a conclusion, analysis, opinion, something, anything. None came.

Upon reflection, I remembered that Saw Maung, who heads the Burmese government, had once linked himself with King Aniruddha in the context of unification; and Martin Smith had shown a slide of a young monk who had been bayonetted by soldiers during the recent troubles. I'm not sure where this Burmese who came up to me stood, but I thought to myself, why is he revising history? Or was he trying to say that, since even the great Aniruddha and Bayinnaung killed monks in their process of unification, Saw Maung's actions were justified? I do not know what he meant, but what bothered me was that if this revisionism of history, if that's what it was, is going on whimsically, what is going on deliberately? A lot! And it is being conducted by individuals, the government, the opposition, Suu Kyi herself in her recent Freedom From Fear, Western journalists, and scholars of Burma. The focus of this revisionism revolves around the coup of 1962: one side sees it as the ultimate cause of all subsequent and current problems in Burma, the other, as an event that saved the Union from disintegrating. Every historical event, every character, every statistic, every opinion, every recollection, and of course ancient history itself, even remotely related (and sometimes totally unrelated) to the coup, is not only being reinterpret ed, but worse, revised to fit one or the other perspective. The exhausting and painstaking reconstruction of Burmese history is being distorted for a fleeting, current political agenda. I guess these are the kinds of occasions when we historians earn our keep.

But apart from revisionism, there is something else, something deeper that makes Burma self-destruct. It has nothing (and everything) to do with King Aniruddha, nothing (and everything) to do with British colonialism, nothing (and everything) to do with "independence" in 1948, and nothing (and everything) to do with the coup of 1962. It is derived from Burmese culture and has been shaped by Burma's remote, colonial, and post-"independent" past. And it manifests itself in the behavior of its leaders.

In Burma's political arena, everyone has to be chief. Loyalty is given first to persons and only second to ideas. Confrontation is considered a sign of strength and reasoned compromise, "weakness"; therefore, solutions to problems are military (or physical) rather than political (or intellectual). Everyone is always right, and every leader is intolerant of criticism and suspicious of others' ideas and intentions. People are jealous of other successful people and malicious with rumors. Far from being objective, they want to believe the worst even if the facts are shown. They are satisfied more by revenge (hence destroying the future), than by magnanimity (which at least suggests the possibility of a future). Pride is parochial, and so when slighted, they would rather cut their noses to spite their faces. At all costs, they enhance their own narrow, personal political and economic interests rather than those benefiting the whole society. And they would rather revise history to suit present, short-term, political and emotional agenda than learn from it to make sure certain things never happen again. The history of Burma's leadership during the past fifty years, from the Thirty Command to SLORC, substantiates this assessment.

This love-hate relationship with Burmese society and culture is similar to the one I have with Burma's ancient past and its present. Santayana was only partly correct when he stated that those who do not know their history are bound to repeat it. The current situation in Burma shows us that those who are bound by their history are sure to repeat it and those who revise it are doomed to repeat it indefinitely.
Southeast Asia Lecture Series

Everyone is invited, including colleagues and students from nearby mandala. We suggest that you phone ahead to reconfirm the schedule and reserve a delicious Southeast Asian lunch.

Jan. 31  Ross Marlay, Arkansas State University
"Filipino Nationalism and the American Connection"

Feb. 7  Grant A. Olson, NIU
"Bangkok: A Desirable City or a City of Desire? (A Meditation on the 'City of Angels' and Beyond)"

Feb. 14  Open Discussion — no speaker scheduled.

Feb. 21  Suntaree Komin, NIDA, Bangkok
"Thai Value Systems: Blueprint for Understanding the Behavior of Thai People"

Feb. 28  Sergey Ozhegov, Moscow Inst. of Architecture
"Artistic Cultures of Burma and Indochina"

March 6  Sulak Sivaraksa
"Shedding the Skin of Thai Society: The Role of the Social Critic in Thai Society"

March 13  SPRING BREAK

March 20  Rita Kipp Smith, Kenyon College
"Indonesia's Bureaucratic Pluralism: Managing Diversity in a Developing Country"

March 27  Kathleen Adams, Beloit College
"Tourism, Ethnicity and the Arts in South Sulawesi, Indonesia"

April 3  AAS Meetings, Washington, DC.

April 10  Prosperina Tapales, Univ. of the Philippines
"The Forthcoming Elections in the Philippines"

April 17  Joselito Fornier, NIU
"Doing Historical Research in the Philippines"

April 24  Carol Compton, University of Wisconsin
"Lao Pronoun Usage Since 1975"

May 1  Panitan Wattanayagorn, NIU
"Military Dependence and ASEAN Counter-Dependence Strategies"

A Bibliography of Microform Holdings on SEA at NIU

The Southeast Asia Collection at Founders Memorial Library has been compiling a bibliographical listing of the microform component of the Donn V. Hart Southeast Asia Collection. There are more than 2,000 items including dissertations, gazettes, Burmese Buddhist laws (dhammathai) on palm leaf manuscripts (filmed by Cornell-NIU-Universities' Central Library, Rangoon, Burma Project), 74 foreign newspaper titles on 3,500 reels of microfilm, and other research materials. All microforms listed are available for use either in the library or through interlibrary loan. This list is available by writing the Donn V. Hart Southeast Asian Collection, Founders Library, NIU, DeKalb, IL 60115 USA.

The estimated total cataloged holdings of the Donn V. Hart Collection is 52,429 volumes. They can be broken down according to country and language as follows:

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Southeast Asia Lecture Series
Southeast Asian Literature in Translation: A Course in Progress
by John F. Hartmann

"Southeast Asian Literature in Translation" is being designed and taught as a course in progress. Envisioned as a controlled stream of glowing lava flowing inexorably towards a sea of knowledge, the course is now midway towards completion as this essay is being composed.

Highly experimental and daring—prose, poetry, film, and music are all part of the mix—the new course is co-taught by three professors: Saya U Saw Tun (Burmese), Bu Patricia Henry (Indonesian and Malay), and Achan John Hartmann (Thai and Vietnamese). In addition, during most of March, a stellar cast of outside guest speakers are contributing to the richness of the experience: Achan Grant Olson speaking on "The Life and Work of Sulak Sivaraksa"; Achan Sulak himself speaking on "Siamese and Southeast Asian Dissident Writers" (and their perceived "threat" to the state) and "Thai Literature Since 1973"; Achan Suntaree Komin on "Thai Value Systems"; and Muhammad Haji Salleh reading his own poetry and lecturing on the Malay literature of tradition and change. The latter two are here as Fulbright scholars-in-residence. Sulak Sivaraksa is making his way across the U.S. lecturing to university and community groups about his Buddhist view of Siamese society. Dr. Olson has recently returned from his own Fulbright experience in Bangkok.

The course, per se, begins with the impact of the direct colonial experience on the literatures of Indonesia, Burma, and Malaysia, and the later, indirect "colonization" of Thailand through its relationship with the U.S. and Japan. Much of the serious literature from Burma, Indonesia, and Thailand incorporates direct or disguised political messages, ranging from the satiric to the searing. With that in mind, the working definition of literature for this course-in-progress has been: "Literature is the productive tension between the writer and the politician." Indeed, Patricia Henry notes in a recent article (Crossroads 62, 59), "The history of Indonesian literature has always been inextricably intertwined with the political realities surrounding it." The voice of the Indonesian poet, Chavil Anwar, speaks of a new sense of self, on both a personal and national level, as Indonesia emerged in the mid-1940s from Japanese or Dutch colonial oppression. Later writers often give a sense of returning oppression. One of the Burmese short stories selected for class discussion by Saya U Saw Tun, "Ginger Ale," written by the late, award-winning woman writer Moe Moe (pen name) and translated into English in 1987, is, on the surface, the story of an ailing, middle-aged woman's nostalgic wish for a sip of ginger ale—the soft drink she was courted with as a young woman—as a metaphorical means of bringing some sparkle back into her life: "But I like the bubbles," the heroine says. Ginger ale is no longer available in the modern setting of the text; the political subtext, however, is that after 1962, the production of this once favorite drink was taken over by the Burmese government and, as with many state monopolies, soon became unprofitable because of inefficiency and mismanagement to the point where it was no longer available at the time of the story (circa 1980). Even the more conservative Thai writers whose works have stood the test of time cannot avoid thinking in political terms. Kukrit Pramoj's most popular works of fiction, Red Bamboo and The Four Reigns, discuss communism and the monarchy: Red Bamboo deals with the threat of communism in a 1950s Thai village, and the decline of Thai tradition and values following the "Golden Age" of the last absolute but enlightened monarch, King Chulalongkorn—the Fifth Reign—is the subject of The Four Reigns. The illustrative power of the politics of Thai literature is recognized in an insightful article on "Kānpāthānā [sic]: Thai Views on Development" written by Harvey Demaine (in Context, Meanings and Power, Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 1986, 92-114). Demaine actually quotes a passage from the master of the Thai short story, Khamsing Srinaw, to paint a picture of the shallowness of rural development schemes during the 1950s and 1960s, despite huge amounts of U.S. aid. Equally direct about the political pull of literature is the statement by Jeremy H. C. S. Davidson (in Context... , 1986, 53): In Vietnam, poetry and politics have never been very far apart. In the precolonial period, poetry was not merely the major vehicle for literary expression, it was also the principal means for the presentation of differing views on contemporary social, political, and educational questions.

Even a move away from the foregoing, heavier political themes towards the supposedly unpolitical genre of the love story—intentionally scheduled around Valentine's Day—cannot avoid, at the very least, the politics of the family: who has the power to decide who shall marry whom? In the Thai stories, it is often money and the social status of the individual suitor that wins out in the end. And a Lat cartoon from Malaysia illustrates the power of the Malay parents in determining a child's future mate at an early age.

This is not to say that everything in Southeast Asian literature has a political subtext. Indeed, the bulk of what is written is escapist, entertaining, or didactic—and ephemeral. Our experience in developing this course, however, is that the pieces of Southeast Asian literature that have emerged as "classic," that is, the books that have gone through many editions in the vernacular and have finally been translated into English, are the works of writers who eventually—or, in many cases, from the beginning—turned their attention to the social and political realities of their times.
Center Associates’ Activities

Michael Aung-Thwin, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, delivered two lectures in Oslo, Norway, in December 1991: “The Principles of the Burmese State,” at the International Peace Research Institute of Oslo and “The Political Culture of Burma: Conceptions of Leadership in Burmese History and the Future as a Legitimizing Concept,” at the University of Oslo. He also presented “The ‘Spiral’ in Early Burmese and Southeast Asian History” in Denmark, at the University of Copenhagen’s Nordisk Institut for Asienstudier. In January, he delivered a lecture on “The History of Dhammathats in Burma” at the University of Chicago’s South Asia Program. He will be addressing the University of Michigan’s Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies on the topic of “Revisionism in Burmese History” in April.


John Hartmann, foreign languages and literatures, has two articles forthcoming: “The Context, Text and Performance of Klap Lue,” in Selected Reports in Ethnomusicology, no. 12 (Los Angeles: UCLA Ethnomusicology Publications) and “Proto-Tai and Tai Dam Poetic Structures,” in Papers on Tai Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics in Honor of William J. Gedney (DeKalb: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, NIU, forthcoming). Professor Hartmann has been invited by the University of Hawaii to serve as “master teacher” for the Thai segment of the Summer Language Institute, funded by the U.S. Department of Education.


Hsin Yi Ling, geology, presented a paper (with G. J. Nichols) on “Paleocene and Mesozoic Radiolarians from the Eastern Halmahera-Waigeo Terrane of Indonesia,” at the Sixth Meeting of the International Association of Radiolarian Paleontologists, Italy, Sept. 30-Oct. 4. He has received support from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Smithsonian Institution, and the National Science Foundation for research in South and Southeast Asia.

Don Maxfield, geography, will be presenting a paper entitled “Changing Trade Patterns of ASEAN Countries,” at the Association of American Geographers annual meeting, April 24, 1992, in San Diego, CA.

Clark Neher, political science, traveled to Thailand in January 1992 as a part of Northern Illinois and Prince of Songkhla Universities’ Linkage Project. At PSU Hat Yai and Pattani, he worked with faculty members to establish the first women’s studies center in Southern Thailand. In Pattani, Neher consulted with research and development staff members on research projects to be submitted to various funding agencies. Neher’s work at PSU mirrored the involvement of Professors Arin Sa-Idi and Bussabong Chaijaroenwatana who came to NIU in October 1991 to observe the Women’s Studies Program.

Grant Olson, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, was in Thailand from Sept. 1991 to January 1992 completing a translation of Phra Debvedi’s Buddha-dharma (2514) under a Fulbright grant. His article, “Thai Cremation Volumes: A Brief History of a Unique Genre of Literature,” has been accepted by Asian Folklore Studies. Currently, he is revising his translation of Phra Debvedi’s Buddhism and Education (1987) for a bilingual edition of this work that will be published by Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University.

Barbara Posadas, history, was an invited participant at the Cornell University Symposium on Asian America, “East of California: Perspectives on Asian American Studies,” where she presented “Asian American Studies at Northern Illinois University: An Idea in Search of an Audience.” This spring she is chair of the nominating committee of the Immigration History Society and continues as chair of the Minority Heritage Committee of the Illinois State Historical Society. She is a member of the editorial boards of Amenasia Journal, Journal of Women’s History, and Illinois Historical Journal.

Ron Provencher, anthropology, was on leave in Thailand from May to October of 1991. He received a Fulbright lecture/research award at the Pattani campus of Prince of Songkhla University in Southern Thailand. The research segment of his project focused on collection and comparison of Malay, Thai, and Chinese folklore in the four southern provinces.

Michael Rhum, anthropology, has been made editor (and ex-officio member of the board of directors) of KhoSaNa, the newsletter of the Thailand, Laos, Cambodia group of the Association for Asian Studies.

Susan Russell, anthropology, is in the Philippines on a National Science Foundation award. She is continuing with her research on fishing and fishermen.
Harold Smith, sociology, published the following: “Sociology and the Study of Non-Western Societies,” The American Sociologist 21:2 (Summer 1990), 150-163.

M. Ladd Thomas, political science, gave a presentation on the February 1991 coup in Thailand at the October 1991 Council on Thai Studies meetings, Madison, WI. He also published the following: “Social Changes and Problems Emanating from Industrialization in the ASEAN Region,” Regional Development Dialogue 12:1.

**Graduate Students at NIU**

Taejoon Ahn, PhD, political science, is focusing his studies on the process of democratization and development in Southeast Asia—especially Malaysia and Indonesia—in the context of the whole society and the culture there.

Boonchai Angkurawaranon, PhD, instructional technology, computer-aided language lab lesson designer and developer, is in the process of writing a dissertation on the topic of the use of computers in the teaching of reading to Illinois primary school children.

Supa Angkurawaranon, PhD, instructional technology, computer-aided language lab assistant and teaching assistant for Thai language, is in the process of preparing for her comprehensive exams. Her dissertation will focus on the use of computers in (ESL) language teaching.

John Baker, PhD, political science, pending funding, plans on conducting research in Thailand on “NGOs in the Environmental Movement in Thailand.”

Steven Browning, MA, political science, continues to research and analyze the political, social, and economic systems found in Southeast Asian States with a focus in the field of comparative government and international relations.

Imelda Chiu, PhD, history, is interested in studying the spread of Theravada Buddhism in mainland Southeast Asia, focusing on the interplay between religious syncretism (Pali Buddhism, Sanskrit Mahayana, and Hinduism) and political change during the 13th and 14th centuries.

J. Michael Clark, MBA, hopes to work in Southeast Asia as a regional manager with a firm such as OXFAM, the Asian Development Bank, or World Vision in developing the small business sector.

Anne-Marie D’Aprix, MA, anthropology, is working to pursue three main professional and academic interests: religious studies, culture change, and the history and theory of anthropology.

Jack D Dalton, MA, art history, specializing in the art of Southeast Asia, particularly Burma. Conducting research on the Buddha’s two chief disciples, Moggallana and Sariputta.

Ladda (Tammy) Duckworth, PhD, political science, dissertation proposal is entitled: “Cultural and Economic Development in Southeast Asia.”

Michael Egan, MA, political science, co-president of Southeast Asia Club. Will have an article published in Journal of Southeast Asian Studies entitled, “A Burmanized Democracy: Reassessing Political Legitimacy in Burma”.

Ida Fadzillah, MA, anthropology, is interested in the perspective of women in Southeast Asia: how they see themselves and their position in society.

George Fisher, MA, history, continues with his study of the Burmese language. He is currently working on a paper entitled, “Burmese Independence Army.”

Joselito Fornier, PhD, history, is working on his dissertation, “19th Century Antique: A Social and Economic History of a Philippine Province.”

Barbara Griffiths, PhD, history, continues with her study of the Thai language. She hopes to eventually work in an academic environment teaching history at the college or university level. She is also interested in working in a library specializing in Asian, especially Southeast Asian, studies.

Alexandra Green, MA, art history, is studying Burmese art and architecture, specializing in Chinese influences on Burma. She plans on examining early Burmese architecture, specifically roof forms, such as the *pyatthat*, through a Chinese perspective.

Bryan Hunsacker, PhD, political science, is researching Thailand, specifically Thai-Japanese relations, political-economy factors affecting Thai environmental policies, and frameworks of explanation for Thai domestic politics.

Sabrin Ismail, artist for the computer-aided language project, is a recent graduate of NIU with a BFA, specializing in illustration.

Liu Jun, MA, political science, has focused her research on American foreign policy toward Southeast Asian countries, especially the Philippines.

Matt Landon, BA (major: international relations, SE Asia), will graduate August 1992. He is planning to go to Thailand to work with an environmental non-government organization.

Jeff Lattimer, MA, political science, is interested in Indone-
sian political culture, political thought, and contemporary political communication.

**Andi Mallarangeng**, PhD, political science, focuses his studies on public policy and comparative politics with a specialization on Southeast Asia rural development.

**Grace Mateo**, MA, history, is writing her thesis on the “Socialist Party of Pedro Abad Santos.” It is both a study of the largest peasant movement in Central Luzon and an attempt to reconstruct the local history of the province of Pampanza (in the Philippines) in the 1930s.

**Tom McGowian**, computer-aided language lab assistant, is currently studying Western and Indonesian Literature, which he finds advantageous in analyzing differences and similarities in cultures, thought, and methodology conveyed through literature.

**Achala Mohanty**, MA, anthropology, is specializing in cultural anthropology with a focus on India.

**David Oldfield**, MA, political science, is currently working on three research projects: one paper to be presented at the NIU Student Colloquium is on the implications for U.S. national security in the Pacific now that the U.S. will be leaving the Philippine bases. His second project involves research on Islamic Law throughout Southeast Asia. His final project reflects his new interest in Bhutan; the paper focuses on how the current theories regarding ethnicity and ethnic values apply to Bhutan’s ongoing ethnic strife.

**Christiane Ong**, computer-aided language lab assistant, is working on her master’s degree in instructional technology. She is a native speaker of Cebuano and Tagalog.

**Anne Parsons**, MA, anthropology, plans on returning to Indonesia this summer to continue her research on jamu (herbal medicines).

**Barbara Provencher**, MA, history, is focusing on British history with a concentration in Southeast Asia.

**Philip Schwehm**, PhD, political science, is currently on a FLAS fellowship in the Philippines conducting research on his dissertation entitled “Local Government in the Philippines: Inter-organizational Relations and Development.”

**James Scott**, PhD, political science, was given a dissertation completion award last year for “Congress and the Reagan Doctrine: Institutional Conflicts in U.S. Strategic Policy.”

**Melik Sumanandar**, MA, Instructional Technology, is a teaching assistant for Indonesian language and a computer-aided language lab lesson developer.

**Bob Vore**, PhD, English and American literature, is researching the literary connections between Southeast Asia and the English-speaking West. He is particularly interested in those works written during or about the colonial era.

**Panitan Wattanayagorn**, PhD, political science, dissertation: “Military Dependence and Counter-Dependence Strategies: A Comparative Case Study of Diversification of Arms Supply and Indigenous Arms Production by ASEAN States.”

**Katie Wiegele**, MA, anthropology, is interested in both medical anthropology and religious studies in Southeast Asia. Generally, she plans to study the interplay between Roman Catholic ideology and imagery with native healing practices as expressed among different socioeconomic groups.

**Than Than Win**, PhD, TESOL, is a teaching assistant for Burmese language and works as lesson developer for the computer-aided language lab.

**Tracy Wood**, computer-aided language lab assistant, speaks French, Russian, and Thai and hopes to master Khmer, Lao, and Vietnamese as well. She is interested in the cultural, political, and sociological effects of language. She would like to conduct the majority of her research in Southeast Asia concerning the effects that colonialism has had on the indigenous languages of Southeast Asia.

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**Student Colloquium on Southeast Asia**

What hopes to be an annual Student Colloquium on Southeast Asia will take place at Northern Illinois University on March 21st. Planned panels will discuss politics in the Philippines, Southeast Asia and the international system, and Burma from 1988 to the present. Following the colloquium, a potluck dinner will be held at Professor Clark Neher’s home. The colloquium is an extension of the activities of the student-led Southeast Asia club on campus.
**News From Other Mandala**

**Arizona State University Exhibit**

Between March 30 and January 31, 1993, the Museum of Anthropology at Arizona State University will host an exhibit entitled "Under the White Parasol: Cultural Diversity in Laos." Costumes from twelve ethnic groups of Laos highlight this exhibit that explores ethnic diversity in Laos, focusing on cooperation and traditional paths of interaction. This is the first showing in the United States of the William W. Sage Collection of Lao ethnographicia, which had its three-year premiere at the Ethnographic Museum of Sweden in Stockholm. The exhibit is accompanied by a series of four lectures on Laos in April 1992. For more information, contact the Department of Anthropology, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287-2402 or call (602) 965-6213.

**Coalition for Peace and Reconciliation**

For those interested in issues of peace and human rights, the letters and newsletter distributed by the Coalition are another source of information. Occasionally, they run valuable bibliographies of current literature on pertinent issues. Write to them at PO Box 1, Sanam Pao, Bangkok 10406 THAILAND, to be added to their mailing list.

**Borneo Research Council—Call for Papers!**

The Borneo Research Council will hold its 2nd Biennial International Meeting at Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia, between June 22-26, 1992. Current panels deal with topics of development, traditional knowledge, common property resources, tourism, language, and conservation. For more information, contact Dr. George N. Appell, Borneo Research Council, Phillips, ME 04966 or Dr. Vinson H. Sutlive, Jr., Borneo Research Council, Anthropology, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA 23195.

**New Publication on World Folklore**

_The Folklore of World Holidays_ catalogs the meaning of various holidays around the world from the point of view of the celebrants, with additional information provided by folklorists and anthropologists. This volume is edited by Margaret R. MacDonald. It is 739 pages long and sells for $80. For information and orders call (800) 877-4253.

**New Titles on SEA from Parallax Press**

Parallax Press, which has established itself as the publisher of the works of Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hahn, has just published three new titles that may interest scholars of Southeast Asian studies: _Thai Buddhist Women_ by Chatsumarn Kabilsingh; _Step by Step: Meditations on Wisdom and Compassion_ by Maha Ghosananda, a Cambodian monk; and _Seeds of Peace: A Buddhist Vision for Renewing Society_ by Sulak Sivaraksa. Contact Parallax Press, PO Box 7355, Berkeley, CA 94707 for prices and information.

**Shan Language Materials**

Sao Tern Moeng of Hyattsville, Maryland, has been working on Shan language materials that can be covered in eight or nine months in an intensive course with an instructor or by a student working on his own. Various styles of speech are presented, from formal public speaking style to informal conversational style. The student who masters the grammatical structures and most of the vocabulary in this book will have at his command most of the important structural patterns of Shan and a vocabulary large enough to permit him to converse on a variety of topics and to be able to understand explanations, meanings, and usages that are not included in this book. For more information write to Sao Tern Moeng, 3402 Dean Dr. #303, Hyattsville, MD 20782.

**Commemorating Prince Mahidol of Songkhla**

Throughout 1992, UNESCO and the Thai Government will commemorate the birth centennial of the late Prince Mahidol of Songkhla, father of the current king of Thailand, who contributed so much for the welfare of his people, especially in the field of public health.

At the request of the Mahabodhi Society in Bangalore, India, H. R. H. Princess Galayani Watthana has donated one million baht for the building of a Buddhist library in Ladakh. Ladakh is the only place in India where Buddhism has been continuously practiced all through the centuries despite Muslim conquest and other catastrophes. King Bhumibol has graciously allowed that the library be named after his late, august father.

Besides the library, there will be schools for young people as well as a meditation center. In addition, Ladakh is remote and educational opportunities are limited, especially for women. Therefore, the Mahabodhi Society in Ladakh has been asked to spend about 20% of all contributions to sustain female ordinands, or sarnaneri and bhikkhuni. If donors in the U.S. wish to have tax exemption for their contributions to this project, they should make their check payable to the Thai-American Project, 1440 Harvard Road, Santa Monica, CA 90404. The money will be passed on to H. R. H. Princess Galayani in Bangkok, with the names of donors and amount they donate. Anonymous donations are also welcome.
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Subscriptions to Crossroads, a journal of Southeast Asian studies, are available at $14/volume (2 issues/vol.). For air mail, add $8. Send checks to the Center written out to "Center for Southeast Asian Studies."

Recent Publications at NIU

Crossroads 62— General Issue

This issue of Crossroads includes articles on SEA writers and activists, an extensive book review essay dealing with the historiography of Burma, and several book reviews.

Forthcoming Publications:

R. Anderson Sutton — "Variation in Central Javanese Gamelan Music: Dynamics of a Steady State"

Penny Van Esterik (editor), Women of Southeast Asia (1982), is progressing towards a late-1992 republication date. Please send inquiries to the Center.

Irrigation in the Heartland of Burma: Foundations of the Pre-Colonial Burmese State

Michael Aung-Thwin

Since the last two centuries of the first millennium BC, except for a short span of sixty years, the pre-colonial state in Burma has been centered in the dry zone of Upper Burma. The basis of this state was agrarian, yet little has been written on its economic wherewithal. Instead, scholars have tended to focus their attention on the state's political, legal, religious, cultural and administrative structures and institutions. This study attempts to fill this crucial gap. In part, it highlights a major theme in pre-colonial Burmese history—"dry-zone paramountcy"—which was the result of state-run irrigation works constructed in six critical regions of central Burma, most of them existing before the 15th century AD.

This volume contains a unique and valuable set of maps to illustrate the areas discussed above.

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An Introduction to the Thai Poem
"Lilit Phra Law"
(The Story of King Law)

Robert J. Bickner

The ancient Thai poem entitled *Lilit Phra Law* holds a position of great importance in the literary heritage of Thailand. Countless Thai students have read it and many can cite parts of it from memory. Despite the enduring popularity of the story, those who composed the poem are frequently criticized for seeming flaws in their poetic forms. There is a curious dichotomy of opinion among modern scholars who have studied the classics: the ancient poets are appreciated for their skill and storytelling, but they are also criticized for the imagined limits of that skill. This study addresses the curious dichotomy in modern treatments of this ancient work by examining the text *Lilit Phra Law* and the verse forms used to create it, as well as the criticism made of it by contemporary scholars, especially from the point of view of linguistic analysis.

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Special Report no. 26

*Ku Dâeng—Thirty Years Later*

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Konrad Kingshill has updated his classic ethnography of the village of Ku Dâeng. This volume contains indispensable information on Thai village life, rituals, and beliefs. Over three hundred pages, including charts, maps, glossary, and index.

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Crossroads:
An Interdisciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

If you have not noticed, in recent years our Crossroads journal has undergone a metamorphosis and has gotten a major facelift. We invite you to subscribe and try our journal. We are the only journal covering pan-Southeast Asian topics in the United States. At $14.00 a volume year, the valuable information we provide is a bargain.

Issues are often focused on special topics, while others are of a more general nature. Recent issues worth noting include the following:

A special issue on Burma (4:1) sold out in a short time;

a two-part Special Thai Issue is still available as back issues (part one is a collection of recent research on Thailand; and part two is comprised of a panel commenting on the work of Condominas in Northern Thailand);

5:2 is a general issue containing articles on Malay political cartoons, the language of a gay community in the Philippines, and Japanese aid to Burma;

this issue was followed by 6:1, which contains a major article by Craig Lockard on modern Malay pop music;

and our most recent issue (6:2) contains articles on writers and activists in Southeast Asia, featuring an article by Donald Swearer on the life and works of Sulak Sivaraksa;

a future issue will summarize the contribution of Lucien and Jane Hanks to Southeast Asian studies (including a major bibliography of this couple’s works).

For more information on how to order back issues and current subscriptions, please see the enclosed publications order form.

The *NIU Mandala* is published by the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 140 Carroll Ave., Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115, when our fruits are ripe. We welcome news from other centers and scholars.

Center Director: Michael Aung-Thwin
Editing and Design: Grant A. Olson
Copy Editor: David A. Mullikin
Donn V. Hart, a cultural anthropologist and specialist on the Philippines, directed Northern Illinois University’s Center for Southeast Asian Studies from 1971 to 1981. From then until his death in 1983, he continued teaching full-time. Dr. Hart was regarded as an expert on Visayan Philippine culture. He had conducted research in the Philippines on numerous occasions, including four separate Fulbright Research Fellowships. Dr. Hart had been a member of the UNESCO Secretariat both in London and Paris and taught at Syracuse University, the University of Denver, and Yale University.

Donn V. Hart was actively involved in promoting the development and use of the Southeast Asian Collection at Founders Memorial Library. In addition to purchasing materials while working in the Philippines, Dr. Hart compiled numerous bibliographies to assist scholars and students in the use of the materials.

The Donn V. Hart Southeast Asian Collection was established in 1983. The Donn Hart Fund was established in 1983 and became officially endowed in 1989. Each year the investment income will be made available to the Collection to help it carry out its mission of serving scholars and students.

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Other:


Contact the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 140 Carroll Ave., NIU, DeKalb, IL 60115 for orders and information (for small orders, add $1 shipping/handling for first volume and $.50 for each additional; for large orders, contact the Center.)

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