Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Spring is here, this capricious season between snow and rain, winter and summer. Worms emerge, birds chirp, yet the ice still hangs on houses and clings to the shade of gorge walls. Though Ithaca spring often feels like winter, if you look closely at the ground in March, you can begin to see the tendrils of baby plants unfurling through the hard winter soil, breaking at the border between earth and air. Nature cracks open to grow, and in this unconstrained way, the seasons cross over.

Like nature, SEAP travels across boundaries, making countless exchanges, collecting and collaborating along the way. The breadth and depth of scholarship by SEAP faculty, students, and visiting fellows never ceases to impress me, and in every issue of the SEAP Bulletin I have the pleasure of displaying it. Perhaps what I love most about this issue in particular is the sense of expansive inquiry in every story. From Andrew Willford’s comparative look at the cultural construction of power and potency within the spiritual and political realms across South and Southeast Asia (see “The Spectrum of Comparisons” on page 12) to Niti Pawakapan’s exploration of the globalized economy of a Thai border town (see “Far Away, Never Isolated” on page 4), the sense of cultural flow reverberates across national borders.

SEAP exhibits and events, past and present, also hit these notes of comparison and crossing spatial and conceptual boundaries, from Elizabeth Wijaya’s account of the highly successful content of the Cross-Cultural Asia conference last fall (see “Encountering Ghosts at The Haunted Conference” on page 7) coupled with Kroch Library’s exhibit exploring witchcraft and “magic” across Asia (see “Enchanted Asia” on page 26) to the upcoming conference on “Kings and Dictators: The Legacy of Monarchy and the New Authoritarianism in Asia.” This two-day symposium in April is organized by SEAP in close collaboration with the East Asia Program, South Asia Program, and the Comparative Muslim Societies Program (see “Upcoming Events” on page 34).

Boundaries crossed in this issue are not only thematic and geographic, but also programmatic and institutional. In our outreach, the Afterschool Language and Culture Program has renewed vitality with offerings of South and Southeast Asian languages for young children in local schools (see “Learning Language through Culture” on page 28). The “Global Voices in Education” speaker series, initiated by the South Asia Program with strong cosponsorship from SEAP, engaged undergraduates, particularly those in the education minor, to think globally (see “On Campus and Beyond” on page 30).

In my double role as managing editor for the Bulletin and SEAP’s outreach coordinator, I am thrilled to announce the collaboratively planned and sponsored March 10 Internationalization conference—“Going Global: Leveraging Resources for International Education,” held on the Tompkins Cortland Community College campus (see “Upcoming Events” on page 34). The event showcases SEAP’s strong partnerships with community colleges and schools of education as well as our steadfast commitment to serving as a resource for strengthening global learning in higher education settings. This final outreach conference of the 2014-2018 National Resource Center grant cycle features presentations by both national and international organizations (Community Colleges for International Development and Asia Society, specifically) with the hope of broadening the impact of our efforts to support curricular internationalization.

Finally, let me call your attention to a special spread of articles about studying and teaching Southeast Asian languages. SEAP Director and Professor of Linguistics Abby Cohn writes eloquently on the diverse array of Southeast Asian languages offered here at Cornell and the critical role our university plays in elevating the quality of instruction and maintaining the availability of these language courses on a national scale (see “Cornell’s Critical Role in Instruction of Southeast Asian Languages” on page 19) as well as the photo collage of last fall’s Conference on Southeast Asian Language Teaching: New Directions on page 21. Also hear from each of SEAP’s research areas about the availability of these language courses on a national scale (see “Community Colleges and Community College campus (see “Upcoming Events” on page 34).

Warmly,
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I spent the next sixteen months conducting research on local traders and their trading enterprises, which, I discovered later, were complexly related to other activities in the community. The town’s main road, Highway 108, which had recently been upgraded, collapsed several times during the rainy season; as a result, the Bangkok-Mae Hong Son bus service was canceled a few times. Travel by car was rather unpredictable. There were four public telephone booths where local and long-distant calls could be made. These phones were the only means I used to communicate with the outside world, though some phone booths were often out of order. For the first couple of months I felt that the town seemed so far away from everywhere and everything. Then I began to realize that there was a lot going on.

Sales representatives, mostly from Bangkok, entered the town in their company’s trucks, loaded with all kinds of manufactured products. Some of them arrived every ten days and some every two weeks. The goods were not the only things they brought with them. They also introduced a new system, the hire purchase, to the locals, who wanted to buy their company’s products, ranging from small electrical appliances to motorcycles, but did not have enough cash on hand to pay for them. They also brought Central Thai, the language they used to communicate with the locals who had their own languages. They preferred their Central food, so some local eating houses learned to cook and serve the new cuisine. Every now and then, caravans of itinerary traders came in their pickup trucks. Some of them offered similar goods as those of the sales representatives, but there were also different items such as fresh fruits that were not grown locally, various kinds of sweets, or even household furniture. Seafood, mainly fish, shrimp, and prawns from the country’s eastern coast, was kept fresh in big ice containers in the back of pickup trucks. Some traders even provided outdoor cinema, free of charge, to entertain their

The first time I arrived in Khun Yuam, a small market town located some thirty kilometers from the Thailand-Myanmar border, was in the early 1990s.

Left: Hmong women selling their produce from the hills.
Below: Cockles for sale, kept fresh in a ten-wheel refrigerated truck.

far away but never isolated
Niti Pawakapan was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at SEAP in Fall 2017. He teaches at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Chulalongkorn University in Thailand. He completed his PhD in anthropology at the Australian National University. Before accepting his position at Chulalongkorn, he worked in New Zealand and taught at Yale University and the National University of Singapore. He has published four books in the Thai language and a number of articles, both in Thai and English. His research interests include borderlands studies, local trade and politics, migration, ethnicity and state-ethnic relations, and emotions. He has recently started new research on material culture.

Motorcycles are the most popular vehicles.

local customers. There were Thai and foreign films; the latter were, of course, dubbed in Central Thai.

I returned to Khun Yuam for a short visit in 1997, when the Asian financial crisis (down in Thailand as the Tom Yum Goong crisis) took place. I wanted to see how the town and its residents were affected by the crisis. I also planned to visit some locals, who had become my friends. It seemed that the impact of the crisis, if any, was minimal. But there were changes. New houses and shops were under construction. Some young people who had been living in Bangkok and were now unemployed returned home. I soon realized why the land was so important to the locals. It did not merely produce food; it also symbolized family and “home,” a place in which one could always take refuge. The crisis confirmed that Khun Yuam was a safe and comfortable refuge for young returnees.

In 1999 Khun Yuam town became a municipality. It was the first time the town had its own mayor, who was elected by local people. The town had long been under the authority of the district head, a government official appointed by the Ministry of Interior Affairs in Bangkok. The election was a new experience for the locals, but they soon learned to live with it and enjoyed it. Now, they could make their own decisions.

I visited the town three more times in 2010, 2016, and 2017. During the last visit many residents complained to me about the effects of the country’s economic slowdown, but it was a different story at the weekly markets, which were organized by the municipal office and the district office. Traders came from all over the place. There were ten-wheel refrigerated trucks, transporting sea and freshwater fish, shrimp, pawns, cockles, and frogs to the markets. Various kinds of fresh fruit were offered. Baked goods were not only popular among the children, but also the locals of all ages; it reminded me of the English idiom “sell like hot cakes.” Traders from Mae Hong Son arrived with their sushi, a cuisine no longer foreign to the locals. There were plenty of different foods, cooked and raw, as well as drinks for the customers. Manufactured products; electrical appliances; ready-made clothes, hats, shoes, and sandals, household and small miscellaneous items, either made in Thailand or the People’s Republic of China, could be found at the markets.

Goods from Myanmar—for example, traditional Shan and herbal medicines; various kinds of nuts, cooking oil, and other ingredients; white candles; Burmese cigars, etc. were transported across the border for local consumption. The weekly market days not only served the town residents, but also the Hmong and Karen who lived in the villages on the hills, near and far. While many Hmong and Karen came down to buy goods, some Hmong women brought the vegetables grown in their hill farms to sell.

For many Thais, Khun Yuam may seem like a small place so far away. In reality, however, its location is crucial. It was a trading town between northern Thailand and Burma’s Shan States in the nineteenth century. For a long time it has been a market town that serves the hill villages surrounding the town. After the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015, the government officials of Thailand and Myanmar and local business people have tried to improve the road networks between the border and Khun Yuam town and establish permanent border checkpoints in hopes of boosting trade, business, and tourism developments for both countries. As a matter of fact, some local business persons have for many years tried to promote the town as a border trading hub. The former town mayor, for example, even speculated about building a new highway to Tha Tonsai, the western seashore town in Myanmar, visualizing Khun Yuam as the gateway between Thailand’s northern region and Myanmar’s west coast sea paradise. From my point of view as an anthropologist, Khun Yuam, despite its small size, has never been insignificant or isolated. Not surprising, perhaps, owing to the economic deterioration in the last few years, a border town with the trading prosperity like Khun Yuam offers hope for the country’s economic recovery.

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nese independent filmmaker, Yang Lina. Emerging as part of the 1990s new documentary movement in urban generation cinema in Mainland China, Lina's fictional, feature-length film debut Longing for the Rain (2013) shows an alluring female protagonist who is enthralled in a sexual relationship.


Following de Bary, Jean Ma, associate professor of art and art history at Stanford University, juxtaposed Apichatpong Weerasethakul's films Blissfully Yours (2002) and Cemetery of Splendor (2015) and Christopher Nolan’s Inception (2015) with references to theorists Jonathan Crary, Jacqueline Rose, Jean-Louis Baudry, placing emphasis on the scenes of sleep, rather than the enactment of dreams in cinema, that will allow us to relinquish "entrenched perception about how films should be watched." Ma’s talk ended with an invitation to consider the “possibilities of sleeping spectatorship.” What if the sleeping subject in cinema and the sleeping spectator could offer forms of resistance to dominant ideas of action and progress? In the Haunted I discussion, SEAP doctoral candidate Chairat Polmuk noted that the cemetery, graveyard, and burial sites appeared across all three presentations, which sparked a discussion of haunting as attachment to space, the dynamic tension between apparatus, the act of walking on the soil/earth, and spectral space as well as transregional idiom or frame.

Chairied by Itthikhar Dadi, Haunted II began with Ashley Thompson, the Hiram W. Woodward Chair in Southeast Asian Art at UCAS, University of London, talking on “Angkor after Angkor: Notes on Buddhist Acts of Remembrance,” followed by Meheil Sen’s examination of “Acts of Possession, Gender, Love, and Spectrality in Bengali Cinema.” Sen, assistant professor in the Department of African, Middle Eastern, and South Asian Languages and Literatures at Rutgers University, noted the lack of ghost films in the Bengali language and the preponderance of socialist melodramas. She investigated the “sonic texture of the gothic” in Satyajit Ray’s Moni- hur (1961) and Aparna Sen’s Goynar Baksho (2013), where “the female ghost is often announced and introduced through the sound of her jewelry.” Kong Rithdey, a documentary filmmaker, screenwriter, and longtime writer for the Bangkok Post, spoke on the limited representation of Islam in Thai cinema, calling Thai films “frozen in time, tormented by identity poli- tics, and haunted by propaganda of national unity.”

In the Q&A session, Anne Blackburn, professor of Asian Studies at Cornell, raised a question for Thompson on Angkor having become an even more popular pilgrimage site since its decline as the seat of power. Rithdey responded to questions on the portrayal of Buddhists and Muslims in Thai cinema, and Sen reflected on the tragic and comic form in Bengali cinema in relation to the two films she discussed in her presentation.

I chaired the concluding roundtable with discussants Annie Elizabeth Parry, professor in the English Department of National Central University in Taiwan, Tani Barlow, and Timothy Murray. Parry responded to the conference discussion on the multiple realities invoked in haunting. From the resonances in Joan Ma’s talk on sleeping characters and the possibilities of queer relationality that foregrounds vulnera- bility and intimacy, Barlow speculated on forming a commu- nity of sleepers dreaming each other’s dreams. Murray spoke on how reality can no longer be thought of as realistic. He also announced the 2018 Cornell Council for the Arts Bien- nial theme: “Duration: Passage, Persistence, Survival.”

Rithdey’s earlier talk on the Muslim minority in Thailand and the ongoing insurgency in Thailand’s deep South set the stage for the screening of Pimpaka Towira’s The Island Funeral (2015) at Cornell Cinema. The conference and the Haunted Roads film series, beginning with Pop Age (Kirsten Tan, Singa- pore, 2014) and Soi Solitude (Yosep Anggi Noem, Indonesia, 2016), concluded with a post-show discussion with screen- writer Rithdey, moderated by Fuhrmann and me. From Rith-
Steps toward Gender Equality in the Indonesian Workforce:

The 2017 US–Indonesia Women’s CEO Summit

by Audrey Tirtosadiguno, undergraduate in design and environmental analysis, class of 2020, and a member of the Cornell Indonesian Association

When Finance Minister Sri Mulyani took the stage at the US-Indonesia Women’s CEO Summit in Washington, DC, in October 2017, she was quick to engage the audience with her candid humor. Her speech, punctuated by compelling anecdotes and wise words, shed light on the responsibilities of both male and female counterparts in establishing gender equality in the workforce, as well as the particular challenges women face in achieving a balance between their personal and professional lives as more opportunities become available to them.

While Indonesia has achieved equal access for women in educational settings, it has not yet done so in the formal labor force, where women have only thirty-two percent participation. According to Minister Mulyani, women own greater than fifty percent of small and micro enterprises, demonstrating a desire to achieve and contribute; however, they own just seventeen percent of export companies and hold less than thirty-three percent of senior management positions in most firms.

Amidst the gender disparity, these statistics shore evidence of growing female participation in the workforce and a desire for social and economic upward mobility. One recurrent theme in the conference was how women often face more pressures than men when striving to pursue a career because of the challenges they face when raising a family, a role that has traditionally been tasked to mothers. As a wife and mother of three children, Minister Mulyani spoke on this topic from experience. Listing her many accomplishments in a humorously matter-of-fact tone, including being the first female minister of planning and the first female coordinating minister in business in Indonesia, she was met with a round of applause from the audience.

So what are some steps toward gender equality in the workforce that both men and women can take? The minister emphasized the importance of one’s family as a source of support, motivation, and joy and stressed that “balance is possible.” While there are enormous responsibilities placed on women who are expected to manage home life, these responsibilities can and ought to be shared with men. Men can also express their support in other ways, such as by acknowledging their wives for their career achievements and supporting their goals. Pausing for a moment, the minister made sure to acknowledge her family’s support by pointing out her husband in the audience. Incidentally, many other high-achieving women who spoke at the event noted their family as a motivating factor in their success.

But is pursuing a career with one’s family at home easier said than done? Speaking with candid honesty, the finance minister addressed the deep sense of guilt women often feel when leaving their children at home for their jobs—guilt no doubt induced by a society that demands that women prioritize home life and put their careers second. Minister Mulyani believes this feeling of guilt resonates with all working mothers and cannot be ignored in one’s conscience. As one possible solution, she suggests using guilt as a reason to consider one’s time at work more valuable. Like a true economist she asserts, “Consider the lost time as higher opportunity costs. Treat your guilt in a constructive way. Use it as a fire in your belly to do better at work.”

For many women, the persistent challenge in striving to achieve a work-life balance lies in the task of juggling multiple roles, for example, switching between the responsibilities of a wife, mother, and career-woman. According to Minister Mulyani, guidance can be found in a personal role model. The finance minister spoke compellingly of her mother as her role model who showed her that balancing a thriving personal life and career is indeed possible. While raising seven children, both her mother and father were university professors who demonstrated to her the benefits of balancing responsibilities between spouses and the sense of fulfillment and joy that can arise from devoting time for family as well as a successful career.

The minister further recommended gaining experiences that can develop personal character. Drawing on examples of her participation in sports while growing up, she spoke to younger members of the audience: “Invest in experiences outside of classes that shape your character and make friends with people who are different from you.”

Setting aside time for personal life outside of school and work may seem obvious to some, but Arianna Huffington, cofounder and editor in chief of the Huffington Post, notes that burnout and excessive work is a common syndrome in today’s generation. This is especially true for women who must work hard against stereotypes that they are less competent than men. In her international bestseller Thrive, Huffington writes that productivity is often considered a marker of success that sometimes comes at the sacrifice of one’s well-being, personal connectedness, and capacity for compassion and giving. Congruing with Minister Mulyani’s insights, Huffington shares, “Our salaries celebrate our lives very differently from the way society defines success. They are not about our resumes—they are about cherished memories, shared adventures, small kindnesses, and acts of generosity, lifelong passions, and the things that made us laugh.”

Finally, Minister Mulyani spoke about the element of caring for and empowering others. She asserted that caring for others, especially other women, can be used as a strength and advantage in professional careers. Her advice is that women should mentor and coach other women at every career level, reminding the audience: “Remember—It’s not about you, it’s about others.”

Senior female managers in particular have greater responsibility to empower younger colleagues who may not have supportive home or work environments or may lack educational training backgrounds. Recently, the importance of men assuming roles as advocates for women’s equality in the workplace has also become increasingly apparent. By creating environments conducive to equal gender participation, organizations can initiate changes in workplace culture that encourage both male and female employees to contribute more optimally to their vocations.

Regarding the broader repercussions of gender equality, the minister notes that increased female participation in the workforce has the potential to benefit society at large. She says that “promoting women’s participation in the labor force through meaningful policy changes is not only good in terms of equality, but it can really improve economic growth in terms of [helping the workplace become] more inclusive and sustainable.” As women today gain more access to skills, training, and opportunities to join the workforce, businesses can expect to see greater productivity and holistic growth.

Speaking with the conviction of a leader with wisdom drawn from experience, Minister Mulyani’s speech strikes at the key challenges and opportunities of achieving gender equality in Indonesia. Alongside many other business leaders at the conference, her insights illuminated the potential for professionals, at any stage of their respective careers, to promote inclusivity and gender equality in their workplaces. On a more personal level, she further reassured the audience that many domestic partners can successfully balance their family and career goals as more awareness around and paths toward equal gender participation emerge.
Comparative studies not only help test theories across the specificity of time and place, but also make visible what is unique to each context...

MY OWN RESEARCH in Southeast Asia has been in Malaysia but draws both comparisons with and transnational ties to South Asia. While deeply interested in probing theories of ethnicity, nationalism, and religious revivalism in the context of modern statecraft, I also discovered that the historical cultural currents across the Indian Ocean created a unique set of relationships between Tamil Hindus and Malays that were complicated by the fissures created by the modern and postcolonial rendering of ethnicity in Malaysia.1

The so-called “Indicized” past of ancient Malaya casts a large influence on Malay culture and, thus, the uncomfortable intimacies between Malay Muslims and Tamil Hindus. In noting these cultural binds, I am drawing upon an influential scholarship on Southeast Asia by scholars such as Benedict Anderson, Oliver Wolters, Clifford Geertz, George Coedès, Stanley Tambiah, James Siegel, Tony Day, John Pemberton, among many others, who constructed and/or critiqued a model of Southeast Asian polity and society premised on notions of sacred power derived, in part, from Hindu-Buddhist conceptions of spiritual potency and divine kingship.

In Southeast Asia, the idea that spiritual power is conjoined to political power in the form of the god-king, or “Devaraja,” radiating outward in successive concentric circles of relative spiritual potency that, in turn, is mapped on to sociopolitical and geographic space, has been called the “galactic” or “mandala” model of polity. While clearly just an ideal-type, this analytic, ostensibly drawn from South Asian models of divine kingship, has influenced the study of ancient kingdoms such as Majapahit, Srivijaya, and Angkor, to name a few.2

Ethnographic and political studies of contemporary Southeast Asian social and political orders have subsequently drawn upon these models in looking at the cultural construction of power and potency within the spiritual and political realms. This “stratigraphic” approach has posited continuities between the ancient and modern, and even postcolonial, orders of statecraft. This has not only been applied to Hindu or Buddhist Southeast Asia, but also to localized Islamic polities, past and present.3

On the other hand, challenges to an Indic model for understanding Southeast Asian “galactic” or “mandala” polities have also been influential and important. Edmund Leach most famously challenged the cosmic polity model by examining how ethnic identity in upland Burma was flexible, depending upon context.4 More recently, James Scott has offered a model for upland-lowland relationships in Southeast Asia that suggests upland communities have adopted strategies of state avoidance against the lowland rice-growing polities and their galactic ideologies of governance.5

Both Leach’s classic study as well as Scott’s recent opus have ignited a legacy of debate surrounding the ideologicalreach of both the “galactic” states, as well as theories of identity and hegemony, more broadly. On the latter point, the avowedly culturalist model of purity and impurity (or hierarchy) that lies at the heart of many constructions of divine polity and sacred power has been critiqued in powerful and exciting new ways through Scott’s more instrumental analysis.6 Indeed, these critiques of Dumont’s model of South Asian hierarchy have long been voiced in South Asian studies.7 Still, Dumont’s influence can be felt in Southeast Asian studies, as powerfully demonstrated in Ward Keeler’s new book, The Traffic in Hierarchy: Masculinity and Its Others in Buddhist Burma.8

While many studies have assessed the influence of “Indic” ideas in Southeast Asian culture and society, Scott’s felicitous

Left: Kurumba painting of harvest festival offerings at sacred grove painted by R. Balasubramaniam, used with permission from The Keystone Foundation (note: photography of actual groves violates their sacrality).
book has inspired comparisons to other upland-lowland dynamics in different regions. Given the close historical ties between South and Southeast Asia, it seems useful to look at a comparable ecological and cultural context in South India to see what purchase Scott’s key insights provide.

For the past five years I have been spending time in the Western Ghats of South India, particularly in the Nilgiris mountain range, investigating questions related to identity and mental health within a rapidly changing social context. The Nilgiris is a small but ecologically diverse area that has been declared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as a biosphere reserve. From the hot plains near Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, the Nilgiris generally lived on the lower and more forested slopes of the hills, practicing a combination of horticulture, small-scale agriculture, and animal husbandry. My own research has looked primarily at a sense of crisis that is ensuing within Kurumba and Irula communities due to outmigration for economic reasons, cultural assimilation into the more dominant Tamil-Hindu mainstream, and the near collapse of a complex ritual system that involves cultivation, ancestor veneration (and, hence, their protective shield over the community), a rise in sorcery accusations in the context of the market economy, and environmental challenges associated with agro-industries and urbanization. The simple question I ask here is whether the upland-lowland relationships within South Asia resemble the dynamics that Scott argues apply to upland Southeast Asia vis-à-vis the principles of hierarchy and spiritual power that govern lowland Hindu polities.

Answering this question requires a historical and dynamic perspective. The archeological anthropologist Gwendolyn Keeler has argued that a dissonant existed among Nilgiris indigenous people toward the rice-cultivating civilizations of the plains.2 Kelly also suggests that the relationships between upland and lowland populations were too complex to characterize them as simply fraught, with the former avoiding the influence of the latter. She demonstrates that linguistic, religious, and cultural influences flowed from the lowlands to the highlands over the centuries. Hindu ideas of sacred power, purity, pollution, and, more generally, hierarchy, for instance, did not constitute hierarchies within tribal society, though they may have had an impact on relative notions of hierarchy between communities, as argued by scholars such as William Noble and Paul Hockings.9

I point to a couple of observations I have noted in my research, preliminary though they might be, that might seem felicitous in light of South/Southeast Asian notions of sacred power and hierarchy. It is my hope that comparisons of this sort, at one time common in the studies of power and potency in Southeast Asia, remain of general interest to scholars. As noted above, the recent work by Kelly and Keeler, for instance, have reignited some of the debates surrounding hierarchy, hegemony, state avoidance, and spiritual power by thinking across the boundaries of the Indian Ocean.

My first observation concerns the relationship between identity, land, and health. In fieldwork I conducted with research collaborators at the Keystone Foundation and students within the Nilgiris Field Learning Center, we have found that a sense of crisis has emerged within the Kurumba and Irula communities as a result of changing modes of economic production and the sociocultural changes that have occurred as a result of these developments.10,11

These communities were characterized by their small populations and relative egalitarian social structures. They generally lived on the lower and more forested slopes of the mountains, practicing a combination of horticulture, small-game hunting, and foraging. Of particular importance was the cultivation of millets, a staple in their traditional diets. These millets were grown on lands associated with their ancestors and near the sacred groves where they honored these ancestors, who, residing in a parallel sacred world, look after the living by protecting them from dangerous malevolent forces and wildlife (tigers, elephants, leopards, bison, etc.).

The honoring of ancestors was tied to a ritual calendar and, in particular, to a harvest festival in which the specific millets grown on sacred sites were offered to them. In recent times there has been a calamitous collapse of the complex system of rituals that provided cosmic protection to the living as well as the templates for social, economic, and cultural reproduction. This has come about due to the changing economic imperatives facing indigenous communities in the hills of the Nilgiris. Large tea estates have encroached upon ancestral lands in the past fifty years, and with this many sacred groves have been encompassed by commercial interests. The growth of industrial agriculture has also meant a shrinking forest habitat for many animals, creating wildlife corridors that are protected by the forestry department. Human-wildlife conflicts have increased, particularly affecting the forest-based communities such as the Kurumba and Irula. Many within these communities now are reluctant to culti-
tivate millets or other crops, given the risks of elephants and bison, in particular, to cultivators.

With an increasing reliance upon the cash economy, many indigenous community members have left their hamlets to work within the tea industry, construction, roadworks, and other wage-paying jobs. Forest-dwelling hamlet communities now face a critical labor shortage with regard to cultivation. Moreover, the cultural and ritual knowledge associated with the various sacred groves and seasonal festivals has been lost, leading to a catch-22 expressed by many villagers: On the one hand, locals say they suffer because they are failing to celebrate the necessary rituals that honor the ancestors and thus provide cosmic protection from malevolent forces. On the other hand, many also say that they fear conducting these ancestral rituals incorrectly, noting that any mistake in performance or utterance could be spiritually disastrous.

We have observed and recorded numerous instances of polity, the ancestors, and most notably the social and physical landscape. That is, cultural life-worlds resonate deeply. I am discovering, despite rapid socioeconomic transformations. Lastly, the history of intertribal relationships in the hills of the Western Ghats, and the Nilgiris in particular, is as equally complex and fraught as are the relationships between upland and lowland societies. What we seem to witness is a whole spectrum of possible comparisons with Southeast Asia that might prove to complicate the construction of sacred power.

Not only are there numerous alternative and challenging theories of galactic politics in South Asia, set against the purity/impurity model of hierarchy posited influentially by Dumont and others, there are also ways to reinterpret the uncanny engine of hierarchy and its discontents in Southeast Asia, inspired in part by lowland-upland relations, but also exceeding them by focusing on internal diversity and critique within both the upland and lowland societies themselves. Scott’s felicitous comparison of the “mandala” model of spiritual polity to a “concertina” is a welcome start in this direction. Like a concertina, the historical ebb and flow of religious and cultural ideas in South and Southeast Asia is the unique historical intimacy between regions and the flows of religious ideas across the Indian Ocean that continue to make comparisons between South and Southeast Asia so fascinating and productive.
provide a rich panoply or spectrum ripe for comparisons. These can take place between upland and lowland, but also between upland and upland, and lowland and lowland. It is the unique historical intimacy between regions and the flows of religious ideas across the Indian Ocean that continue to make comparisons between South and Southeast Asia so fascinating and productive, once we move beyond the ideal types (for example, mandala polity and state avoidance) for each region and explore complexity in all its historical, geographic, cultural, and ecological forms.

My work in the Nilgiris is part of a larger project investigating mental health and traditional medicine in India in the context of a global trend toward biomedicalization.17 It is my hope to turn again to Southeast Asia, perhaps within an indigenous context in Malaysia or Indonesia, in order to draw further comparisons on health, healing, and the cultural shaping of illness. In my fascination with comparisons, particularly between South and Southeast Asia due to their proximity and historical and cultural intimacies, I will certainly have to reckon with the prototypical ideas associated with the likes of Scott and Dumont and their many critics, given the fecundity and continued relevance of their scholarship.

11 The Nilgiris Field Learning Center is a collaborative project between Cornell University faculty and the Keystone Foundation, a nongovernmental organization.

12 There are many Kurumba and Irula subcategories and designations. I am simply using the more general terms of distinction used in the Nilgiris.

13 This is an idea borrowed from Oliver Wolters’s magisterial

14 This refers to the practice of biomedicine or allopathy superseding traditional forms of medical care.

15 See Andrew C. Willcock, Cope: Identity and the Ethnic Felt in Malaysia (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006) and Tewelde and the Hexing


17 One critique of the so-called “Indic” model of divine kingship that has been utilized by scholars such as Coedes, Goetz, and Wolters would be that it fattens a range of historical and political orders within South Asia into a coherent and uniform set of principles that are not born out of the historical study of divergent South Asian polities and the contested theological theories therein.

18 The arrival of Islam in Southeast Asia, as numerous scholars have noted, also came via South Asian influences through trade. Moreover, Islam in South Asia has been deeply influenced by Hindu ideas of devotion and spiritual potency, particularly within Sufi mystical orders.


21 The culturist approach was mostly inspired by Louis Dumont’s germ model for hierarchy, grounded in Brahminical ideas, developed in his grand opus Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and Its Implications (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980).

22 For example, within the Subaltern Studies Collective or earlier in F. G. Bailey’s work. Within Southeast Asia, studies of the works of Hindu tradition in quite relevant, particularly Vivekumar’s Negotiating Difference with the In-Mover (Boca Raton, FL: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 2014).


25 This is an idea borrowed from Oliver Wolters’s magisterial History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspective (Rochester, NY: Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1999). The idea that Wolters forwards is one in which “mandala” states and/or protostates regard and contract in relationship to the leader, chief, or king’s spiritual “progeny,” effectively forging Hindu and pre-Hindu ideas of spiritual power in Southeast Asia.

26 This refers to the practice of biomedicine or allopathy superseding traditional forms of medical care.

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For excellent essays by Noble and Hockings, among others, see


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a National Resource Center in teaching, developing, and promoting instruction in the least commonly taught of the less commonly taught languages. It is worth developing this point to highlight the critical importance of Cornell’s continued commitment in this regard, not just to Cornell but to the nation and beyond.

Following the Modern Language Association (MLA), LCTLs are defined as all languages not in the top fifteen, ranked according to student enrollment at US institutions of higher education. We see that instruction in any LCTL is a critical resource, as instruction in all of the LCTLs make up only 2.6 percent of total foreign language enrollment.

In this regard, if we consider populations or global economic significance, Asian languages are greatly underrepresented, with only Japanese, Chinese, and Korean in the top fifteen. The Southeast Asian languages are particularly underrepresented. Consider the population of Southeast Asia at roughly 649 million with not one national language commonly taught compared to Western Europe at 193 million and accounting for seven of the most commonly taught languages. For example, Indonesia, the national language of the fourth most populous nation in the world, a member of the G20, is taught at less than twenty universities in the United States. Among the LCTLs we can make a further distinction between the leading less commonly taught languages and the least commonly taught. Considering the national languages of Southeast Asia, as shown in the following table, Vietnamese, Filipino, Tagalog, Indonesian, and Thai are among the leading fifteen Asian or Pacific less commonly taught languages, whereas Burmese and Khmer are among the least commonly taught of the less commonly taught languages.

What these numbers show is that Cornell is one of only a handful of institutions providing the opportunity for capacity building in this increasingly important region of the world. The significance of this commitment is nicely illustrated by Burmese: Cornell, one of only two institutions offering Burmese, for many years continued to do so despite the fact that Myanmar was closed to foreigners. With recent political developments, Cornell quickly expanded part-time instruction in Burmese to a multilevel program with a full-time instructor in order to meet the rapidly increased interest in Burmese and Myanmar. Because of its ongoing commitment to Southeast Asian language instruction, Cornell was able to quickly contribute to much needed capacity building in this region.

Cornell’s language instructors and Cornell as an institution are also taking a lead role in collaboration with other institutions. As a designated US Department of Education Title VI Southeast Asia National Resource Center (NRC), Cornell works collaboratively with other Title VI centers across the United States and with the Council of Teachers of Southeast Asian Languages to support and promote instruction in these languages, with the intention of training future scholars and diplomats.

In September 2017, SEAP hosted the Southeast Asian Language Teaching: New Directions conference in collaboration with the Department of Asian Studies and the Language Resource Center in the College of Arts and Sciences. This conference grew out of ongoing collaborations with the University of California, Berkeley and University of California, Los Angeles and the University of Wisconsin and was funded through Title VI NRC funds, with support from the Henry Luce Foundation. Representatives from all seven Southeast Asia NRCs participated, along with colleagues from a number of institutions offering instruction in one or more languages of Southeast Asia. All of Cornell’s six language instructors participated in the conference and welcomed the opportunity to take on leadership roles and deepen collaborations with instructors from other institutions.

One of the most pressing tasks for us at SEAP is to ensure that our Southeast Asia language offerings flourish into the future. This includes not only the institutional commitment to these offerings, but also support for and recognition of our outstanding language instructors in their multifaceted roles as educators, curriculum developers, and collaborators at the national and international levels.

An historic meeting of the Southeast Asian language teachers took place this year at the Conference on Southeast Asian Language Teaching: New Directions, September 8 to 10, 2017, at Cornell University. This conference was the largest-ever gathering of instructors of Southeast Asian languages, bringing together over seventy instructors of the major languages of Southeast Asia from across the United States and from as far away as Thailand. Instructors of the six major national languages of Southeast Asia—Burmese, Indonesian, Khmer, Filipino (Tagalog), Thai, and Vietnamese—and of the major regional languages of the Philippines, Ilokano, gathered in Ithaca for an intensive three days to address pedagogical developments and innovations in the teaching of these languages.

It was a one-of-a-kind conference that included all the major stakeholders involved in the teaching of Southeast Asian languages in the United States; namely, language teachers, academics, and grant organizations and administrators. The event not only served as a catalyst to foster a stronger sense of camaraderie among all language teachers and encourage collaboration among different universities, but also to strengthen the field of teaching Southeast Asian languages.

For a full report and more photos visit the conference website: https://agh955.wixsite.com/sealanguageconference and the COTSEAL website http://cotseal.net/
What’s It Like to Study a Southeast Asian Language at Cornell?

YU YU KHAING, lecturer of Burmese

At Cornell, a mix of all kinds of students—both undergraduate and graduate students—study Burmese. In many cases, students have never been to Myanmar (Burma), but some have visited briefly or have a family background (“legacy students”) where parents are fluent speakers and thus, they are quite familiar with the pronunciation and basic vocabulary but have little or no exposure to the formal written style. Many students of Burmese strive to be able to do independent research on a topic related to Myanmar (Burma), its history, culture, literature, or other aspects. The country has been quite secluded for decades, so most aspects of it have not been previously explored; thus, there are plenty of topics open for serious study.

The essential building blocks of the Burmese language program at Cornell are the Burmese script and phonemes (sounds), including tones. Attention is given to correct pronunciation and reading the script rather than the English transcription. From the beginning, emphasis is put on natural speaking in day-to-day settings and to converse about everyday situations such as talking about yourself and your family, food, moving around on foot and by taxi, etc. After two years of study, the students will have a good command of rudimentary daily conversation, behaving appropriately in Indonesian settings with regard to language use and other behavior, and understanding the history and current place of Indonesia in Southeast Asia.

The elementary-level students are expected to be able to express daily needs, discuss everyday topics, and read simple authentic texts. The intermediates are expected to be able to discuss simple real-life issues in complex phrases and sentences, read simple authentic reading materials and guided interviews, and write short and simple compositions. The advanced students are expected to study and discuss published newspaper articles, academic writings, and online news or videos and write and present short academic papers.

One of the most challenging aspects of learning Indonesian for English-speaking students at the introductory and elementary levels is the pronunciation of particular sounds such as vowels [a, e], unaspirated consonants [p, t, k, g, d], nasal sounds [ng, ny], and intonation. At the intermediate and advanced levels, students confront any carryover issues they have had difficulty mastering at the elementary level as well as foreign language-influenced pronunciation of loan words and passive structures.

Collaborative projects and conferences with other universities have brought significant changes to the structure of the program and the main and supplementary materials used in class. The methodology used has changed from an audio-lingual method to a communicative approach, though the audio-lingual materials published by John Wolff are still used as the main reference for the current materials. Now Indonesian is the medium of instruction for all courses, even the introductory and elementary courses.

JOLANDA PANDIN, senior lecturer of Indonesian

Both undergraduates and graduate students study Indonesian at Cornell for a variety of reasons. Undergraduates often study Indonesian at all levels because of connections with friends, family background, experience traveling in the country, or hearing that Indonesian is an easy Asian language to learn. Graduate students mostly need the language for their degree and future field research and are scattered across all levels.

The introductory course includes a project on Indonesia or Malaysia and often culminates in study abroad in South- east Asia. Students in this course are expected to be capable of rudimentary daily conversation, behaving appropriately in Indonesian settings with regard to language use and other behavior, and understanding the history and current place of Indonesia in Southeast Asia.

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One of the biggest challenges of learning Burmese for English-speaking students is the difficulty they have grasping tones (and remembering which tone a word should have). For Burmese, the tone is an inextricable part of the sound of the word, but for speakers of nontonal languages it is easily seen as an add-on. It is also often hard for students to fully grasp the context of written material. Even though every word can be looked up, it can be hard to get the full meaning of a paragraph.
HANNAH PHAN, senior lecturer of Khmer

I teach Khmer at beginning through advanced levels to students with a wide variety of backgrounds and interests. Learners of Khmer include graduate and undergraduate students from different departments and schools such as the departments of Asian Studies, Government, Linguistics, History of Art, Development Sociology, History, Anthropology, the School of Industrial and Labor Relations, the School of Hotel Administration, the Cornell Institute for Public Affairs, and the Cornell Law School, etc. Some students are preparing to study abroad in the Cornell in Cambodia winter session course. The graduate students are usually interested in doing research on topics related to Cambodia such as politics, culture, art, history, linguistics, development sociology, etc.

A smaller number of students are heritage learners who grew up at home speaking Khmer and want to more deeply connect to their roots as well as speaking Khmer and want to more deeply connect to their roots as well as gain a better understanding of Cambodian life and culture. The Khmer language program has evolved over the years, especially digitally. The new introductory course, Khmer 1100, has been increasingly popular.

THUY TRANVIET, senior lecturer of Vietnamese

Students of all majors from all colleges study Vietnamese at Cornell for both personal and academic reasons, though in the classroom I prioritize conversation and comprehension. Some heritage students want to learn Vietnamese to be able to talk to their families. The advanced level students often strive to be able to read texts in Vietnamese and to conduct research in the country. At Cornell, we offer three to four levels of Vietnamese: elementary, intermediate, advanced, and independent study (beyond advanced). We also offer a one-credit “jump start” course to introduce learners to the language and the country. After learning one year of Vietnamese, students can get along pretty well in the country applying learned skills to express, ask, and make requests. They are able to talk on a variety of topics such as where they are from, their address, telephone number, subjects of study, year in school, family, hobbies, as well as dates and time. They know how to shop for food, order meals, and many other items at the market and can order food at restaurants. Some of the biggest challenges for English-speakers learning Vietnamese are terms of address, the pronunciation of vowels, and tones in writing. Vietnamese films and core readings on various topics such as gender, history, politics, and indigenous groups and their cultures are used. Students, in consultation with the instructor, may select some of the class or grammar texts that are inde- pendent study is intended to provide a venue for exploring students’ interests and needs using the target language. Depending on their learning aptitude, after three years of instruction students can acquire levels of proficiency between novice-high and inter- mediate-high (based on proficiency guidelines set by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages). One of the most challenging aspects of learning Filipino is the complex morphological structure of Filipino grammar. With the switch to a communicative pedagogical approach, supplementary materials for all the levels have been developed since 2002, and the textbook Filipino through Self-Instruction has been used for grammar reference. The collaborative work of a group of Filipino instructors produced Filipino Oral Proficiency Guidelines, which the participants hope can be helpful in the standardization of assessment and in curriculum design for the Filipino language program at various educational institutions in the country.

MARIA THERESA SAVELLA, senior lecturer of Filipino (Tagalog)

Filipino is offered in the Department of Asian Studies at various levels: beginning, intermediate, and advanced. In addition, there is a one-credit introductory course on the elements of language and culture and an independent study course with variable credits.

Both graduate and undergraduate students at Cornell study Filipino. The majority of them are Filipinos or pro-American under-

graduates who would like to learn about their roots and communicate better with their family and relatives in the target lan-

guage. There are also graduate students who study Filipino because proficiency in the lan-

guage is necessary to conduct their research. Most of the Filipino-American undergradu-

ate students have been to the Philippines but not the graduate students.

At Cornell, the beginning level of Filipino gives students a thorough grounding in basic speaking and listening skills, with an introduction to reading and writing. The intermediate level continues to develop all four skills: read-

ing, writing, speaking, and comprehension. Content is given more focus at this level, and some of the topics covered are food, seasons, various forms of art, overseas Filipino workers, and indigenous rituals and performances.

The advanced level continues instruction in conversational skills but with an emphasis on reading and writing. Selected

Enchanted Asia

**The CURRENT EXHIBIT** in the Asia Collections at Kroch library, Enchanted Asia, explores sorcery, witchcraft, spells, rituals, and “magic” in Asia and the various means people have used to protect against bad fortune or to empower themselves.

Persons who believe they have been victims of black magic might visit certain Thai shamans who specialize in countering acting it. For example, using an egg, a shaman may roll it on the subject’s body to locate the harmful article secreted in the body. He then “extracts” it using a second egg, which is broken open to reveal the deleterious item, perhaps a nail, a gob of hair, or other foreign material.

The exhibit also features photographs of objects that have been used for divination. These include ancient Chinese oracle bones that were used not only to record transactions of daily life, but also to reveal to diviners answers to queries— for example, whether it was auspicious to proceed with a certain course of action. The bones would be inscribed, heated over fire, and the resulting pattern of cracks studied and interpreted by the diviners.

The thirteenth-century bronze geomantic tablet pictured in our exhibit was made by Islamic metalworker Muhammad ibn Khutlukh al Mawsili. It contains a series of slides and dials that the geomancer operates and sets according to the inscribed instructions. Various configurations of dots appear. The final semicircular panel provides the meaning of the patterns to the geomancer.

What forms of protection have been employed to ensure good fortune or protect against evil? Amulets, such as the amulet against the evil eye in our exhibit, can be worn around the neck, carried on one’s person, or inserted under the skin like a magical microchip (President Marcos of the Philippines is said to have had an amulet in his back). Spirit shirts or tabards against the evil eye in our exhibit, can be worn around the neck, carried on one’s person, or inserted under the skin like a magical microchip (President Marcos of the Philippines is said to have had an amulet in his back). Spirit shirts or tabards

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A geomancer uses his divination skills to determine, for instance, a good location for a burial site or for orienting a plan for a town or a dwelling, or for advising on travel in a certain direction. It is based on Taoist belief in the energies of the earth and the auspicious or inauspicious configuration of earth’s features in a particular area (similar to feng shui).

Durga is a very popular Hindu goddess who has many incarnations and names, including Devi and Shakti (“feminine energy”), consort of Shiva. She is a powerful demon-slaying Hindu warrior; each of her eight arms holds a weapon. The witch Rangda uses Durga’s power to conjure up her wrathful retribution.

COLUMNS

by Carole E. Atkinson, information and reference contact for the Asia Collections

• 27 •
Leaning Language through Culture
The Cornell Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies’ Afterschool Language and Culture Program

Afterschool Language and Culture Program

STUDYING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE, especially at a young age can, not only open children’s minds, but also increase their understanding of various cultures. In order to expose K-6 students to a wide array of cultures and languages, SEAP, in collaboration with five other area studies programs of the Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, initiated the Afterschool Language and Culture Program. Through this program, SEAP finds graduate student volunteers to teach foreign languages in local afterschool programs. The six-week-long classes focus on teaching students language through engaging cultural activities such as games, crafts, cooking, and dancing.

In order to support volunteers in their lesson planning, the Einaudi Center’s digitized lending library provides educational books, DVDs, and culture kits that include such items as traditional clothes, art, puppets, and textiles of different cultures from around the world. These resources, prepared by experts at Cornell University, are geared for use in K-12 and community college settings and were created to engage both educators and students in developing a deeper understanding of foreign cultures and languages. SEAP has collaborated with local Beverly J. Martin Elementary school (BJM), Greater Ithaca Activities Center, and Cayuga Heights Elementary school, and has recently run Burmese, Hindi, and Thai language and culture classes in their afterschool/enrichment programs.

Connecting Diverse Communities
Aye Min Thant, a Cornell master’s student of Asian studies, taught Burmese language and culture program benefits children in many different ways. “It exposes kids to the diversity of language and culture that exists in the world and promotes a curious and respectful exploration of that diversity. Many of my students mentioned that they started greeting their Burmese-speaking friends and neighbors using what they learned in the program.” Aye feels that teaching language through culture teaches students that language and culture influence one another.

Long-term Impact of Language Learning on Children
Marie Vitucci, the Beverly J. Martin Elementary school enrichment coordinator, has been offering the Cornell Afterschool Language and Culture program at BJM for more than two years. She feels that this type of enrichment program gives children the opportunity to learn another language, which is typically not offered in the elementary school curriculum. “It encourages second through fifth graders at BJM Academic Plus to learn both the culture and language from a variety of countries.” In addition to the short-term outcomes and benefits, Marie believes that the language and culture studying experience can have a long-term impact on participants. “Kids will tell me everything they have learned, including their names in other languages. The excitement and knowledge they gain is a great way to encourage their interests as they develop into lifelong learners.” One of the goals of the Afterschool Language and Culture Program is to expose children to languages early in life and encourage them to continue their learning when such options are available in middle and high school.

Looking Ahead: Growing the Program
The Afterschool Language and Culture Program is continually seeking school partners and volunteer teachers. Introducing children to different languages and cultures is vital to building tolerance across cultural differences. It can also benefit children as they grow into adults and enter the global job market.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION on the Afterschool Language and Culture Program: https://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu/afterschool-language-and-culture-program

Lending Library: https://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu/lending-library

Afterschool Language and Culture Program:
https://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu/afterschool-language-and-culture-program
A DUTERTE READER
Critical Essays on Rodrigo Duterte’s Early Presidency
EDITED BY NICOLE CURATO
$23.95 paper

A critical analysis of one of the most media-savvy authoritarian rulers of our time, this collection of essays offers an overview of Duterte’s rise to power and the actions of his early presidency. With contributions from leading experts on the society and history of the Philippines, The Duterte Reader is necessary reading for anyone needing to contextualize and understand the history and social forces that have shaped contemporary Philippine politics.

IN FALL 2017, SEAP, in collaboration with the Cornell South Asia Program and the education minor, launched Global Voices in Education, a dynamic series of speakers stimulating conversations on and from international voices in the field of education. Sharing the global perspectives of Cornell faculty engaged in international service learning, Fulbright English teaching assistants, cultural educators and human rights advocates, school teachers teaching about global migration, and many others, this series aimed to prepare future teachers to engage students in international issues and to help them become global citizens.

SVAY
A Khmer Village in Cambodia
MAY MAYKO EBIHARA
EDITED BY ANDREW C. MERTHA
INTRODUCTION BY JUDY LEDGERWOOD
$23.95 paper

May Mayko Ebihara (1934–2005) was the first American anthropologist to conduct ethnographic research in Cambodia. Svay provides a remarkably detailed picture of individual villagers and of Khmer social structure and kinship, agriculture, politics, and religion. The world Ebihara described would soon be shattered by Pol Pot’s Khmer Rouge. Fifty percent of the villagers perished in the reign of terror, including those who had been Ebihara’s adoptive parents and grandparents during her fieldwork. Never before published as a book, Ebihara’s dissertation served as the foundation for much of our subsequent understanding of Cambodian history, society, and politics.

SEAP WELCOMED ACADEMIC VISITOR AND INDONESIAN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTOR NURLAELA JUM

IN FALL 2017, SEAP welcomed academic visitor Nurilaela Jum. She is an Indonesian language instructor from South Sulawesi province who was funded by the Indonesian Language Diplomacy Agency of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia to assist SEAP’s efforts to promote Indonesian language and culture. In addition to assisting with Cornell lecturer Jolanda Pandin’s Indonesian classes, she taught Indonesian to children at Beverly J. Martin Elementary School through the Cornell Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies’ Afterschool Language and Culture Program. Jum also taught Indonesian to adults at the Tompkins County Public Library.

One of the strengths of Jum’s lessons in both the adult and children’s classes was how she facilitated opportunities for students to teach each other. For the adult class, Jum gave her students the opportunity to research some aspect of Indonesian culture and present it to the rest of the class, successfully engaging all students with this assignment. In the children’s class, when one student was absent from the previous class, Jum prompted the other students to help their classmate catch up on the missed lessons.

Some words from Jum:

I am a graduate of the State University of Makassar (UNM). I received my master’s degree in language education in 2015. While in my third semester of my undergraduate program at the university, I began teaching English and later began teaching Indonesian, as well. In addition to teaching during my undergraduate years, I began working as a translator for people who do not yet know English. My friends and my colleagues find me an optimistic and self-motivated person. They also believe that I have excellent communication skills. In addition to the experiences above, I have organized a variety of programs that pertain to language and culture in different domains. I have experience working with scholars at UNM to form a program for international students who want to both learn to speak the Indonesian language and study to adjust to this new culture. Additionally, I was given an incredible privilege of volunteering to teach Indonesian to a group of Bugis-speaking elementary students in the village of Bone in southern Sulawesi. I enjoy embracing new life challenges because it expands my horizon. When my contract at UNM had ended, my friends and I decided to branch out and build a new school, Alekawa Language and Culture Center. This school is engaged in the language and culture I am most passionate about. Because my friends and I love meeting new people and finding ways to help them, we strive to make our school a home for learning languages (Indonesian, English, and local languages) and growing in understanding the way their speakers live. While running the school, I am also one of the teachers for the Indonesian Language Diplomacy Agency of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia. I am tasked with promoting the Indonesian language and our culture abroad. This year I am assigned to Cornell University. In addition to exploring languages and teaching, in my spare time I enjoy reading and dancing, especially traditional Indonesian dances.
Calling all alumni and friends of SEAP...

IT MAY BE HARD TO BELIEVE that the Kahin Center has been the heart and home of SEAP for 25 years! In honor of this milestone, and to dedicate our efforts to ensuring that the building is in good shape for another 25 years, we are taking advantage of the Kahin Center’s “chair in the elevator” to launch a fundraising campaign to make major repairs and renovations to the Kahin Center.

For SEAP alumni who were in the program from the early 90s onward, the Kahin Center probably evokes many fond memories. For me these include the late nights/early mornings spent writing my dissertation—fuelled by Ben & Jerry’s Cherry Garcia ice cream and cinnamon pop tarts. The main room brings to mind a whole series of memorable brown bag lectures—including Ben Anderson’s discussion of images of hell from a Thai monastery and his regular attendance at the weekly Thursday talks where he would sit in shorts in the back of the room and surprise guest speakers with penetrating questions. The meals and receptions and language class potlucks mingle together with some of the best conferences and symposia I have had the pleasure of attending at the Kahin Center.

For me, the Kahin Center predates email and the web, and I now look back fondly at the flyer-folding gatherings of the student committee from when paper was the only way to let everyone know about upcoming events. I celebrated the completion of my project in the building along with a dear SEAP friend in the government department who finished the same year.

Weddings and baby showers and other rites of passage have been celebrated in the rooms that have been used to host special events, in keeping with the “spiritual epicenter” of SEAP—to use George Kahin’s term. Contributing to the Kahin Center Building Fund to undertake major maintenance and repair work is an investment in the continuity of a vibrant intellectual community—undertaking repairs means that your dollars can help bring it up to code and accessibility standards while maintaining the historic character of the stately home built by Robert Treman in 1802.

Installations of Southeast Asian art provided the finishing touch and fit gorgeously with the wood paneling and views of Cayuga Lake.

A large photograph of 102 West Avenue still hangs on the wall behind the lectern, and each new cohort of graduate students picks up and adds to the corpus of SEAP lore. Writing groups spring up in the seminar room for mutual support when semester deadlines approach. These students pay extra respect to the Buddha that stands watch over their studies. The availability of WiFi has changed some patterns in the building, and cell phones have replaced the shared phone lines that I reluctantly used to answer while trying to write. The rhythm of the weekly Thursday lecture series provides a steady pulse around which most activity in the building revolves. In other words, the Kahin Center is still very much the “spiritual epicenter” of SEAP—to use George Kahin’s words. Contributing to the Kahin Center Building Fund for major maintenance and repair work is an investment in the continuity of a vibrant intellectual community—one in which much more happens than ever before. Perhaps many of us will have bits of our spirits linger in the building to catch a few strains of the Filipino rondalla rehearsing or to catch a glimpse of the “coconut boys” rehearsing a dance number for an appearance at the spring banquet.

Twenty-five years ago this past May, the Kahin Center was dedicated with speeches and dignitaries gathered under a tent in front of the main entrance. Provost Mal Nesheim ceremonially planted the trees, adding a powerful sense of tradition to the grounds. Provost Mal Nesheim dedicated with speeches by dignitaries gathered under a tent to catch a few strains of the Filipino rondalla rehearsing or many of us will have bits of our spirits linger in the building. The meals and receptions and language class potlucks mingle together with some of the best conferences and symposia I have had the pleasure of attending at the Kahin Center.

Kahin Center insisted that the chair in the elevator was for the friend in the government department who finished the same year. At one point graduate students with offices in the region. At one point graduate students with offices in the region. Graduate students were the heart and soul of the program. Graduate student committees were established after years of uncertainty and comradery in a room that was once a parking lot behind the Law School. After years of uncertainty and comradery in a room that was once a parking lot behind the Law School.

IT MAY BE HARD TO BELIEVE that the Kahin Center has been the heart and home of SEAP for 25 years! In honor of this milestone, and to dedicate our efforts to ensuring that the building is in good shape for another 25 years, we are taking advantage of the Kahin Center’s “chair in the elevator” to launch a fundraising campaign to make major repairs and renovations to the Kahin Center.

For SEAP alumni who were in the program from the early 90s onward, the Kahin Center probably evokes many fond memories. For me these include the late nights/early mornings spent writing my dissertation—fuelled by Ben & Jerry’s Cherry Garcia ice cream and cinnamon pop tarts. The main room brings to mind a whole series of memorable brown bag lectures—including Ben Anderson’s discussion of images of hell from a Thai monastery and his regular attendance at the weekly Thursday talks where he would sit in shorts in the back of the room and surprise guest speakers with penetrating questions. The meals and receptions and language class potlucks mingle together with some of the best conferences and symposia I have had the pleasure of attending at the Kahin Center.

For me, the Kahin Center predates email and the web, and I now look back fondly at the flyer-folding gatherings of the student committee from when paper was the only way to let everyone know about upcoming events. I celebrated the completion of my project in the building along with a dear SEAP friend in the government department who finished the same year.

Weddings and baby showers and other rites of passage have been celebrated in the rooms that have been used to host special events, in keeping with the “spiritual epicenter” of SEAP—to use George Kahin’s term. Contributing to the Kahin Center Building Fund to undertake major maintenance and repair work is an investment in the continuity of a vibrant intellectual community—undertaking repairs means that your dollars can help bring it up to code and accessibility standards while maintaining the historic character of the stately home built by Robert Treman in 1802.

Installations of Southeast Asian art provided the finishing touch and fit gorgeously with the wood paneling and views of Cayuga Lake.

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Calling all alumni and friends of SEAP...

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Calling all alumni and friends of SEAP...
Going Global:
Leveraging Resources for International Education

**Keynote:** Carina Caldwell, Community Colleges for International Development

**PANELS:**
1. **Internationalization at Community Colleges:** Short-term Study Abroad & Lasting Curricular Impact
2. **Internationalizing Teacher Training:** Global Education Faculty Fellows Program
3. **Workforce Readiness and Global Education,** presented by Asia Society
4. **Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL),** presented by SUNY COIL and faculty

**Saturdays March 10 2018 9 AM to 4 PM**

**Tompkins Cortland Community College** at the Forum

Sponsored by Cornell University’s Maria Einaudi Center for International Studies, Cornell University’s Southeast Asia Program and the Cornell-Syracuse South Asia Consortium

**To register, please visit:** http://tinyurl.com/goingglobalconference

UPCOMING EVENTS...

**March 9–11**
**SEAP Graduate Conference**
Kahn Center

The title Possession and Persuasion conjures a range of images and concepts, from cultural performance, to the control and mobility of objects, bodies, and spaces, to modes of coercion, influence, and authority. These terms also evoke possibilities of resistance and transformation. How are entanglements of subjectivity and materiality at work across Southeast Asia? How have possessions and persuasions, broadly imagined, organized studies of Southeast Asia, and to what futures do they beckon? Professor Chiara Fornichelli from the Department of Asian Studies at Cornell will deliver the keynote address.

**March 28**
**Artist’s Talk**

Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art

Javanese artist Jompet Kuswidananto will discuss his work at this talk held in conjunction with the Spring 2018 course “Performing Objects/Collecting Cultures” (ARTH 4851), taught by Professor Kaja McGowan.

Becker House

7:30 PM

As a Becker Artist in Residence, Jompet will be presenting for the Becker House Café Series.

**March 30**
**Sounding out the State of Indonesian Music: The Fourth State of the Field Conference of the Cornell Modern Indonesia Project**

Indonesianist ethnomusicologists join forces with practitioners from around and outside academia to assess the current state of Indonesian music and Indonesian music research. Examinations of ongoing efforts to invigorate traditional music, the challenges faced by ascendant facets of Indonesia’s many music scenes, and the growing interest in sound, will address intersections of music and sound with gender, religion, media, economy, politics, and civil society.

**April 9–13**
**Southeast Asia Language Week**

The third annual Southeast Asia Language Week will consist of a week full of fun activities embracing Southeast Asian culture and promoting language study. Find out how you can get involved in SEAP and study a Southeast Asian language in the undergraduate or graduate section of the SEAP website: https://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu.

**March 29**
**Klenèngan: Gamelan from Java**

Memorial Room of Willard Straight Hall  |  7:00 PM

A touring group of master Javanese musicians, joined by Cornell Gamelan Ensemble members and guests, present gamelan music in the more typical, expansive, and relaxed format known as klenèngan. This performance is held in conjunction with Sounding out the State of Indonesian Music, the fourth State of the Field conference of the Cornell Modern Indonesia Project.

**March 29–31**
**Sounding out the State of Indonesian Music: The Fourth State of the Field Conference of the Cornell Modern Indonesia Project**

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**April 13–14**
**Kings and Dictators: The Legacy of Monarchy and the New Authoritarianism in Asia**

Kahn Center

Jointly arranged by the Southeast Asia Program, South Asia Program, East Asia Program, and Comparative Muslim Societies Program, this conference investigates the history and legacy of monarchy in Asia as well as the current rise of authoritarianism. Presentations and discussions will concern both monarchy in history or today, and how today’s new dictators draw on the legacies of monarchy for the legitimation and mystification of their power and position across Asia.
**AWARDS**

**Foreign Language Area Studies Recipients, Academic Year 2017–2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Country of Interest</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Juan Fernandez</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Burmese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Kate Long</td>
<td>Asian Studies</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Tagalog</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Moroney</td>
<td>Linguistics</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Thai</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jaynel Santos</td>
<td>Landscape Architecture</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Tagalog</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darin Self</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Indonesian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brittain Sluder</td>
<td>City and Regional Planning</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Indonesian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Received research travel funds from both SEAP and Einaudi*

**Foreign Language Area Studies Recipients, Summer 2017**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Language</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charlie Accurso</td>
<td>Linguistics</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margaret Cora Jack</td>
<td>Information Science</td>
<td>Khmer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Moroney</td>
<td>Linguistics</td>
<td>Thai</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nga Ruckdeschel</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darin Self</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Indonesian</td>
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</tbody>
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**Southeast Asia Program Thesis Write-up Fellowships, Summer 2017**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Named Award Received</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Okki Kurniawan</td>
<td>Linguistics</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>James Siegel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Minachek</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Erik Thorkelke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole Reinsour</td>
<td>Ethnomusicology</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Martin Hatch</td>
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**SEAP Research Fellowships and Einaudi Center Travel Grants, Summer 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mingi Chai*</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Audrey Kabin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Fernandez*</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>Aubrey Kahin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampmewty Guring</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Aubrey Kahin</td>
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<td>Oradi Ilkhorong</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Aubrey Kahin</td>
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<td>Margaret Jack</td>
<td>Information Science</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>John Badgley</td>
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<td>Mary Kate Long*</td>
<td>Asian Studies</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>Nancy Lomito</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sinoema Mapsong*</td>
<td>Linguistics</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Nancy Lomito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anissa Rahadininglyaa*</td>
<td>Art History</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Nancy Lomito</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jaynel Santos*</td>
<td>City and Regional Planning</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Helen E. Swank</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darin Selt*</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Helen E. Swank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Thai-Vi*</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Oek Gisk Po</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yooni Zhang*</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Oek Gisk Po</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Lauriston Sharp Prize (2016)**

We are pleased to award the 2016 Lauriston Sharp Prize for outstanding achievement to Edmund Joo Vin Oh, PhD in history, and Sean Fear, PhD in development sociology. Named in honor of the founder of the Southeast Asia Program, Lauriston Sharp (1907–93), the prize is awarded each year to recent PhDs who have contributed most outstandingly to both scholarship and the community life of the Southeast Asia Program.

Sean Fear’s dissertation “Republican Saigon’s Clash of Constituents: Domestic Politics and Civil Society in US-South Vietnamese Relations, 1967–1979” is a superb example of international history in terms of methodology and conception. His meticulously constructed correction of both traditional and revisionist analyses of the later phases of the end of the Vietnam War, and his focus on the need to understand the internal dynamics of Vietnamese politics during that period, come at a particularly appropriate time. The US media is currently revisiting the political dynamics of that period (for example, through a recent PBS series and also through discussions of Watergate), while the current “populist” administration draws us all back to that time because of its postures and actions. Fear helps us to contextualize a moment in history that is now eerily familiar, and does so in a remarkably accomplished way. His control of the main sources of the period—in English, French, and Vietnamese—adds substantial weight and support to his meticulous analysis and well-formed conclusions.

The accomplishments of Edmund Oh are equally impressive. His dissertation “Resources Governance and the Power of Depoliticized Development: The Rise of Fisheries Co-management in Vietnam” is exemplary engaged scholarship in the essential area of local and national politics as well as in the growing field of ecology/environmental studies. It is a landmark work in the sociological scholarship on Vietnam and on environmental studies in general. Moreover, Edmund was a stalwart contributor to the community life of the Southeast Asia Program in numerous capacities. He has not only been a tireless young scholar, but also his character toward others is admirably selfless, patient, and empathetic. Between his scholarship and his service, he is a deserving recipient of this award.

**Sean Fear** is a Lecturer in Modern International History at the University of Leeds. Sean’s research focuses on South Vietnamese domestic politics and diplomacy during the Second Republic (1967-1975). He has conducted research at several archives in Vietnam and the United States, and draws heavily on Vietnamese-language official records and print media. His publications have appeared in Diplomatic History and the Journal of Vietnamese Studies, among others, and he is currently working on a book manuscript under contract with Harvard University Press. Sean has received funding and awards from Dartmouth College Gilman Center for International Understanding, the New York University Center for the United States and the Cold War, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, among others.

**Edmund Oh** currently holds a faculty position at the ELM Graduate School at HELP University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where he teaches research methodology and dissertation writing to business students. For the past two years, he has also co-taught a course on governance and institutions in Asia designed for visiting students from the Australian National University. As part of this course he had the privilege of leading students on field trips to Ho Chi Minh City and the Mekong Delta. His university responsibilities aside, Edmund enjoys working with youth and contributing to leadership and environmental awareness programs at the school where his son is enrolled.
VISITING FELLOWS

RATCHADA ARPORNSILP is a fullbright Hubert H. Humphrey Fellow with the International Program, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, for 2017–18. She earned her BA in political science from Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. She also received her MS in environmental governance from Albert Ludwigs University in Freiburg under the German Academic Exchange Service Scholarship and MA in Inter-Asia NGO studies from SungKongHoe University, South Korea. In Thailand, she worked with the Center for People and Forests, an international nongovernmental organization (NGO) based in Kasetsart University. She has over eight years of professional experience with international NGOs and public agencies working in regional program management across Asia and the Pacific region, including Oxfam Great Britain in Asia and the Asia Foundation. With a background in environmental politics, Ratchada applies her technical expertise to developing interdisciplinary approaches to integrating social inclusion and gender equity from the grassroots community level into national and international policy processes in the field of natural resource management, with a focus on forest landscape governance and sustainable development.

BIAI CHUN is a professor of Thai language and literature at the School of Asian-African Studies, Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU). He has also taught at Chiang Mai Rajabhat University in Thailand. He obtained his MA in regional studies from BFSU. His academic interests involve modern Thai literature and Thai translations of Mahayana sutras. His recent publications include “Modern Thai Literature, 1980–2000” and “Thai Translations of Lotus Sutra (Kumarajiva’s Version): A Comparative Study.” As a visiting fellow in the Southeast Asia Program at Cornell, his current research focuses on the aesthetics of Buddhism and Buddha’s biography in the context of the Buddhist canon. His published works focus on the Mahayana tradition and the Mahayana interpretation of Zen Buddhism. He hopes to write a biography of Buddhadasa on the basis of this research.

FAIZAH ZAKARIA is a postdoctoral research fellow in the History Program at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore and a recipient of that university’s College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Singapore Teaching and Academic Research Talent Scheme international scholarship, which enabled her visit to Cornell. She obtained her PhD in history at Yale University in December 2017, specializing in modern Southeast Asia, late imperial and modern China, and global environmental history. Before that she earned a honors degree in mathematics and a master’s degree in Southeast Asian studies from the National University of Singapore. While at Yale she served as graduate coordinator for the Yale Indonesian Forum and Yale Program in Agrarian Studies, organizing conferences and workshops largely around environmental themes. Her research focuses on landscape and religious conversions in the North Sumatran uplands, including migrations from these highlands to the urbanizing cities on the coast. She is broadly interested in the nexus between social and environmental history, probing dichotomies of humans and nature as well as the natural and the supernatural. These themes will be the part of the book manuscript that she will be developing during her visit to Cornell, tentatively titled “Spiritual Anthropocene: An Environmental History of Conversions in the Sumatran Uplands, 1800 to 1928.” Her published work ranges from academic articles—the most recent being a Gramscian examination of traditional Malay medicine in the journal Indonesia and the Malay World—to fiction and poetry in Malay.

WARREN B. BAILEY, professor, finance, Johnson School of Management
RANDOLPH BARKER, professor emeritus, agricultural economics
VICTORIA BEARD, associate professor, sociology and regional planning
ANNE BLACKBURN, professor, Asian studies and Buddhist studies
THAK CHALOEMIARNA, professor, Asian literature, religion, and culture; and Asian studies
ABIGAIL C. COHN, professor, linguistics and director of the Southeast Asia Program
MAGNUS FISKEJSKI, associate professor, anthropology (on leave Fall 2018)
CHIARA FORMICHI, associate professor, Asian studies
AMIKA FUHRMANN, assistant professor, Asian studies
JENNY GOELSTEIN, assistant professor, development sociology

GREG GREEN, curator, Echols Collection on Southeast Asia
MARTIN F. HATCH, professor emeritus, music
NGAMPIIT JAGACINSKI, senior lecturer, Thai; Asian studies
YU YU KHAING, lecturer, Burmese; Asian studies
SAROSH KURUVILLA, Andrew J. Nathanson Family professor, industrial and labor relations
TAMARA LYNN LOO, professor, history
KAJA M. MCCOWAN, associate professor, art history, archaeology
ANDREW MERTHA, professor, government
CHRISTOPHER J. MILLER, senior lecturer, music
STANLEY J. O’CONNOR, professor emeritus, art history
JOLANDA PANDIN, senior lecturer, Indonesian; Asian studies
THOMAS PEPINSKY, associate professor, government (on leave Fall 2018)

HANNAH PHAN, senior lecturer, Khmer; Asian studies
MARIA THERESA SAVELLA, senior lecturer, Tagalog; Asian studies
JAMES T. SIEGEL, professor emeritus, anthropology
ERIC TAGLIACCOZZO, professor, history
KEITH W. TAYLOR, professor, Asian studies (on leave Spring 2018)
ERIK THORBECKE, H. E. Babcock professor emeritus, economics and food economics
THUY TRANVIET, senior lecturer, Vietnamese; Asian studies
MARINA WELKER, associate professor, anthropology
JOHN WHITMAN, professor, linguistics (on leave Spring and Fall 2018)
ANDREW WILFORD, professor, anthropology
LINDY WILLIAMS, professor, development sociology
JOHN L. WOLFF, professor emeritus, linguistics and Asian studies

It is the policy of Cornell University to actively support equality of educational and employment opportunity. No person shall be denied admission to any educational program or activity or be denied employment on the basis of any legally prohibited discrimination involving, but not limited to, such factors as race, color, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, gender identity or expression, disability or veteran status. The university is committed to the maintenance of affirmative action programs that will assure the continuation of such equality of opportunity. Sexual harassment is an act of discrimination and, as such, will not be tolerated. Requests for information about services for Cornell faculty and staff members, applicants for employment, and visitors with disabilities who have special needs, as well as related questions or requests for special assistance, can be directed to the Office of Workforce Diversity, Equity and Life Quality, Cornell University, 150 Day Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853-2601 (telephone: 607-255-5976; TDD: 607-255-7091). Students with disabilities should contact Student Disability Services, Center for Learning and Teaching, Cornell University, 420 Computing and Communications Center, Ithaca, NY 14853-2601 (telephone: 607-255-4545; TDD: 607-255-7461).
Born in Magelang, Java, Wimo Ambala Bayang lives and works in Yogyakarta. A founding member of the photography collective Ruang Mes 56, images from his series *High Hopes* were included in the Johnson Museum’s 2017 exhibition *Identity Crisis: Reflections on Public and Private Life in Contemporary Javanese Photography*, guest-curated by SEAP Visiting Fellow Brian Arnold. This pair of images reveals the beauty and menace of the thick layer of volcanic ash that fell on Yogyakarta and other areas of central and eastern Java from the eruption of Mount Kelud in February 2014.