HAPPY YEAR OF THE YANG (羊)!

On Friday February 20, 2015 The Chinese Program ushered in the Year of the Sheep with a celebration chock full of Chinese New Year activities including paper crafts, Jianzi game (aka hacky sack), opera mask painting, Beijing opera performance. Students had their faces painted as opera clowns. Students and faculty members from both Pacific Lutheran University and the University of Washington Tacoma Chinese Programs also attended the event.

Everyone enjoyed a delicious meal of traditional Chinese foods including longevity noodles and other delicacies. The evening culminated in the traditional raising of the dragon kite.

Professors Lotus Perry and Professor David Hull along with Teaching Assistant Yingqi Zheng and many of our wonderful student volunteers transformed the second floor Atrium of Wyatt Hall into a festive and welcoming Chinese gathering place.

During our lunar new year event the Chinese Program received some media coverage from Taiwan Microview TV Station and BBC Pop Up, who featured our event on both their Facebook and Instagram feeds.

Asian Languages and Cultures offers our thanks to Ms. Tiffany Lin from Legacy Multicultural and Educational Service Center for providing the traditional crafts, and to Mr. Michael Hsia and Ms. Suang-Chiu Wang from Hwa Sheng Chinese Opera Club for the wonderful God of Prosperity performance. It was a fun and informative event for all participants

Gong Xi Fa Cai!
Recent Asian Studies Events

A lecture by Dongsheng Zang on Chinese Environmental Justice: Mediation in a “Harmonious” Society. Dongsheng Zang is Director of the Asian Law Center and the Chinese Legal Studies Program at the University of Washington.

April 8, 2015
Commencement Hall,
Tahoma Room

Sponsored by Asian Studies, History and Environmental Policy and Decision Making

JAPANESE FILM FESTIVAL

Patisserie Coin de Rue
Like Father, Like Son
Kaze no Sotogawa
(Out of the wind)

Part of Tacoma Sister Cities International Film Festival
Performance as a Generative Force in the Culture-Making Process

The paper looks at studies three cultural performances - Tumen Ekh National Ensemble of Song & Dance from Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia; the Shanghai Circus production, ERA Intersection of Time; and Golden Dragon Water Puppet Theatre of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and seeks to situate their exhibiting of culture in various theories covering the way performance makes culture. The research looks closely for the relationship between performance producers and consumers, and the ways that their negotiations fundamentally make and remake culture and its aesthetic values, hierarchies, and conceptualizations of tradition. The goal is to highlight idiosyncrasies of each performance’s ways of negotiating cultural boundaries and structures, rather than offer an empirical or grand narrative that could be overly general and even harmful.

‘Gee’ that Escalated Quickly: K-pop’s Popularity and Social Media Takeover

The rise of K-pop in recent years has caught the attention of people worldwide and most surprisingly through Gangnam Style’s sudden breakthrough on YouTube. As something that has been around since the 1990s, it is unexpected that Psy’s viral song would suddenly be extremely popular in the U.S. It is, however, popular in Asia and because of the Internet and social media, it has spread across the globe at a very fast rate. K-pop is a global music competitor whose hybrid aspects contribute to its success. Using interviews and CD counts, this paper will look at how social media has impacted K-pop’s growth through behind-the-scenes work by music companies to take advantage of connections overseas. It will also discuss how the system Korean music companies factor into that popularity in creating K-pop groups.

Reappearances of Aspects of Classical Chinese Landscape Painting in Contemporary Chinese Art

This study examines the reappearances of aspects of landscape painting that developed during dynastic China in contemporary Chinese art. Socialist movements in the twentieth century severely limited this style of painting. Two locations are observed in both Shanghai and Beijing. Trends in the reappearance of these styles indicates continuing relaxation of political pressure on the art market and demonstrates the relevance of Chinese cultural heritage to today’s modern world.

Motoring Across Asia: Taking a Closer Look at Automotive Markets and Industry in Asia

The spread of globalization and the increasing wealth in regions of the world has spurred a new desire and demand for powered transportation, particularly automobiles. The purpose of this paper is to focus on specific parts of the Asian region in an effort to comparatively quantify the motivations and market forces at work in particular countries. In other words, what makes them tick? To go about this I will be taking a diverse look at each market in an attempt to view them all through a different lens. Some approaches include economic, social, and technological observations and analysis. However, the topic of “cars in Asia” is quite simply miles beyond the reach of this paper, so only very specific cross sections and case studies of the countries under examination are presented. The end of the essay features a more comprehensive examination of motorization across Asia, and the impacts that it is having on urbanization and the environment.
Perceived Authenticity and Souvenir Purchasing Behaviors: An Examination of (auto-)Orientalist Representations of Vietnam

Using print and electronic primary media sources, produced both in Vietnam and internationally, this paper examines the representation of Vietnam as an (auto-)Orientalized entity traditional identity that emerges from a focus on the rural and a lack of modernity. A survey of the current scholarship on souvenir purchasing behaviors reveals that inadequate attention is given to the Orientalist and neo-colonial narratives that exist in many tourist locations. Framed by the existing scholarship on discourse theory and authenticity, this paper argues that representations of Vietnam in domestic and Western travel publications may inform the distribution and purchase of souvenirs and that further research on the topic will prove to be fruitful for the field.

“Becoming urban” Investigating the implementation of urban development policy by Vietnam and China

This paper focuses on the development and expansion of political capacity in urban areas in market-oriented socialist regimes. Traditionally, scholars have debated the role of the state in guiding the processes of urbanization and urban expansion. This paper hypothesizes that urban policy implementation is possible, but highly difficult to fully realize, even for regimes whose governmental structures provide near-unlimited political autonomy. Two case studies are considered: China, which features more large cities than any other state, and Vietnam, which retains one of the fastest rates of urbanization in world history. Ultimately, while both states have been partially successful in implementing urban expansion policy through the implementation of household registration systems, China has had more success in managing direct urban development.

The Olympics and Nationalist Perceptions

The Olympics are known for producing various thrilling sports moments including the 1992 Dream Team and the Miracle on Ice in 1980. However, host countries have also used the Olympics to put forth nationalist agendas at home and abroad. By examining the 1964 Tokyo Olympics and the 2008 Beijing Olympics, this paper looks at how host countries utilize the Olympics as a nationalist tool. It also considers why Japan faced less scrutiny over its handling of the Olympics than China did. This paper proposes that the symbols used by Japan and the way the government handled the games in 1964 could be interpreted as much more offensive. The point of this paper is not to exonerate China, but to ask why there were not more protests over the course of the 1964 Olympics.

Awakening to Japanese Mountains and Thai Forests: The Natural World as an Element of Buddhist Ascetic Practice

Despite the seeming conceptual contradiction, ascetic practice persists within Buddhist traditions. An exploration of the reasons for misconceptions about asceticism shows that asceticism has been a part of Buddhist practice since the time of the Buddha, and that since then asceticism has been associated with retreating from city monasteries to the natural world. And while research abounds on particular rituals or historical ascetic figures, there is little research that takes a broader approach to the reason the natural world repeatedly shows up among ascetic traditions. This study directly approaches this recurrence in exploring the Mahayana (with some Vajrayana influence) Buddhist ascetic traditions of Japan alongside the Theravada Buddhist asceticism of Thailand. On numerous points the ascetic traditions’ construction of the natural world as a site of awakening converge, but a few distinctions remain. Additionally, this research indicates that there are also some non-Buddhist influences that have created the conditions for wilderness practice to thrive, most notably, a wide acceptance in both Japan and Thailand of pre-Buddhist animist traditions that posited the existence of spirits throughout the natural world.
The Art of Delay in Japanese Landscape Design

The “simplicity” so often ascribed to Japanese gardens is in reality the accumulation of carefully planned and executed aesthetics. Natural materials such as stones, foliage, water, and wood are used to manipulate the experience and facilitate a tension (ma) between the individual and the space. In this presentation, I will discuss how Japanese landscape design manipulates its imperfections and austerities to suspend time and fill it with nothing but the bottomless potentiality of the viewer’s personal experience. They transcend an ordinary state of being as their delayed experience, slowed by the effects of irregularity, gently opens them up to closer observation of the garden as well as of themselves.

Gianna Olson, Junior  
Project: Asia 495  
Major: Art History

Title: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Print Advertisements in China, Japan, and India: Idealized Images of Femininity and Masculinity

This research paper explores the ways in which gender roles are reified and how idealized images of femininity and masculinity are created through print advertisements in China, Japan, and India. By using original data I will begin to answer the fundamental question of what is an ideal man and woman in Chinese, Japanese, and Indian societies; what do they look like, how should they behave and what should they strive for? With the support of Hofstede’s Dimensions of Culture Model, as well as Fowle’s advertising emotional appeals, ads will be categorized and analyzed to identify major themes throughout the imagery of the ads. This area of study is pertinent to advertising as a mean of marketing. It is crucial for companies and advertising agencies to understand the social and cultural frameworks of a market before introducing it to a new product. This topic is also relevant to social anthropologists because advertisements directly reflect the needs and wants of a society, social trends and fads, as well as the norms of gender display, and finally, understanding the differences in cultures as a whole.

Lydia Hollingsworth  
Year: Junior  
Project: BUS 495  
Major: International Business and Chinese Language and Culture

No Women Allowed: Bhikkhuni Nuns and their Relationship to Women’s Roles in Thailand

Thailand, a primarily Theravada Buddhist country, reveres its monks and places them high in the social hierarchy of Thailand. This is because monks are thought to have high merit and can provide merit to the laypeople in order to encourage a better reincarnation. Unfortunately for women in Thailand, they have much lower merit than men and do not have the opportunity to become ordained nuns due to their lack of standing in Thai society. The only opportunity available for women is to become a maechi- an unofficially ordained nun that holds a subordinate position to monks and is looked down upon by Buddhist leaders in Thailand. There is currently a movement in Thailand led by women to create a line of ordained nuns called bhikkhunis. The bhikkhuni nuns are fighting against the outdated patriarchal rulings of the Thai Buddhist order to gain more equality within Buddhism and in Thailand for women. This paper discusses how the low status of women in Buddhism affects the status of women in Thai culture relating to sexuality, HIV/AIDS, and their ability to gain leadership and respect in Thailand. Through my research I discuss how the bhikkhuni movement in Thailand is one of the first steps to provide empowerment to women in Buddhism and Thailand because of the strong influence Buddhism has in Thai culture. The creation of a bhikkhuni lineage will provide an example for women in Thailand to continue to progress beyond the patriarchal values and allow for women to empower themselves within Buddhism and Thailand.

Elana Maslow  
Year: Junior  
Project: Asia 495  
Major: Sociology and Anthropology
Asian Studies is pleased to offer the Suzanne Wilson Barnett Writing Award. Students may submit any paper of any length written for any Asian Studies course, including Asia-related first-year seminar courses taught during the most recent Spring, Fall or Summer. Authors of senior, junior or sophomore standing must have declared the Asian Studies designation or any of the Asian Languages and Cultures majors or minors at the time of submission.

Deadline May 11th
Please see the Asian Studies webpage or contact Lorraine Toler in the Asian Studies office for more information ltoler@pugetsound.edu

JAPAN WEEK  日本週間  March 30—April 4

Japan Week activities:
❖ Decorating with Japanese Style, Calligraphy and Sumie Painting
❖ Sampling of delicious Japanese cuisine
❖ Film Kaze No Sotogawa,
❖ Mountain Temple Style Tea Ceremony
❖ Neko Café, Hosted by the Japan House, students had tea and treats with kitty cats.
❖ Mochi Making, students pounded mochi rice into bite sized Japanese treats.
❖ Field trip to Nihon-Machi
# Fall 2015 Course Offerings

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Big Roar, No Bite – The Paper Tiger of SE Asia
An Exploration of the Mekong River Commission and its potential as a model for trans-boundary water management in relation to sustainability and development.
Transboundary water systems represent a significant portion of the world’s water resource; the Mekong River represents one of these important water systems. The Mekong River Commission (MRC) was founded in 1995, under the Mekong River Treaty, an agreement founded with the intention of easing discussion between its four principle members, Vietnam, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia, and its two dialogue members, Myanmar and China. The MRC was intended to produce policy and action that represents the interests of all involved parties and balances sustainability and development in the region. However, since its founding the MRC has seen a breakdown in its policies and positions. The breakdown of the MRC can be seen both on an organizational level with an unproductive structure, lack of potential participation, no real regional power and diverging national interests. These issues can be seen through the lenses of hydropower and environmental awareness. In regards to diverging national interests, the nations of the MRC can be categorized into the categories of developing state (Laos), bystander and supporting state (Thailand), contradicting state (Vietnam) and the non-involved, developing state (China). This paper will explore the breakdown of the MRC on an organizational and regional level, assessing its potential as a model for transboundary water management in relation to sustainability and development. The MRC has been deemed a ‘paper tiger’ a title fitting of the organization as it stands as a viable model on paper, but not in practice.

Holy Rivers from Hell and Monastic Trees: A Multi-Regional Study of Environmental Concern and Culture
Asia, as well as the rest of the world, is in a perpetual process of change, development and degradation. In recent years, economic development has led to increasing affluence, a growing middle class and changing individual leisure aspirations (Cochrane 2006). While economic growth has increased overall quality of life and brought many people out of poverty, environmental degradation has been a tradeoff. This paper will explore the different ways that individuals and groups perceive environmental issues and behave in response to them in China, India, Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia. Drawing from the subjectivity of concepts such as ‘nature’ and ‘wilderness’, as well as acknowledging the Western origins of contemporary environmentalism, this paper will explore perceptions of nature, patterns of human interaction and impacts on conservation in these various contexts. Through this discussion I will conclude that nature has worth and environmental protection exists in all of the contexts included in this study, however the manner in which this worth is interpreted and influences behavior is by no means universal.

Reinventing History:
A comparative analysis of how Nationalism is portrayed by museums in China and Japan
This paper explores the similarities and differences in how nationalism is promoted in two different nations and through two different museums. The National Museum of China in Beijing and the Yushukan Museum at Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo offer valuable insights to how nations perceive themselves and their histories. Whether its the National Museum of China focusing largely on conflicts involving Japanese aggression in order to draw attention away from the Cultural Revolution or Yushukan offering a complete revisionist perspective of the Rape of Nanjing, both museums construct exhibits in a specific way in order to uphold particular nationalist messages. This is significant to understanding why nationalism matters in countries such as China and Japan and what these museums represent.