

THE ASIAN CONNECTION

Sigur Center for Asian Studies

Spring 2014

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One of the main measures of the growth of Asian Studies at GW in recent years has been the increasing number of public events on Asia sponsored by the Sigur Center and other programs around the university (the Sigur Center itself hosted a record number of 86 events in the last academic year). Equally significant though has been the expansion in the scope of subjects covered in these events.

Given GW's location in the nation's capital, which attracts significant numbers of students interested in politics and international affairs, it is probably not surprising that for many years the social sciences and policy issues have been dominant in Asia-related programming. The humanities, often the heart of Asian Studies at other universities, were in turn unrepresented to the point of near invisibility—with only the annual Hahn Moo-Sook Colloquium in the Korea Humanities (completing its 21st program last fall) standing as a beacon against this trend.



Sigur Center Director Edward McCord

Against this background, it was encouraging to see a new focus on the humanities in a number of events this past semester. First, the Sigur Center initiated the Spotlight Taiwan Program focusing on the culture of Taiwan with a musical performance in September by the Taiwanese group, *A Moving Sound*. Second, the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures inaugurated its East Asian Humanities Lecture Series with a presentation by Professor S. Robert Ramsey of the University of Maryland on the interaction of geography, language and culture in determining “what it means to be East Asian.” Finally, GW's new Confucius Institute began its own academic programming in November with a lecture by Professor Mayfair Yang, from the University of California, on the meaning of the “Jade Emperor” in the religious-political culture of contemporary China. The auspicious conjunction of these programs in one semester clearly marks an important new stage in the development of Asian Studies at GW.

A MOVING SOUND, LIVE AT GW

In Fall 2013 the Sigur Center for Asian Studies was awarded a grant from the R.O.C. (Taiwan) Ministry of Culture for a “**Spotlight Taiwan Program**.” The purpose of this program is to introduce different aspects of traditional and contemporary culture in Taiwan to GW students as well as the general public.

The program got off to an impressive start with an inaugural concert by the Taiwanese band, **A Moving Sound** in Jack Morton Auditorium on **September 30, 2013**. Described by **Tom Pryor** of **National Geographic On Line World Music** as “**One of the most original outfits working in the world music arena today**,” the band fuses traditional Taiwanese, Chinese and neighboring Asian music forms in new original song compositions. Instruments such as the Chinese erhu (a vertically held, bowed instrument) and the zhong ruan (Chinese guitar) worked together with the transcendent vocals and dance of lead singer Mia Hsieh to give audiences a new and enriching musical experience. The students, members of the GW community, and the general public in attendance were treated to an eclectic performance in an intimate atmosphere, with crowd participation and singing punctuating the event.



R.O.C. (TAIWAN) AMBASSADOR, PU-TSUNG KING



On **November 8, 2013** the Sigur Center was privileged to host Ambassador Pu-tsung King in the City View Room of the Elliott School for his first public remarks in Washington since assuming his position as Representative of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in D.C.

Introduced by Sigur Center Director **Ed McCord** and Elliott School Dean **Michael Brown** (pictured on left), Ambassador King gave a speech entitled, “**Prospects for US-Taiwan Relations**.” While acknowledging certain obstacles to improved U.S.-Taiwan relations in the past, Ambassador King stressed the mutual interests of both countries and important strides made in areas such as trade, people-to-people relations and military assistance. The ambassador also noted that thanks to the diplomatic efforts of both the Obama and Ma administrations, cross-Strait relations have never looked better. He cited such tangible benefits as the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) and posited that improved economic linkages between Taipei and Beijing increase the likelihood of better political ties. At the same time, Ambassador King stressed that constant investment in, and management of, the relationship is essential going forward.

The speech was marked by optimism and a desire to continue the trajectory of improved Taiwan-U.S. and cross-Strait relations.

RISING POWERS INITIATIVE



Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL), Professor Mike Mochizuki and Professor Charles Glaser in discussion at *Strategic Asia 2013-14: Asia in the Second Nuclear Age* (10/02/2013)

On October 2, the **Rising Powers Initiative (RPI)** joined with the **National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR)** for the launch of the book, ***Strategic Asia 2013-14: Asia in the Second Nuclear Age***. The book examines how Asian countries have managed the impact of increased nuclear weapons proliferation activity in the region. RPI was a fitting co-host, as it is conducting its own study - ***Nuclear Debates in Asia*** - that tracks domestic debates on nuclear power and nonproliferation in eight countries in Asia at varying stages of nuclear weapons proliferation activity. Project authors **Mike Mochizuki** and **Christopher Clary** spoke in various capacities at the event. The event was also co-sponsored by the Elliott School's **Institute for Security and Conflict Studies**. Elliott School participation in the event was made possible by support from the **MacArthur Foundation**. A full audio recording and in-depth synopsis of the event can be found at RPI's website [HERE](#).

The major theme underscoring the event was the importance of Asia in nuclear proliferation and strategic analysis. Panelists discussed China's on-going nuclear modernization activities, Pakistan's emerging battlefield strategy using tactical nuclear weapons, India's pursuit of a true and effective triad-based deterrent, developments on the Korean peninsula, nuclear decision-making in Japan, and the challenges facing U.S. extended deterrence in Asia.

Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) delivered a morning keynote address that warned that Washington "cannot be in the business of yielding U.S. primacy" by neglecting to fund modernization efforts as several countries in Asia move forward with expanding their nuclear arsenals. To do so, he argued, would create uncertainty in the minds of our allies in Asia who depend upon the extended security guarantee of an effective and credible U.S. nuclear

arsenal. While other panelists expressed less pessimistic views on the trajectory of the U.S. stockpile, they recognized that current budgetary pressures mean tough choices will need to be made on the size and composition of the nuclear force, decisions that will be closely watched by U.S. allies in Asia.

After welcoming remarks by **Mike Mochizuki** and NBR President **Richard J. Ellings**, **Charles Glaser** chaired the first panel on **"Asia's Nuclear Powers."** Panelists included:

- ◆ **Abraham M. Denmark** (NBR)
- ◆ **Gaurav Kampani** (Norwegian Institute of Defense Studies)
- ◆ **Yukio Okamoto** (Center for International Studies)
- ◆ **Christopher Clary** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

Abraham M. Denmark argued that due to the size and doctrine of China's nuclear force, Beijing is unlikely to join arms control negotiations between the U.S. and Russia any time soon. **Gaurav Kampani** observed that even as India boasts its emergent nuclear-powered submarine fleet, New Delhi will need an even more advanced generation of subs if it wants to move beyond today's limited capacity. Finally, **Christopher Clary** remarked on Pakistan's threat assessments, including a move by the U.S. to eliminate its nuclear arsenal.

The second panel was moderated by **Travis Tanner** from the **100 Thousand Strong Foundation** and included:

- ◆ **John S. Park** (Harvard Kennedy School)
- ◆ **James L. Schoff** (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace)

While **John S. Park** discussed nuclear ambitions on the Korean Peninsula and the possibility of North Korea participating in arms control negotiations, **James L. Schoff** spoke on Japan's nuclear hedge and its potential for an indigenous nuclear arsenal.

The final panel was chaired by **Ashley J. Tellis** of the **Carnegie Endowment for International Peace** and featured:

- ◆ **Linton Brooks** (Independent Consultant)
- ◆ **Mira Rapp-Hooper** (Columbia University)

The discussion focused on the future of U.S. extended deterrence in Asia, with both panelists concluding that simply possessing sufficient nuclear capabilities is not enough to maintain alliances, which are primarily political relationships and therefore must be maintained through regular consultations.

RISING POWERS INITIATIVE



Professor Robert Sutter, Associate Dean Douglas Shaw and RPI Director Deepa Ollapally at *Central Asia, Iran, and the Nuclear Landscape in Asia* (11/14/2013)

On November 14, RPI and the **Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies' Central Asia Program** co-sponsored a conference on **Central Asia, Iran, and the Nuclear Landscape in Asia**. Experts discussed the role of nuclear issues for countries in Central Asia, the status of programs in established nuclear powers such as China, India, and Japan, and the links developing between these countries. This event was made possible by support from the **MacArthur Foundation**. A full audio recording and in-depth synopsis of the event can be found at RPI's website [HERE](#).

Douglas Shaw, (Associate Dean for Planning, Research and External Relations, Elliott School) gave opening remarks as well as chaired the first panel on **"Asia's Changing Nuclear Landscape."** Panelists included:

- ♦ **Mike Mochizuki** (Associate Professor of Political Science and International Affairs, GW)
- ♦ **Robert Sutter** (Professor of Practice of International Affairs, GW)
- ♦ **Deepa Ollapally** (Director, RPI, GW)

Mochizuki maintained that because of the disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant on March 11, 2011, Japanese public opinion has been moving toward a reduction of Japan's reliance on nuclear power, though Tokyo would remain a *latent* nuclear weapon state in light of rising uncertainty in the region. **Mochizuki** also noted Japan's increased nuclear energy cooperation with Kazakhstan. Turning to India, **Ollapally** discussed how India's domestic debates on nuclear issues parallel its broader foreign policy debates with "Nationalists," "Realists," "Liberal Globalists," and "Leftists." **Ollapally** also noted that the nuclear cooperation agreement recently signed between India and Kazakhstan is a significant development that will deepen ties between India and the region.

To finish off the panel, **Robert Sutter** argued China would

continue its cautious approach to reinforcing Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) norms when it comes to countries closer to home (e.g. North Korea), and that it will continue to face little difficulties in its energy and political ties with Central Asian countries.

The second panel, **"The Iranian Question and its Regional Environment"** was chaired by **Cory Welt** (Associate Director, Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies) and included:

- ♦ **Janne Nolan** (Research Professor, GW)
- ♦ **Jeff Mankoff** (Center for Strategic and International Studies)
- ♦ **Marlene Laruelle** (Director, Central Asia Program, GW)

Nolan discussed **"Iran's Nuclear Ambitions: US and Israeli Threat Perceptions"** while **Mankoff** spoke on the topic of **"Partners or Rivals? Contextualizing the Russian-Iranian Nuclear Relationship."** **Laruelle** discussed **"Central Asia's Viewpoint on being in Iran's Vicinity."**

Rounding out the conference was a panel on **"Central Asia's Nuclear Strategies and Challenges,"** chaired by **Deepa Ollapally**. Panelists included:

- ♦ **Richard Weitz** (Hudson Institute)
- ♦ **Dauren Aben** (Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies, Almaty)
- ♦ **Tongzhan Kassenova** (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace)
- ♦ **Sebastien Peyrouse** (Central Asia Program, GW)

Placing Kazakh public opinion in the context of the legacy of the Cold War, **Peyrouse** stated that Kazakhstan would have a hard time moving forward with many of its nuclear energy plans until concerns over lingering effects and memories of nuclear weapons testing were addressed. **Aben** and **Kassenova** noted, however, that these "legacy issues" have not interfered in the country's development as a leading, responsible member of the NPT and a country to be emulated. **Kassenova** concluded that the transformation of the former Soviet nuclear test site from a barren radioactive land into an important venue to train experts how to detect nuclear detonations and verify arms control accords should provide a model for policymakers looking for creative solutions to these challenges.

Overall, the conference demonstrated the noteworthy role of Central Asia in the nuclear landscape and the interconnectedness of developments in nuclear energy and weapons throughout Asia. You may follow RPI's **Nuclear Debates in Asia** project on Twitter [@westmyer](#) and on their [blog](#) for news and analysis on nuclear issues in Asia.

RECENT EVENTS

TAIWAN EVENTS



Da-Jung Li, Bonnie Glaser and Alan Romberg at *Taiwan Forum - Building Cross-strait Military CBMs - A Goal between Far and Near* (8/27/2013)

August 27 2013: *Taiwan Roundtable - "Building Cross-strait Military CBMs - A Goal between Far and Near,"* with **Bonnie Glaser**, Senior Advisor, Freeman Chair in China Studies; **Alan Romberg**, Director, East Asia Program, the Stimson Center; **Da-Jung Li**, Associate Professor, Tamkang University, Taiwan. [Read the Asia Report HERE.](#)

September 9, 2013: *Taiwan Forum - "To Be or Not to Be? Taiwan and the US Pivot to Asia,"* with **Yeh-chung Lu**, Assistant Professor, Department of Diplomacy, National Cheng-chi University (NCCU), Taiwan.

April 12, 2013: *Taiwan Forum - "Improving South Korea and Taiwan Relations: Sometimes Painful, Always Meaningful, and Ultimately Inevitable,"* with **Jaeho Hwang**, Chair, Division of International Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, ROK.

CONFERENCES/LECTURES

September 12, 2013: *"The Chinese People Have Stood Up: Popular Protest in Urban China,"* with **Qin Shao**, Professor of History, the College of New Jersey.

September 17, 2013: *Book Launch: "Foreign Relations of the PRC: The Legacies and Constraints of China's International Politics since 1949,"* with **Robert Sutter**, Professor of Practice of International Affairs, GW.

October 16, 2013: *"A Discussion on China's Future Role in Africa,"* co-sponsored by GW's **International Affairs Society**, with **Lula Chen**, Program Manager, the Sino-African Institute of Sister Cities International.

October 18, 2013: *East Asian Humanities Lecture Series Inaugural Lecture - "The Languages of East Asia: What Does it Mean To Be East Asian?"* co-sponsored by the **Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures**, with **Robert Ramsey**, Professor of East Asian Linguistics, the University of Maryland.

October 23, 2013: *"The U.S. Rebalance and ASEAN Regionalism,"* with **Julio Amador III**, *Asia Studies Visiting Fellow*, the East-West Center in Washington.

November 8, 2013: *"The 6th Annual Conference on U.S.-China Economic Relations and China's Economic Development,"* co-sponsored by the **Institute for International Economic Policy**, the **GW Confucius Institute** and the **Center for International Business Education and Research**.



Former U.S. Ambassador to the R.O.K, Kathleen Stephens speaking at a panel at *The 21st Hahn Moo-Sook Colloquium in the Korean Humanities* (11/09/2013)

November 9, 2013: *"The 21st Hahn Moo-Sook Colloquium in the Korean Humanities - "Korea and Cultural Diplomacy: Politics and Meaning in the Arts, Industry and Civil Society,"* co-sponsored by the **Korea Foundation**, GW's **Columbian College of Arts and Sciences**, the **Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures**, the **Institute for Ethnographic Research**, and **Literature Translation Institute of Korea**.



Elliott School Dean Michael Brown giving opening remarks at *The 6th Annual Conference on U.S.-China Economic Relations and China's Economic Development* (11/08/2013)

November 11, 2013: *"The Jade Emperor: Sovereign Power, Celestial Bureaucracy and the Political Theology of the Masses in China,"* co-sponsored by **GW's Confucius Institute**, with **Mayfair Yang**, Professor of Religious Studies & East Asian Languages & Cultural Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara.

November 15, 2013: *"Study Abroad: The Ivy League Dream and Chinese Modernity,"* co-sponsored by the **GW Department of English**, and the **Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures**, with **Andy Wang**, Associate Researcher, Institute of European and American Studies, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.



Ho-Young Ahn, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the U.S. gives the congratulatory address at *Historical Reconciliation and Prosperity in Northeast Asia: 70 years since the Cairo Declaration*, (12/02/2013)

November 21, 2013: *Book Launch: "Sino-Japanese Relations After the Cold War: Two Tigers Sharing a Mountain,"* with **Michael Yahuda**, Visiting Scholar, the Sigur Center for Asian Studies; Professor Emeritus of International Relations, London School of Economics.

December 2, 2013: *"Historical Reconciliation and Prosperity in Northeast Asia: 70 years since the Cairo Declaration,"* co-sponsored by the **Northeast Asian History Foundation**.

VISITING SCHOLAR ROUNDTABLES

October 10, 2013: *"China's Soft Power,"* with **Stanislav Mysicka**, Lecturer, University of Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic.

December 5, 2013: *"The Road to TPP: Political and Economic Challenges Facing Taiwan and Possible Resolutions,"* with **Constance Wang**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Taiwan.

MORE RISING POWERS INITIATIVE EVENTS

October 14, 2013: *Policy Forum: "Assessing India's Inclusive Development for Better Outcomes,"* co-sponsored by the **Institute for International Economic Policy's Sustainable Development Forum**, with **Ajay Chhibber**, Director General, India's Independent Evaluation Organisation.

October 16, 2013: *"Informal Labor, Formal Politics and Dignified Discontent in India,"* with **Rina Agarwala**, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Johns Hopkins University.

October 17, 2013: *"Beyond Pakistan: New Delhi's policy toward Afghanistan and Central Asia,"* co-sponsored by the Elliott School's **Central Asia Program**, with **Jean-Luc Racine**, Director, Science Policy at the Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Paris.

The Sigur Center's Rising Powers Initiative examines how domestic foreign policy debates and identity issues affect international relations in Asia.

More information on the Rising Powers Initiative can be found at:

Website: <http://www.risingpowersinitiative.org>



OAS EVENTS

September 15, 2013: *“Cross-Strait Relations: A Taiwanese Student Perspective.”* A seven person delegation from Taiwan’s Soochow University consisting of six undergraduates and their professor, **Huang Xin-Yi**, met with students to discuss their perspectives on the political, economic, and cultural dimensions of current cross-Strait relations.

September 25, 2013: *“Japan’s Foreign Policy Towards its Neighbors.”* In cooperation with the Japanese Student Union of D.C., OAS welcomed a delegation of nine students lead by **Professor Takeshi Sakade** of Kyoto University to engage in a discussion of Japan’s foreign policy toward its neighbors. Professor Henry Nau of The George Washington University provided his expert insights and commentary following the students’ presentation.

November 20, 2013: *“Pakistan in Perspective: A Progressive State Faced with Challenges.”* Sigur Center visiting scholar, **Lt. Col. Talat Shabir**, met with students to give an informal talk on the current state of affairs in Pakistan.

November 22, 2013: *“Foreign Policy Making in the US and China.”* **Gregory May**, Bilateral Political Unit Chief in the Office of Chinese and Mongolian Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, met with students discuss the foreign policy making processes and institutions in the United States and China. This event was co-sponsored with the GWU chapter of the Global China Connection (GCC).



Akiko Yamanaka, Professor at Chiba University of Commerce and former Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan at *Japan’s Initiatives to Empower Women* (11/05/2013)



Professor Akiko Yamanaka, Professor Mike Mochizuki and GW students at *Japan’s Initiatives to Empower Women* (11/05/2013)

November 5, 2013: *“Japan’s Initiatives to Empower Women.”* The Japanese Student Union of D.C., the Organization of Asian Studies (OAS), and the GWU chapter of Women in International Security (GWU-WIIS) hosted **Professor Akiko Yamanaka** of the Chiba University of Commerce and former Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan for a roundtable discussion on women’s empowerment issues and initiatives in Japan.

The **Organization of Asian Studies (OAS)** is a graduate and undergraduate student organization that seeks to foster an appreciation of Northeast, Southeast, and South Asian culture. The organization focuses on strengthening ties between students and faculty with an interest in Asia through ambitious programming and events, all made possible by the support of the Sigur Center for Asian Studies.

Celebrating **30** Years **PARTNERSHIPS FOR INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIES IN ASIA**

Partnerships for International Strategies in Asia (PISA) is a program housed within the Sigur Center for Asian Studies. Directed by **Linda Yarr**, PISA prepares leaders for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st Century and mobilizes networks of scholars, policy makers, and advocates on both sides of the Pacific to address urgent national and transnational concerns. 2014 is a year of particular significance for PISA as it marks 30 years since its establishment in 1984.

MYANMAR CLIMATE INITIATIVE

PISA is gearing up for the second phase of its multi-year Myanmar Climate Initiative that will commence in July 2014. PISA will be hosting a cohort of "high-multiplier" delegates from Myanmar's line-ministries with portfolios that include natural resource oversight and development planning to take part in an intensive three-week capacity building course. The delegates will be exposed to a wide range of issues related to global climate change and environmental governance.

CLIMATE-WISE DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE SERIES

Thanks to the generous support of the Chino Cienega Foundation, PISA is pleased to announce the launch of the Climate-wise Development Roundtable series. The series brings Science and Technology Officers of the ASEAN member embassies in Washington, DC together with specialists from the NGO, think tank and academic communities in invitation-only, off-the-record sessions to discuss the ways in which ASEAN nations are innovating in the realm of climate-wise or "green growth" development strategies. Meeting on a quarterly basis, PISA will facilitate and host these discussions with invited experts in the climate, security, energy, and development fields.



Dr. Nguyễn Vũ Tùng of the Embassy of Vietnam, PISA Director, Linda Yarr, Dr. Hoang Minh Ha of ICRAFF, Ms. Sally Benson of CCF, and Dr. Trần Ngọc Ca of the Embassy of Vietnam after the inaugural session of the Climate-Wise Development Roundtable Series (10/2/2013)



PISA Director, Linda Yarr moderating the discussion at an event on "Indonesia's Approach Toward a Green Economy" featuring Dr. Mubariq Ahmad on (10/14/2013)

RECENT EVENTS HOSTED BY PISA

October 14, 2013: "*Indonesia's Approach Toward a Green Economy*" with **Dr. Mubariq Ahmad**, Adviser for Climate Change Policy, World Bank; Strategy Working Group Leader, Indonesia's Presidential Task Force on REDD+. Dr. Ahmad provided an insider's perspective on the government of Indonesia's ambitious new climate change mitigation policies.

October 2, 2013: "*Climate-smart Agriculture—Opportunities and Challenges in ASEAN Countries and the SEA Region*," with **Dr. Minh Ha Hoang**, Senior Scientist, World Agroforestry Center (ICRAF). During the inaugural session of PISA's Climate-Wise Development Roundtable series Dr. Minh Ha Hoang presented her research on the challenges that climate change poses for agricultural production in countries located in the Mekong Delta.

More information on Partnerships for International Strategies in Asia (PISA) can be found at:

Website: <http://www.gwu.edu/~pisa/>

Blog: <http://pisaspeak.wordpress.com/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/PISAtweet>

FEATURED ALUMNUS - TIMOTHY HEATH



Timothy R. Heath received his MA in Asian Studies from the Elliott School of International Affairs at GW in May, 2005. Mr. Heath now serves as the senior analyst in the **US Pacific Command (USPACOM) China Strategic Focus Group**, a small team of experts established to provide strategic level analysis and assessments to the USPACOM commander.

Since moving to Hawaii in 2009, Tim has briefed many US and foreign security officials. He has also presented lectures at various conferences and published numerous articles in sources such as *Asian Security* and Jamestown Foundation's *China Brief*. A chapter authored by Tim will be included in a forthcoming book published by the

National Bureau of Asian Research on the People's Liberation Army. Tim is also completing a draft of a book on China's strategy and policy guidance formulation process. Previous to his current assignment, Tim served as an analyst on Chinese military, strategy, and politics at the **DNI Open Source Center** and the **Office of Naval Intelligence**.

Regarding his current assignment, Tim states that "USPACOM's role in maturing the US-PRC military-to-military relationship provides a fascinating vantage point to observe the evolution of the Asia Pacific region. At USPACOM, there are fantastic opportunities to hear the perspectives of defense officials from China, our allies and partners, and other countries in the region."

Recalling his studies at the Elliott School, Tim said, "From my studies at GWU, I gained a profound appreciation for the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to studying topics related to China. Even when examining military developments, for example, I find it essential to study carefully the history, and social and economic influences which place those developments in context."

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT - SAHER ASAD

Saher Asad is a PhD candidate in Economics, and originally from Pakistan. Saher is also a Sigur Center Summer Research Fellow, having spent the past summer in Pakistan conducting research on "The Impact of Cell Phones and Infrastructure Access on Crop Choice and Post-harvest Loss for Rural Pakistani Households."

During her last few years of undergraduate study at the Lahore University of Management in Pakistan, Saher began working as a research assistant with professors who were exploring the effects of decentralization that had occurred around Pakistan and attempting to explain how this had impacted budget reallocations. Working on this project was one factor that motivated her to conduct her own original research. After applying for and receiving a Fulbright Fellowship, Saher decided to attend GW. She recalls that, "GW seemed like a natural choice because of the quality and range of faculty advisors and their specialties, considering my interest in development economics. Also, the location was very alluring due to its proximity to numerous think-tanks and government agencies."

While conducting previous field research in Pakistan, Saher became particularly interested in information technology (IT) and how it was applied in a development context. She had encountered numerous sugar cane farmers who were having trouble selling their product at a profitable price. This was due largely to the long wait-times involved in getting their crops to the market, which allowed the quality of the crop to deteriorate along with the price by the time they reached the buyer.

However, Saher met some farmers who had access to cell

phones and who were therefore able to coordinate more efficient selling times with the markets, as well as grow more lucrative crops that had higher rates of deterioration. Observing this, Saher began wondering about the potential that IT had for helping more farmers grow and sell their crops for a better return. After receiving funds from the Sigur Center to explore this question in rural Pakistan, Saher surveyed households in 15 villages on each side of a zone near the Indian border. Villages lying in the restriction zone had no cell phone access while the villages on the other side did. Saher plans to present the findings of this research in a forthcoming paper.

Saher hopes to pursue a career in academia as a professor. She also hopes to continue to conduct field research related to the problems she has already been exploring as a Sigur Center Research Fellow.



FACULTY FOCUS - JOEL KUIPERS



Joel Kuipers is Professor of Anthropology and International Affairs, and a Sigur Center Center affiliated faculty member. "I first became interested in anthropology as a child," recall Kuipers. "I would hear about stories about other cultures and how people in other societies spoke languages that were very different from our own. I found the differences in languages even more remarkable than the differences in appearance, housing, dress, etc. How was it possible that languages could be so different from one another? Did that mean that people who spoke different languages thought differently? If languages were so different, how would we translate between one language and another?" After time spent as an exchange student to Finland in high school, he eventually learned Finnish well enough to earn passing grades in all his classes, and from that point he "was hooked."

Kuipers majored in English and Sociology in college, pursuing his interest in translation, language and culture, writing several papers on related topics. During college he became increasingly interested in anthropology, specifically linguistic anthropology - the comparative study of how humans use language to communicate - and so applied to graduate study in this field. "When I arrived at Yale in 1976, it had one of the strongest PhD programs in this area of study. I still did not know where I wanted to do my dissertation research, but after spending a year in Finland I was ready for warmer climates and Yale had a very strong program in Southeast Asian Studies at the time. I found that there was also a strong cohort of graduate students working on Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia."

"I began looking for linguistically-oriented dissertation research topics in Indonesia and was amazed at what a rich and varied environment it was for the study of language, with elaborate systems of verbal politeness, a rich variety of writing systems, spectacular forms of verbal art and performance, and fantastic diversity. I eventually settled on studying a form of ritual speech

that existed on the eastern Indonesian island of Sumba. On that rather remote island, in addition to their ordinary forms of speech, the Sumbanese have an additional poetic style of couplet speech used to address their ancestral spirits, and used in prayers, songs and myths." Kuipers received grants to investigate this form of speech and carried out two years of ethnographic and linguistic research on the western highlands while learning to become a practitioner of this ritual speech himself. Based on this dissertation research, and several subsequent visits, he wrote a book in 1990 entitled ***Power in Performance*** that describes the role of ritual speech in the construction and enactment of their system of political and religious authority.

Kuipers reflects that "by 1995, I could see signs that this indigenous system of ritual and speaking was undergoing radical change. Whole villages were abandoning this traditional practice and converting to Christianity, and adopting the Indonesian national language as the language of political and religious authority rather than ritual speech." Kuipers chronicles this remarkable transformation in his second book, ***Language, Identity and Marginality in Indonesia***, published in 1998.



Professor Kuipers interviewing a ritual spokesman in Sumba, Indonesia, 1979

With the help of the Sigur Center, Kuipers continued to pursue his interest in the relationship between language and religious and political authority, embarking on a preliminary investigation of the role of the Arabic language in the resurgence of Islamic piety in Muslim Java in Indonesia. "Although the vast majority - 87% - of Indonesians are Muslims, less than 1% can actually speak Arabic well. They use it with great reverence in daily ritual prayers, in greetings and occasionally in everyday conversation, but it is seldom used in a way that is productive of new phrases or even meaningful in a

FACULTY FOCUS - JOEL KUIPERS

broader range of contexts. Yet its usage is growing in personal names, in TV and radio performances, in day care centers, and in schools."

This last fall Professor Kuipers was awarded a three year senior research grant by the **National Sciences Foundation (NSF)** to support a comparative study of Arabic as a sort of ritual language in three areas of Java: the central court region; the northern, highly Islamized region; and the more eclectic and diverse eastern region of the island. He has been looking at the role of Arabic in the development of piety in young children, how it gets used in mosques, talk shows, schools, public forums, and in everyday interaction.

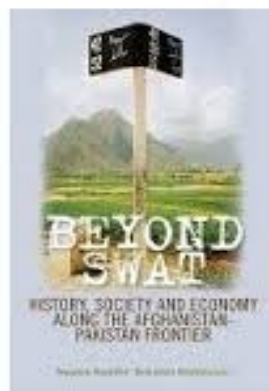
"Although my funding for field research seems secure now for the next three years, I am grateful to the Sigur Center for its unflagging support of my work. The seed money from the Sigur Center proved crucial in procuring outside research money. Also, the Sigur Center's invitation to share my research findings in a public seminar in April of 2013 was helpful for all the useful feedback I received from students and faculty."



Professor Kuipers observing a Muslim day care center in Central Java teaching children Qur'anic Arabic, 2011

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

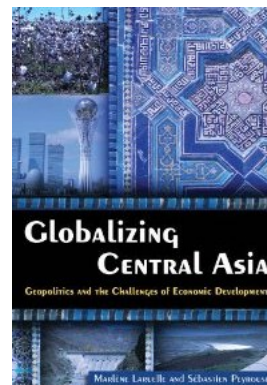
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Sebastien Peyrouse and Marlene Laruelle, *Globalizing Central Asia: Geopolitics and the Challenges of Economic Development*. M.E. Sharpe, 2013.

FALL 2013 VISITING SCHOLARS

In Fall of 2013, the Sigur Center hosted visiting scholars from seven countries. Visiting scholars continue to be a valuable part of the Sigur Center as they conduct research on a wide variety of issues, present their findings at Visiting Scholar Roundtables and participate in activities such as Sigur Center language tea times. The Sigur Center is proud of the quality and variety of its visiting scholars as they help to distinguish the Center in numerous ways. **Here is a list of visiting scholars from August 27, 2013 to December 31, 2013:**



Yi-Yi CHEN, Taiwan (R.O.C.)
Email: eeeee@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Senior Auditor, National Audit Office of Taiwan, R.O.C.
Research topic: **"Theories and Practices of Government Performance Audit that the U.S. has Implemented."**



Stanislav MYSICKA, Czech Republic
Email: mysicka@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Lecturer, University of Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic
Research topic: **"China's Soft Power in Contemporary International Relations."**



Naofumi ISHIKAWA, Japan
Email: ishikawan@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Editor, The Asahi Shimbun, Japan
Research topic: **"Does Decreasing Population Slow Economic Growth? Discussions Over Japan's Situation and Policy Implications."**



Satoshi NAKANO, Japan
Email: stnakano@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Professor, Hitotsubashi University, Japan
Research topic: **"Bridging and Integrating Asia-Pacific War History and Genocide Studies: General Comparative Studies of Justice, Reconciliation, and Memory."**



Da-Jung LI, Taiwan, (R.O.C.)
Email: djli@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Associate Professor, Tamkang University, R.O.C.
Research topic: **"Building Cross-strait Military CBMs - A Goal between Far and Near."**



Talat SHABBIR, Pakistan
Email: talatsbhatti@gwu.edu
Affiliation: PhD Candidate, Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan
Research topic: **"Pakistan-China Relations in the Post Cold War Period: Regional and Global Implications."**



Jeonghoon LEE, Republic of Korea
Email: ljhoon49@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Lieutenant Colonel; ROK Army
Research topic: **"How has North Korea's Third Nuclear Test Changed Regional Security?"**



Michael YAHUDA, United Kingdom
Email: yahuda@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Professor Emeritus, London School of Economics
Research topic: **"Sino-Japanese Relations: Bridging the Gap."**



Satoru MORI, Japan
Email: smori@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Professor, Hosei University, Japan
Research topic: **"U.S. Regional Strategy in Asia Since 1971."**



Weizhen ZHANG, China (P.R.C.)
Email: weizhenzhang@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Associate Professor, Jinan University, China
Research topic: **"American Armed Forces in China (1945-1949)."**

GIFTS AND GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

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If you wish to make a donation to the Sigur Center for Asian Studies, please contact Deepa Ollapally at deepao@gwu.edu OR follow our donation link below:

https://www.gwu.edu/online_giving/

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Give us a call or send us an email for more information about our various programs and opportunities. Also, we are always delighted to hear from our alumni and we would love to learn about the interesting things you have been up to since leaving the Sigur Center.

Please don't be a stranger!

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