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But this success was tempered by the fact that we “lost” a valuable member of the Sigur Center, Ikuko Turner, who has taken up a position at the GW Language Center. Many students, faculty, visiting fellows, and others have been helped by Ikuko over the past decade, so her presence will be sorely missed.

Luckily, we are pleased to announce that we have hired Chilly (Jill) Lee to replace her in managing the office, taking care of financial issues, and helping to advise students. Feel free to stop by and say hello to her.

We will have a full repertoire of events this coming semester, and look forward to seeing many of you at them.

Shawn McHale, Director & Deepa Ollapally, Associate Director

In This Edition:

**Message from the Directors**

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**Major Events**

In the fall of 2008, the Sigur Center sponsored 29 events drawing over 1500 attendees. Here are some highlights:

**Discussion with a Maoist Official**

In October, the Sigur Center hosted a unique lecture, *Conversation with a Maoist Revolutionary*, given by Nepal’s new Finance Minister, Baburam Bhattarai. Dr. Bhattarai spoke to a crowd of over 120 about transforming Nepal’s economy and society.

**Conference on US-China Economic Relations**

The Sigur Center, along with the Elliott School’s Institute for International Economic Policy, sponsored a conference on *U.S.-China Economic Relations: Perspectives on Today and the Future*. The first panel looked at the U.S. and China in the world economy, the second examined trade and investment issues, and the panelists in the third session discussed the future of U.S.-China relations.

**Roundtable on Taiwan’s Economy**

The Sigur Center held a roundtable on *Taiwan as an International Economic Actor*: Drivers, Partners, and Prospects, which featured commentary from Claude Barfield of the American Enterprise Institute, Peter Chow of City University of New York, and Rupert Hammond-Chambers of the US-Taiwan Business Council. Over 60 people attended the session.

**Conference on Globalization and Migration**

The Sigur Center, with support from the Henry Luce Foundation, presented a conference on *Globalization and Migration in Asia: A View from Three Angles*. It included contributions from Aneesh of the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Weiping Wu of Virginia Commonwealth University, and GW’s Elizabeth Chacko.
Lecture Series

Throughout Fall 2008, the Sigur Center continued its lecture series on Transnational and Subnational Asia, and held one Visiting Scholar Roundtable. The Center also hosted a series of book launches for faculty.

**Transnational and Subnational Asia**

“Evaluating China’s Persuasive Power: Cases from Southeast Asia,” Evelyn Goh, University of London

“Crazy for Japan: Art and Political Agendas at the International Expositions in the Gilded Age,” Hannah Sigur, University of California-Davis

“Dragon Lady: Reconsidering the Ambiguous Legacy of Madame Chiang Kai-Shek in U.S.-China Relations,” Laura Tyson-Li, freelance author

“Donors and Development: Understanding the Aid Crisis in Pakistan,” Samia Altaf, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

**Book Launches**

“International Relations of Asia,” David Shambaugh, The George Washington University and Michael Yahuda, London School of Economics


ESIA’s Wine & Cheese Faculty Book Reception featured 3 Asian Studies Faculty:

William Cummings, Policy-Making for Education Reform in Developing Countries: Policy Options and Strategies

Bruce Dickson, Wealth into Power: The Communist Party’s Embrace of China’s Private Sector

Deepti Ollapally, The Politics of Extremism in South Asia

**Visiting Scholar Roundtable**

“Where Women Rule: South Asia,” Hasna Moudud, Bangladesh

**New E-Publication**

We are pleased to introduce a new e-publication from the Sigur Center titled ASIA REPORT, created in an effort to record and distribute summaries of selected talks held at the Center to a wider audience. The first ASIA REPORT covers “Taiwan as an International Economic Actor: Drivers and Prospects.”

President Knapp & Dean Brown Travel to Asia

GW President Steven Knapp and Dean Michael Brown (ESIA) traveled to China, Thailand, and Singapore this fall to reach out to alumni and meet university leaders in the region. Dean Brown also stopped at Fudan University in Shanghai, one of the Elliott School’s exchange partners in China. Dean Brown gave a lecture at Fudan on “Foreign Policy Priorities for the Next U.S. President.”

Dean Brown met President Knapp in Singapore. Together, they visited both Nan- yang Technological University and the Elliott School’s exchange partner, the National University of Singapore. They also hosted a GW Community Event, attended by more than 80 alumni.

In support of this trip, five Sigur Center faculty members -- Shawn McHale, Harry Harding, Alasdair Bowie, Mike Mochizuki, and Henry R. Nau -- shared their expertise on the region with President Knapp in a pre-trip briefing.

This was President Knapp’s second trip to Asia, which has the highest concentration of GW alumni outside North America. In 2007, he visited Seoul, Beijing, and Hong Kong.
India Initiative

The Sigur Center’s India Initiative continued to sponsor a variety of unique and timely events on Indian politics and culture.

The India Initiative kicked off the fall semester with a concert by renowned sarod musician Amjad Ali Khan. Co-sponsored by the Asia Society and the Indian Embassy, the India Initiative held a private reception with the artist prior to the event for members. The concert was covered in the Washington Post. Over 200 people attended the event.

As a congressional vote on the historic U.S.-India nuclear accord reached a crucial phase in September, the India Initiative sponsored a roundtable, entitled “New Energy for the U.S.-India Nuclear Deal: Policy & Business Implications.” It featured the Elliott School’s Amb. Karl F. Inderfurth, who laid out the political gains for bilateral relations, Michael Krepon from the Henry L. Stimson Center, who pointed out nonproliferation challenges, and Ted Jones from the U.S.-India Business Council, who spoke about the economic and commercial incentives. The discussion, which drew a large audience, was moderated by Sigur Center Associate Director Deepa Ollapally.

The India Initiative also co-sponsored an event organized by Bridging Nations discussing “Terror in Mumbai: Where Do We Go From Here?” The event featured Tata Sons representative David Good, the Heritage Foundation’s Lisa Curtis, and United States Institute of Peace’s Qamar-ul Uhda. Curtis argued for the U.S. to hold Pakistan more accountable, and Uhda suggested that we need to differentiate between extremist groups.

Memory & Reconciliation

The Sigur Center held a number of events this year related to impact of history and memory on the present. These events featured:

“Embedding Memory in Culture: Japan’s Hiroshima and Korea’s Kwangju,” with Mikyoung Kim, Assistant Professor, Hiroshima Peace Institute, Hiroshima City University. Professor Kim spoke about the process of incorporating traumatic events such as the Hiroshima bombing into cultural history.

“American POWs of the Japanese: WWII Experiences,” featured Howard Brooks, a survivor of the Thai-Burma Railway and Lester Tenney, a survivor of the Bataan Death March. They discussed their experiences as prisoners of war of Japan, and how they continue to live with those experiences today. Kelly Crager, of Texas Tech University and Shawn McHale, Director of the Sigur Center, provided commentary.

The Sigur Center and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation co-sponsored “Historical Dialogue and Reconciliation in East Asia,” which featured a panel discussion on the importance of history to reconciliation, with speakers from China, Japan, Korea, and the United States. They discussed the background of current disputes and ongoing efforts at dialogue and transnational historical cooperation. This event was included in the October-November issue of Asian Views, and was attended by over 100 people.

The Center also hosted “Healing the Wounds of War: Justice for Vietnam’s Agent Orange Victims.” The speakers were Dang Hong Nut, who survived exposure to Agent Orange while a member of the resistance in Southern Vietnam, and Tran Thi Hoan, a second generation survivor. They discussed their experiences with a select audience of students and faculty.
Professor Profile

Shoko Hamano, Professor of Japanese and International Affairs, is the Director of GW’s Language Center as well as an honored teacher of Japanese at GW.

Professor Hamano’s current research interests lie in creating a Japanese grammar text that would make linguistic knowledge available to students of Japanese. She is writing a book with Takae Tsujio, also in GW’s East Asian Languages and Literatures Department, on Japanese grammar.

One of her most impressive accomplishments has been the creation of a one-of-a-kind website called “Visualizing Japanese Grammar” (www.gwu.edu/~eall/vig/vghomepage/vjghome.htm) with Wakana Kikuchi, which provides a unique visual animation of key grammatical points in Japanese. In the past 15 months, the site has been accessed from 3114 cities and from 117 countries/territories. Professor Hamano hopes to expand the site into languages other than English.

The Language Center, which Hamano directs, currently serves about 90 language instructors and their students with a variety of services including digitization of media and tutoring for students.

Regarding language study in general, Hamano believes “no single individual or nation exclusively owns a language. People own a language. Japanese is not a language of Japan. It just happens to be spoken by the majority of people living in Japan. Just as English forms an inseparable part of me by now, so by studying the Japanese language, students come to own it.”

It is this dedication to helping students become a part of a language that helped earn Hamano the 2004 Trachtenberg Teaching Award, as well as the 2008 Language Center Teaching Award.

Student Spotlight

Ajay Verghese is a fourth-year Ph.D. candidate in Political Science. He is currently writing his dissertation prospectus, and will spend the next year conducting field research in India.

His dissertation will examine the long-term political impact of British colonialism in India. He argues that colonial legacies can explain why some Indian states are better governed today than others, especially when compared between states that were directly governed by the British versus those indirectly governed. He argues that British policies rigidified the caste system, which reduced trust between castes, destabilized institutions, and resulted in poor governance.

Although Verghese was born in India, he moved to the U.S. while very young, and came to GW without any real interest in South Asia. Yet after taking classes with GW Professor Emmanuel Teitelbaum, Verghese found himself interested in Indian politics.

About his interest, he says “I believe that India is an extremely under-studied country relative to the rest of Asia; this is especially true within political science. I was therefore excited to hear about the Sigur Center’s recent India Initiative program. I have taken advantage of its great lectures, events and faculty, and I urge all other students with an interest in South Asia to do so.”

In 2007, Verghese presented some of his preliminary work at conferences at Georgetown University, and at the annual American Political Science Association meeting.

During the summer of 2008, he spent 10 weeks in India learning Hindi in the US Department of State’s Critical Language Scholarship program, which is an extremely competitive award.
Featured Alumnus

Chris Harris (MA, East Asian Studies, 1997), is currently Vice President for GE (China) Company’s Capital Markets (Greater China). Harris concentrated on Chinese politics and international banking finance at the Elliott School and is now manager in charge of all equity and debt needs in GE’s industrial business line in China. Harris is also responsible for advising GE businesses on China-based financing needs.

Prior to that he worked at the U.S. Bank National Association. He began his career at the Export-Import Bank of the United States, where he served as a Credit Officer for China and Southeast Asia and worked in the business development division.

Harris credits the Elliott School’s advantageous location in DC and its excellent reputation with government organizations for allowing him to obtain his first position at the Export-Import Bank of the United States, which launched his career in international finance. “It goes to show you,” he says, “that a seemingly innocent, low-level position can indeed lead to much greater career opportunities.”

During his studies at the Elliott School, Harris also took a number of classes at the business school, focusing on economics and international finance. The flexibility of the graduate program, which allowed him to take classes both at the Elliott School and in the business school provided him with a solid foundation with which to return to Asia to pursue his career. “The combination of studies is always a point that my employers touch on as a major strength and differentiator,” Harris states.

Harris received his undergraduate degree in Chinese language and East Asian Studies, and studied abroad at Shaanxi Teacher’s University in Xian, China, where he earned an Intensive Chinese Language Certificate.

Sigur Affiliated Programs

Program for International Studies in Asia (PISA)

Linda J. Yarr, Director of PISA, recently returned from Vietnam where she and Deputy Director Suzanne Kelly-Lyll collaborated with the Institute of World Economics and Politics of the Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences to present an 8-day Leadership Institute on Creative Responses to Global Climate Change.

Thanks to financial support from the Ford Foundation and the Chino Cienega Foundation, as well as in-kind contributions from ESRI Vietnam and Spot-Image, Inc., forty participants from diverse ministries, universities and the private sector took part in an interdisciplinary study of the anticipated impact of global climate change in Vietnam.

Professors Ryan Engstrom and Elizabeth Chacko of the Department of Geography were among the eight international and Vietnamese lecturers who addressed the group. Participants also visited Xuan Thuy National Park for a close-up look at a coastal habitat.

Legislative Exchange Program (LEP)


LEP reports that the discussions, as in the past, were frank and enlightening. Topics covered once again included controversial issues such as the disputed islands, history issues, and education of military officers. Special attention was given to the financial crisis, Japanese politics, and the North Korean dilemma.

“2009 in particular promises to be a very interesting year in China: money is tight, transactions are under more scrutiny, and finding the right people with the right skills is sometimes difficult and frustrating. Nonetheless, deals will get done, money will be made, and I wouldn’t want to be anywhere else in the world.”

-Chris Harris
Professor David Shambaugh was appointed in September as Honorary Research Professor at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences.

Gengyun Wei, a Visiting Teaching Fellow at GW’s Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, was honored in 2008 with the Selection of Excellent Works in International Chinese Language Teaching by Hanban, the Office of Chinese Language Council International. She was also invited to participate in the Demonstration Class Exhibition at the Ninth International Forum on Chinese Teaching, in Beijing.

The Sigur Center successfully reapplied for GW’s Center of Excellence/Signature Program status.

Recent Books

*International Relations of Asia*, (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), Edited by David Shambaugh, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs and Michael Yahuda, Visiting Professor.

*The Japan-U.S. Alliance and China-Taiwan Relations: Implications for Okinawa*, (Sigur Center for Asian Studies, 2008), edited by Mike Mochizuki, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs, Akikazu Hashimoto, J.F. Oberlin University, and Kurayoshi Takara, University of the Ryukyus.

*The United States in Asia*, (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), Robert Sutter, Adjunct Professor of International Affairs.

Honors

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Support the Sigur Center! Visit our home page to make your gift to support student scholarships and core activities.

We’re on the web! Visit us at: www.gwu.edu/~sigur

Faculty & Student Accomplishments

Edited by:
Deepa Ollapally & Erin Robinson


Howard Brooks, former POW of the Japanese and one of the few Americans who labored on the Thai-Burma Railway, speaks at the Sigur Center, September 9, 2008.

New Membership Drives

The Sigur Center is inviting membership in two groups: Friends of the India Initiative and Friends of Korea Studies, providing a new avenue for outreach with special briefings and networking events. Read about these groups at www.gwu.edu/~sigur/indainitiative.html and www.gwu.edu/~sigur/friendsofkorea.html.

To make a contribution to either program, please go to https://www.gwu.edu/online_giving/ and be sure to select “Other” for the gift designation and type “India Initiative - Sigur Center for Asian Studies” or “Friends of Korea- Sigur Center for Asian Studies.”