



# Asian Studies Notes

NEWSLETTER OF THE ASIAN STUDIES PROGRAM OF THE UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

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Website: [wings.buffalo.edu/asian/asn](http://wings.buffalo.edu/asian/asn)

亞細亞學研究

## Avoiding Comparisons

by Arabella Lyon, English Department

How do established scholars develop new areas of expertise or more complex approaches to established areas? What institutions exist to help an academic take a different turn? Where or how does one find novel perspectives? There is an assumption that the dissertation, a thoughtful article, or a scholarly book demonstrates that an intellectual can develop ideas, but if a professor is branching into new areas, the path to follow is not so clear. Trained in Anglo-American rhetorical theory, I have been working to develop my understanding of China for seven years now. Alternatively building on my discipline and studying new materials, working on my own and attending seminars, I have come to appreciate comparative approaches. Just as theories are finely ground spectacles revealing only part of any scene, so too, cultures, disciplines, and methods obscure as much as they expose. Take them off and put on another.

In the summer of 2003, I attended a six week National Endowment for the Humanities seminar, "Law, State, and Individual in Ancient Greece, Rome, and China." Housed

at the University of California-Berkeley and directed by David Johnson, a Chinese historian, and David Cohen, a Greek classicist and legal scholar, this seminar compared the political ideas and institutions of Greek and Roman antiquities with those of China. The operative assumption was that these historical and political traditions have significant and obvious differences at their core. As the NEH description noted, "there is no word in the traditional Chinese-lexicon for "citizen"-the individual considered as a bearer of political rights and obligations, and as a member of the political community. It is more natural to use the collective noun *min*--the people, the mass of subjects." The directors' perspective provided the most interesting tension. Indeed, among the great questions of the humanities are how diverse is human culture, how alike and different are the East and West.

Fifteen faculty from a variety of disciplines met twice a week around a syllabus divided into three parts:

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## New Major In Asian Studies Is Approved!

This summer, the State University of New York granted final approval of UB's new, interdisciplinary B.A. in Asian Studies. This is the culmination of two years of curriculum design by Asian studies faculty at UB. Students interested in consultation or registration for the major should make an appointment with the Director of the Asian Studies program, Thomas W. Burkman.

The Major begins with 10 hours of required core courses and four semesters of an Asian language. The language will define the student's focus area for the Major. Eighteen hours of upper-level electives represent both the social sciences and the humanities. Nine hours must relate to the focus culture or region. A senior seminar concludes the Major. A total of 37-39 hours is required beyond the General Education language requirement. Courses for the Ma-

major will be drawn from many departments as well as from the Asian Studies program itself. UB is home to some twenty faculty whose teaching and research are devoted primarily to Asia. Students may opt for these Asian languages: Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Hindi, Thai, and Vietnamese. Study abroad options give students the chance to encounter Asian cultures firsthand and advance their language capability. On the UB campus, a wide variety of special lectures, stage performances, and Asia-focus student clubs provide additional opportunities to learn about Asia.

The Asian Studies program continues to offer the Minor in East Asian Studies. Additionally, undergraduates can pursue language minors in Japanese, Chinese, and Korean, and can focus on Asia in the International Studies Major.



## UB to Host Statewide Asian Studies Conference

The Asian Studies Program will host the annual meeting of the New York Conference on Asian Studies (NYCAS) October 17-18, 2003. Some 200 faculty and graduate students from colleges and universities across New York State and the surrounding region will listen to research papers and plenary speakers on a variety of topics related to East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Asia-America.

Sessions will be held at University Inn and Conference Center in Amherst. NYCAS is a regional body of the Association for Asian Studies. The conference theme, "Walls in Asia," was selected as a prelude to a major art exhibition, "The Wall," which will be staged in Buffalo in 2005.

Walls have become symbols of Asia in the minds of Asians and non-Asians alike. They denote separation, but also serve to protect and foster identity. Presenters at the conference will address the theme both concretely and abstractly, including treatments of racial, gender, cultural, economic, and disciplinary barriers.

UB faculty and graduate students are authors of some 100 papers which will be presented in 34 panels and roundtables.

A highlight will be a lecture/performance of Beijing opera, titled "The Monkey Knows No Walls." A troupe from Beijing will bring this event to the Center for the

Arts on Friday night, October 17, portraying Monkey King legends. Following the performance, conferees will attend the opening reception for an exhibition in the University Gallery, titled "Chinese Maximalism" and curated by UB Assistant Professor of Art History, Minglu Gao.

James L. Watson, an anthropologist from Harvard University and president of the Association for Asian Studies, will deliver an address on "The Other Side of the River: Hong Kong's Border Saga, 1899-2003", on Friday afternoon. Ayesha Jalal, Professor of History at Tufts University and a leading scholar on India-Pakistan partition, will speak at the luncheon on Saturday, on *Holes in the Wall: India's Partition Revisited*.

For more information and on-line registration, visit the conference website:

<http://wings.buffalo.edu/asian/NYCAS03>. UB students may attend without paying the registration fee, but need to pay for meals and the Beijing Opera lecture/performance. Students should come to the Asian Studies office (714 Clemens) to register, rather than registering on-line.

The NYCAS conference is an unusual chance to hear and discuss front-line research and scholarship, and to network with Asian specialists from a variety of institutions. It all will happen here at UB.

**COMPARISONS** (cont. from p. 1)  
foundational narratives, foundational narratives of political community; formal political thought; and law, rhetoric, and "the public man." In six weeks we whizzed between *The Book of Documents* and Tacitus' *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, stumbled from the *Iliad* to the *Tang Code*, and pushed Plato against Han Fei Zi. Despite copious reading, one of the most frequent protests was "if we had read XXX instead, we would not find this difference." The range of texts and times in the seminar was immense, but at times, the readings seemed to be leading in a particular, inescapable direc-

tion (as do the texts in any carefully written syllabus). The ancient voices demonstrated a difference between the West and East, one where the West was logical, evidential, individualist while China was affective, contextual, communal. We know these poles.

At the end of the seminar, most of the participants, myself included, presented research in our established fields; only a few did comparative work. We were uncomfortable with the broad comparisons posited by the readings. Regardless of the quality of scholarship, six weeks are not adequate to address cultural differences,

even in cultures long gone. We did not so much deny cultural differences as struggle to find an adequate and ethical approach to discussing them, one that was sufficiently narrow, contingent, and self-consciously imperfect. Most of the participants would agree that analyzing the cultures of ancient Greece, Rome, and China is valuable in revealing diverse conceptions of law, state, subjectivity, language, and knowledge and that the ancient differences reveal some of the limitations and strengths of our contemporary cultures. The ethics and principles of making these comparisons, however, are still unwritten.

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## Asia at Noon Has Full Program for Fall Semester

Asia at Noon is a series of brown-bag lunch gatherings at the University at Buffalo, sponsored by the Asian Studies program. They are usually scheduled for a Friday at 12 noon, and dismiss promptly at 1:00. The meeting place is Park 280.

The presenter usually takes about 20 minutes, and the rest of the time is devoted to question and answer and discussion. The audience is comprised of undergraduates, graduate students, interested faculty, and folk from the Buffalo community. Those who wish may bring their lunch and drinks.

In September, two fine programs are scheduled:

- September 12. **Howard R. Wolf**, Professor of English. *World Travel as a Form of Education: Cultural Autobiography as Knowledge*.

Professor Wolf's travels and lecturing throughout his career have taken him to many locales, including Asia. He taught at the University of Hong Kong 1991-94 and lectured widely in Asia during that time. His short story about Hong Kong, "At the End of the Day," was recently included in *Imported Breads: Literature of Cultural Exchange*. He will draw on his experience as an overseas educator-writer to make a case for a broad interpretation of academic

"professionalism" - one that includes personal (micro) and global (macro) knowledge.

- September 26. **Jeffrey Albert**, designer at Foit-Albert Associates, Architecture, Engineering, and Surveying. *Architecture and the Void: A Bridge between East and West*.

Mr. Albert studied architecture at the Pratt Institute, and developed a multicultural vision for design through studying traditional cultures and working in Western Europe, China, Southeast Asia, and India. He will discuss the contemplative origins of eastern and western architecture and philosophy. He will address the role of spiritual experience in the design of places that acknowledge both the presence and absence of humanity.

Other Asia at Noon events in the Fall Semester are:

- October 24. **Jonathan Stalling**, Ph.D. student in English. *Translating for the Sound of It: Experimental Translations of Song Dynasty Lyric Verse*.

- November 7. **Tomie Arai**, Asian American public artist (invited).

- November 21. **Mark Ashwill**, Department of Linguistics. *Vietnam and America: From Swords to Plowshares*.

## Asian Studies Picnic September 14

The annual Asian Studies Picnic will take place Sunday, September 14, from 1:00 to 4:00 at the home of Prof. Burkman in Grand Island. See newsletter insert for a map and directions. Those needing transportation should contact Asian Studies.

Dress informally. Rain or shine. Bring a dish to pass. Meat and drinks will be provided. Don't miss this opportunity to meet faculty and students connected to Asia.

Come and join us!



## Workshop on China for Teachers

"Asia in the Classroom," a day-long workshop for elementary and secondary teachers, will be held Friday, October 17, from 8:00 a.m., at University Inn and Conference Center. The event is for all teachers, and is designed to meet the particular needs of 9th and 10th grade Global History and Geography teachers and elementary teachers of the "Communities around the World" curriculum.

The workshop is co-sponsored by Asian Studies and the International Education Center of Buffalo/Niagara WorldConnect. It is held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the New York Conference on Asian Studies. It is funded by the Association for Asian Studies, the East Asian Program of Cornell University, and the John R. Oishei Foundation.

Sessions for the teachers include:

- Beijing Opera: live, interactive presentation
- State and Society in China since 1976, with Prof. Anna Brettell of Cornell University
- Chinese Myths and Legends, with Prof. Steven Sangren of Cornell University

- Roundtables addressing teaching methods for Asian material for elementary and secondary teachers.

The \$25 registration fee includes lunch and packets of teaching materials. Teachers attending the workshop are permitted to attend any sessions of the NYCAS meeting without additional charge. Registration forms can be obtained from the Asian Studies program or Buffalo/Niagara World Connect (834-2150).

Thomas Burkman, Research Professor and Director of Asian Studies, was elected vice-chair of the Council on Conferences of the Association for Asian Studies at the Council's March meeting. The Council oversees matters relating to the eight regional conferences of the Association. He will automatically become chair of the Council in March 2004.

**Burkman Elected to National AAS Post**

## \*OPPORTUNITIES, GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS\*

### Publication Opportunity for Undergraduates

*Wittenberg University East Asian Studies Journal* is America's oldest undergraduate journal of scholarship on East Asia. Undergraduate students are encouraged to submit their papers, essays, poems, and artwork to the *Journal*. All submissions should be sent to Professor James L. Huffman, Wittenberg University, Department of History, P.O.Box 720, Springfield, Ohio 45501. For **more information**, please check out the following: <http://www4.wittenberg.edu/academics/east/Journal/journal.htm>

### ART/ DMS 200 Visual Studies Speaker Series

Mondays, 6-8pm, CFA 112. UB Community may drop in for these Asia-related speakers:

- Sep. 22: Maggie Kinser Saiki, who spent 15 years in Japan, where she wrote on vernacular housing, contemporary culture and post-war design. Her latest book, *12 Japanese Masters*, tells us that in postwar Japan, practitioners of a brand new occupation, "design", completely re-imagined the visual-cultural landscape of their nation.
- Oct 6: Minglu Gao, UB Art History Professor (Ph. D., Harvard), is one of the leading authorities on Chinese Art in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. An author of four books, he also has an impressive record of curatorial activity in China prior to 1989.
- Oct 20: Huan Zhang, born in 1965 in China. In 1992 he co-founded an artist's colony known as Beijing East Village and in 1998 he immigrated to New York. He is renowned for his performance art—opening a new approach to dance, theater and life, as well as for his conceptual photos and sculptures.

Website:

[www.art.buffalo.edu/speakerseries](http://www.art.buffalo.edu/speakerseries)

### Radcliffe Institute Fellowships

The Radcliffe Institute awards stipended fellowships each year to scholars, professionals, writers, and artists from around the world. Applications must be postmarked by October 1, 2003. For **more information**, please check out the following website: <http://www.radcliffe.edu/fellowships/index.html>

### Baldy Center: Small Research Grants Program 2003-2004

The Baldy Center invites applications from members of UB faculty for small research grants of under \$1,000 for projects dealing with any aspect of law, legal institutions, or law and social policy. Applicants will be considered three times each year. The submission deadlines are: June 15 and September 15, 2003 and February 15, 2004. Application materials will be available on the Baldy Center website: [www.law.buffalo.edu/baldycenter/research.html](http://www.law.buffalo.edu/baldycenter/research.html). Questions? **Contact** Laura Mangan at 645-2102 or e-mail at [lmangan@buffalo.edu](mailto:lmangan@buffalo.edu).

### Social Science Research Council: International Dissertation Field Research Fellowship

The International Dissertation Field Research Fellowship program provides support for social scientists and humanists conducting dissertation field research in all areas and regions of the world. Up to fifty fellowships will be awarded in the year 2004. Funds are provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The fellowship must be held for a single continuous period within the eighteen months be-

tween July 2004 and December 2005.

**Deadlines:** November 3, 2003—Online registration; November 10, 2003—Complete application.

**More information:**

<http://www.ssrc.org/fellowships/idrf>

### JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship Program

The JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship Program for US researchers provides promising and highly qualified recent Ph.D.s with opportunities to conduct research in Japan. Applications are welcome from all social science and humanities disciplines and need not be explicitly related to the study of Japan. Projects must include work with colleagues and resources in Japan and propose a single, continuous stay in Japan from 3-11 or 12-24 months. **Deadline:** December 1, 2003.

**More information:**

<http://www.ssrc.org/fellowships/japan/postdoc/index.page>.

### Japan Studies Dissertation Workshop

The annual SSRC Japan Studies Dissertation Workshop will take place December 2003 at the Asilomar Conference Center in Monterey, California and involves 10-12 students and 3-4 faculty. Funds for the program are provided by the Japan Foundation. The annual workshop draws participants from all fields in the social sciences and humanities and from institutions throughout the US. It provides the opportunity to give and receive critical feedback on dissertations in progress. **Deadline:** October 1, 2003. For **more information:** [http://www.ssrc.org/fellowships/japan/dissertation\\_workshop/index.page](http://www.ssrc.org/fellowships/japan/dissertation_workshop/index.page)

*Continued on next page*

### Research Grants

Sponsored by Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange (CCKF), the research grants are usually given for no more than two years and should not exceed U.S. \$100,000 for a two-year period. Researchers focusing on the political, social, economic and cultural development of Taiwan over the past few decades are especially encouraged to apply. Priority will be given to collaborative projects with scholars in Taiwan. Applicants in the American region should contact the foundation's regional office in McLean, Virginia. [cckfnao@aol.com](mailto:cckfnao@aol.com) **Deadline:** October 15, 2003. **More information:** <http://www.cckf.org/e-dornation-2.htm>

### Postdoctoral Fellowship

The Korea Institute at Harvard University administers a postdoctoral

fellowship in Korea studies with funding from the Korea Foundation. Well-designed projects at any stage, from initial research to revision for publication, are welcome. Candidates must have their Ph.D. degree prior to the date of their appointment, and may not be more than five years beyond receipt of the doctoral degree. **Contact** [korea@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:korea@fas.harvard.edu). **Deadline:** January 15, 2004. **More information:** <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~korea>

### ACLS/SSRC/NEH International and Area Studies Fellowships

Scholars pursuing research and writing on the societies and cultures of Asia will be eligible. An applicant must hold a Ph.D. (conferred by October 1, 2003) or demonstrate the equivalent in publications and professional experience. The fellowship is up to \$50,000. **Contact information:**

Donna Heiland, Program Officer, [dheiland@acsls.org](mailto:dheiland@acsls.org). **Deadline:** October 1, 2003. **More information:** <http://www.acsls.org/felguide.htm>.

### Bridging Scholarships, Spring 2004

The US-Japan Bridging Foundation was formed in 1998 to provide scholarships through the Association of Teachers of Japanese (ATJ) to assist students to study in Japan. It is accepting applications from American students participating in study-abroad programs in Japan in Spring 2004. Undergraduate students majoring in any field of study are eligible to apply for these scholarships. The **deadline** for application is October 3, 2003. **Further information:** Susan Schmidt, Executive Director, [atj@colorado.edu](mailto:atj@colorado.edu). [www.colorado.edu/ealld/atj/Bridging/scholarships.html](http://www.colorado.edu/ealld/atj/Bridging/scholarships.html)

### Freeman Scholarships for Study Abroad in Asia

Study abroad in Asia can be a capstone experience for undergraduates with interest in Asia. UB maintains a set of exchange relationships with fine universities in Japan, China, Korea, Thailand, India, and other countries. Every year students study in these locations for a summer, a semester, or an academic year. Academic credits transfer to UB, and the biggest added cost compared to study in Buffalo is the transPacific airfare.

The Freeman Foundation offers generous scholarships to cover the cost of travel and other expenses incurred studying abroad. \$7000 is offered for an academic year program. Interested students should contact Sandra Flash at Study Abroad (645-3912; [studyabroad@buffalo.edu](mailto:studyabroad@buffalo.edu)) or go to the Freeman Asia website: [www.iie.org/freeman-asia](http://www.iie.org/freeman-asia). The deadline for spring semester programs is November 1; for summer programs, March 1; for fall and academic year programs, April 1.

In the current academic year, these UB students are recipients of Freeman Asia awards:

#### Fall 2003 (\$5000)

- Merle Bump (major: Media Study), Capital Normal University, Beijing
- Mary Emma Bogumil (major: International Studies), Korea University, Seoul

#### Academic Year 2003-2004 (\$7000)

- Kevin Wesolowski (major: Linguistics), International Christian University, Tokyo
- Kenneth Giese (major: Fine Arts/Media Study), Kanazawa University

In the coming months, UB will host three outstanding troupes representing classical performing arts of East Asia. All will perform in the Center for the Arts.

• **Beijing Opera**, October 17, 8:00 p.m., CFA Mainstage. Lecture/performance: *The Monkey Knows No Walls*. Ghaffar Pourazar of the National Academy for the Chinese Traditional Opera, Beijing, and actors. Student tickets, \$5.

• **Korean Masked Dance**. November 21, 8:00 p.m., CFA Mainstage. *Dongnae Yaryu: Korean Masked Dance*.

• **Japanese Noh Drama**. February 1, 2004, 8:00 p.m., CFA Drama Theater. *Aoi no Ue*. The three actors of the Kanze school will also conduct a residency in the Department of Theatre and Dance, January 26-February 1.

Tickets for the Beijing Opera and Korean Masked Dance performances are now on sale in the Center for the Arts Box Office. Watch upcoming ASN issues for more information.

## Asian Studies Calendar

### September

- Sept. 8, Mon. 6:30-8:30 pm. "Women of the Muslim Faith: A Community Dialogue." Presented by Buffalo/Niagara WorldConnect and the American Muslim Council. Free and open to the public. Muslim Community Center, 745 Heim Road, East Amherst. Doors open at 6:00 pm for refreshments and informal socializing.
- Sept. 12, Fri. 11:45 am. *Asia at Noon*. **Howard R. Wolf**, Professor of English. "World Travel as a Form of Education: Cultural Autobiography as Knowledge." Park 280.
- Sept. 26, Fri. 11:45 am. *Asia at Noon*. **Jeffrey Albert**, designer at Foit-Albert Associates, Architecture, Engineering, and Surveying. "Architecture and the Void: A Bridge between East and West." Park 280.

### October

- Oct. 17, Fri. 3:00 pm. **Prof. Jalal**, "Partisans of Allah: Meaning of Jihad in South Asia." Sponsored by CISP/

History department. Student Union Theater.

- Oct. 17, Fri. 8:00 p.m. **Beijing Opera: *The Monkey Knows No Walls***. CFA Mainstage
- Oct. 17-18, Fri.-Sat. The New York Conference on Asian Studies (NYCAS). University Inn and Conference Center in Amherst. Please check the website: [wings.buffalo.edu/asian/NYCAS03](http://wings.buffalo.edu/asian/NYCAS03) for details.
- Oct. 24, Fri. 11:45 am. *Asia at Noon*. **Jonathan Stallings**, Ph.D. student in English. "Translating for the Sound of It: Experimental Translations of Song Dynasty Lyric Verse." Park 280.

### November

- Nov. 7, Fri. 11:45 am. *Asia at Noon*. **Tomie Arai**, Asian American public artist (invited) Park 280.
- Nov. 21, Fri. 11:45 am. *Asia at Noon*. **Mark Ashwill**, Department of Linguistics. "Vietnam and America: From Swords to Plowshares." Park 280.
- Nov. 21, 8:00 p.m. **Korean Masked Dance**. *Dongnae Yaryu: Korean Masked Dance*. CFA Mainstage.



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CAMPUS

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