

Friday Forum Fall Semester 2016

September 9, 2016: “Kruba Srivichai, the Saint of Northern Thailand: Exploring the Historical Context of his 1935-36 Detention” -Katherine Bowie, Professor of Anthropology, UW-Madison

Kruba Srivichai is the most famous monk in northern Thailand, yet he was also the most controversial. He was sent to Bangkok for investigation in 1920 and 1935-35. Over 400 northern monks and novices were forced to disrobe before Srivichai was allowed to return to the north. After being disrobed, some monks reordained under central Thai authority, some wore white robes the rest of their lives in protest, and some returned to lay life. Elsewhere I have explored the circumstances surrounding his first detention. In this talk I will consider the historical circumstances surrounding the 1935-36 detention.

September 16, 2016: "Weak State and the Limits of Democratization in Cambodia, 1993-2016"-Kheang Un, Associate Professor of Political Science, Northern Illinois University

This talk analyzes the nexus of democracy and state building in Cambodia following the 1993 United Nations intervention. It reveals that over two decades later, Cambodia's democracy has landed in the zone of electoral authoritarianism while its state capacity remains weak. These conditions are by-products of the nature of the state at the time of the introduction of democracy. Despite the promulgation of a new liberal democracy in 1993, the structure of the Cambodian state has remained based on a neo-patrimonial system which constitutes of formal political institutions and informal networks of patron-clientelism. This talk traces the formal and informal structures to discern their interactions and impact on state capacity and the quality of democracy.

September 23, 2016: “Southeast Asia’s Early Maritime Exchange Networks and their Impact on Southern China during the Han Dynasty” -Francis Allard, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Archaeological evidence from Southeast Asia points to the operation of trade and exchange networks linking the region to the Indian subcontinent – as well as coastal areas within the South China Sea – by the mid-first millennium BCE. However, it is not until the first century BCE that evidence of sustained trade with southern China emerges, with the ports of Hepu and Panyu playing an important role in this development. Even as burials at these coastal locations have yielded significant amounts of materials originating from Southeast Asia, relatively few such artifacts have been found inland, a spatial pattern which encourages caution when evaluating the impact that Southeast Asia's early maritime exchange networks had on southern China during the Han dynasty (206 BCE - 220 CE).

September 30, 2016: “The Remarkable Story of the Duch Trial” -Thierry Cruvellier, International Journalist and Visiting Lecturer, UW-Madison

Kaing Guek Eav, aka Duch, was the first senior Khmer Rouge to be tried before the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia. Thierry Cruvellier, a UW-Madison Visiting Lecturer and author of *The Master of Confessions – The Making of a Khmer Rouge Torturer*, explains why this trial stands out as the judicial symbol of Pol Pot’s terror and as a unique case in contemporary war crimes justice.

Thierry Cruvellier is an international journalist and author whose specialty is international criminal justice, especially the workings of international justice systems after war crimes and atrocities. He is the only journalist in the world who has attended and reported on all of the important post-Cold War international tribunals. He is the author of three books: *Court of Remorse – Inside the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda*, *The Master of Confession – The Making of a Khmer Rouge Torturer*, and, coming out later this year, *The Richest Poor Man – Stories from Sierra Leone*. Writing in *The New Yorker*, Philip Gourevitch has called him, “a deeply informed and deeply thoughtful observer of the legal, political, moral, and psychological complexity of his subject. He is an elegant, understated writer, with a keen and rigorous intellect, and a wry, quiet wit.”

Mr. Cruvellier, who has a master's degree in journalism from the Sorbonne, is spending the fall semester of 2016 in residence in the UW-Madison's Institute for Regional and International Studies (IRIS). While here, he is teaching an undergraduate course: International Studies 601, “International Criminal Justice: Models and Practice.”

October 7, 2016: “The Early Life of the Vietnamese Buddhist Monk Physician Tuệ Tĩnh and the Medical, Religious, and Physical Environment of 14th Century Đại Việt” -C. Michele Thompson, Professor of History, Southern Connecticut University

The Vietnamese monk physician Tuệ Tĩnh (c. 1330-c.1400) is most famous for having been sent, in 1885, as a living present to the Ming Dynasty from the Vietnamese royal court. This is at least in part because the medical text he wrote while living in China had a profound impact on the history of Vietnamese Traditional Medicine. Tuệ Tĩnh wrote his most well known text, *Nam Dược Thần Hiệu* (Miraculous Drugs of the South), specifically to explain Vietnamese medicine to the Chinese. Tuệ Tĩnh had attracted the attention of the Trần Dynasty (1225-1400) through his work in the medical gardens and clinics attached to most Buddhist monasteries in Vietnam. Through royal land grants and other forms of patronage Buddhist monasteries formed the closest thing to a public health system that Vietnam had and many members of the Vietnamese sangha were healers, pharmacists, and field botanists. Before being sent to China, Tuệ Tĩnh had traveled extensively, within Vietnam, on a common Buddhist circuit of monasteries. While some of his monastic companions spent most of their time studying and writing religious texts, Tuệ Tĩnh spent his time studying plants and composing texts in Nôm on them. He also gathered local knowledge of plants and their properties, in fact some scholars regard Tuệ Tĩnh's work as ethno-botanical in nature.

While the Trần Dynasty has long been acknowledged as the most devoutly Buddhist of all Vietnamese royal dynasties, and the political influence of prominent Buddhists has been discussed by several scholars, the entwinement between the Trần royal family, Buddhist personages and institutions, and health care in Trần ruled Vietnam has received scant attention and to my knowledge no one has yet published on the physical and political environment which shaped this.

October 14, 2016: “Buddhist Brahmins: The Royal Court Brahmins of Thailand” - Nathan McGovern, Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

Even in the present day there is a coterie of Brahmins who perform rituals for the King of Thailand. Although these Brahmins are fully assimilated into Thai culture and have been so for many generations, they claim descent from actual Indian Brahmins who migrated to Siam in the Ayutthaya period or earlier. This talk will explore some of the evidence for the history of Brahmins in Siam, as well as ways of theorizing the role they play in an overwhelmingly Buddhist context.

October 21, 2016: “Creative Criticism, or Writing as an Other,” Lecture and book discussion by Pulitzer Prize winning author Viet Thanh Nguyen

Viet Thanh Nguyen is the Aerol Arnold Chair of English and Associate Professor of English and American Studies and Ethnicity at the University of Southern California, and is the Pulitzer Prize winning author of *The Sympathizer*; *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War*; and *Race and Resistance: Literature and Politics in Asian America*. For more info, see: <http://vietnguyen.info/author-viet-thanh-nguyen>

October 28, 2016: "The New Vietnam Revolutionary Party in Colonial Annam" - Haydon Cherry, Assistant Professor of History, Northwestern University

Between 1925 and 1929, the New Vietnam Revolutionary Party was the most intellectually vibrant and politically vital Vietnamese political grouping in colonial Annam. A clandestine organization, the party successively went by many names: the Phục Việt, Hưng Nam, the Việt Nam Cách Mệnh Đảng, the Việt Nam Cách Mệnh Đồng Chí Hội, and the Tân Việt Cách Mệnh Đảng. The party provided an important meeting place for a wide variety of anti-colonial nationalists, ranging from reformers to radicals and nascent Communists, such as Trần Mộng Bạch, Đào Duy Anh, Tôn Quang Phiệt, and Trần Phú. This paper draws on published and unpublished colonial security reports, party documents, memoirs, newspaper articles, local and provincial histories, and retrospective assessments by former party members. The paper has three main objectives. First, it discusses the organization of the New Vietnam Revolutionary Party, its membership, and goals. Second, the paper argues that members of the Party were involved in a lively and contentious intellectual culture in the old imperial capital of Huế that became increasingly radical: they published tracts, pamphlets, books, and newspaper articles, introducing modern social, political, and economic ideas to readers in Annam. Third, the paper argues that contrary to the received historiography, the New Vietnam Revolutionary Party had a broad rural base in the countryside of colonial Annam. This latter point has significant consequences for our

understanding of the revolutionary high tide of the Great Depression in Tonkin and Northern Annam, particularly the Nghệ Tĩnh Rebellion.

November 4, 2016: “People, Fish, Ocean: Enduring Encounters in Interwar Southeast Asia” -Anthony Medrano, Ph.D. Candidate in Southeast Asian History, UW-Madison

The world’s oceans have long been instrumental in shaping the fates and fortunes of human societies, and yet figure no more than saltwater in the archives of the written past. Indeed, historiographically, seas and basins have been largely conceptualized as infrastructure, linkages between shores. Anchored in a landlubber’s world, this otherwise rich literature has kept in place the assumption that oceans are unlike forests, deltas, and rivers, and thus exist “outside of history” (Bolster 2006: 574).

This talk, however, assumes a different approach. It examines the Asian marine environment not as a surface or linkage, but as an ocean of enduring encounters between people and fish, science and society, and technology and nature. The talk focuses on how these multiple encounters transformed the Philippine seascape in the wake of the nineteenth century. In particular, it looks at the rise of Mindanao’s tuna industry in the interwar years. By casting this iconic frontier within a wider milieu of peoples and environments, the talk shows how the ocean was central to Mindanao’s colonial development and its postwar positioning as one of the world’s leading tuna capitals.

November 11, 2016: “Campaigning for All Indonesians: The Politics of Healthcare in Indonesia” -Dr. Eunsook Jung, Faculty Associate, Department of Political Science, UW-Madison

Many scholars argue that democratization is conducive to the development of social welfare policies and that democracy brings about redistributive reform due to demands from the newly enfranchised poor. In reality, however, democracy does not necessarily bring about comprehensive social welfare reform. If not democracy, what explains social welfare expansion in developing countries? This article examines Indonesia, which began the process of democratization in 1998 following the fall of President Soeharto, and which has since become a stable democracy with a consistently growing economy. More than a decade after Soeharto’s resignation, Indonesia started to implement a comprehensive health care policy. What explains the gap between the enactment and the implementation of this social policy reform? In answering this question, this talk argues that electoral competition alone does not shape social policy reform. Instead, social reform has institutional prerequisites, such as the broad-based organization of its advocates. A broad-based organization goes beyond its narrow interests, builds cross-class alliance and pressures the government. Without this prerequisite, democracy does not necessarily result in comprehensive social reforms.

November 18, 2016: “Decolonizing the Prehistory of Island Southeast Asia and the Pacific” -Dr. John Edward Terrell, Regenstein Curator of Pacific Anthropology, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago

We can now see how assumptions once widely held to be true in previous centuries about human diversity and prehistory in island Southeast Asia and Oceania are not only historically implausible but racist and demeaning. Yet many of these assumptions are still used today to interpret the results of new scholarship in archaeology, historical linguistics, and human molecular genetics. Drawing on decades of research in the southwest Pacific, this talk describes an alternative networks science approach to understanding history and diversity.

December 2, 2016: “Mythology and Modernity in the Musical Theatres of Early Twentieth Century Philippines” -Isidora Miranda, Ph.D. Candidate in Historical Musicology, UW-Madison

In the early years of American colonialism in the Philippines, the theatrical stage became a contested space for the older form of komedya performance and the emerging musical theatre, the zarzuela. Set in the tenuous political landscape of Manila, the komedya-zarzuela debates shed light onto competing ideas on Filipino identity and modernity in theatrical representations. Leading intellectuals and writers of the period saw the fantastical elements of the komedya for its creative possibilities of incorporating local mythologies to produce new works, while others favored the realism of the zarzuela as a vehicle for social commentaries on contemporary issues. More importantly, music became a crucial factor in these debates where stage artists and musicians navigated a transitional space between different genres of popular performance. As the Tagalog zarzuelas began to dominate the cultural life of urban Manila, composers found opportunities to write new music while seasoned artists found it more difficult to transition to the lyrical stage. By examining these tensions between the 'old' and the 'new,' this paper shows how cultural legacies are also entangled histories in need of careful re-evaluation and study.

December 9, 2016: “A Century of Philippine Spatial Inequality: Searching for Explanations” -Jeffrey Gale Williamson, Laird Bell Professor of Economics, Emeritus Harvard University

This SEAC Forum presentation is in two parts. The first deals with the present and the second deals with the last century. They are connected.

Income inequality is higher in the Philippines than in most of its Asian neighbors, and spatial (urban-rural and provincial) inequality accounts for a fairly large share of it. However, there is little evidence of labor market failure since, when properly measured, real wage gaps by skill are modest or absent. Rather, unequal endowments account for most of the urban-rural and provincial income gaps, not wage or underemployment rates. That is, human capital endowments of workers and households explain the vast majority of the gaps. Workers born in the cities and immigrants to the cities invest much more in human capital than do rural workers and workers in poor provinces. But how much of that is due to better human-capital-building infrastructure supply in the cities and rich provinces, and how much is due to higher urban and rich province demand for that infrastructure? It's very hard to disentangle these two by looking only at modern urban-rural and provincial comparisons, but a look at history certainly does.

By using census-based provincial Human Development Indices (first constructed by the UN in the 1990s), the second part of the presentation identifies an abrupt trend reversal from regional

convergence 1918-1960 to regional divergence 1960-2010, and offers explanations for the reversal favoring human-capital-building infrastructure supply. It appears that the American imperialists favored inclusive convergence while the independent Filipino politicians did not.

Jeffrey Gale Williamson is Laird Bell Professor of Economics, emeritus, Harvard University; Honorary Fellow, Department of Economics, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Adjunct Professor, University of the Philippines, School of Economics. His most recent books are: *Unequal Gains: American Growth and Inequality since 1700* (Princeton 2016: with P. Lindert), *The Spread of Modern Manufacturing to the Poor Periphery since 1870* (forthcoming Oxford: ed. with K. O'Rourke), *Latin American Inequality in the Long Run* (forthcoming Springer: ed. with L. Bértola), *The Cambridge History of Capitalism* (2 vols. 2014: ed. with L. Neal), *Trade and Poverty: When the Third World Fell Behind* (MIT 2011); *Globalization and the Poor Periphery before 1950* (MIT 2006); and *Global Migration and the World Economy* (MIT 2005: with T. Hatton).