15th Annual Conference Highlights
Life Experience and Innovative Scholarship—
Classroom Experience and Innovative Pedagogies

The April 2007 ASIANetwork Conference held in Lisle, Illinois, was noteworthy for its emphasis upon the personal and the pedagogical. Stirring recollections by invited speakers Bardwell Smith and Wendy Doniger drew attention to the many ways in which personal and professional growth are often intimately intertwined. Dorothy Ko delivered a provocative and controversial talk on the nexus between foot binding and women’s empowerment in traditional Chinese society. And panel sessions discussed pedagogical and curricular approaches to the teaching of Asian Studies that were as eclectic as they were innovative.

Many of the articles in this issue of the ASIANetwork Exchange reflect the spirit of the 2007 Conference. Wendy Doniger, one of the most important historians of religion in our times, has summarized her keynote address in a printed version that gives testimony to the importance of parents and teachers, as they offered her support throughout her eminent career. In so doing, they not only fostered her commitment to consistent intellectual engagement over five decades, but allowed her to help redefine one of our most important fields of study.

We also see in the various articles in this issue other authors who are similarly questioning traditional disciplinary boundaries in creative ways. Whether it be through the use of material culture such as film, music, anime, and manga, to introduce our students to concepts intrinsic to the humanities and social sciences in ways that are personally accessible, or through the use of reflective reading and discussion to question conventional assumptions on the nature of Mao’s historical legacy, our contributors demonstrate how it is possible to use creative methods and resources to strengthen their curricular and pedagogical choices in the teaching about Asia. They offer insight as to how we can use the tools of literary analysis in re-conceptualizing the nature and interpretation of the media as text, and they demonstrate how the many tools of analysis used within the social sciences and the humanities can be integrated throughout one’s teaching.

The enthusiasm and willingness of our authors to question disciplinary convention and to utilize creative ways of stimulating our students’ imagination about Asia can serve as an example for all of our colleagues throughout the academy interested in improving undergraduate education. We are very pleased to present their findings in the following pages.

Irv Epstein and Tom Lutze
ASIANetwork is a consortium of over one hundred seventy North American colleges and universities that strives to strengthen the role of Asian Studies within the framework of liberal arts education to help prepare succeeding generations of undergraduates for a world in which Asian societies play prominent roles in an ever more interdependent world. The unique teaching mission of the undergraduate liberal arts institution poses special opportunities and challenges in the development of Asian Studies. ASIANetwork seeks to encourage the study of Asian countries and cultures on our campuses and to enable our students and faculty to experience these cultures first hand. In a time of fiscal constraints, ASIANetwork facilitates conversation among faculty and administrators concerning the development and strengthening of Asian studies programs, as well as ways to foster collaboration among institutions.

The ASIANetwork EXCHANGE, A Newsletter for Teaching About Asia, is published three times a year. As an important venue for communication among members, the newsletter includes information and articles in its sections Network News, Teaching about Asia, Media Resources, Research of Note, For Our Students, and New and Noteworthy.

We welcome submissions of materials for any section of the newsletter. **Deadlines** for submission: **February 1** for the Spring issue, **July 1** for the Fall issue, and **November 1** for the Winter issue. The editors reserve the right to edit all materials submitted for publication.

Materials may be submitted electronically to <anexchange@iwu.edu>, or disks may be sent to Patra Noonan, ASIANetwork EXCHANGE, Illinois Wesleyan University, P. O. Box 2900, Bloomington, Illinois 61702-2900. For further information contact the editors at the above e-mail address or by telephone at (309) 556-3420.

---

**Board of Directors**

Donald Clark, Chair  
Trinity University  
(210) 999-7629  
dclark@trinity.edu

Erin McCarthy, Vice Chair  
St. Lawrence University  
(315) 229-5224  
emccarthy@stlawu.edu

Gary DeCoker  
Earlham College  
(765) 983-1890  
decokga@earlham.edu

Robert Y. Eng  
University of Redlands  
(909) 793-2121, ext. 4273  
Robert_Eng@redlands.edu

Zhenhu Jin  
Valparaiso University  
(219) 465-7957  
Zhenhu.jin@valpo.edu

T. James Kadera  
Wellesley College  
(781) 283-2597  
jkadera@wellesley.edu

Ronnie Littlejohn  
Belmont University  
(615) 460-6494  
littlejohnr@mail.belmont.edu

Mary-Ann Milford-Lutzker  
Mills College  
(510) 430-2096  
mnilford@mills.edu

Lisa N. Trivedi  
Hamilton College  
(315) 859-4980  
ltrivedi@hamilton.edu

Phyllis Larson  
Ex-Officio  
St. Olaf College  
(507) 646-3744  
larsonph@stolaf.edu

**Executive Director**

Teddy O. Amoloza  
Illinois Wesleyan University  
(309) 556-3405  
tamoloza@iwu.edu

---

**Council of Advisors**

David Adams  
Senior Program Officer, Asia  
Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES)

Roger Ames  
Professor of Philosophy and Editor,  
*Philosophy East and West*  
University of Hawai‘i

Vishaka Desai  
President  
Asia Society

Lucien Ellington  
Editor, *Education about Asia*  
University of Tennessee  
Chattanooga

James Huffman  
Professor of History  
Wittenberg University

Roberta Martin  
Co-Director, The National Consortium for Teaching About Asia  
East Asian Institute  
Columbia University

Barbara Metcalf  
Alice Freeman Palmer Professor of History  
University of Michigan

Richard Smith  
George and Nancy Rupp Professor of Humanities  
Rice University

Patricia Stranahan  
President  
The United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia

---

**ASIANetwork Exchange**

**Co-Editors**

Thomas Lutze  
Illinois Wesleyan University

Irving Epstein  
Illinois Wesleyan University

**Associate Editor**

Patra Noonan  
Illinois Wesleyan University
$1.3 Million Freeman Grant Renewed and other 2006-2007 Highlights

Teddy O. Amoloza
Illinois Wesleyan University

Freeman Grant Renewed

It is quite thrilling to begin my summary of last year’s highlights with the announcement that for the fourth time, the Freeman Foundation gave us funding for the Student-Faculty Fellows program. This latest cycle will enable us to continue sending teams of students and faculty mentors to East and Southeast Asia in the summers of 2008, 2009 and 2010. While our proposal requested funding for 12 teams totaling 60 students and faculty mentors per year, it is possible that we will be able to award more grants using the unspent monies returned by grantees, as witnessed this year by the 14 teams and 73 researchers who traveled to Asia this summer. Once again, we are deeply grateful to the Freeman Foundation for continuing to support this program that to date has awarded 106 grants that have sent 429 students and faculty mentors from 68 institutions to Asia during the last ten years.

Annual Conference and Business Meeting

We are again pleased that attendance at the April 2007 Conference, held for the second straight year at Hickory Ridge in Lisle, Illinois, drew more than 200 attendees. The steady number of conference participants is encouraging and is inspiring the Board of Directors to continually respond to the suggestions from the membership about the content and format of future conferences. In this regard, please make plans to attend the next conference that will be held on March 14-16, 2008 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel on the Riverwalk of historic San Antonio, Texas. The theme of the conference “Scholar-Teachers of Asia: Past and Present” is already drawing international interest with panelists for one proposed panel coming from Beijing Foreign Studies University in China and Ghent University in Belgium.

We hope to see as many if not more of you at the conference next spring that will be hosted by Trinity University.

At the Business Meeting last April, the proposal to increase membership dues was approved. Dues for Full Members will be $300 starting this academic year and $200 for Associate Members; this will entitle eight instead of six individuals per institution to receive paper and electronic mailings from ASIANetwork. We have not increased our membership dues for the last seven years but the costs of running the consortium continually increase. This year, even with this dues increase, our projected income of $117,250 and total projected expenses of $113,500 give us very little margin for unexpected expenses.

Strategic Plan, New Website and Other Board of Directors News

One of the initiatives that kept us very busy last year was our strategic planning. After a series of consultations and discussions with past board members and chairs, and with the Council of Advisors, the Strategic Planning Committee held a workshop during the deep of winter in Minnesota. A draft plan was revised throughout the spring semester and finally presented to the Board at the April meeting for approval. The Strategic Plan that was approved by the Board and presented to the membership at the Plenary Session on Sunday morning of the conference is reprinted on the back page of this newsletter. We welcome your inputs and suggestions as we now move to the implementation stage. Phyllis Larson is to be commended for her leadership in moving the strategic planning process forward and for bringing us to this point so quickly.

Another major undertaking was the complete redesign of our website. Board member Bob Eng of the University of Redlands, who chairs the Publicity and Website Committee, worked diligently and meticulously on this daunting task. He now reports that the ASIANetwork website has been re-designed, streamlined and re-organized for easier access to information on ASIANetwork news, programs, and services. In particular, navigational menus and aids on each page provide visitors with one-click access to the most significant and popular pages on the site. Visitors can open and download individual articles within an issue of the ASIANetwork Exchange instead of having to open the entire issue. Each individual project report of the Freeman-funded Student-Faculty Fellows Program has its own page. Photo galleries for past conferences back to 2001 are available. Please visit the website at www.asianetwork.org and send us your comments and suggestions about this new site. I am sure you will agree with me that Bob Eng deserves recognition for his excellent job.

In the Winter 2006 issue of the newsletter, we were able to publish information on only two nominees for the Board of Directors due to a last minute withdrawal. At the meeting last April, we presented the third Board nominee, Lisa N. Trivedi, who was subsequently elected to the Board. She is Associate Professor of History at Hamilton College where she teaches courses on South Asia and comparative Asian history. A cultural historian of politics and society, her interests include the history of women, comparative colonialism and nationalism, and the history of work. For more information on Professor Trivedi, please visit the website.

A Round of Applause and Thanks

In closing this report on the highlights of the past year I would again like to recognize all those who helped in the (continued on next page)
smooth operation of the consortium. First and foremost, thanks go to the members of the Board for their continued dedication and enthusiasm in executing the numerous responsibilities assigned to them especially the Strategic Planning Committee; to the Past Chairs Advisory Council and to the Council of Advisors for generously sharing their time and giving us their wise counsel, and to my Illinois Wesleyan ASIANetwork team, who continue to assist me in the myriad operations of the headquarters. The consortium will not be running as effectively without all your contributions. Though space limitation does not allow me to list names of people, I would like to specifically thank deeply Phyllis Larson and Patra Noonan for all their support this past year and more importantly for stepping up to the plate and taking the rein of the April conference when I had to be away for my mother’s funeral. Thanks very much to all of you who pitched in at various points during the conference but most especially, thanks for your expression of sympathy and support. It is very comforting to be surrounded by such a caring community of friends and colleagues!

We begin this year with a strong membership roster: 138 full members, 24 associate members and 12 affiliate organizations for a total of 174 members. I look forward to another exciting and energizing year as we continue to move toward our vision for the consortium. To all of you, Maraning Salamat at Mabuhay!

**ASIANetwork Initiatives**

**Student-Faculty Fellows Program funded by the Freeman Foundation**

Now in its tenth year, this grant enables individual faculty at liberal arts colleges to take up to five students to East and Southeast Asia to conduct undergraduate research activities. Faculty mentor and students apply as a team. During the past nine years, 429 persons have participated in this program. Funding is available for up to sixty persons (mentors and students combined) to study in Asia during the summer of 2008. **Deadline for application is December 1, 2007** with notification by January 30, 2008. For additional information contact Dr. Van J. Symons, Program Director, Augustana College, 639 – 38th Street, Rock Island, IL 61201-2296, (vanjsymons@augustana.edu, phone 309-794-7413).

The ASIANetwork Consultancy Program

The ASIANetwork Consultancy Program is a service to ASIANetwork member institutions seeking outside advice on ways to strengthen the study of Asia on their campuses. Drawing from a pool of over thirty experienced consultants who have served in the program from 1994 to the present, the ASIANetwork Consultancy Program can recommend a list of possible consultants to interested institutions and help with the planning of the campus visit. ASIANetwork charges no fee for this service, although colleges who wish to make use of it should plan on covering the travel expenses of the consultants selected and provide consultants with a reasonable honorarium. For more information, please contact Professor Phyllis Larson, St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN 55057-1098, (larsonph@stolaf.edu; phone 507-646-3744).

For additional details on these programs, visit our website at www.asianetwork.org.

*Exposing Incoming Students to Asian Studies* (continued from page 25)

happened anyway, with the current media attention focusing upon the increasing impact China has had on the American economy. Yet we continue to believe that with the emphasis of FYS upon discussion and our attempt to incorporate an experiential component to the China part of the course, we have caught the attention of students who might otherwise have paid little attention to media hype. At the very least, we will have 1500 students who feel some connection to East Asia through achieving a better understanding of Chinese society and culture than when they began college a year ago.

**Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my appreciation to the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont, and especially to Asian and Pacific Studies Director, Linda Lewis, to on-site program coordinator Lu Yuan, to our liaison with Kunming TCM Hospital Wen Zheng Zhi, and to the other teachers and my co-participants in the program. I am grateful to the Freeman Foundation for their support of the Access Asia faculty development project at SIT. The opportunity to turn this personally enriching learning experience into a part of the First Year Seminar curriculum was due to the support of Dean Linda Eisenmann and the efforts of FYS Directors Lauren Bowen, Robert Kolesar, and Sheri Young at John Carroll University.

+This description of the JCU First Year Seminar refers to the way the program was established in 1996 and continues to operate through Fall, 2007. During the 2006-2007 academic year, this program underwent review, and some organizational changes have been recommended for future years.
My intellectual career is a tale of friendship and serendipity. I was nourished by several deep friendships—first with my mother, then with several great teachers, and later with colleagues in fields other than the one for which I had a union card. And I was gifted with serendipity (which the Oxford English Dictionary defines as the faculty of making happy and unexpected discoveries by accident). Horace Walpole, the 4th Earl of Oxford, coined the word “serendipity” in 1754, referring to the story of “The Three Princes of Serendip,” that is, Shri Lanka Dvipa; it’s an Orientalist term. I would define serendipity as the art of appreciating a new possibility when you come across it unexpectedly, the willingness to veer from your projected path and take one you never thought of. Serendipity is particularly valuable when things, inevitably, do not turn out as you wished (as in the old joke: Do you know how to make god laugh? Tell him your plans; or, as John Lennon put it, life is what happens when you’re making other plans). At such moments, if you are a serendipitist (a word that James Joyce coined in 1939, in Finnegans Wake), you discover that the new possibilities before you are in fact more useful than what you had intended to do, that what you found turns out to be better than what you were looking for.

Parental Influences

I was born in 1940 in New York and raised in Great Neck by Jewish parents who had come to America (my father from Russia/Poland, in 1919, my mother from Vienna/Marienbad, in the 1920’s) searching, like modern pilgrims, for freedom from religion. My mother was a devout Communist, who felt that the world would not be fit to live in until the last rabbi was strangled with the entrails of the last priest. It was not until I went to school that I learned that there was such a thing as paper white on both sides; I had done my early drawings on the backs of flyers for Henry Wallace and Ella Winters. During the McCarthy Era, people like Pete Seeger and Zero Mostel drifted in and out of our house. (In high school, I was vice-president of the Great Neck chapter of the World Communist Youth organization; the president, Peter Camejo, ran for governor of California last year on the Green Party ticket). My father was a New Dealer, who adored Roosevelt. (My earliest memory is of him taking me on his lap as he wept and told me, “A very great man has died.”) Both of my parents regarded themselves as ethnically Jewish; they sent money to Israel and to the Anti-Defamation League, fought for the Rosenbergs and against anti-Semitism, and always managed to get some more pious relatives to invite us to a Passover seder. But neither of them would be caught dead in a synagogue.

Yet my mother gave me a copy of E.M. Forster’s A Passage to India, when I was about 12 years old, and it changed my life. I wonder now what made my mother choose that book for me. I can guess, partly. My mother had a nose for great books, and she knew me very well. I had been, from very early childhood, enchanted by stories about other worlds, fairies and gods. And since my mother regarded this as a literary, rather than a religious, taste, she encouraged it. She also gave me Rumer Godden’s The River, and Aubrey Menen’s wicked satire on the Ramayana. She was an amateur Orientalist in her own way, and was crazy about Angkor Vat; she cherished her copy of the great four-volume work on the temple of Angkor published in 1930 by the École Française de l’Extrême Orient. All her life she wanted to visit Angkor, and she finally did. When I went to India, she came to visit me and went on by herself to visit the temples of Angkor despite the rumbles of war (it was 1964), and when she was dying, thirty years later, she told me (only then) that that had been the high point of her whole life. That old French book about Angkor Vat remained a kind of icon to me throughout my youth; when she died, it came to me, and it still holds for me the mystery and glamour that it had then. I passed it on (together with my mother’s politics) to my son, Michael O’Flaherty, who began his graduate study of the history of Southeast Asia at Cornell in 1995. But I am getting ahead of my story.

Outstanding Teachers

In high school I fled from what I had come to regard as the excessive reality of the real world (the world of Communist politics and the Cold War and McCarthy) by studying Latin and, in unofficial sessions with my devoted Latin teacher, Anita Lilenfeld (now Seligson), ancient (continued on next page)
Greek. She casually mentioned to me that Sanskrit was the language of ancient India, which meant to me the language of A Passage to India (and, by extension, Angkor Vat). I was hooked, and I chose to go to Radcliffe, rather than Swarthmore, largely because I could learn Sanskrit at Harvard. And so I did, as a 17-year-old freshman, in 1958. But I never studied religion at Radcliffe; what would my parents have said? I did take one course in comparative religion and several classes with Albert Lord, who taught me most of what I know about oral epics and comparative folklore.

I recognized even then my mother’s influence in this flight from religion (I sometimes regard myself as a recovering atheist), but oddly enough I did not until quite recently acknowledge her equally great influence in what I fled. For surely the long shadow of Angkor Vat fell over me as I sat in the dusty little room in the top of Widener Library, studying Sanskrit with Daniel Henry Holmes Ingalls. A charismatic teacher and old-fashioned Virginia gentleman—who owned and ran the “restricted” (i.e. anti-Semitic) Homestead resort, in West Virginia, in his spare time—he was the formative intellectual influence of my university years. He taught me not only Sanskrit but Indian literature, Indian history, Indian religion, and something else, harder to define: something about the pleasure of scholarship, the elegance of the written word, the luxury of the world of the mind. I also, in the manner of old-fashioned Sanskritists and “Orientalists,” studied Greek.

Mircea Eliade

In 1968, Mircea Eliade provided the bridge, what Hindus call a tirtha, on which I walked across from Sanskrit studies to the history of religions. When I finished my Harvard dissertation in 1968 and sent it, all 950 pages of it, to Ingalls, he read it and asked Mircea Eliade to serve as the other reader, since my dissertation was about yoga and the mythology of the Hindu god Shiva, and Eliade was the world’s greatest mythologist and had published, in 1958, the very year I entered Radcliffe, a definitive work on yoga. (Ingalls believed in having the best of everything). Eliade liked the dissertation well enough (“Il y’a des longueurs,” is one phrase from his long, hand-written French evaluation that still makes me wince as I recall it) and published two parts of it in two issues of the journal, History of Religions, which he had founded just two years previously; this was my first publication. Eliade and I began to correspond, and he published another article of mine, the seed of my 1973 Oxford dissertation, in 1971. But we never met in person until 1978, when I moved to Chicago to take up my post as professor of the history of religions and as an editor of the journal that had first published my work. But again, I am getting ahead of my story.

**Lévi-Strauss taught me that a myth is an always doomed attempt to solve an insoluble contradiction, and that the inevitable failure of that enterprise is what drives a culture to tell the same story over and over again, finding ever new ways to show how the square peg does not fit into the round hole (or, perhaps, whole).**

**Russian Formalism and Lévi-Strauss**

By the time I started teaching at S.O.A.S. in 1968, I had begun to write books, based on Sanskrit texts, all right, but also books about myths. When I was living in Moscow, in 1970-71 (serendipity: I was there only because my husband, a Russian historian, had a grant to study there, and I went along for the ride), with nothing to do but plot with Jewish dissidents, ride horses, and conceive my child, I turned my Harvard dissertation into a book.

The major challenge was to find a way to refer to all the different versions of the central myths without retelling each one in its entirety as I had done in the 950 page dissertation with its “longueurs.” I just happened to meet, at the Oriental Institute (the Institut Vostokovedina), on Armyanski Periulek, a group of Russian Sanskritists who also happened to be Russian formalists and structuralists, and who introduced me to the works of Claude Lévi-Strauss. This gave me the key I needed, the principle of the mytheme, a unit of symbolic meaning that could be identified in several different versions. It meant that I did not have to discuss each version in detail, but could begin to make statements that applied not only to the structures but to the meanings of a whole corpus of variants. A related, but less mechanical and more philosophical, tool that Lévi-Strauss gave me was the idea of the paradox at the heart of myth, certainly at the heart of the erotic/ascetic conflict that was the subject of my dissertation. Lévi-Strauss taught me that a myth is an always doomed attempt to solve an insoluble contradiction, and that the inevitable failure of that enterprise is what drives a culture to tell the same story over and over again, finding ever new ways to show how the square peg does not fit into the round hole (or, perhaps, whole). This was the key to what other scholars regarded as the inexplicable contradiction embodied by Shiva, simultaneously a chaste yogi and the god of the erect phallus. In 1973 I published the book, Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Siva.

**The Importance of Translation**

Then, in 1975, I published the first of three Penguin Classics, Hindu Myths: A Sourcebook, translated from the Sanskrit. The editor of the Penguin Classics at that time was a wonderful woman named Betty Radice, who taught me a great deal about writing and translating and rescued me from the Groucho Marx paradox (“I don’t want to be a member of any club that would have me for a member”) as applied to translation: “I don’t want to write a translation for anyone stupid/lazy/uneducated enough to make use of a translation.” It was Betty Radice who provided, in her own person, the ideal audience for a translation from the Sanskrit: an intelligent, educated, intellectually curious person who did not claim to know very much about Indian literature. And it was she who, in her optimism and modesty, taught me that there were thousands of people like her who would buy such translations. My father had also been such a person, but he had died in 1971, before I published my first book. Betty Radice also replaced my father in her own person, the ideal audience for a translation from the Sanskrit: an intelligent, educated, intellectually curious person who did not claim to know very much about Indian literature. And it was she who, in her optimism and modesty, taught me that there were thousands of people like her who would buy such translations.
The translations balance the more interpretive books, filling me up with a world of knowledge gleaned from an intimate and detailed response to a particular author, in contrast with the more diffuse and more self-generated conversation that drives me when I write the other sort of book. Stretch your knowledge and your intelligence beyond what you have done before. I continued to learn from Betty Radice when I worked on The Rig Veda (in 1981) and though she had died by the time I did the last Penguin publication, The Laws of Manu, ten years later, her friendly ghost still hovered over the work, as it continues to hover over my subsequent translations. The translations balance the more interpretive books, filling me up with a world of knowledge gleaned from an intimate and detailed response to a particular author, in contrast with the more diffuse and more self-generated conversation that drives me when I write the other sort of book. It troubles me that many departments do not regard translations as “real” works, that they will not count them toward tenure; for I have learned most from my works of translation, and certainly contributed something that will be more useful to other scholars for a longer period of time, than my “original” works of scholarship.

While I was working on the first Penguin book, I was also working with R. C. Zaehner at All Souls College on my Oxford dissertation, which I did simply because I happened to be in Oxford (because my husband went to Oxford and I came along for the ride: serendipity) and because I had taken out of that 950 page Harvard dissertation another 500 pages (in addition to the original 950) that now supplied the material for a second work, first the Oxford D. Phil. dissertation (in 1973) and then a book, The Origins of Evil in Hindu Mythology (in 1976) Zaehner was working at that time on his wild book about Charles Manson (Our Savage God), and I benefited enormously from long, boozy dinners with him at the Elizabethan restaurant next door to the Sheep’s Shop immortalized by Lewis Carroll; we talked about Manson and the Pope and Aristotle and cabbages and kings. I also realized, years later, that writing that book, which is in large part about the evil of death, was a way of trying to make sense of my father’s death, my first major experience of inexplicable and unjust evil. In 1978, Eliade invited me to join the faculty in Chicago, and I did. And the rest, as they say, is history (of religions).

The lives of many women are, I think, inspired by their desire to be unlike their mothers; but so often, like Alice in Looking-Glass Land, the farther we try to run away from that house of mirrors, the quicker we find ourselves walking back in at the door. This is part of my story, surely. And the accidents of marriage and professional opportunities landed me in a role that I had never dreamt of, indeed had never known the existence of, before I accepted it—the role of a professor of the History of Religions at the University widely regarded as the axis mundi of that discipline. Indeed, the discipline itself is now changing in directions that render rather vieux jeux the approaches that were regarded as radical when I first tried them out. Somehow, like a Kafka character, I went to bed one night an enfant terrible and woke up the next morning an old fuddy duddy. But I don’t regret missing my fifteen-minute allotment of, if not fame, at least trendiness. Non, je ne regrette rien.

Endnotes

But it has Some Good Songs (continued from page 12)


Footnotes
4. Ibid., 80.
Korean films, like much else related to Korea, seem to have come out of nowhere to win worldwide notice in recent years. By any measure, whether as stories, works of art, or examples of good technique, the Koreans have won a place in the front rank of world cinema. Koreans see the prizes won at Cannes and other festivals as proof that they are taking the world by storm in what they like to call the “Korean Wave” (Hallyu). They may in fact have a way to go before taking the world by storm, but there is no denying the rising reputation of Korean film in neighboring Asian countries and, increasingly, in the West.

When we teach Korean history to mainstream American students, we ask them to imagine a civilization that is almost wholly unfamiliar. Though a handful may have taken a course on China or Japan, their sense of Koreans is derived mainly from stereotypes in the media. Unless they are “heritage” learners with Korean parents and grandparents, they think of Korean chaebol products (if we’re lucky), or more likely the Korean War and the DMZ, goose-stepping troops in Kim Il-sung Square and Kim Jong-il as a madman in sunglasses. In other words, in attempting to humanize the Korean people and make sense of their story, we begin with serious handicaps.

In teaching Korean history at Trinity University, I’ve discovered that nothing compares to the power of film to dispel stereotypes and invest students’ minds with curiosity and motivation to learn about the Koreans as people and their story as an example of the cross-currents of modern times. I’ve organized an annual Korean film festival at Trinity, which is required viewing for my 25-or-so students but is also open to the general community, including off-campus K-12 teachers who participate in Trinity’s National Consortium for Teaching About Asia (NCTA). The series changes from year-to-year, but at present it consists of seven films. Students in the course are required to view at least four of them and write response papers on each, expressing their understanding of the historical context of each one. Here are the seven films:

**Ch’unhyang**

Ch’unhyang (“Fragrance of Spring,” 2000, dir. Im Kwôn-taek) is Korea’s greatest love story: the tale of a lowly kisaeng’s daughter named Ch’unhyang who catches the eye of the magistrate’s son. The two marry secretly but then the boy is called to Seoul to take the civil service examinations. A new magistrate arrives in town and orders all of the local maidens to be brought for his selection. Ch’unhyang, secretly-married, refuses his attentions and is tortured and imprisoned. She suffers horribly while maintaining her faithfulness to her husband. Eventually the husband, now a royal inspector, turns up and rescues her, punishes the evil magistrate, and proves the value of her loyalty.

Ch’unhyang is a tale of Confucian virtues, social class conflict, love, pain, and justice. It has always been a staple in the repertoire of p’ansori epics. P’ansori is a Korean operatic form where a storyteller, assisted by a single drummer on a stage, sings/chants/speaks/shouts the story, and plays all the parts in a narrative that poses conflict that elicits powerful emotional responses from a live audience. The genre requires prodigious vocal range and dramatic talent.
conflict that elicits powerful emotional responses from a live audience. The genre requires prodigious vocal range and dramatic talent. Many films have been made of the Ch’unhyang story, but in this one, the director Im Kwun-taek succeeds in presenting the story as an authentic p’ansori performance, cutting back and forth between scenes of the story and scenes of the singer in the theatre. The effectiveness of this technique is shown in one scene where the camera cuts to the audience, comprised of rapt students, middle-aged couples, and elderly grandparents, daubing their eyes and weeping at the suffering of the heroine in the clutches of the evil magistrate—conveyed to them solely by the voice and gestures of Cho Sang-hyun, the singer on the stage. Im Kwun-taek is famous for his “inside jobs,” his films designed to tug at the heartstrings of Koreans through their common experience. Ch’unhyang, however, is a story with a universal theme, so it is effective in class as a window on the Korean soul as well as a demonstration of the power of the p’ansori genre.

Chihwaseon

Chihwaseon (“Painted Fire,” 2002) is also directed by Im Kwun-taek, who won a Best Director prize for his efforts at Cannes. It is the story of a tormented artist in the late 1800s whose low birth status condemns him to paint for a living, but whose talent is such that he should be pursuing his pure creative genius. At a time when Korean society is collapsing and Japan is poised to devour Korea, when the Korean class system is being revealed as a national sham, the artist So-woon is forced, not always successfully, to stifle his raging anger and curb his genius. The movie, also beautifully filmed, is shocking on many levels, but it is also useful for many reasons, not least of which is its ability to convey an emotional sense of the despair of late Chosun dynasty Korean national life.

Because Ch’unhyang continuously refuses Magistrate Pyon’s advances, she is beaten repeatedly and locked in prison. (Scene from Ch’unhyang)

Self-indulgence and arrogance are mainstays for many artists; Jang is no exception. (Scene from Chihwaseon)

ellas, and elderly grandparents, daubing their eyes and weeping at the suffering of the heroine in the clutches of the evil magistrate—conveyed to them solely by the voice and gestures of Cho Sang-hyun, the singer on the stage. Im Kwun-taek is famous for his “inside jobs,” his films designed to tug at the heartstrings of Koreans through their common experience. Ch’unhyang, however, is a story with a universal theme, so it is effective in class as a window on the Korean soul as well as a demonstration of the power of the p’ansori genre.

Chihwaseon

Chihwaseon (“Painted Fire,” 2002) is also directed by Im Kwun-taek, who won a Best Director prize for his efforts at Cannes. It is the story of a tormented artist in the late 1800s whose low birth status condemns him to paint for a living, but whose talent is such that he should be pursuing his pure creative genius. At a time when Korean society is collapsing and Japan is poised to devour Korea, when the Korean class system is being revealed as a national sham, the artist So-woon is forced, not always successfully, to stifle his raging anger and curb his genius. The movie, also beautifully filmed, is shocking on many levels, but it is also useful for many reasons, not least of which is its ability to convey an emotional sense of the despair of late Chosun dynasty Korean national life.

Because Ch’unhyang continuously refuses Magistrate Pyon’s advances, she is beaten repeatedly and locked in prison. (Scene from Ch’unhyang)

Self-indulgence and arrogance are mainstays for many artists; Jang is no exception. (Scene from Chihwaseon)

ellas, and elderly grandparents, daubing their eyes and weeping at the suffering of the heroine in the clutches of the evil magistrate—conveyed to them solely by the voice and gestures of Cho Sang-hyun, the singer on the stage. Im Kwun-taek is famous for his “inside jobs,” his films designed to tug at the heartstrings of Koreans through their common experience. Ch’unhyang, however, is a story with a universal theme, so it is effective in class as a window on the Korean soul as well as a demonstration of the power of the p’ansori genre.

Chihwaseon

Chihwaseon (“Painted Fire,” 2002) is also directed by Im Kwun-taek, who won a Best Director prize for his efforts at Cannes. It is the story of a tormented artist in the late 1800s whose low birth status condemns him to paint for a living, but whose talent is such that he should be pursuing his pure creative genius. At a time when Korean society is collapsing and Japan is poised to devour Korea, when the Korean class system is being revealed as a national sham, the artist So-woon is forced, not always successfully, to stifle his raging anger and curb his genius. The movie, also beautifully filmed, is shocking on many levels, but it is also useful for many reasons, not least of which is its ability to convey an emotional sense of the despair of late Chosun dynasty Korean national life.

Because Ch’unhyang continuously refuses Magistrate Pyon’s advances, she is beaten repeatedly and locked in prison. (Scene from Ch’unhyang)

Self-indulgence and arrogance are mainstays for many artists; Jang is no exception. (Scene from Chihwaseon)

ellas, and elderly grandparents, daubing their eyes and weeping at the suffering of the heroine in the clutches of the evil magistrate—conveyed to them solely by the voice and gestures of Cho Sang-hyun, the singer on the stage. Im Kwun-taek is famous for his “inside jobs,” his films designed to tug at the heartstrings of Koreans through their common experience. Ch’unhyang, however, is a story with a universal theme, so it is effective in class as a window on the Korean soul as well as a demonstration of the power of the p’ansori genre.

Chihwaseon

Chihwaseon (“Painted Fire,” 2002) is also directed by Im Kwun-taek, who won a Best Director prize for his efforts at Cannes. It is the story of a tormented artist in the late 1800s whose low birth status condemns him to paint for a living, but whose talent is such that he should be pursuing his pure creative genius. At a time when Korean society is collapsing and Japan is poised to devour Korea, when the Korean class system is being revealed as a national sham, the artist So-woon is forced, not always successfully, to stifle his raging anger and curb his genius. The movie, also beautifully filmed, is shocking on many levels, but it is also useful for many reasons, not least of which is its ability to convey an emotional sense of the despair of late Chosun dynasty Korean national life.

Because Ch’unhyang continuously refuses Magistrate Pyon’s advances, she is beaten repeatedly and locked in prison. (Scene from Ch’unhyang)

Self-indulgence and arrogance are mainstays for many artists; Jang is no exception. (Scene from Chihwaseon)

ellas, and elderly grandparents, daubing their eyes and weeping at the suffering of the heroine in the clutches of the evil magistrate—conveyed to them solely by the voice and gestures of Cho Sang-hyun, the singer on the stage. Im Kwun-taek is famous for his “inside jobs,” his films designed to tug at the heartstrings of Koreans through their common experience. Ch’unhyang, however, is a story with a universal theme, so it is effective in class as a window on the Korean soul as well as a demonstration of the power of the p’ansori genre.

Chihwaseon

Chihwaseon (“Painted Fire,” 2002) is also directed by Im Kwun-taek, who won a Best Director prize for his efforts at Cannes. It is the story of a tormented artist in the late 1800s whose low birth status condemns him to paint for a living, but whose talent is such that he should be pursuing his pure creative genius. At a time when Korean society is collapsing and Japan is poised to devour Korea, when the Korean class system is being revealed as a national sham, the artist So-woon is forced, not always successfully, to stifle his raging anger and curb his genius. The movie, also beautifully filmed, is shocking on many levels, but it is also useful for many reasons, not least of which is its ability to convey an emotional sense of the despair of late Chosun dynasty Korean national life.

Because Ch’unhyang continuously refuses Magistrate Pyon’s advances, she is beaten repeatedly and locked in prison. (Scene from Ch’unhyang)

Self-indulgence and arrogance are mainstays for many artists; Jang is no exception. (Scene from Chihwaseon)

ellas, and elderly grandparents, daubing their eyes and weeping at the suffering of the heroine in the clutches of the evil magistrate—conveyed to them solely by the voice and gestures of Cho Sang-hyun, the singer on the stage. Im Kwun-taek is famous for his “inside jobs,” his films designed to tug at the heartstrings of Koreans through their common experience. Ch’unhyang, however, is a story with a universal theme, so it is effective in class as a window on the Korean soul as well as a demonstration of the power of the p’ansori genre.

Chihwaseon

Chihwaseon (“Painted Fire,” 2002) is also directed by Im Kwun-taek, who won a Best Director prize for his efforts at Cannes. It is the story of a tormented artist in the late 1800s whose low birth status condemns him to paint for a living, but whose talent is such that he should be pursuing his pure creative genius. At a time when Korean society is collapsing and Japan is poised to devour Korea, when the Korean class system is being revealed as a national sham, the artist So-woon is forced, not always successfully, to stifle his raging anger and curb his genius. The movie, also beautifully filmed, is shocking on many levels, but it is also useful for many reasons, not least of which is its ability to convey an emotional sense of the despair of late Chosun dynasty Korean national life.

Because Ch’unhyang continuously refuses Magistrate Pyon’s advances, she is beaten repeatedly and locked in prison. (Scene from Ch’unhyang)

Self-indulgence and arrogance are mainstays for many artists; Jang is no exception. (Scene from Chihwaseon)
the Analects and “Brokeback Mountain.”
Korean-American students are quick to
share their own families’ attitudes about
gender, contributing a nice educational
bonus to the rest of the class. Though this
may not be the best way to study the
troubled times of Yŏnsan’gun, it certainly demonstrates the way attitudes are
changing in contemporary Korea.

Korean War Films

The Korean War is another subject
about which Korean attitudes are changing.
Two films in the series treat this topic while
discussing the long-term damage done to
Korea by the interminable North-South
confrontation.

JSA (“Joint Security Area,” dir. Park
Chan-wook) turns on an investigation of a
murderous incident in the DMZ between
North and South Korean soldiers. The
movie portrays a natural state of
brotherhood between them as they are
forced to pose as enemies. Before the year
2000, when it was made, a filmmaker
would have gone to jail in South Korea for
showing North Korean soldiers as decent,
particularly under the title nationalist, and the technique, ab-
unnatural about the two Koreas,
leaves many of them dead. The
wild shooting that results
and the material context of their
reinforcing the logic of
senselessness of what’s happened to Ko-
before long everyone is getting along.
The film is a comedy—mostly—though it
defines what is natural and
and before long everyone is getting along.
triggers their
instant
army enmity,
resumption of
activation by a downed American pilot. In this vil-
the politics of the war make no sense,
the wild shooting that results
leaves many of them dead. The
the real shock
as a liberated woman who is
beauty, smart, and talented but also gets
drunk, regularly beats him up, and seems
not to know her own mind. His singular
devotion to her and her volatile behavior
work together to make viewers laugh. More
the point, the material context of their
story reveals South Korea to be the sur-
prisingly wealthy, techno, and hip society
that it has recently become. American stu-
dents identify with the characters because
their U.S. counterparts are sitting right there
in the room. As a result, they love the
movie.

My Sassy Girl is full of cultural
code. One scene puts the young
couple in a thatched farm
watchtower, a direct visual reference
to Hwang Sun-wŏn’s love story
“Sonagi” (“Cloudburst”), which is
read by every schoolchild in Korea.

My Sassy Girl

The final movie in the se-
ries is about being
young in South Korea. My Sassy
Girl (“Yŏnsan’gun
Kŏnjogin Kŏnyŏn,” 2001,
dir. Kwang Chae-yong) is a romantic
comedy about a slacker and his
love-object, a twenty something
girl who is getting over a lost love affair.
She opens her heart to her beau Kyun-woo
only slowly, as the film heads to a predictable
conclusion. Along the way she is re-
vealed as a liberated woman who is
beautiful, smart, and talented but also gets
murderous incident in the DMZ between
North and South Korean soldiers. The
movie portrays a natural state of
brotherhood between them as they are
forced to pose as enemies. Before the year
2000, when it was made, a filmmaker
would have gone to jail in South Korea for
showing North Korean soldiers as decent,
particularly under the title nationalist, and the technique, ab-
unnatural about the two Koreas,
leaves many of them dead. The
wild shooting that results
leaves many of them dead. The
the real shock
as a liberated woman who is
beauty, smart, and talented but also gets
drunk, regularly beats him up, and seems
not to know her own mind. His singular
devotion to her and her volatile behavior
work together to make viewers laugh. More
the point, the material context of their
story reveals South Korea to be the sur-
prisingly wealthy, techno, and hip society
that it has recently become. American stu-
dents identify with the characters because
their U.S. counterparts are sitting right there
in the room. As a result, they love the
movie.

My Sassy Girl is full of cultural
code. One scene puts the young
couple in a thatched farm
watchtower, a direct visual reference
to Hwang Sun-wŏn’s love story
“Sonagi” (“Cloudburst”), which is
read by every schoolchild in Korea.

My Sassy Girl

The final movie in the se-
ries is about being
young in South Korea. My Sassy
Girl (“Yŏnsan’gun
Kŏnjogin Kŏnyŏn,” 2001,
dir. Kwang Chae-yong) is a romantic
comedy about a slacker and his
love-object, a twenty something
girl who is getting over a lost love affair.
She opens her heart to her beau Kyun-woo
only slowly, as the film heads to a predictable
conclusion. Along the way she is re-
vealed as a liberated woman who is
beautiful, smart, and talented but also gets
drunk, regularly beats him up, and seems
not to know her own mind. His singular
devotion to her and her volatile behavior
work together to make viewers laugh. More
the point, the material context of their
story reveals South Korea to be the sur-
prisingly wealthy, techno, and hip society
that it has recently become. American stu-
dents identify with the characters because
their U.S. counterparts are sitting right there
in the room. As a result, they love the
movie.

My Sassy Girl is full of cultural
code. One scene puts the young
couple in a thatched farm
watchtower, a direct visual reference
to Hwang Sun-wŏn’s love story
“Sonagi” (“Cloudburst”), which is
read by every schoolchild in Korea.

My Sassy Girl

The final movie in the se-
ries is about being
young in South Korea. My Sassy
Girl (“Yŏnsan’gun
Kŏnjogin Kŏnyŏn,” 2001,
dir. Kwang Chae-yong) is a romantic
comedy about a slacker and his
love-object, a twenty something
“But it has Some Good Songs ...”:
Introducing Students to the Aesthetics of the Popular Hindi Film Through Music

Nilanjana Bhattachajya
Colorado College

Screening films in music classes often offers students a clearer understanding of different performing contexts and the culture that surrounds them. When they are available, scenes of live performances and on-screen interviews with musicians and other figures enhance students’ understanding of different performing traditions and musical cultures beyond what could be gained from mere recordings and scholarly literature. While popular Hindi films are usually fictional and rarely present live performances, they still offer an ideal text through which music students can gain familiarity with South Asian culture—in no small part due to the fact that song-and-dance sequences are perhaps the single most distinguishing feature of popular Hindi films.

The first film with sound, Alam Ara or “Beauty of the World,” which appeared in 1930, featured no fewer than seven song and dance sequences. Drawing clearly on recognizable forms of entertainment that combined music and drama in both folk and classical traditions, early Hindi films such as Alam Ara helped establish music, song, and dance as an integral part of the popular film genre throughout South Asia.1 Today these song-and-dance sequences can occupy almost forty minutes of a film that already runs close to three hours; the sheer length of many popular Hindi films deters new audiences, and even within India, song and dance sequences represent to some what is wrong with Indian cinema. Film critic Kobita Sarkar has commented,

The most irritating aspect of the song in the Hindi film is its sheer irrelevance. Many of them can be deleted entirely without in any way affecting the film’s content, and many of them suppressed would do much to improve the general quality of the film... The interminable singing... merely slows the action and confuses the major issues at stake.2

But is this really so?
When students first read the syllabus for my class and realize that they will be viewing almost fifty hours of subtitled films and listening to at least one soundtrack after attending two hours of lecture each day within our three and a half week class, a small number of them leave to find another class. Those who stay, however, quickly begin to consider the song-and-dance sequences as fundamental, rather than extraneous, to the structure and sensibility of the film itself.

Significances of Song and Dance Sequences

Conventionally, screenplay writers have inserted song-and-dance sequences in situations where they believe that music would express ideas more effectively than dialogue. Audiences may measure a screenplay writer and director’s skill by determining how well these songs are integrated into the screenplay, so they will and do criticize songs that have apparently nothing to do with the rest of the film.3

Song-and-dance sequences provide an efficient way to depict the progression of a developing romance, but they potentially convey more desire, passion, and fantasy than could ever be carried through conventional dialogue. Characters may

When students first read the syllabus for my class and realize that they will be viewing almost fifty hours of subtitled films and listening to at least one soundtrack after attending two hours of lecture each day within our three and a half week class, a small number of them leave to find another class. Those who stay, however, quickly begin to consider the song-and-dance sequences as fundamental, rather than extraneous, to the structure and sensibility of the film itself.

(continued on next page)
and how they will return to their homes in
France, Japan, Germany, China, and the
U.S. Many of these film song sequences
were filmed in Kashmir before violence es-
calated there in the late 1980s.3 Director
and producer Yash Chopra has set the
benchmark for setting his song sequences
in stunning locations such as in his film
Silsila (1981), which features its protagon-
ists singing and dancing in the middle of
Dutch tulip fields, and in the Swiss Alps.
The convention of the song sequence en-
ables us to not have to wonder how our
characters from the tulips to the mountains,
and how they will return to their homes in
the same soundtrack; as an example, the
film Veer-Zaara (2004), originally scored
by Madan Mohan, features both a perfor-
ance of qawwali by Sufi devotional sing-
ers and a bhangra folk-dance performed
in Punjab.

Film Soundtracks
Film soundtracks may play an impor-
tant role in defining the film’s location, as
well as its protagonists. Music director
Khayyam composed an exquisite score of
ghazals for the film Umroa Jaan (1981)
help establish the biography of the famed
19th-century courtesan, expressed in poetry,
music, and dance. A.R. Rahman’s score for
Rang De Basanti (2006), on the other hand,
incorporates traditional Punjabi cultural
elements (such as a woman’s prayer in a
Sikh gurdwara and a harvest festival
bhangra dance) with hard-rock and hip-hop
elements so as to depict the cosmopolitan
life of contemporary college students at
Delhi University.

Lyricism
Many prominent lyricists, such as
Javed Akhtar and Gulzar, distinguished
themselves as masterful poets before the
film industry drew upon their ability to
weave together conventions and thematic
allusions, drawn from indigenous folk tra-
ditions, religious and mythological texts,
and classical Sufi and Persian poetry that
make allusions to contemporary culture.
The entire plot of Mani Ratnam’s Dil Se
(1998), for example, is built upon the clas-
sical image of the moth who is drawn to
the flame, and who dies as a result of it—
an image that abounds in classical Persian
poetry. Students who have already been sys-
tematically exposed to a repertory of Per-
sian-influenced qawwali and ghazal film
songs and their lyrics are surprised by their
ability to recognize the sym-
bolic role of
Gulzar’s lyrics and the genres
themselves within Dil Se—
an understanding that rests
upon their ability to situate it
within historical conv-
ventions.
Guiding students
so that may rec-
ognize these ele-
ments and how
they are inte-
grated expands
their conception of South Asian culture to
comprise the present and the past, the fa-
miliar and the unfamiliar.

Furthermore, after students watch a
number of popular Hindi films, they
invariably notice that song and dance
sequences do in fact influence the core of
the film. They may delay the develop-
ment of the plot, distract us from other scenes in
the narrative through reworking our sense
(continued on page 7)
Teaching 20th Century China and India: Integrating Films and Texts

Jim Matson
Colorado College

For an interdisciplinary course on India and China in the modern world, I advocate using “islands of context.” The scale and complexity of the 20th century encounter with imperialism, independence, economic development and then integration in the capitalist world-economy swamps most boats, especially under Colorado College’s intensive block plan. So I ask students to look closely at a few selected issues, to interrogate the evidence, to read critically and, for the dozen films we watch, to view them actively and with discernment. Films play a crucial role in presenting details and texture that allow students to visualize and empathize with lived-experience so different from their own, and they often offer counterpoint to or contradict aspects of our readings. The juxtaposition of the films and the readings provides the fodder for the specific issues—those “islands of context”—that students select for their essays.

Accessible, engaging surveys—I recommend Timothy Cheek’s Living with Reform: China since 1989 and Edward Luce’s In Spite of the Gods: The Strange Rise of Modern India—provide much useful context for the pairing of films and more focused, shorter readings. Students are asked to post four four-page essays that integrate analytic elements from these readings with specific images, incidents, or emotions from films on our course’s on-line web-based “virtual learning environment” (using Moodle), to read their peers’ essays and to post a specified number of responses. The objective is to create a dialogue, for example, on the gendered dynamics of family life and rural social change in the early 1980s, using Carma Hinton’s film Small Happiness (village dynamics on the North China plain) with feminist appraisals of the China’s revolution and subsequent reforms.

Two films, discussed below, are generally successful in helping students to develop empathy and emotional engagement with individuals who populate our “islands of context.” The juxtaposition of these films and the readings encourages an active imagination that asks how the analyses or narratives intersect and how we should be critically interrogating both sets of materials.

Not One Less (1999)

Director Zhang Yimou is best known in the US for a succession of internationally acclaimed films—Red Sorghum (1987), Raise the Red Lantern (1991), Hero (2002), House of Flying Daggers (2004), Curse of the Golden Flower (2006) — that are familiar to many students. Unlike his recent big-budget blockbusters, in his small 1999 film, Not One Less (Yi ge dou bu neng shao) he used non-professional actors to achieve the naturalism of cinema vérité; few students know this film, despite its winning the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival (the first Asian film to win since Kurusawa’s Rashomon in 1951; won again last year by Jia Zhangke’s Still Life).

Ostensibly about a woefully unprepared, thirteen year-old substitute teacher (Wei Minzhi) in a remote, impoverished rural school, and her dogged determination to recover a ten year-old boy (Zhang Huike) who’s run off to the city (Jiangjiakou in Anhui), the film provides much food for thought about the gap between the town and countryside in contemporary China. Its portrait of the stark rural living standards, with bare-bone village schools and families vulnerable to sickness and debt, sharply contrasts with the bustling modernity in the impersonal city. But what makes the film’s imagery so effective is its sense of unvarnished authenticity and (carefully calculated) pathos. Wei Minzhi’s tearful televised plea that leads to...
a reunion with her student rarely leaves a dry eye in the classroom. My students care about these characters, and this emotional investment is often evident in their engagement with and analysis of the assigned academic literature.

Zhang Huike puts a face on the massive migration of 100 million-plus from the countryside. To get students to think critically about the social experience of this migration, and the market reforms that drive it, I assign Lei Guang’s detailed portrait of a migrant worker, and then small contractor, in the urban home improvement market. Lei’s thick description of one migrant’s trajectory from Anhui to the outskirts of Beijing, and the succession of his strategies to grasp the brass ring of hard-scrabble success, well illustrates the complex interaction of family ties, short-lived social alliances and shifting state regulations that construct the entrepreneurial terrain. Lei’s principal concern is to convey the market as a lived experience, a messy social process full of misrepresentations and unequal power relations, and to show how individuals respond to changing conditions. The depth of detail in Lei’s analysis helps the students imagine the migrants as active agents, not simply passive victims, negotiating the environments as rooted in particular political and social contexts, markets with actually-existing people in them.

When Four Friends Meet (2000)

Rahul Roy’s 43-minute documentary When Four Friends Meet (2000) [available at www.metaphormedia.org] follows four male high school dropouts (Bunty, Kamal, Sanjay, Sanju) in a trans-Jumuna housing colony on the outskirts of Delhi. The film, (supported by UNICEF) was part of a series on South Asian male attitudes toward sex roles and sexuality. The lads who are portrayed, are roughly the same age as my traditional college students, but with very different life chances, expectations and knowledge bases. This contrast has often sparked sharp and occasionally insightful responses from my students.

Roy’s film intersperses the jocular camaraderie among the boys with individual profiles; the portraits are often plaintive and attitudes exhibited toward women often disturbing. These young men have checkered work experience, largely in the informal sector, few prospects and no clear path to prosperity. Yet they dream of striking it rich and, in the terms of my students, “getting lucky.” But their romantic prospects are slight, constrained by social mores and short money. Several of these young men opposed the idea of any wife of theirs ever working (unless they had “good” professional jobs), an attitude more typical several pay-grades above their station. And they spoke shamelessly about harassing young women should they get the chance. Students tend to find these attitudes provocative and pathetic in equal measure.

One of the most striking aspects of the film is the way that these men employed Hindi films, both story-lines and songs, as templates for making sense of life and for suggesting appropriate roles and behaviors toward the opposite sex. Women, in urban India, are all around them in the public space, yet our lads socialize only among themselves, often “piled haphazardly on top of each other,” as a student wrote, “singing and nodding along to the [Bollywood song track]… the closest thing to a religion for these men caught in transition, assertive, slanted and solid as air.” Life imitates art, without ever winning the girl.

I assign two chapters from Pankaj Mishra’s recent Temptations of the West, that focus on college life in Benares in the mid-1980s and an election in Allahabad in 2000. Mishra’s portrait of an unraveling educational institution (Benares Hindu University) plagued by corruption and violence takes the gloss off the academic track that Bunty and his buddies abandoned. The downward mobility of upper-caste educated youth raises lots of questions about what it takes to succeed and how individual trajectories reflect the effects of institutional structures. The callow political culture of the 2000 election, and complex calculus of communities and parties, serves as a sobering reminder to my students of the messy dynamics of democratic politics. These chapters caution against those who invoke common talismans of education or democracy as keys to individual or collective mobility.

This film and these readings don’t have an exact correspondence. But I find the pairing helpful in addressing a larger issue of what modernity means. Many of my students harbor a general expectation that the recent economic reforms will make India and China “just like us.” Markets will fuel growth, so this reasoning goes, and social attitudes will conform to contemporary standards of the West. Mishra, writing in The Guardian newspaper [http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,1794329,00.html], sought to disabuse readers of this notion. He observed “…the hope that fuels the pursuit of endless economic growth - that billions of customers in India and China will one day enjoy the lifestyles of Europeans and Americans - is an absurd and dangerous fantasy. It condemns the global environment to early destruction, and looks set to create reservoirs of nihilistic rage and disappointment among hundreds of millions of have-nots.” To imagine the lived-experience of Bunty and the boys, and entertain why they might hold the attitudes they express, helps my students discern the contradictory consequences of modern social change.

Citations

Japanese Culture, Literature, and History

Popular Culture’s Distorting/Alluring Lens
Joan E. Ericson
Colorado College

I am increasingly drawn to connecting Japanese popular culture with literary and historical texts. This is especially effective in interdisciplinary courses such as the ones that I have taught at Colorado College with my political science and history colleagues. In the not so distant past, I often used canonical films, but today I show more films without much artistic pretension that tend to catch the attention of our millenarian students.

For a recent team-taught introductory course “Fantasy and the Fantastic in Japanese History and Literature,” I chose the following four films (among others) to introduce students to literature and aesthetics in a historical context: Super Kabuki with fantastical animals and flying spirits from the Kojiki; what my students refer to as the “Ghostbusters” of the Heian Period; ghost stories where the Heike dead seek reprieve; and a “slash and gurgle” samurai anime of the mercurial years just prior to the Meiji Restoration. The four films, presented in chronological order, require a knowledge of literature and history in order to fully appreciate the tales and so help motivate students to study the relevant background of each historical period.

Super Kabuki
Kabuki is the iconic form of Japanese theatre. But, to the extent that my students are familiar with Kabuki at all, too often they tend to presume that its repertoire conveys a narrow range of supposed quintessential cultural values, most often in struggles between giri/ninjo (obligation vs. personal wishes). Few of my students appreciate Kabuki’s complex historical evolution since the early 1600s or its successive innovations in staging and spectacle, to say nothing of the range of its themes or approaches. Super Kabuki developed in recent decades to attempt to entice a younger Japanese crowd into the theatre with fabulous costumes, acrobatics and action and to produce new plays in modern Japanese language. An NHK film of a theatrical production of “Yamato Takeru” (1995) showcases the talents of its star, Ichikawa Ennosuke III (b. 1939) and astonishing special effects.

“Yamato Takeru” is set in a pre-historical past when Japan was not yet unified. Drawing on material from the earliest Japanese written text, the Kojiki (Record of Ancient Matters, ca. 712), the historian Umehara Takeshi has created an enchanting twentieth century kabuki classic, revolving around the court intrigue in the mythic Land of Yamato. Prince Ousu, the younger twin son of the twelfth emperor of Japan, outwits the many plans of his step-mother to have him placed in dangerous situations where he would be gloriously killed by the enemy. He perseveres over the many enemies of the Yamato Court — including the aboriginal inhabitants of Japan to the south, the Kumaso, and to the north, the Emishi. In The Nobility of Failure, Ivan Morris portrayed Yamato Takeru as the archetype of the defeated hero that reverberated through Japanese history. The usual engagement with the

The usual engagement with the musty tales of the Kojiki is a hard sell, but the mythistory of the origins of the Japanese state are foundational references for the glorification of Japanese identity, and the spectacle of Super Kabuki often informs as it captivates.

Ghostbusters
“Onmyoji” (2001), a commercially successful mainstream Japanese movie, depicts the battle with malevolent forces that was behind moving the capital to Kyoto in 794 CE. In 784, Emperor Kammu ordered the capital moved from Nara to Nagaoka. Soon afterwards, political rivalries culminated in the exile and assassination of the Emperor’s brother, Prince Sawara. When natural disasters and misfortunes plagued the new capital, it was attributed to Prince Sawara’s vengeful ghost. In an attempt to placate him, he was given posthumous promotion, and the capital moved again to the more propitious location of Heian, what would become Kyoto.

The film opens with the ominous vision of demons that have infiltrated the capital. Political jealousy and palace intrigue result in one family aligning with the evil Doson. Prince Sawara’s grave is opened to enable him to return to the capital to seek vengeance and wreak havoc. Members of the Onmyoji, the office of yin-yang, are enlisted to try to find the source of the problems. Minamoto no Hiromaki, a court official, and Abe no Seimei (played by the kyogen master Nomura Mansai), a

(continued on next page)
yin-yang sorcerer, are based on historical offices and eponymous characters. Symbolism and imagery in this film are not difficult to interpret. It is fairly easy for students to read into the darker scenes of Doson, the malign sorcerer, as he performs his magic, compared to the sunny spirtelike Seimei. Popularization of historical references presents a distant past for young Japanese to imagine. The complex value systems on display help to make the unfamiliar more accessible and to visualize the spirit possession in literary depictions from The Tale of Genji. The central place of the fantastic, and the equal weight given to the seen and unseen, allow students to enter a world that we, and modern Japanese, have lost.

**Folk Tale**

The 1964 film Kwaidan, based on Japanese folk tales retold by Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904), presents four separate ghost stories. I use the story “Mimi nashi Hoichi” (Earless Hoichi), set in the after-math of the Gempei Wars that culminated in the defeat of the Heike in 1185. “Earless Hoichi” is the story of a blind monk who carries on the tradition of the wandering Biwa player. He recites The Tale of the Heike for anyone who wishes to hear the tragic tale. 

One night when the young monk is left to look after the temple, a majestic samurai appears before him with the request that he go to a nearby manor and play for a group of visiting exalted personages. He goes, not realizing that the ghosts of the Heike have sent for him. Hoichi is taken not to a manor, but to the burial grounds that are within walking distance of the temple, and he recites the tale of the very ghosts before whom he sits. When the head priest of the temple realizes what is happening, he writes sutras on Hoichi to prevent him from being ripped to pieces and taken to join the world of the ghosts. However, the samurai ghost sees the one area on his body that had failed to be covered with sutras, and Hoichi is left earless.

“Earless Hoichi” excels as a visual text. The lavish costuming overlaid by the sonorous intoning of the epic provides a glimmer of twelfth century aristocratic life, a striking contrast with the peasants who populate the era in which Hoichi resides. The scenes of the ghosts during the recitation, splendid in their late Heian court clothing, provide an especially rich source. The deceptively simple tale is comprised of at least four levels of interpretation: the historical defeat of the Heike Clan at Dan’oura, the literary text The Tale of the Heike as recited by the blind biwa player, the folk tale that grew up around the ghost story, and finally the interpretation by the foreigner Hearn.

**Anime**

A favorite of many male students, “Samurai X” (2001) depicts assassination groups in the 1860s to show the complicated rivalry of various factions that played crucial roles during the Meiji Restoration. The story first ran as the manga “Rurouni Kenshin” serialized in Shonen Jump in the late 90s, and was made into a TV series, half a dozen OAVs, and a movie directed by Furuhashi Kazuhiro. 

Kenshin, a sword expert who had been apprenticed to the famous swordsman Hiko, later worked for the Choshu clan as assassin, killing many members of the Shogunate over a four-year period. One episode from this anime in particular shows the fervor and plotting of the late Bakumatsu Period. In 1864, Choshu plotters had planned to set fire to the city to provoke instability and chaos, and members of the Shinsengumi crushed the ring. What came to be known as the Ikeda-ya Incident is portrayed in “Samurai X.”

This popular anime is particularly effective in portraying the chaos through its “slash and gurgle,” scene-by-scene detailing of not only the swordplay, but also the political maneuvering. Emotions interplay with clan obligations, but with more fluidity than conventional giri/ninjo tension. Unlike with “Yamato Takeru,” “Onmyoji,” or “Mimi nashi Hoichi,” there is no old historical text to consult, or complicated literary layering to unpack in analyzing this film. Fantastical elements have been replaced by the intricacies of political intrigue and the machinations of civil unrest. However, the medium of animation with its drama and melodrama often allows for a clearer visual text, with each detail consciously incorporated to advance the storyline.

By opening up the door to include popular films as legitimate text in my classroom, I have found that students are willing to use creativity and imagination in both class discussion and in their written assignments. They are unafraid to treat film as a literary text and readily employ strategies usually applied to a work of fiction (foreshadowing, symbolism, imagery, and the like). At the same time, they acquire deeper understanding through contextualizing the film and relating what they see to other historical or literary texts assigned for the course.

**Discography**

Super Kabuki: “Yamato Takeru” (Shochiku Home Video, NHK, 1995, 180 minutes) 
Onmyoji (Takita Yojiro, Director, 2001, 116 minutes) 
Kwaidan [excerpt “Mimi nashi Hoichi” (Earless Hoichi)] (Kobayashi Masaki, Director, 1965, about 60 minutes) 
“Samurai X: Trust and Betrayal, Director’s Cut” (Furuhashi Kazuhiso, Director. OAV, Vol. 1; Trust; Vol. 2: Betrayal; ADV Films, 90 minutes)
Japanese Comics as Literary Art Form

Osamu Tezuka’s Phoenix Series: Teaching Manga in the Literature Classroom

Todd S. Munson
Randolph-Macon College

One issue that faces many professors at small liberal arts colleges is teaching in areas “at the edges of our competencies,” as the popular phrase goes. When faced with the task of organizing my first Japanese literature course a few years ago, I first turned to the works of Natsume Soseki, Murakami Haruki, Junichiro Tanizaki, and other canonical authors with whom I could claim some broad familiarity (though not expertise). To this roster I sprinkled some variety and diversity in terms of genre, class, and gender, working for the most part with literary anthologies published by University presses. As I came to understand, however, there was an important element missing from this mixture—and it was the one thing that many students were studying Japanese for to begin with: Japanese comics, or manga.

Our Students and Japanese Comics

Manga, for those few readers who may not know, are Japan’s great cultural export of this century. They are far and away the most popular comics in the United States, accounting for nearly 200 million dollars of sales per year.1 If you walk into Barnes and Nobles or Borders, you will see racks and racks of manga, which such titles as Naruto and Bleach; you will invariably also see teenagers sitting on the floor reading them. Some of those teenagers are my students.

A ready-made audience of student readers was something of a double-edged sword. First, like any true fans, manga aficionados know their stuff. Were I to have incorporated popular contemporary manga in my class, there would invariably have been one group of students who knew it intimately, and another group who had never heard of it, and that was a combination I wished to avoid if possible. Furthermore, until relatively recently I didn’t know my stuff at all. All I knew about manga was based on my own first-hand observations in Japan in the 1990s: that they were broadly popular in Japan, appealing not just to children but to all demographics; that manga stories were published serially, in huge phone-book size anthologies that appeared weekly or monthly; and that manga had a reputation for what in the United States would be considered unacceptable levels of sex and violence. With regard to authors, artists, history, and most important of all literary and artistic quality, I was lost. Even if I could teach a course that included manga, I wondered, was it worth it from a pedagogical standpoint?

Finding Tezuka

Faced with this dilemma, I did what historians do, and that is look for an answer in the past. Since my manga readers had

While enormously influential as the pioneer of the “story comic”—novel-form stories running hundreds or sometimes thousands of pages—Tezuka’s true significance rests with the fact that he was among the first people in any country to use the comics medium as a vehicle to grapple with the larger questions of man’s significance in the universe. Schodt, a friend of Tezuka, put his feelings this way:

Tezuka infused nearly all his stories with what came to be known as “Tezuka humanism.” Tezuka respected all people and the sanctity of life. He had an ability to look beyond the superficial actions of people and to view them in their totality, to assess them in the context of their environment, history, and even (occasionally) of their karma. As a result, Tezuka’s heroes were not two-dimensional but complex and flawed; sometimes they did the wrong, not right thing; sometimes they died.3

Schodt’s praise had put me on the path, but without English translations of Tezuka’s works, I would not have been able to proceed. Coincidentally enough, just as I was discovering Tezuka, a number of his works were being published in English translation by Viz Media. Among them was a series called Phoenix, which on examination revealed the narrative complexity and humanistic spirit Schodt described.4

Phoenix, or Hi no Tori in Japanese, was truly Tezuka’s lifework and magnum

(continued on next page)
opus; a sprawling, three thousand page meditation on human greed and finitude, he started writing it as a young man in the mid 1950s, and had not finished at the time of his death in 1989. In Phoenix, Tezuka began to perfect his vision of comics as a profound medium of expression, one that would allow him to explore the meaning and significance of human life.

Strictly speaking Phoenix is not a single work, but rather twelve separate tales; each stands alone but is linked to the others by the presence of the Phoenix, or the bird of immortality. The twelve stories in the Phoenix series veer back and forth in time; the first takes place in the 3rd century AD, while the second takes place three thousand years later. All utilize the quest for the Phoenix—and thus the quest for immortality—as a symbolic way to explore the meaning of man’s own finite existence.

In reviewing the volumes then available in English translation, I concluded that Tezuka’s works should be able to generate classroom discussions similar to those we might have about prose works such as Kokoro or “The Dancing Girl of Izu.” However, there remained the difference in narrative structure between prose literature and manga with which to contend, and rather than gloss over this issue I opted to confront it directly—which meant finding some way to discuss comics and comic narrative in a scholarly way.

Theorizing Comics as Art Form

Here I was fortunate to come across a book by comic artist Scott McCloud, entitled Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art.5 Understanding Comics is a comic book, but one which attempts to deconstruct the language and grammar of graphic storytelling in a very sophisticated way. As McCloud explains it, the key to comics storytelling—or the “grammar” of comics, as he terms it—lies in the transition from panel to panel, specifically how much time or action elapses between each panel.

The most common type of transition in the Western comic is the action-to-action transition, in which each panel moves us forward one brief and discreet action at a time. We do not see every single moment that occurs, because we do not need to—our brains easily fill in the gaps of missing information.

The second most common type is subject-to-subject transition, in which sufficient time or space passes in between panels to deliver the reader from one discrete scene and into the next. In order to ease this potentially jarring transition of both time and space, there is often a caption accompanying such transitions, which might say something like “Meanwhile, back at the Daily Planet.”

McCloud argues that the key to understanding manga—and of Tezuka’s monumental impact on the genre—lies in two other panel transitions, which until very recently were rarely seen in the West. The first are moment to moment transitions, in which the passage of time from panel to panel is extremely short; for example, we might see a character slowly turn his head over the course of several panels.

The other transition—and the one that really sets manga apart from Western comics—is what McCloud refers to as aspect-to-aspect. In aspect-to-aspect transition, time does not pass at all, but rather the eye or “camera” lingers on different aspects of a single scene. As McCloud says, “Rather than acting as a bridge between separate moments, the reader [looking at aspect to aspect transitions] must assemble a single moment using scattered fragments.”6

Both moment-to-moment and aspect-to-aspect transitions are credited to Tezuka’s own invention, and reflect his own exposure to Hollywood and Japanese cinema. Besides his penchant for drawing “cartoony” figures with oversized eyes (a reflection of his love for Disney characters), Tezuka’s drawing style also incorporated a distinct break from the past in his usage of cinematic elements—using a variety of angles and cuts to tell stories in a way that reflected his knowledge of Western animation and film. As he wrote in his autobiography,

I felt after the war that existing comics were limiting . . . as if seated in an audience viewing a stage, where the actors emerge from the wings and interact. This made it impossible to create dramatic or psychological effects, so I began to use cinematic techniques. . . . I experimented with close-ups and different angles, and instead of using only one frame for an action scene, I made a point of depicting a movement or facial expression with many frames, even many pages. . . . The result was a super-long comic that ran to 500, 600, or even 1000 pages.”7

Applying Theory to Phoenix

While space does not permit an extended application of McCloud’s ideas to the Phoenix series, a few examples should communicate a sense of how Tezuka’s style can be discussed in the classroom. The first is from an early volume entitled Future, originally published in 1967-1968 [Figure 1]. Here we learn that two city-states, each ruled by a powerful computer, have committed to a course of mutual destruction; the panels presented on this page all occur during the final minute of their existences.

The three panels that comprise roughly the middle section represent a typical example of aspect to aspect transition, in that each image moves through space but not time; we move (right to left) from the ticking clock, the wind blowing...
through the grass, and then to the character
of Dr. Saruta, who gazes on from within a
glass dome. These panels—comparable to
the impressionistic “pillow shots” of
celebrated director Yasujiro Ozu—do not
move the narrative forward in any way, but
set a contemplative, forbidding mood, and
serve to remind the viewer of nature and
creation in the face of ultimate destruction.

Another Phoenix story set in the
distant future is Resurrection, and this is
the volume I ultimately adopted in my
literature course last year. Originally
published in serial format from 1970 to
1972, Resurrection is the tale of a young
man who tries but ultimately fails to acquire
the blood of the Phoenix. In this scene
[Figure 2] the protagonist is regaining
consciousness after having been shot and
having lost his arm; first we see a house,
followed by a long moment-to-moment
passage (again, reading left to right) where
he struggles to raise himself up with his
remaining limb.

The middle three panels—which
convey no physical movement, but rather
a “camera” movement towards the main
character—are reminiscent of an axial cut
in cinema, a technique often employed by
another celebrated Japanese director, Akira
Kurosawa. Such panel transitions
dramatize the character’s supreme effort,
and communicate a strong—if jarring—
impact.

Finally, let us turn to a page from a
volume entitled Karma. The story is set in
the eighth century and stars a character who
begins his life as a thief and beggar, but
eventually becomes a revered Buddhist
monk. On this page [Figure 3] we see
another character, a master woodcarver
who was attacked by the thief and loses
the use of his right arm. In a series of panels,
using moment-to-moment and aspect-to-
aspect transitions, we experience the
woodcarver’s struggles in an emotional and
personal way.

The three pages represent the tiniest
fraction of Tezuka’s output, but they
convey what made his work so special. He
was above all an innovative storyteller with
a very vivid imagination, and a man who
dedicated his talents to exploring the
dimensions of the human experience. My
students had no problem recognizing these
qualities in his work, and in the end I found
that their previous exposure to manga was
not much of a factor in influencing their
responses to his artistry. The aficionados
had little comparative advantage: we were
working with complex texts at a level of
theoretical complexity that caught them off
guard, which in some cases helped shape
their own interest in the genre. For the non-manga
students, I’d like to think that the inclusion
of the Tezuka material (paired with
McCloud’s analytical framework) brought
to the students not just an appreciation for
manga, but also a deeper understanding of
graphic storytelling as a truly literary
medium. For their instructor, this was
certainly the case.

Footnotes

1 Milton Griepp, “ICv2 White Paper—Graphic
Novels: Growth and Change,” presented at
the New York Comic Con, February 22,
2007.
2 Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese
Comics (Kodansha International Ltd., 1983);
Dreamland Japan: Writings on Modern
Manga (Stone Bridge Press, 1996).
3 Schodt, Dreamland Japan, pp. 236-237.
4 See Viz’s website at http://www.viz.com/
5 Scott McCloud, Understanding Comics: The
Invisible Art (Kitchen Sink Press, 1993).
6 McCloud, p. 79.
7 Schodt, Manga! Manga!, p. 63.
Mao’s Dao and the Core Curriculum on Western Thought

Stephen Herschler
Oglethorpe University

Editors’ Note: Last year, in response to the publication of Chang and Halliday’s Mao: The Unknown Story, we called on readers to respond with their views on the controversy surrounding that work and on how, if at all, the book affected their teaching. We were pleased to see that one of the liveliest panels at the 2007 Conference was entitled “The Mao Controversy.” Stephen Herschler and Jinxing Chen (see following article) were two of the panelists, and we are grateful to them for allowing us to publish their presentations and keep the discussion moving forward.

Introducing university students to Asia at Oglethorpe presents a particular challenge as our four-year core curriculum, a sequence of nine courses required of all students over and above any of their major requirement, significantly reduces students’ opportunity to ‘discover’ the wonders of Asia through serendipitous course selection. Yet, as all students must take core classes, I have found that this challenge can, dialectically, be turned into an advantage: by including Asian texts in core courses, we have the opportunity to expand the horizons of a broad spectrum of students.

I teach the sophomore core course in which students read the works of influential Western thinkers, including Smith, Tocqueville, Durkheim, Weber, Nietzsche, and Marx, so as to consider different conceptualizations of ‘Human Nature and the Social Order.’ I add to the course’s core texts, Mao Zedong’s essay ‘On Contradiction’ as I find it serves not only to clarify Marx’s ideas, it also enriches the course by introducing elements of a non-Western philosophical tradition. Yet teaching Mao poses particular pedagogical and political challenges.

Teaching Marx to American students is no easy task. Although I emphasize his historical importance as well as the respect his ideas hold in much of the world, most students consider him irrelevant and his turgid writing style all but impenetrable. I guide them through some of Marx’s main concepts, including teleological history, stages, classes, revolution, means of production, relations of production, etc. ‘contradiction,’ however, does. Students are amused and intrigued to hear that at the individual level, perhaps they are not ‘conflicted’ but rather ‘contradicted’ and, moreover, that Mao would see personal development and life itself as dependent on contradictions.

‘Contradiction’ also serves as a conceptually effective contrast to the views of the course’s other thinkers. For example, Mao’s critique of ‘mechanical materialism’ and ‘vulgar evolutionism’ can be readily related to Adam Smith’s incrementalist view of progress involving an inexorable march to ‘universal opulence’ (or Mao’s lauding of ‘struggle’ can be contrasted with Smith’s depiction of the ‘angry man’ in Theory of Moral Sentiments). Mao’s idea that contradiction is vital for life itself contrasts effectively with Durkheim’s premise that society has a collective purpose. And, of course, it fuels the debate with Weber’s polemic against historical materialism in The Protestant Ethic.

Mao on Marx

Mao’s ‘On Contradiction’ serves admirably in giving students a sense of the propulsive force driving history. Students are grateful for the essay’s clear organization and writing style. Since most of these students know nothing about China, I emphasize that they should scan paragraphs in which Mao applies general theoretical insights to historical specifics. Fortunately, Mao places his general points at the start of each section.

Part of the utility of ‘On Contradiction’ lies in its distilling a complex idea into a term that students more readily understand.... ‘Contradiction’ also serves as a conceptually effective contrast to the views of the course’s other thinkers.
The Dao and Mao

Yet Mao does far more than simply ‘translate’ Marx. Stuart Schram and others have referred to Mao’s ‘Sinicized Marxism,’ one evincing traits of traditional Chinese philosophical thinking. This is where and how Mao makes an Asian contribution to the core curriculum. I have found Chenshan Tian’s work Chinese Dialectics useful in tracing the relationship between correlative thinking and Mao’s conception of the dialectic. Tian’s argument is too nuanced for the course, but I can relate his ideas to aspects and symbols of Asian philosophy with which students are familiar. If dialectics is a ‘dao’ and, as Tian writes, “a yin and a yang is what we call ‘dao’,” then the ubiquitous yin-yang symbol (indeed, often at least one student in the class either is either adorned or tattooed with it) becomes a useful graphic representation of the dialectic—with the vital addition of struggle, of course. Hence, I supplement the Marxist unit of the course with a mini-lecture on Daoist thought, a topic that students hold in much higher esteem than Marxism.

While a background in Marxism is imperative to understanding Mao, Mao does stand as a theorist in his own right. Mao’s infusion of Marxist dialectics with correlative thinking shifts the Marxist view of historical development in subtle yet significant ways. Two changes in particular have been much noted by scholars. First, Mao breaks with a pure materialism by avowing that sometimes the social superstructure can play a revolutionary role in transforming the economic base—hence the Great Leap Forward. Second, Mao challenges the idea that antagonistic relations between a duality will transform into non-antagonistic relations after the Revolution by emphasizing the violent struggle between a couplet’s counterparts—hence the Cultural Revolution. These revisions to quotidian Marxist ideas prove pedagogically useful as students have to debate, in essays if not in class itself, such issues as whether economics always drives society or whether progress is possible without struggle and even violence. Thus, Mao contributes to the core curriculum in part by clarifying Marx’s ideas, and doing so through terms that students more readily comprehend. Mao also engages with and expands the core’s philosophical terrain by including a significant, distinctive mode of thinking that lies largely outside the purview of the Western philosophical tradition, concurrently enriching and problematizing Western conceptualizations of human nature and the Social Order.

Mao makes strikingly clear that our ideas have consequences. Mao’s ideas are intellectually interesting and pedagogically useful. At the same time, they have been responsible for tremendous pain and destruction. Mao makes strikingly clear that our ideas have consequences. While I argue throughout the course that the ideas we study have shaped the world we live in and the ways we understand ourselves, no other thinker in the course has been in a position to implement their ideas so fully and directly. In this respect, relative to the other theorists we read in the class, Mao is an outlier.

To achieve true pedagogical ‘balance’ in the class, I could present relatively pure examples of how the ideas of each theorist have been implemented. That would prove extremely difficult in practice, however, as those who have used the ideas of Smith or Weber, for example, invariably have done so selectively and under circumstances very different from those in which the ideas were originally crafted. No tidy comparative cases present themselves.

Another way to attempt to address the issue in a ‘fair and equitable’ way is to explicitly debate throughout the term the impact of these philosophers’ ideas as they have been applied to the world. For example, supplementing neo-liberalism as a proxy for Smithian economics and modernization theory as a proxy for Weber’s rationalization, one might explore the constructive and destructive impact of these theories when implemented. Here too, of course, the line between the theory and the consequences is still more tenuous than is true for Mao and Mao Zedong Thought. It might help somewhat to have a particular case or set of cases to focus upon so that students better appreciate how each theory provides its own particular way of analyzing and evaluating the world.

Perhaps the utility in using Mao’s thought for the course includes the very cognitive discomfort he generates. ‘Human Nature and the Social Order’ should challenge the assumptions of the students as well as my own. Even if Mao conceded the Great Leap Forward to be a mistake, he might well dismiss those lamenting his political campaigns for inducing ‘pain and destruction.’ Had he foreseen China following the path of ‘reform and opening’ upon his death, he may well have determined Chinese society to be wracked with revolution-threatening antagonisms requiring even greater and more violent struggle to resolve. Mao might say the problem is not with Mao Thought, either in theory or in practice, but rather with my bourgeois, Rightist thinking—a thought provoking assertion, for students and teacher alike.
Wild Swans as Class Text

Swans’ Seduction in Teaching the Mao Era

Jinxing Chen
Edgewood College

Although Jung Chang and John Halliday’s recent book, Mao: The Unknown Story has sparked intense discussion in the academy, not many instructors have used it as a source in their teaching. It is Jung Chang’s early publication, Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China that has enjoyed greater popularity and become one of the most adopted texts in college classrooms since the early 1990s. I have also utilized Wild Swans as one of the main sources in my past teaching. Both the benefits it brought and the challenges it posed were obvious in my classroom.

The book has many advantages as a teaching source. Written in a novelistic style, the memoir smoothly weaves modern Chinese history into the lives of three generations of Chinese women. The family episodes are well carved and touching; the narrative is clear and eloquent, bringing “dry” history to life.

I chose Wild Swans for other specific reasons. The course I taught was History of the People’s Republic of China, with no prerequisite. The stories of Jung Chang’s grandmother and mother were able to serve as an introduction to both the old China of the early 20th century and the new China that began with the establishment of the Communist government. The family life she described before 1949 provided concrete examples for us to learn about Chinese traditional culture. As Jung’s grandmother’s and mother’s experiences are told against the backdrop of major historical events, I was able to design an assignment based upon their stories, asking the students to examine the issues and problems in Chinese society prior to 1949 before we moved into the Mao era.

When the class began to study the early period of the People’s Republic, the story of Jung Chang’s father became a useful illustration in our discussion of the challenges and problems the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) encountered after 1949. The author portrays her father as an upstanding party cadre, representative of those who selflessly devoted themselves to Communist ideals in the early years of the People’s Republic. He battled against the corrupt officials outside of the family, on the one hand, and his wife within the family, on the other hand, so as to uphold the Party’s principles. His story enabled me to construct another assignment, asking the students to examine the rising issues within the Chinese Communist Party after it turned into the ruling party after 1949, in conjunction with their reading of Wang Meng’s short novel, A New Young Man at the Organization Department.

Although Jung Chang’s father appeared as an archetypal Communist official in the book, his family inevitably enjoyed the many privileges ordinary Chinese could never attain. For example, Jung Chang as a child lived in a spacious house inside of a guarded compound, went to a key middle school in the city, and received favorable treatment from her teachers. She was able to leave the countryside for factory work much earlier than did most sent-down youths during the Cultural Revolution. She soon entered college, and then went to England shortly after the end of the Cultural Revolution. It would be impossible to convince any knowledgeable Chinese person that each move of her career had nothing do with her family’s “back-door” connections. The author’s experience gives us a glimpse into the life of a privileged child growing up in a ranking official family. This, I hoped, could help the students understand the emergence and development of a new elite class and a bureaucratic state in the People’s Republic.

The author’s experience gives us a glimpse into the life of a privileged child growing up in a ranking official family. This, I hoped, could help the students understand the emergence and development of a new elite class and a bureaucratic state in the People’s Republic.

The book has many advantages as a teaching source. Written in a novelistic style, the memoir smoothly weaves modern Chinese history into the lives of three generations of Chinese women. The family episodes are well carved and touching; the narrative is clear and eloquent, bringing the “dry” history into life.
the experience of many, including party cadres, intellectuals, and others. Jung Chang’s own encounters enabled the students to have a close look at the experience of Chinese youth during the Cultural Revolution.

The memoir was indeed the most popular reading among all of my texts, and the students loved it. As most of them were of white European descent growing up in rural Wisconsin, with little knowledge of China, I could see that Wild Swans contributed significantly to their increased interest in China and Chinese history. However, the students’ interest was accompanied by a number of pedagogical challenges. Though a handy source for various discussion topics, the book did not help achieve much of what I had wished the students would have achieved.

Problems Unfold with the Text

As many of us may agree, though its tone is much more measured in comparison with Mao: The Unknown Story, Wild Swans obviously has no intention of addressing the complexity of Mao as a historical figure or treating the Mao era as one of the phases in China’s continuous struggle for modernization. To assist the students in acquiring a good understanding of Communist victory in 1949, I found that additional readings were needed. What the students obtained from Chang’s book was an understanding of the problems of China and of an incompetent Guomindang regime, but they did not learn much about why the CCP won its victory.

More problems appeared when we began to examine the Mao era after 1949. The father’s story did not help the students develop a critical view of rising issues within the Party and the government. Jung Chang’s description of constant conflict between her mother and her father, their argument as to whether the family or the party came first, seemed to strengthen some students’ pre-conceived view of the CCP and the PRC. Influenced by Jung Chang, they were generally sympathetic to the mother. They believed that all her mother asked for was reasonable and that her father’s insistence on the party’s principles made no sense, if not being completely self-serving. They did not see that it was exactly the power abused by party officials and their families, along with other types of corruption, nepotism, and bureaucratism, that caused tremendous problems to the CCP as it became a ruling party.

In our discussion of the Cultural Revolution, Jung Chang’s depiction of her family experience in those years led many students to jump to quick conclusion: Mao was China’s Hitler. A student of mine was quite representative when she wrote: “As an American, I knew very little about Mao. I had only seen his name printed among the other notorious 20th century killers like Hitler, Lenin and Stalin.” Wild Swans certainly bolstered this existing image among my students.

But I wanted to show the students a multifaceted Mao era. I assigned, for example, Chen Village Under Mao and Deng, by Anita Chan, Richard Madsen, and Jonathan Unger, and alternatively, The Spiral Road: Change in a Chinese Village through the Eyes of a Communist Party Leader, by Huang Shu-min. Chinese rural life during the Mao era in these two monographs demonstrated many diverse and complicated relationships between public politics, peasants’ interest, family feuds, clan connections, and village religious life. The two books also make an excellent connection between the Mao era and the post-Mao reform era. However, it seemed that, captivated by Wild Swans, many students did not fully grasp the links between the eras.

We instructors all agree that we ought to challenge our students intellectually, expose them to various controversies and sources, and help them to make intelligent judgments. Yet, we also have our own views and interpretations, and we want the students to grasp the messages we want them to take home. The teaching sources we select undoubtedly make a difference. Many recollections, eyewitness accounts, and memoirs regarding the Mao era have been published in the last three decades. The value of these works is that the authors have had their own experiences with the historical eras they described; they integrate large historical events into their personal stories, and the narratives are usually vivid and moving.

Students generally find these primary accounts much more readable than standard history books. However, most of these works, shaped by strong personal biases, portray the Mao era as a dark age if nothing else.1 If instead we want our students to acquire a broad historical perspective and see many entangled social and cultural dimensions of the Mao era, we may have to be very careful about adopting them as teaching materials.

Different from Mao: the Unknown Story, which launches a bold all-out assault on Mao Zedong and therefore has instantly driven away many instructors, Wild Swans reads more like the moans of a beautiful, victimized swan and is very appealing to many. Its soft, sentimental tone is seductive, and it takes his story at face value students will easily be led into accepting a one-sided view of Mao’s China. Wild Swans is surely useful in teaching about China. However, it may serve us better if we utilize it for upper-level classes, where our main job is to tackle the different perspectives in studying modern China or the Mao era.

Footnotes

1In the recent years, other recollections have been published that, taking issues with the mainstream dark age narratives, intend to provide a multidimensional view of the Mao era. For examples, see Xueping Zhong, Wang Zheng, and Bai Di, ed. Some of Us: Chinese Women Growing Up in the Mao Era, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001; Ye Weili with Ma Xiaodong, Growing Up in The People’s Republic: Conversations between Two Daughters of China’s Revolution, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
Exposing Incoming Students to Asian Studies: The Fortunate Intersection of First Year Seminar and a SIT Faculty Development Program

Susan Orpett Long
John Carroll University

Editors’ Note: Susan Long and Christopher Hall (whose article follows on page 26) were two members of a 2006 School for International Training-sponsored faculty development study tour in China, focusing on a new study abroad opportunity centering on Traditional Chinese Medicine. The two articles in this issue of ASIANetwork Exchange are based on presentations given at the 2007 ASIANetwork Conference.

For a number of years, members of John Carroll University’s East Asian Studies program have been puzzled over how we might better capture the attention and interest of first year students early in their college careers, so as to expose them to Asia and to better prepare them for their futures in the interdependent world in which they will live. Over several years, we explored with the directors of our First Year Seminar program ways in which East Asia could be incorporated into the curriculum.

In 2005-2006, we were fortunate to see several factors come together in a way that benefits our program and, we believe, our students. These included the selection of a theme for the Seminar for which an excellent text on China was available, the offer of a School for International Training (SIT) faculty development program in China in the summer of 2006, and excellent cooperation between the First Year Seminar Committee and the East Asian Studies faculty.

The First Year Seminar is a course required of all incoming first year students at John Carroll University. Approximately 750 students a year are divided into 40 sections of a course that earns three academic credits. A common theme and three common texts are selected on a two year cycle by a faculty committee. This committee has regularly selected at least one text on an international topic related to the theme of the course. The common readings are supplemented by guest lecture and film options, with each faculty member creating his or her own syllabus from this core of required and optional activities. The course is intended to be strongly interdisciplinary and discussion-focused.

Relating the First Year Seminar to Asian Studies

For the 2006 and 2007 Seminar, the committee chose the theme, “The Human Body in Art, Science and Literature.” As a means of incorporating material about the way the human body has been viewed cross-culturally, the East Asian Studies faculty recommended inclusion of perspectives on the body offered by Confucianism and Taoism, a focus on the portrayal of the human body in Chinese art, and the treatment of the body in traditional Chinese medicine.

Inclusion of such material in the First Year Seminar, however, depended on several factors: an appropriate text that would serve as a common reading, the willingness of the East Asian Studies faculty to assist with on-campus faculty development, and the availability of supplemental speakers and films. Since the East Asian Studies faculty were committed to this initiative and numerous films and community resources were available, we recommended David Eisenberg’s Encounters with Qi (WW Norton & Co., 1995) as a possible text. I had previously used this book in my class, “Health and Healing in East Asia,” and knew that students found it engaging and accessible. It is cross-disciplinary, and provides plentiful material for discussion, even for those without background on East Asia.

One drawback to Encounters with Qi, however, is that it is over 20 years old. Although I have some background in medical anthropology and Chinese studies, my own research has focused upon biomedicine in Japan, and I had no first-hand experience with what is called Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) in contemporary China. Students, as did my colleagues, wanted to know what is happening in China now and how it relates to their own lives.

First-Hand Experience

When I heard about a short faculty development program focused on TCM, I quickly applied to it. It seemed that even with limited first-hand experience, learning about TCM in China would not only be relevant, but also would offer an updated sense of the place of TCM in contemporary Chinese policy and health care. I was fortunate to be accepted into the ASIANetwork program, “Access to Asia—China: Public Health and Traditional Chinese Medicine,” organized by SIT and funded by the Freeman Foundation.

At John Carroll University, First Year Seminar faculty development workshops are held for several afternoons in May and are held two additional half-day sessions in August prior to the first time a new theme is introduced. At the May workshop, I gave a presentation about the basic elements of classical Chinese thinking about the body (ideas of balance, humans’ place in the universe, etc.) and TCM (forms of diagnosis and treatment). Our colleague and East Asian art...
historian Diana Chou introduced the FYS faculty to the ways that the human body is depicted (or not) in Chinese art. Together we presented basic information on the Chinese language, including how to read pinyin, and a simple outline of Chinese history. These presentations and substantial bibliographies were posted on the FYS Blackboard site for faculty to review and/or use as they wished.

In late June I met colleagues from a variety of disciplines from colleges and universities around the US for nine days of intensive study of TCM and other health practices in Kunming and Lijiang, in Yunnan province. We were given lectures and demonstrations on such topics as TCM theory, methods of diagnosis, herbal medicine, acupuncture and cupping, massage, and taijiquan from academics and practitioners. We were also able to try our own hands at some of these techniques and learned about balance, diet, and herbs through experiencing delicious meals.

In addition, there were presentations on health policy in China, and on the interface of TCM and biomedicine regarding AIDS and women’s health. We learned about health issues for minority populations and traditional Dongba and Tibetan medicine in lectures and demonstrations. This classroom learning was supplemented by field trips that included tours of a TCM hospital, a women’s and children’s (biomedical) hospital, a Tibetan Buddhist temple, a Daoist temple and herb garden, and a park where we observed popular early morning practices of taiji and other forms of exercise.

Sharing First-Hand Experience

Upon returning home, my problem was how to “translate” the first-hand excitement of such a stimulating adventure into something useful for my colleagues who would be teaching about Chinese perceptions and treatments of the body. I was given about an hour and a half in the August faculty development workshop, for which I prepared a Powerpoint presentation with the goal of updating the Eisenberg text by asking the following questions:

- How has China changed?
- How have images of the human body changed?
- What does TCM look like in China today?
- How is TCM integrated into contemporary Chinese society?

I tried to convey the dynamism of modern China as well as the rural-urban, large city-regional city, and social class disparities I observed during my time there. I presented images of the human body that I saw on billboards, shop windows, and on the street. I described what I had learned from reading and had observed in my limited time about the place of TCM in contemporary China, discussing continuities and changes in ideas about prevention, treatment modalities, medical education, and use of TCM by the public. I suggested to my colleagues from various departments around the university that TCM could be studied as one of the multiple options for health care, as bodily practice, as part of the Chinese capitalist economy, as political ideology and behavior, as a topic of scientific investigation, and as an alternative world view. I challenged them to question the idea of “tradition” as a cultural relic and see what uses TCM has today for Chinese politics, economics, and for people’s lives. This presentation, like the May one, was posted on Blackboard for reference and for possible classroom use, along with an expanded bibliography that included films on TCM.

In other ways, I attempted to share my experience of the SIT program. With First Year Seminar funds, I purchased hands-on materials such as acupuncture models, charts, and needles, glass cups, and moxa sticks to bring back to campus. These were kept in the FYS office and were made available to any of the FYS faculty to use in class. I provided an introduction to the FYS director of a local American practitioner of TCM who was invited to campus to give a lecture to two groups of 250 FYS students. A colleague helped locate a taijiquan instructor who was willing to work with the students of interested faculty members to teach them some of the basics of the practice. Some faculty also took students on field trips to one of the several herbal pharmacies in our area. In these ways we attempted to duplicate, with the obvious limitations of being in Cleveland, the first-hand experience I had with the study of TCM in China.

Results

The benefits of this collaboration between East Asian Studies and the First Year Seminar have been substantial. It demonstrated the way that area studies can enrich the curriculum and it exposed students to a part of the world about which most knew little. Encounters with Qi proved to be popular with both students and faculty. Based on course evaluations, the FYS director concluded, “Students loved it.” At a faculty evaluation meeting, one colleague noted, “It was a good exposure to a non-western culture,” and another reported that he had begun to explore acupuncture as a complementary treatment for his own health problem. The FYS Committee decided to use the book again this fall.

Of course we are hoping that a positive first experience with East Asian Studies will encourage more students to take additional courses that are part of our East Asian Studies concentration, and consider study abroad opportunities in this part of the world. We have seen increased interest in our Chinese language course and in our China study abroad program at the Beijing Center. Perhaps this interest would have (continued on page 4)
To the delight of their parents, many college freshmen come in declaring themselves to be “pre-med.” In truth only a small percentage of these students will actually realize this goal. The student that is ultimately successful in matriculating into medical school is usually a model of perseverance and focus. My five years as the pre-medical advisor at a school known for its high success rate for medical school admission has brought me into contact with many such students. These individuals are far more likely to sacrifice nights out with friends to study. They spend weekends and summers volunteering in emergency rooms, participating in directed research projects, and studying for the MCAT, the notoriously difficult medical school entrance exam. In short these students are highly motivated to succeed. Some might say they are at times too driven.

Many people argue that a student’s undergraduate years should be a time for exploration and discovery. That is the basis of a liberal arts education. But such an education shouldn’t be simply about academic exploration, but rather a time to examine one’s own place in the world and come to terms with the responsibilities of being an adult. It is also important to provide opportunities to explore how other people live, an exercise that often brings a new gratitude and appreciation for one’s own situation. Simply attending college, especially if it means being away from home, is often perceived to provide all the new freedom and worldly insights any student should require to make the transition from being dependent to independent. Many of those students motivated to more fully explore the world find these eye-opening opportunities through study abroad programs.

“I’m Pre-Med. I Can’t Study Abroad”

In contrast, for those driven to attend medical school, the academic experience frequently becomes an extension of high school, with the student rarely considering activities beyond those perceived to be steps toward medical school admission. Unfortunately they fail to realize that their time for exploring the world from the emotional perspective of a young adult is fleeting. Once in medical school free time is hard to find, a situation that only gets worse in a medical residency program. After that time has to be invested in establishing a practice, and from that point on, they are largely at the mercy of the appointment book. What is frequently lacking for these students is that singular experience that they look back on and say, “That changed the way I saw the world.”

To realign their focus to considering studying abroad is often difficult. The suggestion frequently elicits a response that amounts to “I don’t want to get distracted from getting into medical school.” It’s at this point that I begin running through the list of reasons that they actually need to participate in study abroad as a way to stand out from the plethora of other outstanding students competing for those coveted spots. Here I’ll briefly outline the advantages gained by the pre-medical students when they participate in study abroad programs. This will be followed by a specific focus on the additional benefits of the SIT study abroad program focused on traditional Chinese medicine and public health. The astute reviewer of [medical school] applications knows that a student that has participated in study abroad programs is far more likely to be an independent thinker, someone that goes beyond convention and wants to experience something outside the confines of the United States pop culture. This translates into a practicing physician who likely thinks “outside the box” of a traditional medical education, openly considering alternative avenues for care and treatment.

The medical schools are awash in applications from gifted students. Grade point averages between 3.8 and 4.0 are expected, and MCAT scores above 30 are certainly common. Once these criteria have been met, the astute reviewer looks for the “extras” embedded within the application to make one stand out from all the other motivated people. Physician shadowing, volunteer work, and glowing letters of recommendation are all expected to be in there as well. What are considered extraordinary are those voluntary experiences that demonstrate a broader cultural education and interest in the lives of others. The astute reviewer of such applications knows that a student that has participated in study abroad programs is far more likely to be an independent thinker, someone that goes beyond convention and wants to experience something outside the confines of the United States pop culture. This translates into a practicing physician who likely thinks “outside the box” of a traditional medical education, openly considering alternative avenues for care and treatment. This is especially true if the travel experience takes the student to a country where healthcare is considered adequate even in the absence of the technology that physicians in the U. S. so heavily rely upon. Despite the arrogance most medical students demonstrate in believing the only real physicians are practicing in the United States, the most outstanding diagnosticians I have ever witnessed were those in developing countries where ordering a battery of laboratory tests was out of the question.
question. If the television character featured in the series “House” were real, I would suspect he was trained and/or practiced in Ecuador or Vietnam, not in the United States.

With only their perspective from the spoiled perch of privilege to draw on, the conditions and challenges dictating healthcare in developing countries are always eye opening for students from the U. S. Few forget the sight of a small child carrying a five-gallon bucket of muddy water up a steep hill to their home. This always seems to lead to a more empathetic view of those that have to awake each morning to face these challenges. Many students that have participated in such study abroad programs come home with a greater sense of charity and desire to reach out. Inevitably the impact of these experiences finds its way into the essays required by all medical school applicants.

An Ideal Program: Chinese Traditional Medicine

When it comes to suggesting a specific study abroad experience to a pre-medical student there are few choices that combine the more general life changing experiences of exploration of a truly foreign culture while providing a program that examines a healthcare system that has been distilled through 2000 years of experience. The course on Public Health and Traditional Chinese Medicine through the School for International Training (SIT) is one such offering. Based at the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) in the city of Kunming in Yunnan Province, China, this course immerses the student in an intensive exploration of arguably the oldest culture and healthcare system on earth. The participant receives lessons in the Mandarin language and Chinese culture (2 credits/30 classroom hours) and more importantly to the medically inclined, 90 hours (6 credits) of instruction and training on TCM techniques and the healthcare system.

There are several reasons why the study of TCM should be high on the “to-do” list of any practicing or future physician. First is the recognized success the Chinese have historically enjoyed in maintaining a relatively healthy populace by stressing a philosophy toward health maintenance rather than treating symptoms and pathology. The success of the Chinese has been recognized in the West, as evidenced through the adoption of many basic TCM techniques. For example, the idea that diet and exercise are fundamental to good health has been a long recognized foundation of TCM. This is an idea that is relatively new in the West, where the dominant strategy had been to wait until sick and then treat the symptoms. Techniques such as acupuncture and deep tissue massage are increasingly accepted by Western medicine as offering genuine therapeutic value. Indeed the holistic approach to medicine, one that looks at the whole person rather than simply treating a particular symptom, launched the concept of osteopathic medicine, and as such has its roots in TCM. The contributions of TCM to the field of pharmacology also deserves acknowledgement from the West. The health benefits of green tea, artemisin, and quinine, all historically associated with TCM, have been scientifically demonstrated.1

Integration of Chinese and Western Medicine

Another unique approach to the SIT course is the examination of the way Western medicine is being incorporated into the traditional Chinese system. Indeed many of the lecturers for the course hold dual degrees, one in TCM and another from a “western” medical school. It is revealing that the medical degree in TCM requires a longer course of study than that of a traditional western medical degree. The program highlights the blending of these two very different, but ultimately cooperative approaches to healthcare. The instructors offer examples of when they might apply the TCM techniques to a patient, and when they feel the more Western approach is warranted. The students are also taken to various rural areas where they meet and learn from “Barefoot” doctors, the traditional rural healers; and participate in conducting health surveys and epidemiologic studies. Finally the program provides insights into the way the Communist government manages the massive logistical challenge of providing healthcare. All this is structured around an immersion into the Chinese culture, with various exercises designed to build student confidence in coping with challenges, invaluable lessons to a future physician.

Typical pre-medical student are normally highly focused and driven toward success. What they may be ultimately missing, though, are those experiences that make them unique candidates in a field of accomplished scholars. Study abroad courses that allow a pre-medical student to study a successful, albeit different, approach to medicine, while gaining cultural insights and self-confidence, are opportunities that should be presented and hopefully utilized. In addition to standing out on a medical school application the experience almost certainly will provide a lifetime of benefits.

References
Since its inception, Adam Matthew Digital has been striving to provide significant and useful digital resources for teaching and research in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Flagship projects such as Empire Online (looking at the rise and fall of the British Empire), Everyday Life and Women in America and Mass Observation Online have already reached a wide audience, and have been adopted as teaching resources at many universities worldwide.

Always keen to develop specific resources for Asian Studies, we undertook meetings with librarians and academics in the field and listened to their requests. As a result we have created China: Trade, Politics and Culture 1793-1980 to fulfill a clear need for a wide ranging English language resource that not only spanned this period of great change in China, but also allowed students to perform their own detailed academic research using original historical documents.

We have been guided by the many discussions that we have had, and also by an excellent panel of consultant editors, who are experts in their field. Professor Robert Bickers of Bristol University, Professor Richard Horowitz of California State University Northridge, and Dr Wong Man Kong of Hong Kong Baptist University have each provided us with valuable insights regarding key original sources, teaching trends and requirements, and are providing substantive supporting essays to show ways in which the material can be approached.

Professor Bickers has noted that “we cannot understand the contemporary world unless we understand China, and we cannot understand contemporary China unless we understand its past”. China: Trade, Politics and Culture 1793-1980 goes a long way toward facilitating this understanding. It is brimming with images of original source documents from libraries and archives across the world, principally from the School of Oriental and African Studies and the British Library, London, but also from the Cambridge University Library, the Church Missionary Society, Duke University, the National Archives at Kew, the National Library of New Zealand and the Yale Divinity Library. These sources illustrate, through manuscript reports, diaries, letters and eye-witness accounts, events from the fateful Macartney Embassy episode of 1793 through to the birth and early years of the PRC. There are wonderful sources for social and cultural history, political history and the history of trade.

Key documents relating to the Chinese Maritime customs service, from the recollections of Robert Hart to Frederick Maze, are accessible and searchable alongside diaries, logbooks, illustrations and original reports of diplomats, missionaries and businessmen.

There are letters relating to the first opium war, survivors’ descriptions of the Boxer Rebellion, and tantalising glimpses of life in China from the collected diaries and personal photographs of the Bowra family.

A fully searchable run of the missionary journal The Chinese Recorder describes life in China from 1867-1941, while official government files from the National Archives track postwar trade between Britain and China and give accounts of the Nixon and Heath visits to China and the thawing of East-West relations. Further Foreign Office records and papers of individuals such as Rewi Alley provide contrasting views of life in the PRC.

All of the material has been carefully indexed and all of the printed items have been double-keyed and are fully searchable. Over 400 colour paintings, maps and drawings by English and Chinese
artists, as well as photographs, sketches and ephemeral items provide a striking visual accompaniment to these documentary sources. A comprehensive list of contents can be found on our website, www.amdigital.co.uk

Creating a digital resource is a lengthy process, requiring care and attention to detail—and a real and genuine passion for the project. It is a truly global process, involving input—fittingly—from partners in China, India, Britain and North America. It was wonderful to be able to announce the first details of the project at the recent Association for Asian Studies conference in Boston and to receive so many favourable comments from scholars. The quality of the original documents coupled with an innovative design, extra features such as an interactive map and slideshow, and the undeniable benefits of full text searching, make it an invaluable tool in the field of Asian studies. 

China: Trade, Politics and Culture 1793-1980 will be published in September and free one month trials are available to all interested scholars.

2007 CONFERENCE MOMENTS

Dorothy Ko presenting her plenary talk, Perspectives on Footbinding
(Photo by Irv Epstein)

Bardwell Smith during keynote address
(Photo by Irv Epstein)

Board of Directors meeting in April
(Photo by Bob Eng)

Audience at panel session: Ordinary People
(Photo by Roxie Ransom)

Orientation session for 2007 Student-Faculty Fellows faculty recipients
(Photo by Roxie Ransom)
Antioch College will temporarily suspend operations as of July 1, 2008. The Board of Trustees of Antioch University, the College’s parent institution, intends to reopen a state-of-the-art College campus in 2012. In the meantime, the remaining five non-residential campuses of the University will operate as normal. This includes Antioch Education Abroad, all of whose current study abroad programs will continue, including both the Buddhist Studies in India and Buddhist Studies in Japan programs.

Berea College: Jeffrey L Richey was awarded tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor in spring of 2007, having taught courses in Asian studies and religion at Berea College since 2002.

In fall 2007, Richey’s edited volume on Teaching Confucianism will be published by Oxford University Press. The volume features contributions by Richey as well as other scholars, including ASIANetwork member institution faculty Joseph Adler (Kenyon College), Robert W. Foster (Berea College), and Jack Furlong (Transylvania University).

Colgate University: Padma Kaimal of the Art and Art History Department received a 2007 NEH Summer Stipend for a project called “Collecting and Scattering: The Dispersal and Reassembly of a South Indian Goddess Temple.”


College of Charleston: Mary Beth Heston, Associate Professor of Art History and Director of the Asian Studies Program, has an article accepted by the journal Art History: “Mixed Messages in the New ‘Public’ Travancore: Building the Capital 1869-1880.” Professor Heston received a Fulbright Senior Research Award for India and a Council of American Overseas Research Centers Multi-Country Research Award to fund her sabbatical research during the summer and fall of 2007.

Matthew P. Canepa, Assistant Professor of Art History and Acting Director of the Asian Studies Program, has an article appearing in the volume Scythians, Sarmatians, Alans, edited by A. Alemany (special supplement to the journal Favendoria): “The Problem of Indo-Scythian Art and Kingship: Evolving Images of Power and Royal Identity between the Iranian, Hellenistic and South Asian Worlds.” Professor Canepa was the 2007 Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (DAI) North American Fellow in the summer of 2007. This fellowship was in support of his next book, Iran between Alexander and Islam: the Global Idea of Iranian Kingship in the Middle Iranian Era (331 BCE – 9th Century CE).

Furman University: Katherine Palmer Kaup, Associate Professor of Political Science and Chair of the Asian Studies Department, edited Understanding Contemporary Asia Pacific (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Press, 2007). She authored three of the text’s fourteen chapters: Introduction, Asia Pacific Politics, and Ethnicity. Eleven leading specialists from the United States, Australia, and Hong Kong contributed chapters on the region’s geography and historical context and on a broad range of key issues in the region since 1945.

The Asian Studies Department of Furman University won a major federal grant to run an intensive Chinese language summer institute at Suzhou University in China this summer. The grant was administered by CAORC and ACS. 20 American students selected out of hundreds of applicants from all over the nation participated in the institute. Professor Harry Kuoshu of Furman University directed the intensive 9-week program of the institute, which provided the equivalent of one year’s study of 3rd year Chinese at college level in America.

Lafayette College: beginning a Chinese language program this fall. Dr. Gang Song, who earned his BA and MA in Chinese Language and Literature from Peking University, and his PhD in East Asian Languages and Cultures from the University of Southern California in 2006, will join the faculty as a Visiting Assistant Professor. In addition to language courses, he will offer courses on Chinese culture and civilization. He has previously taught at UC-Irvine and Loyola Marymount University. Lafayette also offers Japanese language instruction.

Pomona College: Professor of Chinese Allan H. Barr’s translation of Yu Hua’s novel Cries in the Drizzle will be published this October by Anchor Books.

Sewanee: The University of the South: Jim Peterman, Professor of Philosophy, has received a Fulbright research award to work on a book on Confucius, Wittgenstein and the problem of reflection. He will be conducting his research at Academica Sinica in Taipei, Taiwan.

Harold J. Goldberg, chair of the Asian Studies Program, has published D-Day in the Pacific: The Battle of Saipan (Indiana University Press, 2007). Goldberg argues that this decisive battle has long been ignored because it was overshadowed by both the invasion of France that started only 9 days earlier and the infamous battle for Iwo Jima early in 1945.

Spelman College: Pushpa Naidu Parekh, Professor of English and Director of the Ethel Waddell Githii Honors Program, is the Contributing Editor of “Intersecting Gender and Disability Perspectives in Rethinking Postcolonial Identities,” the special summer issue of Wagadu: A Journal of Transnational Women’s and Gender Studies, Volume 4. Disability, gender and postcolonial studies scholars from around the world contributed to the volume.

University of Evansville: The Institute for Global Enterprise in Indiana collaborated with the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Commercial Service to deliver Access Asia Now: Tri-State Trade Mission to Malaysia and Japan. The 13-day trade mission began May 19, 2007 and served as the centerpiece of Project Tri-State Global Enterprise Asia, a Business and International Education Title VI-B grant earned by the University of Evansville from the U.S. Department of Education.

University of Redlands: Graeme Auton, Professor of Government, has been awarded a senior Fulbright lectureship to teach and do research at Kyung Hee University in Seoul, South Korea, for four months starting in mid-August.

Wittenberg University: Marcia J. Frost, Associate Professor of Economics & East Asian Studies, was awarded a Fulbright Lectureship to teach economic development and comparative economics, and assist with curriculum development projects at the School of Foreign Studies, National University of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar for spring semester 2008. She is currently on sabbatical and teaching courses on China’s Economy and the Silk Road for CET’s Beijing-Chinese Studies program during summer and fall 2007.

Professor Frost and Stephen Smith, Professor of Sociology, have developed a month-long summer field experience program on China’s Silk Road from mid-May to mid-June of 2008. The six-credit interdisciplinary course is designed to introduce students to China, both historically and contemporaneously, from the perspective of its interactions with cultures to its west, including the steppe nomads of Inner Asia. The pedagogy includes lectures, readings and on site experiential learning activities at major sites along the Silk Road, including Xi’an, Jiayuguan, Dunhuang, Turfan, Urumqi and Hotan. For more information contact Drs. Marcia Frost [mfrost@wittenberg.edu] or Stephen Smith [srsmith@wittenberg.edu].
## MEMBERS 2006-07

**Full Members:**
- Agnes Scott College
- Albertson College of Idaho
- Albion College
- Allegheny College
- Alverno College
- Antioch College
- Augustana College
- Austin College
- Baldwin-Wallace College
- Bard College
- Bates College
- Belmont University
- Beloit College
- Berea College
- Bowdoin College
- Bucknell University
- Butler University
- Calvin College
- Carleton College
- Carthage College
- Central College
- Clark University
- Coe College
- Colby College
- Colgate University
- College of Saint Benedict/Saint John’s University
- College of William & Mary
- College of Wooster
- Colorado College
- Connecticut College
- Cornell College
- Daemen College
- Davidson College
- Denison University
- DePauw University
- Dickinson College
- Drew University
- Drury University
- Earlham College
- Eckerd College
- Edgewood College
- Elms College
- Elon University
- Fairfield University
- Furman University
- Gettysburg College
- Goucher College
- Green Mountain College
- Guilford College
- Gustavus Adolphus College
- Hamilton College
- Hamline University
- Hanover College
- Hastings College
- Haverford College
- Hiram College
- Hobart & William Smith Colleges
- Hope College
- Huron University College
- Illinois Wesleyan University
- John Carroll University
- Kalamazoo College
- Kenyon College
- Knox College
- Lafayette College
- Lake Forest College
- Lawrence University
- Lewis & Clark College
- Loras College
- Luther College
- Lynchburg College
- Macalester College
- Manhattanville College
- Marietta College
- Marlboro College
- Maryville College
- Mills College
- Moravian College
- Mount Holyoke College
- Nazareth College
- North Central College
- Occidental College
- Oglethorpe University
- Ohio Wesleyan University
- Pomona College
- Presbyterian College
- Principia College
- Purchase College—SUNY
- Randolph-Macon College
- Randolph-Macon Woman’s College
- Rhodes College
- Ripon College
- Roanoke College
- Rollins College
- Saint Anselm College
- Saint Vincent College
- Sewanee: The University of the South
- Shorter College
- Simmons College
- Simon’s Rock College of Bard
- Skidmore College
- Southwestern University
- Spelman College
- St. Andrews Presbyterian College
- St. John’s College
- St. Lawrence University
- St. Mary’s College of Maryland
- St. Olaf College
- Swarthmore College
- Transylvania University
- Trinity College
- Trinity University
- Union College
- University of Evansville
- University of Notre Dame
- University of Puget Sound
- University of Redlands
- University of San Diego
- Valparaiso University
- Vassar College
- Virginia Wesleyan College
- Viterbo University
- Wabash College
- Warren Wilson College
- Wartburg College
- Washington & Lee University
- Webster University
- Wellesley College
- Wells College
- Westminster College
- Westmont College
- Wheaton College
- Whitman College
- Whittier College
- Willamette University
- Williams College
- Wittenberg University
- Wofford College

**Associate Members:**
- Bridgewater State College
- Case Western Reserve University
- Central Washington University
- College of Charleston
- Converse College
- East Tennessee State University Honors College
- Evergreen State College, The
- Highline Community College
- Lingnan University
- Loyola Marymount University
- Methodist University
- Muhlenberg College
- Naropa University
- Northeastern State University
- Northern Kentucky University
- Pacific Lutheran University
- Rice University
- Saint Joseph’s University
- South Puget Sound Community College
- Temple University
- University of Findlay
- University of Florida, School of Architecture
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, AEMS
- University of Washington, Tacoma

**Affiliate Organizations:**
- American Council of Learned Societies (CEENV)
- Associated Colleges of the Midwest
- Association of Teachers of Japanese
- Council for International Exchange of Scholars
- Eastbridge, A Non-Profit Corporation
- Henry Luce Foundation, Inc.
- Institute for the International Education of Students
- Japan ICU Foundation, Inc.
- Myanmar Foundation for Analytic Education
- Payap University
- School for International Training
- United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia (UBCHEA)

**Affiliate Individuals:**
- Bao Bean, Cathy
- Blair, John
- Kiblinger, Kristin Beise (Winthrop University)
- Martin, Roberta (Columbia University)
ASIANetwork
Strategic Plan and Goals 2007-2012

ASIANetwork is a consortium of over 170 North American colleges that strives to strengthen the role of Asian Studies in undergraduate liberal arts education in an increasingly interdependent world.

MISSION: ASIANetwork encourages the study of Asian languages, societies and cultures on member campuses and enables faculty and students to experience these cultures firsthand. AN facilitates conversation to develop and strengthen Asian Studies programs and to foster collaboration.

VISION: ASIANetwork will be the central organization for the study of Asia in undergraduate liberal arts education through its programs and resources in areas of Asia represented by its members.

GOAL 1: By 2012 AN will offer an expanded variety of collaborative learning programs, sending more students and faculty to Asia
GOAL 2: By 2012 AN will provide enhanced opportunities for faculty research and development
GOAL 3: By 2012 AN’s annual conference will be a showcase of Asian Studies scholarship and pedagogy
GOAL 4: By 2012 AN will be a resource that helps member institutions initiate, support and deepen the teaching of Asian languages in the liberal arts
GOAL 5: By 2012 AN will identify additional sources of funding for its projects

Mark your Calendar!!

Scholar-Teachers of Asia: Past and Present
2008 ASIANetwork Conference
March 14-16, 2008

The Alamo, San Antonio, TX

Riverwalk, San Antonio, TX

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Riverwalk
San Antonio, Texas
Hosted by Trinity University