



Spring 2013 Magazine



Remembering Joseph Lee

"Perhaps no one could ask more at the end of his life than to know that they will be missed and remembered by those they leave behind. There is no doubt whatsoever that Joseph Lee will be deeply missed and warmly remembered by his friends and colleagues in Asian Studies." –Remarks by Professor Jack Williams, Former Director, Asian Studies Center, upon the passing of Professor Joseph Lee.

Professor Joseph Lee was born in China on October 22, 1929. After receiving his PhD in American History from the University of Maryland, he taught American History at St. Norbert College in West De Pere, Wisconsin. At the completion of a number of successful years in Wisconsin, Professor Lee joined Michigan State University to teach in the Department of American Thought and Language in 1963.

Throughout his 30 years at Michigan State University, Professor Lee touched many lives, from the faculty and staff that he worked with to the hundreds of students he taught. His students remembered him fondly, many saying his classes were some of the best at Michigan State. He taught with enthusiasm, spreading his passion

about his homeland through his lectures and classes. His selfless efforts were a staple of his time here, from nurturing younger faculty toward excellence to introducing innovative uses of computers in language teaching. In addition to the expertise he provided to the University, he also gave generously, such as selling trees from his own 40 acre farm to support an endowment in the Biochemistry department.

Professor Lee died in Beijing on November 8, 1993 at the age of 64. In March of 1996, to commemorate his life and devotion to MSU, the Joseph Lee Endowment was started by his wife, Dr. Lucy Lee. This fund was established with the goal of enriching the academic experiences of both students and faculty at Michigan State University as well as serving as a means to support exchange opportunities for scholars from China.

Lucy has continued on with her husband's philanthropic legacy. She continues to give to the University and is a very active participant in each year's Joseph Lee Memorial Lecture, which is supported by The Joseph Lee Endowment.



The Memorial Lecture brings a scholar of China to Michigan State each fall to deliver a presentation. This lecture is one of the most well attended events hosted by the Asian Studies Center each year, drawing individuals from many disciplines on campus.

In the years of the endowment's presence at Michigan State, Lucy has even offered to the scholars a place to stay during their visit to campus. "When the endowment was still young, there wasn't enough money to pay for the speakers' travel and a hotel when they got here, so I was happy to offer them a room in my house while they were here," said Lucy.

Lucy and her husband shared a drive to give back to the community. "It is important for students to learn about our global civilization, there are 5000 years of history and tradition that students can learn about China, and the endowment is one step toward helping people to learn more," said Lucy.

When asked what she thinks her late husband would think of the work his

endowment does now, Lucy responded, "He would be proud. He would have wanted it to be this way. He spent his life and career promoting international understanding and cooperation."

Professor Joseph Lee's 30 years at Michigan State University left a lasting impression on the campus. His mission to spread knowledge about China is supported by the Asian Studies Center. We host the Joseph Lee Memorial Lecture to commemorate his contributions each year.

To support the Joseph Lee Memorial Fund please contact the Asian Studies Center at: 517-353-1680 or visit us online at: <http://asia.isp.msu.edu/supportus.htm>



A new Asian Studies Program, to focus faculty attention on curriculum development and research in Asia, will swell the growing list of international programs at MSU. [The Asian Studies Program will] bring guests to campus for lectures and seminars, arrange special seminars or institutes to deal with research and teaching and provide research professors and graduate fellowships to encourage research.



Excerpt from "Celebrating 50 Years of MSU Asian Studies," from a State News article dated November 26, 1962. See page 16.

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Asia is the Future



Siddharth Chandra, Director
Asian Studies Center



In the fifty years since the Asian Studies Center at Michigan State University was established, Asia has undergone profound transformations in the spheres of economics, politics, society, and culture. In 1963, Japan's economic miracle was in its infancy. Today, Japan has ascended into the ranks of the most prosperous countries in the world, followed by Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan.

As I write this note, Asia's three population giants, China, India, and Indonesia, are on their way to achieving similar levels of prosperity. Politically, where the Soviet Union was the Asian superpower in the 1960s, China is now emerging to take its place, with important implications for bilateral and multilateral relationships in Asia and worldwide. And with this newfound prosperity, coupled as it has been with the explosive growth of the flow of information in myriad forms, has come a heightened level of cultural creation, transmission, and exchange. Asia is emerging like never before, and the Obama administration's very public "pivot to Asia" is but one of many consequences of this trend.

In this new and increasingly Asia-focused world, the importance of Asian studies is greater than it has ever been. This is reflected in a variety of trends in higher education in America. Increasing numbers of students from Asia are attending US institutions of higher education, creating a means for cultural exchange that benefits our large and diverse communities of learners. Increasing numbers of students from the USA are becoming aware that Asia offers study abroad opportunities that parallel those offered in the



traditional destinations of Europe, including London, Paris, Florence, and Madrid. To take one example, Seoul, Korea, offers all of the comforts and amenities of a modern and sophisticated global city while providing some of the finest multidisciplinary learning experiences in the world for undergraduate students in English. Likewise, the Japan Center for Michigan Universities in Shiga, Japan and East Lansing, Michigan offers an enriching array of programs that enable students to learn about Japanese culture while also studying other subjects such as the environment, which are not normally associated with study abroad programs. Increasing numbers of researchers are also turning their attention to Asia. Michigan State University has benefited greatly from the hiring of young scholars who study Asia through a variety of lenses, from art history to business and health to literature. This is creating unprecedented opportunities for the creation on campus of new knowledge that is enriched increasingly by the fusion of Western and Asian influences.

The rapid development of Asia is not without its challenges, however. Asia is becoming an increasingly dangerous place. As new powers emerge and power relations are re-negotiated between countries that have long histories of cooperation and conflict, history continues to demonstrate its tendency to repeat itself. Because these Asian players are increasingly in a position to directly affect America on a variety of levels, learning Asian history is more relevant today for young Americans than it has ever been. The optimistic view of Asia is that economic interests will trump

patterns of historical animosity, generating prosperity for the entire region and, by extension, the rest of the world. There is, however, a pessimistic set of scenarios in which increasing numbers of Asian countries, large and small, feel the need to use their new-found prosperity to arm themselves with nuclear or other dangerous weapons, increasing the risk of conflict that could turn unimaginably destructive.

A second area of concern is the environment. Asia is home to approximately 60% of the world's population. China and India alone are home to seven times the population of the USA. At economic growth rates exceeding 5% a year, a future in which America's and Europe's contribution to global pollution and climate change, which itself has been significant, is dwarfed by Asia's contribution, is fast becoming a reality. To date, arguments between developing and developed countries about balancing the overarching global interest (served by reducing pollution and slowing down or even reversing global warming) with considerations of fairness (America and Europe achieved prosperity essentially in the absence of environmental controls, so developing countries today should be allowed to play by the same rules until they achieve similar levels of prosperity) have prevented countries from cooperating to enact the strong measures that are necessary to maintain the environmental status quo or at least slow down the destruction of the global environment. It can be argued that the devastation of the tart cherry crop in Michigan by an extreme warm-weather

event early in the spring season is the product of our inability to achieve a cooperative solution to the global environmental crisis that will have increasingly direct and potentially devastating consequences right here in Michigan.

As Asia grows in a shrinking world, I am optimistic about the prospects for the Asian Studies Center at Michigan State University. Even in the face of the significant budget cuts that the Center has faced with a combination of across-the-board reductions in the budget within the university over the past four years, and the halving of the value of our grant under the Title VI program of the US Department of Education, I expect that market forces will demonstrate the ever-increasing value of education about Asia. Astute students on campus will vote with their feet and enroll in Asia-related courses to learn Asian languages, travel to Asia, imbibe the histories and cultures of this rich region, and develop intercultural skills that will enable them to partake of the bounty that is Asia today. Likewise, faculty members will be drawn to develop relationships with the increasingly vibrant intelligentsias of these countries, often supported by newly prosperous governments that are keen to infuse their systems of higher education with the many strengths of the US higher education system. For those at Michigan State University who embrace these opportunities, the future is bright.



Born Traveler

Traveling has been part of Julia Novak's life since childhood. She has research, academic and volunteer experiences in the United States, South America, Asia, and Australia. She first visited Asia in 1995 with her family. Since then the region has become a special interest. Returning nearly 15 years later, Julia regained her connection through work, which sent her to the Indian Institute of Sciences in Bangalore, India in 2009.

After that visit, Julia continued to learn more about India. When she entered Michigan State University to pursue her doctoral studies in Fisheries and Wildlife, Julia had the opportunity to study Indian languages-both Hindi and Tamil-for two years. "Fisheries and the Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship made my passion and dreams come true," said Julia. FLAS is a fellowship program administered by the Asian Studies Center with funds from the US Department of Education.

Making Ends Meet

The feasibility of carrying out her research

required two things: financial support and exposure to languages. Studying abroad can seem daunting, but there are resources available to help students make ends meet. "It was fortunate that my advisor knew about the FLAS Fellowship and encouraged me to apply. I was into qualitative research and needed the ability to speak the language to carry it out," said Julia. She had the opportunity to spend the summers of 2010 and 2011 at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where she studied Hindi and Tamil respectively through the South Asia Summer Language Institute (SASLI) program. Julia said, "These courses were really intensive and effective as well."

Research in India

Julia's research involves many direct interactions with fishermen in India. She started her FLAS Fellowship learning Hindi and realized that Hindi was useful mainly at an official or corporate level in Tamil Nadu, so she spent the following summer and academic year learning Tamil. In the summer of 2012, she attended the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) Tamil language program in Madurai, India. She became more familiar with the local dialect which paved the way for effectively interviewing the local fishermen in the districts of Tamil Nadu. "It has taken a lot of time to learn these languages and I am still learning them, but the tutors were really helpful and patient with me," Julia said.

Thinking Back

Julia returned home last summer with more than a knowledge of new languages. Her understanding expanded beyond her research. She was able to relate at a human level to the fishermen and she developed an appreciation of the cultural intricacies of India. She noted that she felt safe there and travelled using public transportation throughout her stay. Julia came to know her surroundings, comfortably shopped in the local markets, and observed the local lifestyle. She learned the local language better by interacting with people while living and learning their culture. Julia has an eye on the future and in that view, she wishes to go back to India someday soon.



Julia Novak



A Life's Work: Study of the Philippines

Prior to landing at Michigan State University in 1978, Dr. Roger Bresnahan taught at a historically black college and spent one year as a Fulbright scholar in the Philippines. That unique combination of experiences sparked a career that combines his love of literature with study of the Philippines.

Dr. Bresnahan's association with the Asian Studies Center is deeply woven within his work and spans over 30 years, including a stint as the interim director in the late 1990s. Today he wears many hats; his academic home is in Writing, Rhetoric & American Cultures, and he serves as the Fulbright advisor within the Dean's Office in International Studies and Programs.

International Conference of the Philippines

In his latest role, Dr. Bresnahan served as the Convener of the Ninth International Conference of the Philippines, commonly referred to as ICOPHIL-9, resulting in a dynamic and widely attended conference held at MSU, October 28–30, 2012. Over 220 people came from the Philippines, Australia, and Japan, as well as Europe, the UK, Canada, Mexico, and the US.

Reflective of the diverse issues concerning the Philippines, the ICOPHIL-9 conference featured:

- A renowned climate scientist as the keynote speaker Rodel Lasco, the Senior Scientist at the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) at the University of the Philippines, Los Banos.
- A documentary titled, "U.S. v. Narciso, Perez & the Press," directed by MSU faculty Geri Alumit Zeldes. The film tells the story of the trial of two Filipino nurses accused and convicted of poisoning patients at a VA hospital in Ann Arbor, MI in the 1970s. The subject of an intense FBI investigation, the nurses' case has been re-examined and questions remain about the conduct of the prosecution.
- Over 200 paper presentations appeared in the final program.
- A panel about greater transparency in government, partially funded by the University of the Philippines.

When asked about the outcomes of ICOPHIL-9, Bresnahan noted the opportunity for greater collaboration. He



plans to create a database on this topic and will start by reconnecting with the people who presented papers at the conference as well as other attendees.

"The Asian Studies Center is a big supporter of my work and a place where I can find colleagues in other departments to work with," said Bresnahan. The conference benefited from financial support from International Studies and Programs, the Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives, and the Asian Studies Center.

On The Horizon

When asked, "What's next?" Bresnahan says he, "is deeply concerned about the prospects around economic development, food security and the environment in the Philippines." Then there are his longtime interests around Filipino literature and the history of US involvement. All combined, Dr. Bresnahan has enough to keep him going for another three decades.



Dr. Ruby R. Pares, Assistant Vice-Chancellor, University of Wisconsin, delivering her paper on William Howard Taft.



Roger Bresnahan, MSU faculty and ICOPHIL-9 Conference Convener



Ian Lovitt in China.

Early Travel Sparks Asia Interest

When he was thirteen years old, Ian Lovitt (BA '10) traveled to Japan as part of a sister city program between the City of Lansing, Michigan and Otsu, Japan. The partnership also involved the Lansing School District where he was a student. That trip sparked a commitment to lifelong learning. Ian said, "I decided that I wanted to continue with Japanese until I was fluent, so I took classes in high school as well. Once I got into college, though, I realized that there is no end to studying a language."

Today Ian is an accountant and administrator with a Japan-based auto parts company, working in the Detroit

metropolitan area. He explained how he is increasing his language skills, especially in the business arena. He is finding out that there are many nuances not only in the use of language, but also within the company hierarchy and protocols.

The Road

Ian left MSU with a BA in East Asian Languages and Culture (Japanese) with a specialization in Asian studies (Chinese language). During his college years he spent time in both countries. Following graduation, he took accounting courses at a local community college to prepare

for his chosen field. His company also has locations in China and he speculates that he will have an opportunity to utilize his Chinese language skills in a professional capacity one day as well.

Though it is easy to see why studying other languages leads to better work opportunities, many students like Ian find themselves initially and continually fascinated with aspects of the cultures involved. He enjoys the aesthetics of East Asian countries. Of Japan, Ian likes everything from seasonal menus to the way food is enjoyed and presented, to such arts like Bonsai and calligraphy. As

for China, he especially admires the ancient architecture, the paintings, the martial arts, and traditional Chinese medicine.

As a student of Zen Buddhist archery called Kyudo, Ian has learned an ancient martial art that in modern times focuses on physical and spiritual development. Meaning the "Way of the Bow," Kyudo is often considered a pure martial art.

Finding a way to combine his interests in Asia with other job skills is the path Ian chose. He says, "Studying foreign languages is essential now for anyone wanting to compete globally. But the language by itself is not enough. Studying abroad is key."



Ian Lovitt in Japan practicing Kyudo.





Students display the Indonesian flag, Merah-Putih, at the Indonesia Cultural Night event.

Indonesia Focus 2012

Student Group Hosts National Conference

Elizabeth “Lisa” Kastanya believes that science and technology play a critical role in Indonesia’s future development. She also thinks that young people will be the key to that future.

“We need to increase student involvement and that’s true for Indonesian students back home as well as those studying outside of the country,” said Kastanya, a senior in political science and prelaw at Michigan State University. “Conferences

like Indonesia Focus have the right formula,” she added.

Kastanya’s dedication to her country was evident on November 9, 2012, as she stood among a small team of Indonesian scholars at Indonesia Focus (IF 2012), an annual event in the US organized by the Asian Society for International Relations and Public Affairs (ASIRPA). The event was held at MSU for the first time, owing to the efforts of the Indonesian Students Association of Michigan State University (PERMIAS-MSU) and MSU’s

Asian Studies Center. Kastanya explained that the IF 2012 had two main programs, namely: Indonesia Focus Conference and Indonesia Cultural Night.

Kastanya also noted, “IF 2012 provides opportunities for Indonesian scholars and international scholars to share their research and thoughts for the betterment of Indonesia. It was an honor to host the event this year and we were delighted with the outcome. We had many distinguished speakers, guests, and more than 130 participants,” she said.

A wide range of topics were discussed at the five plenary sessions under the theme of "Embracing innovative art, science and technology in supporting the acceleration of Indonesian development." Keynote speakers included Imron Cotan, Indonesian Ambassador to China and Tjatur Sapto Edy, a congressman from the Indonesian House of Representatives.

Participants included Nur Sisworahardjo, president of ASIRPA, Siddharth Chandra, director of the MSU Asian Studies Center, Andriana Supandy, the Indonesian Consul General in Chicago, and Satya Yudha, Indonesian parliamentarian and MSU parent.

On Friday night of the conference, the beauty of Indonesia and Indonesian culture took center stage before an audience of 300 students, faculty, and community members. Anastasia Suradja, a senior in marketing at Michigan State University, and Dewi Puspa, a prominent member of the Indonesian community in Lansing, helped organize the Indonesian food delicacies, Indonesian classical dance, vocals, and other amazing performances that have made Indonesian Cultural Night a favorite annual event at MSU.

"I can't think of a better event on campus that demonstrates the richness and vibrancy of a culture," said Ralang Argi, a sophomore in mechanical engineering and president of PERMIAS-MSU. "I am proud to be an MSU student and I am proud to be an Indonesian student."

Haryo Winarso, Educational Attaché of the Indonesian Embassy at Washington D.C., sent a message of appreciation to PERMIAS-MSU and the Asian Studies Center and encouraged the continuation of events focusing on strengthening the friendship between Indonesia and the United States.

Noted Proceedings from the Conference

The program closed with a lively discussion among the keynote speakers and the IF participants on issues that can impede a country's progress in developing science and technology. Some of the issues and needs raised by the participants included:

- Improving the public's awareness of the Indonesian government's budget and role in development.

- Need for increased government funding for research.

- Greater transparency and use of technology for public access to data and research reports, particularly those funded by the Indonesia government.

- Prioritizing renewable energy research and inventions.

- Introduction of a special type of visa (i.e. student visa) to accommodate the increasing need of exchange students between Indonesia and the USA.

Concurrent Events at MSU

Yonny Koesmaryono from the Bogor Agricultural University, sponsored by The Institute of International Agriculture (IIA) at Michigan State University, visited MSU during the week of the IF event to explore ways to conduct joint research and formalize a student exchange between MSU and Bogor Agricultural University in the future. He also participated in IF 2012.

PERMIAS-MSU also hosted a national PERMIAS meeting on the last day of the IF event. It will lead the effort to re-establish an Indonesian Student Association in the United States at the national level in 2013.





Celebrating 50 Years of MSU Asian Studies

On November 26, 1962, a State News article read:

"A new Asian Studies Program, to focus faculty attention on curriculum development and research in Asia, will swell the growing list of international programs at MSU." The Asian Studies Program, the article continued, will "bring guests to campus for lectures and seminars, arrange special seminars or institutes to deal with research and teaching and provide research professors and graduate fellowships to encourage research."

While these words were written 50 years ago, their description of the Asian Studies Center (ASN) is still very accurate. Yet, in its five decades in existence, the Center has grown to do much more, continuously developing activities such as supporting Asian language classes and providing fellowship and scholarship opportunities, as well as working to spread knowledge about Asia across MSU and the broader community.

Since 2000, the U.S. Department of Education has recognized the breadth and depth of MSU's commitment to Asia by designating the University's Asian Studies Center a National Resource Center (NRC) for education about Asia. ASN directs one of the largest, most diverse programs of education about Asia in the Midwest. Unlike comparable programs, the Center is distinguished by its comprehensive

attention to East, Central, South, Southeast, and West Asia in the design of its curriculum, focus on faculty research, and scope of outreach activities. Presently, the Center's approximately 150 affiliated faculty represent a wide range of disciplines, teaching both undergraduate and graduate level courses.

The Genesis

Asian Studies has been a part of the curriculum at Michigan State University since establishing the Department of Foreign Studies in 1943. However, ASN began as the brainchild of a group of dedicated and devoted MSU faculty members, all of whom were a part of what was then called the Asian Studies Group. The first session of the Group was held on May 23, 1960, and would later prove to be the starting point of the Asian Studies Center. This small gathering of committed individuals worked tirelessly to build interest and support for the proposed new center. They continued to watch it grow and evolve in the years to come as members of the Center's Advisory Council.

The years that followed the inception of the Center were ones of great development for Asian Studies at MSU, under the direction of Dr. William T. Ross. Throughout the 1960s, ASN focused its attention on research, the forum and publishing, while also working to develop curriculum related to Asia.



The Center also created an Asian Studies Specialization that encouraged students from diverse academic disciplines to take a core set of courses that develop awareness of the rich diversity of Asia. Since 1962, over 450 students have completed its requirements, many of whom have gone on to use their knowledge of language, culture, and history to pursue careers in Asia.

The Comeback: Struggle and Hardships

From the 1960s through the 1980s, the Center's accomplishments received wide recognition and funding from the Social Science Research Council, the Luce Foundation, the Japan Foundation, the Korea Foundation and other agencies. The early 1980s brought many changes to MSU and were an economically grim time, with International Studies and Programs and the Asian Studies Center being targeted for cuts. The Asian Studies Center was even being considered for outright elimination. When the news came that the Center was under threat many MSU faculty and staff members wrote letters to then University President Mackey protesting such a plan, and making a very compelling case for maintaining the Center regardless of budgetary concerns. The passion of the faculty and staff of the Asian Studies Center was clear and was a driving force for pulling the Center through this most difficult time.

The turn of the century brought with it the start of the status of the Asian Studies Center as a government recognized National Resource Center. The additional funding, along with the recognition provided by the federal government allowed ASN to expand programming, enhance outreach activities, and provided the Center the opportunity to engage in campus-wide academic support and faculty development.

Today, the Asian Studies Center continues to pursue its mission to provide outstanding undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs on Asia to students at Michigan State University, to promote research on Asia, and to advance Asia-related outreach throughout the community. In the most recent years, the Center has undergone a major transition as the curriculum for faculty research, the exchange programs, and outreach activities have expanded and developed to embrace programs in places as diverse as India, Indonesia, Korea, and Nepal. With this expansion has come the university's significant increase in instruction of Asian "less commonly taught languages," now including Vietnamese, Hindi, Korean, Tagalog, and Thai, to name a few of the approximately 20 Asian languages offered at MSU.

With the Center's 50th year now underway, it is a great time to reflect back to its origins. Through the examination of

many documents, proposals, meeting minutes, and articles that led to formation and shaping of MSU's Asian Studies Center the names of many individuals associated with those places have emerged.

These individuals are the pioneers who saw the need for a center that is devoted to the study of Asia. They are the ones whose work and persistence built it and changed the academic landscape of MSU. For that achievement we are thankful.



Asian Studies Center Staff (left to right)

Siddharth Chandra, Sivaram Murthy, Vu Nguyen, Cathy Fields (rear), Jun Wan, Brenda Hodge (rear), Bhanu Sisodia, Julie Hagstrom, Karen Klein (rear), Bharathi Murali

Siddharth Chandra - Director, Asian Studies Center; Professor, James Madison College

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Karen Klein - Outreach Specialist

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Bharathi Murali - Student Employee

Vu Nguyen - Student Employee

Sivaram Murthy - Student Employee

About the Asian Studies Center

The Asian Studies Center, named a National Undergraduate Resource Center (Title VI NRC) since 2000 by the U.S. Department of Education, directs one of the largest, most diverse programs of education about Asia in the Midwest. Unlike comparable programs, the Center is distinguished by its comprehensive attention to East, Central, South, Southeast, and West Asia in the design of its curriculum, focus of faculty research, and scope of outreach activities. Presently, the Center has close to 150 affiliated faculty representing disciplines ranging across the curriculum in teaching undergraduate and graduate students.

The Asian Studies Center's shift toward an all-Asia emphasis reflects the university's growing internationalization. Two-thirds of MSU's foreign students and over half of the university's 1,200 foreign scholars come from Asia, and nearly 2,000 undergraduates are Asian-Pacific Americans. The changing domestic demographics and the increase in students and scholars from Asia have created demands for an Asian Studies curriculum relevant to new needs and experiences reflecting the university's genuinely multicultural quality.

Look us up on the web at
<http://asia.isp.msu.edu>

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