

Monash Asia Institute Bulletin (10/2008)
12 December 2008

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Monash Asia Institute and Monash University News

1. Seasons Greetings from the Director, MAI

The Director, staff, students and Executive Committee of the Monash Asia Institute take this opportunity to wish you a happy and safe break over the coming New Year holidays. We also thank you all for your interest and support in our activities during what has again proved to be a most exciting and productive year. We end the year by congratulating two of our doctoral students who have submitted their theses for examination: David Templeman and Diana Cousens.

Monash Asia Institute, as with Monash University, is closed from 24 December 2008 until 4 January 2009. The university will reopen on 5 January 2009.

In the new year we are launching an MAI blog and a ready calender for events at the MAI.

2. Seminar

Monash Asia Institute and Centre for Studies in Religion & Theology
Friday 19 December 2008, 12:00noon
Room S822, Monash Asia Institute
Level 8 South, Building 11 (Menzie's), Monash University Clayton

Sacred Mountain Traditions in Southeast Asia

Prof Donald K. Swearer, Center for the Study of World Religions

The study of sacred mountain traditions in Buddhist Asia is part of a growing interest in lived religion, material culture, place, and space. Prof Swearer's interest in the subject stems from researching Buddhism in the mountainous region of northern Thailand, especially the Chiang Mai Valley. In this talk, Prof Swearer will develop a paradigm for understanding the multifaceted nature of sacred mountains with a particular focus on the historical, cultural, and religious context of northern Thailand.

Donald K. Swearer is the Director of the Center for the Study of World Religions and Distinguished Visiting Professor of Buddhist Studies at Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, MA., U.S.A. His research has focused on Buddhism in Southeast Asia, especially Thailand. His recent monographs and edited volumes include: *The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia* (1995/2008); *The Legend of Queen Cama. Bodhiramsi's Camadevivamsa* (1998); *The State of Buddhist Studies in the World, 1971-1997* (2000); *Becoming the Buddha: The Ritual of Image Consecration in Thailand* (2004); *Sacred Mountains in Northern Thailand and Their Legends* (2004).

Enquiries: MAI.Enquiries@adm.monash.edu.au

3. Purchase MAI Press publications online

A number of books from the MAI Press can now be purchased online:

<http://ecommerce.arts.monash.edu.au/categories.asp?cid=48>

To view the full catalogue, see:

<http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/mai/press/index.php>

4. 7th International Congress of Morita Therapy

March 2010

Beyond Borders: Morita Therapy for Uncertain Times

Conference sponsored by Monash Asia Institute, Melbourne, Australia

Papers invited for special conference panels on:

Medical origins of Morita Therapy

Morita Therapy, trauma, and counselling psychology

The ecology of Morita Therapy

Teasing out Zen and the existential in Morita Therapy

Paradox, language and isolation

Assessment, case studies, and duty of care

Morita Therapy in community-aid development (Cambodia and Lao PDR)

Research methods: accounting for intrinsic and extrinsic change

Updates will be presented on the official website, see:

<http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/mai/morita/>

Enquiries:

Dr Peg LeVine, Conference Convenor
Monash Asia Institute, Building 11
Monash University Clayton, Vic 3800, Australia
Email: peg.levine@adm.monash.edu.au

5. Obituary: Prof J.Vin D'Cruz

Staff, Students, Colleagues and Friends at the Monash Asia Institute note the sad passing of Prof Vin D'Cruz on Monday 24 November 2008. Prof Vin D'Cruz was appointed an Adjunct Professor of the Monash Asia Institute in 2001 and was one of the MAI's most delightful and productive members. He had an enormous passion for research as demonstrated by his large book *Australia's Ambivalence Towards Asia: Politics, Neo/Post-colonialism, and Fact/Fiction* (co-authored with William Steele) published by the Monash Asia Institute Press. In that book he grappled with his love for Australia and its people and the disappointing performance of the Australian government and press in their failure to engage with Asia in a more positive and creative manner.

Vin arrived in Australia in 1954 and is survived by a son, a daughter, siblings and a great-grand-daughter. He will be greatly missed and as a mark of our respect, a minute's silence was observed at the MAI postgraduate seminar on Friday 28th November. For a fuller note about Vin's life, see:

<http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/mai/staff/vdcruz.php>

<http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/mai/staff/vindcruzobituary.pdf>

News from other institutions

6. Asialink leaders program 2009 - Sydney applications extended to 23 January 2009.

Are you ready for the Asian Century? By 2020, one in four jobs will be Asia-related. Build your cultural intelligence and operate more successfully across geographic and cultural borders - Apply for the Asialink Leaders Program 2009.

Limited places are still available for the program in Sydney. Please register your expression of interest by 23 January 2009. Send an email to

leadership@asialink.unimelb.edu.au or call Asialink on (03) 8344 4800.

To apply now please download a form from the Asialink Leaders Program website: www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/our_work/leaders.

7. Dissertation Workshop

Social capital and civic engagement in Asia

May 3-6, 2009

This dissertation workshop seeks to engage scholars whose work explores the impacts of collective action and social capital, and its various component parts (trust, norms, networks and associations) in diverse parts of Asia, where the nature of state, civil society and alternate civilities is changing rapidly. Our premise is that the “productivity” of civic engagement in terms of enhancing the economic and political vitality of local communities depends, to a large extent, on the responsiveness of the local government and the nature of civil society/alternate civilities in the region under examination. As such, empirical research that seeks to discover and document how social capital and civic engagement interact with other aspects of social and political life to enhance, or perhaps diminish, well-being is important to both intellectual and policy debates taking place across a variety of academic disciplines. Further, researchers who focus on Asia are well positioned to contribute to theoretical debates about the relative usefulness of the concept of “social capital” and associated terms such as social cohesion, cooperation, public participation, empowerment, and community as ways of apprehending the complex dynamics of Asian settings. The workshop thus seeks to bring empirical research and re-theorizations from Asia into a productive dialogue.

Eligibility and Arrangements

The workshop is intended for doctoral students whose dissertation projects concern the role of civic engagement and social capital, in its many variations, in fostering dynamic change in any part of contemporary Asia. The purpose of the workshop is to encourage and assist doctoral students who are just beginning work on these issues, as well as those who are farther along in their projects. The workshop will involve intensive discussion of the individual projects and also the larger theoretical and methodological issues that they raise. Possibilities for continuing associations among interested students and faculty will be explored. Applicants must be enrolled in a full-time doctoral program. They must have drafted a dissertation research proposal, even though it may not yet be approved by their committees. They must be prepared to engage in some work prior to the meeting, namely reading and commenting on the proposals of other participants to establish a basis for productive exchange at the event.

The workshop will take place over three days on the campus of the University of Toronto. It will include twelve students and four faculty members from a variety of disciplines and interdisciplinary fields. The Asian Institute at the University of Toronto will cover the costs of work, meals, and accommodation. Travel will be subsidized up to a maximum of CDN\$600 per participant.

APPLICATION DEADLINE is JANUARY 30, 2009

Applications consist of two items: 1) a current curriculum vitae and 2) an 8 to 10 page double spaced dissertation proposal. Alternatively, if the work is well underway, an 8 to 10 page double spaced description of the specific issues being addressed, the intellectual approach, and the materials being studied. Workshop participants will be selected on the content of the submitted projects, the potential for useful exchanges among them, and the benefits of including a wide range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches and intellectual traditions. Applications should be sent in an email attachment to ai.soc@utoronto.ca. Applicants will be informed about whether or not they have been selected for the workshop by February 6th 2009. For further information about the workshop or eligibility, please contact the workshop assistant at ai.soc@utoronto.ca.

8. Website of the month

<http://www.wanukaka.com/>

Hilu Wanukaka - the language of Wanukaka

This web site has been created to coordinate the working dictionary of Hilu Wanukaka and to present materials about the culture and life of the people of the Wanukaka valley. This is the beginnings of a rich and informative site and contributions, in Indonesian or English, from anyone with relevant materials is welcomed. Contact Dr David Mitchell at david@wanukaka.com

About the MAI Bulletin

The Monash Asia Institute Newsletter incorporates news items from the research centres of the Monash Asia Institute, partner organisations and other groups working to promote Asian Studies in Australia.

For further information about the Monash Asia Institute and this newsletter: <http://www.monash.edu.au/mai/>

To unsubscribe, please send an email to: Monash-Asia-Institute Enquiries <MAI.Enquiries@adm.monash.edu.au>