

From the Director

Since I last wrote for *Asia Connections*, there have been some major developments for the Carolina Asia Center. Most significant is the award of a prestigious John E. Sawyer Seminars on the Comparative Study of Cultures grant (see story). This is a significant addition to the Center's work, enhancing our focus in a new and cutting-edge research.

From January to the end of July 2010, I was fortunate to undertake a period of research and writing that took me to Britain, Denmark, Thailand and Australia. Most of my research became focused on contemporary political turmoil in Thailand as I was in Bangkok when there were ongoing demonstrations involving so-called red shirts who were calling for an end to the current parliament and new elections. Being able to attend some of the rallies and collect research materials was a fascinating and challenging process, not least because there was considerable violence during the period.

While in Britain I was Visiting Professor with the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation at Warwick University. This period allowed me to use many of the research materials collected in Thailand in an intensive period of writing that produced several journal articles and book chapters. At the Saxo Institute (University of Copenhagen) and the Asia Research Centre (Murdoch University, Perth), I was able to present papers that also drew on the research conducted in Thailand.

While I was away from UNC, the Center was in the capable hands of Interim Director Professor Robin Visser from the Department of Asian Studies. She was ably supported by Associate Director Stephanie Nelson who returned from leave and the birth of her new daughter. I am most grateful to both of them for the hard work in support of the Center and Asian studies at Carolina.

Kevin Hewison, *Director*

Carolina Asia Center receives Sawyer Seminar Grant

Director of the Carolina Asia Center Kevin Hewison and Arne Kalleberg, Kenan Distinguished Professor of Sociology were successful in their application to the Mellon Foundation for a John E. Sawyer Seminars on the Comparative Study of Cultures grant. The grants are designed to bring together faculty, visitors, postdoctoral fellows and graduate students from a variety of fields for the intensive study of particular subjects.

Kalleberg and Hewison proposed an 18-month seminar entitled "Precarious Work in Asia," examining the changing nature of work in Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, India and Sri Lanka. The seminar, based in the Carolina Asia Center, will involve a postdoctoral fellow and two graduate students working directly on the project and a range of faculty and graduate students from across the campus. Importantly, each of the country studies involves research partners, who will visit UNC during the period of the seminar.

AFTERMATH

September 15 – November 11, 2010 | FedEx Global Education Center
Artist Lecture | November 3, 2010 | 6:00 PM | Room 1005



AFTERMATH is an exhibition by artist and Professor elin o'Hara slavick that explores the aftermath of war. The display on three floors of the FedEx Global Education Center includes a selection of works from "Hiroshima: After Aftermath" and "Protesting Cartography: Places the U.S. Has Bombed." Both projects examine and protest aerial bombardment through the use of maps, rubbings, photographs (black and white, color and cyanotypes), drawings and paintings.

Slavick has exhibited her work across the U.S. and Europe and in Cuba, Hong Kong, Scotland, England and Canada. She has been a Professor of studio art, theory and practice at UNC-Chapel Hill since 1994.

This exhibition is sponsored by the Carolina Asia Center with support from the Center for European Studies, Center for Slavic, Eurasian and East European Studies, Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations, Institute for the Study of the Americas, African Studies Center, Center for Global Initiatives and Parr Center for Ethics.

Image: Lebanon, 1983–1984 and 2006, For Rania Masri 30"x22"
elin o'Hara slavick, ink, color pencil, gouache and watercolor on Arches paper

Triangle East Asia Colloquium 2010

In the humanities, we are accustomed to focusing exclusively on the study of human culture and history; yet our human lives intersect in myriad ways with the lives of other animals — whether as pets, pests, resources or neighbors. In reflection of this reality, the study of human-animal relationships has become a growing field in various disciplines including Asian Studies. This year's multidisciplinary Triangle East Asia Colloquium on April 16-17, 2010 — organized by Barbara Ambros (Religious Studies, UNC-Chapel Hill) and funded by Duke University, North Carolina State University, the

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and by a Department of Education Title VI grant — featured five scholars in Chinese and Japanese Studies, who delivered papers on the topic of "Animals in East Asian History and Culture." John Knight (Anthropology, Queen's University Belfast) delivered the keynote speech entitled "The Establishment of Monkey Parks in Postwar Japan." Other speakers were: Ian Miller (History, Harvard University) "Mohammed Ali and Other Creatures of the Japanese Colonial Imagination," Christine Marran (Asian

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Carolina Asia Center China Forum

In spring 2010 the CAC sponsored a series of campus-wide events on China culminating with a China Forum on April 23, which featured presentations and roundtable discussions of research from faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences. The China Forum had two primary aims. First, given recent China-related hires in the College, participants exchanged information on current research projects to strengthen possible research and teaching synergies on campus. Second, a roundtable discussion on "Strategies for China Studies at UNC and beyond" addressed ways to support China studies in the Triangle in the future.

Participants included: Dr. Jonathan Hartlyn, Senior Associate Dean for Social Sciences and International Programs, Wei-cheng Lin (Art History), David Ross (English), Robin Visser (Asian Studies), Wenhua Shi (Communications), Michael Tsin (History), Gang Yue (Asian Studies), Xi Chen (Political Science), Yong Cai (Sociology), Yan Song, (City and Regional Planning), Barbara Ambros, (Religious Studies).

Triangle East Asia Colloquium 2010, continued

Languages and Literatures, University of Minnesota) "Water, Toxins, and the Creaturely in Cinema," Fa-Ti Fan (History, University of Binghamton) "Animals and Their Political Meanings in Modern China," And Wei Cheng Lin (Art History, UNC-Chapel Hill) "Wheels on the Silk Road: Camels and Horses in Han and Tang China". The Colloquium ended with a reception at the Ackland Art Museum and a tour of the museum's Silk Road Exhibit.

Welcoming new Asian studies faculty

Dr. Morgan Pitelka, Associate Professor in Japanese; **Dr. Ji-Yeon Jo**, Assistant Professor in Korean; **Dr. Canguzel Zulfikar**, Lecturer in Turkish; **Ms. Farida Badr**, Lecturer in Arabic; **Ms. Jia Lin**, Lecturer in Chinese; **Ms. Shahla Adel**, Lecturer in Persian; **Dr. Jiayun Zhuang**, Assistant Professor in Asian Theater and Performance, Performance Studies



Asia Connections

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Learn Urdu In Cyberspace: The *Darvazah* Project

By Afroz Taj



January 2010 marked the long-awaited launch of *Darvazah: A Door Into Urdu*, UNC and NC State's ground-breaking website for Urdu for language learning. This "cyber-book" project was funded by a major multi-year grant from the US Department of Education as part of a government initiative to make certain critical languages available to the widest possible number of learners. *Darvazah*, accessible free to any student wishing to learn elementary Urdu, has received world-wide attention as an innovation in the field of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and is being used as a primary or supplemental course material by Urdu students around the world. It is also used as the course "textbook" at several universities and in Urdu programs like those at Fort Bragg and Camp Lejeune in North Carolina.

Darvazah ("doorway" in Urdu) consists of twenty-four interactive lessons based on short films. In order to create these films, I spent many hours directing international camera crews on location in India and Pakistan. We used amateur actors as well as students who were in the process of acquiring fluency in Urdu. Films were made from Varanasi to Hyderabad to Peshawar, featuring diverse locales, interesting situations, and — of course — occasional songs to illustrate topics from the lessons. Our objective was to expose students as much as possible to natural Urdu speech. For example, Lesson 9 concerns a woman who has lived in Agra for many years but who has never seen the Taj Mahal. She finally convinces her husband to take her there as proof of his love, but as they wander the gardens, she hears a disembodied voice: is it Shah Jahan speaking to her across the centuries? Many of the *Darvazah* films pay tribute to famous Bollywood films. Lesson 7 parodies *Mere Mehboob* as a boy and girl collide on the campus of Aligarh Muslim University. They accidentally exchange books and glances, leading to a college romance.

Darvazah contains extensive interactive activities and exercises, as well as thorough explanations of culture, usage, grammar, and other language details. You can even click on an icon to have a video-professor pop up to explain something in person! There is an extensive Alphabet Module to aid students in mastering the Urdu writing system which is based on the Perso-Arabic alphabet. Enter *Darvazah* at: <http://taj.chass.ncsu.edu/urdu>. No password or registration is required.

Mahatma Gandhi Fellowship Awards

Sangam, the South Asia student organization at UNC, awards the Mahatma Gandhi Fellowship. Each year two students receive funding to complete a project that benefits South Asians. In 2010, Shenan Bradshaw and Tasha Prados were awarded the fellowship. Shenan is currently in the UNC School of Dentistry and utilized the funds to organize the first annual UNC Dentistry Nepal Project. Tasha spent the summer in the Republic of Maldives interning with the NGO Live & Learn and working on the Innovative Gardening and Education Project. <http://mgf.uncsangam.org/>

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