The Update

A bi-weekly roundup of news in the Department of Asian Studies
For our Students, Faculty and Staff

Asian Studies Welcome Back Lunch on Imagine Day!

You are invited! Come learn about the Asian Studies Experience and join the Asian Studies community. Meet with faculty and staff, network with alumni and mingle with students (graduate and undergraduate) over a free lunch. Imagine Day is your greatest opportunity to become aware of the programs across campus and start planning ahead! We hope that you will leave more knowledgeable about our Language and Culture Programs, UBC’s Go Global Exchange Program and UBC’s student work opportunities.

Tuesday, September 2nd, 2014

Time: 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM
Location: Asian Centre Auditorium, 1871 West Mall
Price: Free

Upcoming Forum on Traditional Korean Society
Forum on Traditional Korean Society

- Time & Date: 9:30-17:00, Tuesday, September 02, 2014
- Venue & Location:
  Multipurpose Room, Liu Institute for Global Issues at UBC
  (6476 NW Marine Drive, Vancouver, BC)
- Language: Korean
- Speakers & Schedule
  김인숙 박사 (남산강화원)
  제1부: “18세기 조선 지식인의생태학: 백수 지성의 향연”

  고미숙 박사 (감이당 인문의 역학연구소)
  제2부: “열하일기, 18세기 지성사와 노마디즘”
  제3부: “연암과 다산, 증세 ‘외부’를 사유하는 두 개의 지도”

All is welcome. Those who plan to attend are expected to reserve a seat by sending an RSVP to taeom@interchange.ubc.ca (Tae Yeon Eom, Asian Studies) by August 24th (Sunday). Lunch and drinks will be provided.

Featured Course: Advanced Readings in Classical Chinese
This course is for undergraduates and graduate students who have already completed the first level of Classical Chinese (ASIA 399/CLCH 399, CHIN 431, or the equivalent) and are interested in working with Classical and Literary Chinese materials on their own, beyond introductory textbooks. Students will learn to work with difficult texts by using scholarly resources such as specialized dictionaries and both modern and traditional commentaries, with the goal of producing accurate and polished English translations. If you have any questions about the course, please contact the instructor at bruce.rusk@ubc.ca.

Register for the course >>

Congratulations to Drs. Murphy, Sathaye and Rea

The Department recently celebrated a major milestone in the history of UBC Asian Studies and in the careers of three dynamic young colleagues: Anne Murphy, Adheesh Sathaye and Christopher Rea were all tenured and promoted from Assistant to Associate Professor. Warm congratulations to three excellent scholars and teachers who contribute so much to the life of the Department, and whose dossiers serve in so many ways as models for colleagues across the Department.

From left to right: Adheesh Sathaye, Anne Murphy, Christopher Rea

Hanmun and Kanbun Workshops

From June 25 to 29 Ross King hosted a hanmun (Literary Sinitic as studied and used in Korea) workshop for Koreanists on the topics of the Chondung sinhwa kuhae (a Choson-dynasty Korean
annotated version of the highly influential Ming story collection, Jiandeng Xinhua, and indeed, the first such annotated collection of fiction in all of East Asia) and Korean Idu-style Variant Literary Sinitic. The convenor was Professor Sim Kyung-ho of Korea University. Two days were spent reading selections from the Chondung sinwha kuhae and three days were spent reading examples of idu-infused fictional narratives in hanmun.

From July 2 to 4 Ross King and Christina Laffin hosted a small international conference under the auspices of their Academy of Korean Studies grant on “Language, Writing and Literary Culture in the Sinographic Cosmopolis” that focused on workshopping the many translated papers from the Year One and Year Two conferences along with the translated chapters from Professor Saito Mareshi’s 2007 book on kanbunmyaku—the ‘Literary Sinitic context’—in order to prepare those volumes for publication. Three new papers were presented by Professor Sim Kyung-ho (Korea University), Professor Saito Mareshi (University of Tokyo), and Professor Ito Hideto (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies).

Following the hanmun workshop and international conference, seven Asian Studies graduate students and faculty members, along with two graduate students from other institutions, participated in a workshop from July 7 to 11 on the history of kanbun (Literary Sinitic as used in Japan). Led by Professor Saito Mareshi and hosted by Christina Laffin, the workshop took
participants on a journey from the early history of writing on objects during the Shang and Zhou dynasties through the relationship between the Literary Sinitic and English in nineteenth-century Japan. Participants were able to practice their kanbun reading and interpretation skills using eighteenth-century texts by the Confucian scholar Ogyu Sorai.

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**Letterman Jackets are in!**

If you didn’t already know, our Asian Studies Letterman Jackets came in this summer! To collect your order please visit Oliver Mann in the Asian Studies main office who can assist you.
If you like what you see, put your name in our jacket pre-order form. If we get enough pre-orders throughout the year we can organize a re-order in the spring.

Confucianism and Christianity

Serving as one of the three celebrants in a Confucian ritual in Andong, Korea, Professor Don Baker combined library research with field research in East Asia over the summer of 2014. He also traveled around Taiwan to observe the state of Christianity there in preparation for teaching ASIA 466, the History of Christianity in Asia, this fall. Between his trips to Korea and Taiwan, he also finished a book on the persecution of Catholics in Korea in 1801. That book introduces dozens of the Korean martyrs Pope Francis raised to Blessed status in a ceremony in Seoul in August.
Recent Translations

1. The National Endowment for the Arts announced that Professor Bruce Fulton and Ju-Chan Fulton have been recommended for an NEA Literature Translation Fellowship of $12,500. The Fultons are one of 20 recommended fellows for 2015. The fellowship will support the translation into English of PUBLIC OFFENDER: A CH'AE MANSHIK READER.

2. RAT FIRE: KOREAN STORIES FROM THE JAPANESE EMPIRE, ed. Theodore Hughes et al. (volume 167 in the Cornell East Asia Series), published earlier this year, contains translations by Professor Ross King ("Naktong River" by Cho Myong-hui), UBC graduate Young-Ji Kang ("City and Specter" by Yi Hyo-sok, and "The Factory Newspaper" by Kim Nam-ch'on), Professor Christina Yi ("Tenma" by Kim Sa-ryang), and Professor Bruce Fulton and Ju-Chan Fulton ("Mister Pang" by Ch'ae Man-shik). These translations constitute one third of the volume.

3. UBC Asian Studies graduate Kerong Lin is the translator of "Today's Fortune" by Korean author Han Ch'ang-hun, #56 in the series Bi-lingual Edition, Modern Korean Literature, published by ASIA Publishers, Seoul. Among the translations issued thus far in this projected 100+ volume series are those by UBC graduates Miseli Jeon and Teresa Kim and Professor Bruce Fulton and Ju-Chan Fulton.

Congratulations to Daniel Pieper!

Dan Pieper, one of our grad students, recently earned the Best Paper award at the 10th Worldwide Consortium of Korean Studies Centers Workshop: New Generations, New Ideas in Korean Studies, held at Harvard University.

Faculty representatives were asked to select the 2 best among the 19 student papers presented to the workshop, and during the closing ceremony on June 9, one award was given for Best Paper and three other papers were awarded Honorable Mention.

On-Campus Events

Monday, July 28 - August 20, 2014

Touring Exhibition Celebrating The Life And Work Of Professor Chia-ying Yeh On Her 90th Birthday
Time: 9:00am - 5:00pm
Location: UBC Asian Centre foyer and the upper floor of Asian Library, 1871 West Mall, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Sponsors: Asian Library, Department of Asian Studies, Centre for Chinese Research and the Institute of Asian Research

Off-Campus Events

Images of Internment Exhibition: Oil Paintings by Dr. Henry Shimizu - Series 4 - Lifestyle in the Camp - July 21 - September 5, 2014

Alumni Spotlight: Max Gruber, BA '11

Every Update we take an Asian Studies Alumnus from our Asian Studies LinkedIn Group and interview them on their paths after graduation. This issue we catch up with Max Gruber, who graduated from our honours program in 2011 with a focus on China and Mandarin. He has spent a significant period of time living, studying, and working in China and currently works in Washington D.C. as an All-Source Analyst for BAE Systems focusing on national security issues for a government customer.

1. Could you go into some detail about your career path until now?
I am a relatively recent graduate, graduating in 2011, so my work history is quite brief. I received my degree in Asian Studies, with a focus on China and Mandarin. I have always had an interest in politics and international relations. Although I did not have a clear idea of what career path I wanted to go down immediately after graduation, I knew I wanted to apply my regional understanding of China and East Asia to the foreign policy arena. Plus, I assumed this is the field where my knowledge could best be utilized and where it would be most in demand. My family currently resides in Washington DC, so it was an easy decision for me to move back to the Capital region to search for work post-graduation. Unfortunately, it was quite a challenge landing a job within this field in 2011. The U.S. economy was still in recession, there was a surplus of job seekers, and all the talk in Congress focused on slashing budgets in the public sector. While I tried to find increasingly elusive positions within government or supporting the government, I actually worked in college admissions for UBC. I was the school's Northeast Regional Representative for International Student Recruitment. At the very least I could gain some professional experience while supporting international higher-education, something somewhat tangentially related to my degree and interests. It took twelve months, but I finally landed a position with a defense contractor. I currently serve as an All-Source Analyst. In the most basic sense, I provide research and analysis support on a range of issues our government customers demand. Although I am not focusing on international issues, let alone Asia-Pacific issues, it is a stepping stone to opportunities within the public sector that focus on foreign policy.

2. How did you get your first job after graduating?

As I mentioned above, UBC offered me my first position after school. As with most jobs, it was a combination of qualifications and networking that landed me the job. My friend who graduated from UBC in 2010 previously served as the Northeast Regional Rep. When he left the position he introduced me to his team as he thought I would be a strong candidate. After that it was all up to me. I interviewed well and my qualifications met the requirements, so I was offered the job. I landed my current position the same way, making contacts within the firm/sector I wanted to work with, possessing the appropriate qualifications, and then interviewing well.

4. Are there any opportunities in your field?

Opportunities do exist, but they are not easy to come by. The economy still hasn’t fully recovered from the recession of 2008, and, at least in the U.S., the political reality is one of shrinking budgets. This means that there are fewer positions for increasing numbers of well qualified applicants. This is a dynamic that is not inherit to the field I’m currently in. It’s endemic to the whole economy, save for a few select fields, most notably, the technology sector.

5. What can students/recent graduates do to get a foot in your industry?

Unfortunately, one will have to move to where the action is. I can’t speak about the public sector in Canada, as I’m not Canadian, but if one is interested in entering the world of politics or foreign policy in the U.S., one will have to move to Washington D.C. Outside of the Capital region there are few opportunities available within this field. New York City, where the U.N., various think-tanks, research centers, and NGO’s are located, would be second on the list, but the numbers pale in comparison to those of D.C. After that it, as with many things in life, it then comes down to qualifications, networking, persistence, and timing. There is no magic bullet or set path to landing a job within this industry, especially with the political and economic climate the way it currently is. If this was the early to mid 2000’s, it would be dramatically different. Then, everyone was hiring. It would be analogous to the technology boom we are seeing now.
6. In your field what does a typical entry level position entail?

One usually comes on-board as an analyst. A lot of the skills used during university are extremely valuable. You will not be called upon to be a subject-matter expert or a manager, but you will be expected to have proficient research, writing, and analysis skills. You will be gathering information from various sources (journals, news outlets, internet searches, etc.) and presenting them in a way that can be easily digested. Written briefs, research papers of various lengths, and presentations are all par for the course. Depending on what subject matter you are tasked with, it can help if you have a regional understanding and foreign language skills to be able to source information in the target language and provide contextualized analysis. None of this is different than many of the assignments students are tasked with during their time at UBC. Additionally, there are frequently entry-level translation and transcription positions, if one is specifically interested in using their foreign language skills.

7. Do you have any other advice that you would like to impart to students/recent graduates?

Network! It’s the most important aspect of landing your first job post-graduation. There are too many qualified job applicants across all sectors of the economy. Simply submitting a resume online will not cut it. In my experience, you need to have some sort of inside connection to the firm or field you want to work in. Companies are much more willing to hire someone they have a personal connection with. It really is the only way to differentiate yourself from the stacks of faceless resumes all companies receive today. It won’t get you hired, but it usually leads to at least a first round interview. After that, it is up to you. Reach out to friends, family, and professors with any sort of connections at all. Don’t be afraid to simply get in touch with the company you are interested in working with to have an “informational interview”. Like a lot of my professors at UBC, most people love to talk about their jobs and the subject matter they are interested in. Most people are more than happy to help out a recent graduate who is interested in entering their field and sharing the same common interests. Most importantly, be prepared for copious amounts of failure and rejection. That is simply the way the world works. Don’t take it personally. Keep moving forward. Eventually one’s persistence will pay off.

8. Can you recommend your favorite location in your region?

I’m assuming this is in my region of study, which would be China? I would have to go with Beijing. It’s dirty, crowded, confusing, and chaotic, but that is part of it’s charm. There is a lot of history, especially recent history, within it’s walls. Go before it’s too late. It’s all being torn down, but this is also an intriguing aspect of the city. Beijing is a microcosm for the rest of China. All the challenges, successes, and oddities embodied in today’s China are on display in the country’s capital. By visiting Beijing, you can witness a country develop before your own eyes. Not to mention, the food is delicious, the people are friendly, and the city tends to have a laid-back, casual atmosphere that fits my personality well.

9. What is one of your funniest or memorable moments abroad?

Taking the ferry from Xiamen to Jinmen, a Taiwanese island just off the coast of mainland China. No other place can one experience the striking distinction between the political and economic systems of the PRC and ROC. It would be like being able to walk across the DMZ between North and South Korea. You can visit both places in a day and begin to understand the past 60 years of modern Chinese history. It’s also a great way to get from the Mainland to the island of Taiwan cheaply. Jinmen has an airport with direct flights to Taipei.

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We Welcome your Submissions

If you have a story that you would like featured in our biweekly update please submit your story here.
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