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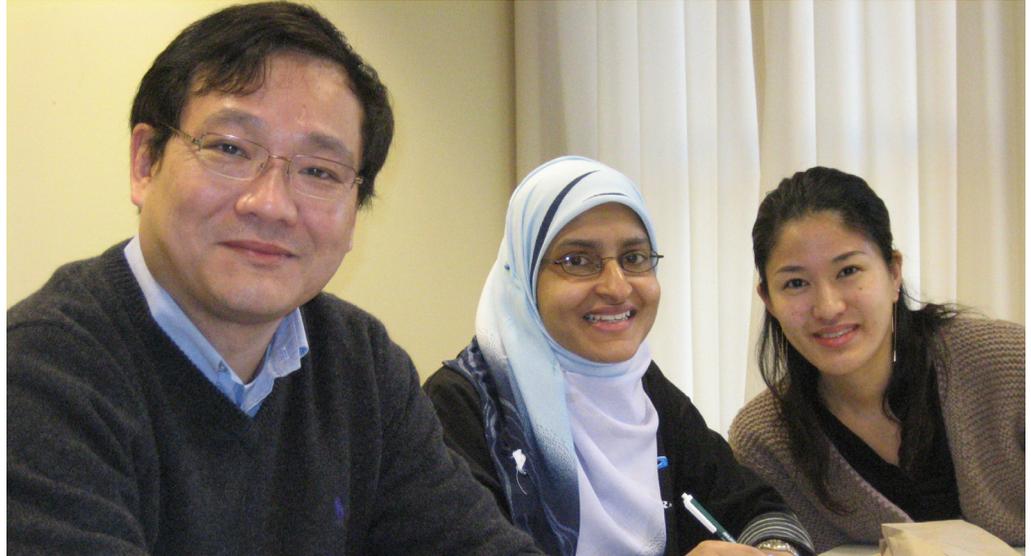
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EMERGING IDEAS

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Dr. Jieli Li and 2nd-Year IDS Students Who Are Preparing to Graduate

A Message from the Director

DR. JIE-LI LI

This time last year, I wrote a small piece in the winter issue of the IDS newsletter about my scanty reflections on issues regarding a possible paradigm shift in development studies. The then newsletter editor, Joshua O’Donnell, gave that piece a fascinating title called “From the Rocking Chair of Dr. Li.” However, what went beyond my expectation was that those who read my stuff liked it and some even encouraged me to write more in the coming issues to make the program newsletter more intellectually stimulating.

I would like to pursue this idea further. It would be of great benefit to our faculty and students if we could turn the program newsletter into a platform where thoughts and ideas we may have on world development can be shared. Actually, we have been constantly engaged in such reflections and even in debates on a variety of issues delivered to us each academic quarter from guest talks at the international studies forum. Yet we never made a real effort to collect these thoughts and ideas and share them amongst ourselves. So beginning in the winter quarter, I asked all IDS students to write down their reflections after each forum and put them together in their final papers as a partial requirement of the colloquium sequence.

As you will see, this issue of the newsletter devotes much space to excerpts of second-year IDS students’ colloquium papers, and those selected and published in the following illustrate our students’ reflections on the forum talks. I anticipate that the forthcoming spring issue of our newsletter will continue to publish reflective thoughts by our students on various topics of development to which they have been exposed during the international studies forums. I hope that our efforts will eventually turn the IDS newsletter into an effective medium for intellectual exchange.



“Young Women Suicide in Fast-Changing Rural China: Culture and Risk Factors” Professor Jie Zhang, Director of China Studies at SUNY-Buffalo



Haajima Degia enjoys a warm drink.

“AN INSIGHTFUL LECTURE BY PROFESSOR ZHANG JIE” — HAAJIMA DEGIA

“Professor Zhang Jie presented some unique and insightful views on the phenomena of suicide and utilized Durkheim’s classical study of suicide. . . . Consistent with Durkheim’s findings, Professor Zhang Jie stated that the research he has done demonstrates that it is the level of social integration of a community’s members [that] determines suicide rates. This research is very fascinating firstly because it corroborates a classical study, that of Durkheim. Secondly, it demonstrates that contrary to what we think (that is, that suicide is an individual phenomenon), suicide is actually linked to societal forces, and is therefore a sign of the relationship between society and the individual.”

“He drew attention to socialism as promoting women’s rights, and mentioned that the communist ideology in China since the 1950s promoted women’s participation in the workplace and broke down the strict stratification of gender roles. At the same time however, he acknowledged that in rural China, the Confucianist value system is still predominant. This Confucianist system, he argues, maintains men’s privileged positions and keeps women suppressed.”



Kinnalone Kittiphanh under the cherry blossoms.

“WHAT DEVELOPMENT HAS GIVEN THE WORLD” — KINNALONE KITTIPHANH

“In recent years, China has been growing very fast politically, socially and economically. The government has put a strong emphasis on economic and infrastructure development. I have the impression that when a country is more developed, people tend to be more stressed and have to try to “catch up” with modernization. It is more difficult for poor people in rural areas who do not have the means (financial assets and education) to achieve what society expects them to be. Thus, it creates pressure and social problems, and as the speaker stated, “suicide is not only a mental problem but a social problem as well”. Nevertheless, depression has correlation as a risk factor contributed to suicide. The speaker pointed out many different facts and suggested that the cause of suicide is a mental problem, not depression. In addition, like other Asian countries, cultural values are also a contributing factor in the sense that they put social stigma on women when they fail to maintain the values of a good woman identified by their traditional culture. Furthermore, social interpretation gives people the psychological impression that ‘a man who commits suicide is considered a coward, while for a woman, she is considered a heroine’.”

“This presentation has raised my intention to think about what development has given to the world today. It should be that when a country is developed, people are supposed to be happy and live in a healthy society. However, it seems to me that the result of development in this case is more of a loss than a gain when people have to kill themselves because of not being able to meet society’s expectations. In this case, who should we blame? And is this a price a country has to pay to be developed? As the speaker said “this suicide problem has no solutions yet.” Therefore, development needs to look back and examine its impact not only on the aspect of economic success but also on people’s well-being.”



“The Bank, the President and the Pearl of Africa” — A Film by Peter Chappell

“THE WORLD BANK AND UGANDA” — JOSHUA O’DONNELL

“ . . . I found the video very interesting because it clearly showed the difficulty the World Bank has in implementing efficient and effective projects in places that are burdened by extreme poverty and political instability such as Uganda. In short, the World Bank would have liked to fund a project to develop primary education, but compromised with Ugandan officials by agreeing to fund an infrastructure project aimed at building roads. During implementation of the project, however, a violent insurgency began raging on the Northern border forcing the Ugandan government to divert donated funds away from the World Bank project to military spending. . . The video allowed the viewer to see actual governmental and diplomatic meetings that took place during these negotiations.”

“Perspectives on International Development” by Jeffrey Clark of Clark and Associates

“SEVENTEENTH OF SEVENTEEN” — TREASA JAMES

“Jeffery Clark held no punches as he pointed out that the US’ contribution to foreign aid is pathetic as a developed nation when compared to other donor countries. He supported this by presenting the facts that, of the seventeen international donor governments, the US holds the seventeenth position when it comes to foreign aid. The presenter argued that as foreign aid dwindles, political aid is on the increase. . . . Essentially, when examining foreign aid from the US, the political agenda takes precedence while other areas such as social needs bring up the rear.”

“The presenter gave two main reasons for the inverse relation between foreign aid and political aid: (1) the increase in political aid is to promote western democracies in other regions of the world. . . . (2) Foreign aid is misunderstood. It is an investment, not a charity. Consequently, a return in investment would include trading partners, stability, democracy, women having more rights and children being respected.”

“THE DIFFICULTIES OF DEMOCRACY” — SHANI SALIFU

“Clark noted with disappointment the pace of democratization on the African continent. He observed that, even though elections have in some cases succeeded in dethroning leaders who have been widely perceived by people as governing badly, incoming governments have not been able to prove elections as something worth making a positive difference—they have mostly ended up repeating exactly what their predecessors did or even exceeding that. . . . [He] hinted that the lack of progress in democracy might also be due to the lack of commitment on the part of the very people who propose the system. This hint was contained in his observation that in the past the US had consciously stifled democratization in the developing world by spending a lot of money to prop up corrupt and autocratic leaders; one example of whom would be President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, now Democratic Republic of Congo, who used to wine and dine with the presidents of the US, France and Belgium while his people wallowed in poverty.”

INTERESTED IN THIS FILM?

This video is available online through Alden Library’s website. Just do a search for “the bank, the president and the pearl of africa”.

www.library.ohiou.edu



Joshua O’Donnell and Malcolm Meyer . . . perhaps discussing the World Bank? Photo by Treasa James.

DID YOU KNOW . . .

Jeffrey Clark is an Athens native and Ohio University Distinguished Alumnus. He is also an executive associate with Development Associates:

www.devassoc.com/



Treasa James and Mai Phuong at the Center for International Studies annual potluck. Photo by Shani Salifu.



“East Timor: Descent into Chaos”

by Brian and Diane Francisco, IDS Alumni, United Nations

“THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL AND GOVERNMENT SYSTEMS” — MARK MASON

“Brian and Diane Francisco are OU graduates of the IDS department, working for USAID and the International Organization of Migration as well as formally for the United Nations in East Timor. . . . [T]he former prime minister [of East Timor] was forced to resign, despite heading the 60% majority party in the parliament. . . . [Additionally], their comments on how badly the Portuguese government has complicated the development of education, social and government systems (due in part to Timor Leste’s ruling elite having selected Portuguese as the official language while virtually no one speaks this language) explained how [Portuguese] was retarding the country’s progress. The Franciscos discussed how the legal system is in shambles because everything must be done in Portuguese and no judges or lawyers can speak this language. At present there are recommendations from local people and foreign governments to select English as the official language, with the local language and Indonesian as additional working languages. Thirdly, the couple explained how difficult it was to hire locals with any education or skills to work on their projects. . . . Lastly, the couple shared a disdain for the UN in East Timor, explaining on how their employees, officials, departments and programs accomplish nothing. Brian, who was employed by the UN in East Timor prior to switching employers, was disgusted with how the entire structure was set up to simply push paper and keep people employed but failed to carry out any work whatsoever.”

“Challenges of the Millennium” — A Film by Albert Wandango



“UNDP PROJECTS IN KENYA” — CHANSOUK INSOUVANH

“The documentary indicates that many UNDP projects help to alleviate poverty in Kenya in order to meet the UN’s declaration of eight-millennium goals. . . . The documentary states that the significant development issues include low productivities, lack of water and food, natural disasters (drought), shantytown, HIV/AIDS, girls’ education and underage marriage, and 230 orphans who parents died because of HIV/AIDS. The UNDP provides financial support through micro-intervention programs for dealing with each issue. For example, regarding the issue of water and food, the UNDP helps the community to have easy access to water by building water wells closer to villages. . . . Another example is the issue related to girls’ education: the UNDP has set up a girls’ boarding school that rescue young Kenyan girls from social/family discrimination, rape and underage marriage. . . . It is important to note that this documentary is only a promotion for the UNDP. Basically, it identifies problems as listed above and shows how the UNDP deals with these problems with great success. The documentary claims that their strategies are effective and therefore Kenya is heading in the right direction with the millennium path.”

“Locating Southeast Asian Horror”

by Professor Adam Knee, Assistant Professor of Film at Ohio University



“A LIGHT PRESENTATION” — MARINA SOLAKHYAN

“It was a very light, interesting and exciting presentation about the specifics of horror film production in Southeast Asia, and the tendency of combining the Western features of horror films with the local customs and tradition in order to capture the market.”

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE GENRE, DR. KNEE RECOMMENDS NANG NAK AND SHUTTER (THAILAND), JELANGKUNG (INDONESIA), THE EYE (CO-PRODUCED BY SINGAPORE), SNAKER (CAMBODIA), AND FENG SHUI (PHILLIPINES).



Mo Tejani graduated from the International Development Studies program in 1984. He recently authored *A Chameleon's Tale: True Stories of a Global Refugee*.

A Chameleon's Tale: True Stories of a Global Refugee

MO TEJANI

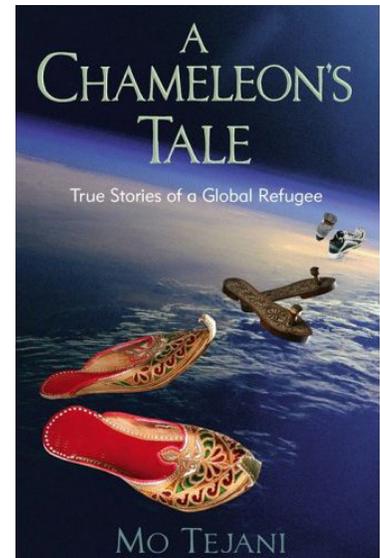
Mo Tejani - an Indian Shia Muslim by ancestry - was expelled from Idi Amin's Uganda in 1972. Torn apart from his family and exiled from his continent of birth, he was left homeless, without sense of his own cultural identity. Over the next three decades on the road, he worked with non-profit agencies, learned a slew of new languages, met fellow cultural nomads in forlorn places, and became involved in some of the world's most significant historical events.

In this entertaining globetrotting memoir, the author travels through five continents in search of a place he can call home. The trials and tribulations of 'identity shopping' in the 'multicultural supermarket' of today almost bring him to the brink of alienation but, as he discovers over the years, there are many along the road who are ready to lend a helping hand. Join him on his journey as he seeks liberation from his cultural chains and the catharsis of realizing his true identity.

"*A Chameleon's Tale* is an easy novel to read, and a hard one to put down." — Metro Magazine, Bangkok

"This is a wonderful book about travel, survival, betrayal, determination, full of intelligent comment." — Pattaya Today Review, June 2006

INTERESTED IN THIS BOOK?



You can purchase *A Chameleon's Tale* through Amazon.com or visit the author's website directly at:

www.mo-tejani.com

Recommended Reading

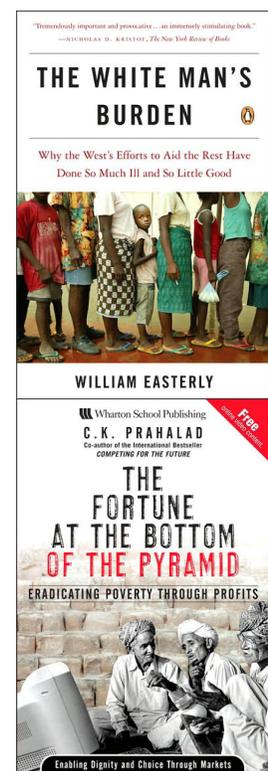
SOMEWHERE BETWEEN PRESENTATIONS, INTERNSHIPS, TERM PAPERS AND THESE, IT IS IMPORTANT TO TAKE SOME PERSONAL TIME. WHEN YOU HAVE A CHANCE, TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THE DEVELOPMENT-RELATED BOOKS SUGGESTED BELOW:

World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability by Amy Chua. Thoughtful insights and historical examples form a critical investigation of the influence of Western-promoted capitalism and its impacts on inequality and ethnic tensions.

White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done so Much Ill and so Little Good by William Easterly. Easterly suggests that the bureaucratic, top-down methodologies employed by Western aid organizations have failed, and will continue to fail, until they incorporate feedback and accountability.

Making Globalization Work by Joseph Stiglitz. Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz outlines the obstacles to equitable globalization and offers solutions.

The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid: Eradicating Poverty through Profits by C. K. Prahalad. The consumers who companies have traditionally ignored, those at the "bottom of the pyramid," represent an important economic group. Prahalad suggests ways in which companies can target this untapped market to simultaneously earn large profits and alleviate poverty.

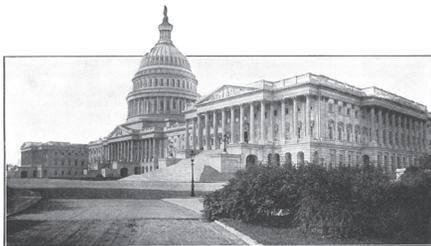


IDS Sponsoring Two CIS International Forum Speakers

“HIV/AIDS and Communication in China” — Dr. Shuming Lu, City University of New York at Brooklyn

“What the World Needs Now: The Case for Prosocial Values in a Global Culture” — Dr. Jay Weinstein, Eastern Michigan University

Dr. Jay Weinstein's presentation suggests that development modalities need to shift away from egoism and toward altruism: “It is a crisis of unmitigated egoism, and it lies behind every major social, political, and economic problem we now face. We will never be able to manage this crisis effectively unless we understand it as a cultural—a shared, collective—phenomenon. Unfortunately, a large part of the problem is that, when we see it at all, we see it as an individual psychological issue. Today's presentation outlines an analysis of the crisis and offers a strategy to solve it. This analysis is many-layered, because the problem of unmitigated egoism, itself, is multi-layered. It includes historical, philosophical, political, and psychological perspectives. The strategy, too, draws on several disciplines, both theoretical and applied. It involves techniques and principles to instill and disseminate prosocial values in all of our relationships, from the interpersonal to the international. The ultimate aim of this strategy is to restore a balance between egoistic and altruistic behavior in human affairs. It is important to state, early and often, that the goal is not to replace egoism with altruism. Both orientations are required for our survival. But it is equally necessary to emphasize the fact that, with the increasing world dominance of U.S. culture and the multinational corporations based in the U.S. and other highly industrialized nations, an emphasis on egoism and a devaluation of altruism have come to characterize global culture. The goal here is to restore the balance and give altruism the role it deserves.”



GRADUATING?

Complete instructions for graduation are available online at:

<http://www.ohio.edu/registrar/grd.cfm>



Spring 2007 Dates to Remember

WITH THE 2ND-YEAR COHORT PREPARING TO GRADUATE AND THE 1ST-YEAR COHORT PACKING FOR THEIR INTERNSHIPS, WE ARE FACING A BUSY QUARTER!

Tuesday, April 17 is the last day to apply for graduation for Spring Quarter. Even if you are planning to graduate at the end of summer, you can still walk during the spring ceremony.

On **Thursday, April 19** a world famous environmental economist will give a presentation titled “Climate Change through the Eyes of an Economist” at the Baker Center Theater from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

On **Wednesday, April 25 to Saturday, April 28** representatives from both the 1st- and 2nd-year IDS cohorts will take a trip to Washington, D.C. The itinerary includes tours of the World Bank and different development-based NGOs.

April 30 is the deadline to submit proposals for communications-related papers on international topics to the 2007 Global Fusion Conference in St. Louis, USA.

The 2007 Student Research and Creativity Fair is **Thursday, May 3** from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Convocation Center. Be sure to stop by and support your participating colleagues, including the editor of this newsletter!

Friday, May 4 to Sunday, May 6 is Mom's Weekend.

The IDS farewell party for the graduating 2nd-year cohort is **Friday, May 18** beginning at 6:30 p.m. Lori Sargent is hosting the party, and transportation will be provided for all students.

Friday, June 8 is graduate commencement. If you are graduating, remind your family of this date! If not, mark it on your calendar to support graduating friends. Congratulations to the 2nd-year IDS cohort!

