



APAC News

FROM THE WEATHERHEAD EAST ASIAN INSTITUTE ASIA PACIFIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

January 26, 2007

Upcoming Events:

1/29 Beginning of the year East Asian Concentrators meeting

1/30 Eighth Annual Mitsui USA Symposium

2/1 China Forum talk by Professor Zelin

2/5 Panel for undergraduates on Asian Careers and Internships

2/8 Brownbag on South Korean modern cities

2/15 Brownbag on Mongolian society

More details and more events are listed on page 4

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Kobe and Katrina: Lessons Learned

By Virsa Hurt



From September 2004 to June 2005, I spent a year studying in Tokyo, Japan. Once my program ended, I returned to my home institution, Dillard University, in New Orleans, LA. August 29, 2005, just one week into my senior year, the campus and the city of New Orleans were devastated by a horrible hurricane followed by floods throughout the region. Was it a coincidence

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Annual "Taste of Asia" Draws Crowds

With the semester winding down and exams approaching, students flooded the sixth floor of the International Affairs Building for the annual "Taste of Asia" feast. On hand to feed the noisy throng were volunteers from the Greater China Initiative, China Forum, Japan Exchange Forum, Korea Focus, Southeast Asia Student Initiative and CU-EAST. The dishes on hand—from sushi to kimchi to Chinese noodles to Thai greens—spanned Asia (though the beer was solidly Midwestern).



Above: Volunteers from student organizations waiting to serve the hungry hordes

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Mongolian Ambassador Addresses WEAI



Ambassador of Mongolia to Washington Ravdan Bold spoke as a part of the Weatherhead Policy Forum in December, emphasizing Mongolia's unique role historically and as a small Northeast Asian state today.

Mongolia's former reach as conqueror of large parts of East and West Asia, noting that Mongolian forces were closing in on Western Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries when they were unexpectedly pulled back.

Professor Morris Rossabi started the event off with a description of Mon-

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Katrina and Kobe, contd.

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that I had recently returned from a country that experienced a similar disaster 10 years prior? The subject that I studied and the city that I lived in appeared to have striking similarities.

On January 17, 1995, the city of Kobe was flattened by an earthquake and damaged by subsequent fires. It was the worst earthquake in Japan since the Great Kanto earthquake in 1923, which claimed 140,000 lives. 10 years later, on August 29, 2005, New Orleans experienced Hurricane Katrina, the costliest and one of the deadliest hurricanes in the history of the United States. It was the sixth-strongest Atlantic hurricane ever recorded. The Kobe earthquake caused more than 6,400 fatalities, destroyed 50,000 buildings, and led to an economic loss of \$200 billion; Hurricane Katrina caused 1,600 fatalities, affected 90,000 square miles and resulted in a \$105 billion economic loss.

Although these two cities are extremely dissimilar in make-up, culture, history and disaster type, the catastrophes they experienced and their catastrophes' aftermaths have striking parallels. Both Kobe and Katrina left thousands of



Above: Photos courtesy of BBC, Katrina-Help.com and www.rmutphysics.com

people displaced and both received slow responses from all levels of government.

As a result, the earthquake and the hurricane served as a wake-up call for disaster prevention tactics in both countries. The disasters also drew volunteers from throughout Japan and the U.S., as well as generous interna-

tional assistance.

During the spring of 2006, a group of Japanese urban planners came to the Port of New Orleans to present the recovery plan for Kobe. Due to this recovery plan, the once flattened and destroyed city of Kobe is now a thriving and bustling metropolitan.

However, hurricanes, more even than earthquakes, are a tough job for urban planners. Especially when the city in question is under sea level and levees designed to prevent floods from hurricanes have design flaws. Additionally, New Orleans experiences a number of hurricanes each year, and because of this, planners and residents are hesitant to rebuild when there might be the chance of another "Katrina" occurring next year.

New Orleans has a long way to go before it fully recovers. I was able to return to the city and play a part in its recovery and growth. Parts of the city that were on higher levels are fully operating and back to normal; however, most parts of the city have little to no operating capacity.

Looking back in retrospect, Kobe has regained its strength and returned to its beginnings within the past 12 years, and therefore it offers hope for New Orleans.

Mongolian Ambassador Speaks, contd.



Above: Professor Morris Rossabi introduces Ambassador Bold

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Ambassador Bold picked up where Rossabi left off, describing how Mongolia, once the world's largest contiguous empire, is now caught between the two giants China and Russia.

He also spoke of how a growing capital city was straining his country's environment and how Mongolian economic policies that looked good on paper were slow to be implemented.

Much as many of its challenges are its

own or are similar to those faced by other small, developing countries around the world, Bold pointed out that Mongolia is a firmly Northeast Asian state (the title of his talk was "Mongolia and Northeast Asia"), tied to the changes shaping that region.

Audience members asked further about economic and foreign policy issues facing the country. One attendee sought Mongolian advice for the United States, which the attendee described as a fellow empire in decline.

Panel on Non-Profit Careers in Asia Held

At the end of November, activists from the Asian non-profit world shared advice with students at a career panel hosted by APAC.

Panelists included Christine Clarke of the National Labor Committee, Susan Hubbard from the Japan Center for International Exchange, Imrana Khera of the Asia Society, and Bede Sheppard from Human Rights Watch.

In a candid discussion, one speaker after another dealt with the difficulties of working in the non-profit sector—but also spoke of how activist work could be fulfilling.

Christine Clarke, for example, emphasized that non-profit jobs are surprisingly hard to come by. She cautioned that students should not imagine that they are doing something no one else cares about or that no one else wants

to do if they forgo the rewards of the corporate world.

In response to a student question about maintaining morale when dealing with the world's worst shortcomings, panelists emphasized focusing on who they were serving and finding inspiration there.

Students asked about moving from the private to the public sector (answer: emphasize your skills, get an internship) and how to be sure that one's activism was making a difference, particularly in countries like China with authoritarian governments.

After the panel concluded, students stayed around to ask further questions and chat with panelists.

APAC hopes to host a private-sector career panel this spring.

“Taste of Asia”, contd.

Continued from page 1

The crowd at the event was estimated at over 240 people and the line snaked out of the cafeteria and down the hall at the building's main entrance. Luckily, everyone with a ticket appeared to have received a plate by the end (there were worries that food would run out).

After the rush subsided, dazed “Taste of Asia” volunteers scavenged for leftovers, shaking out the remainders of soda bottles and slathering a tub of wasabi on crackers or anything else they could find.

APAC was pleased with how smoothly the event went off, how it drew on the strengths of the campus' different Asia-related student groups, and, most importantly, how it brought the broader school community together.

Students Meet to Discuss Their Interests, Experience in Asia

In mid-November, students from across the Columbia campus gathered for the chance to talk about their interests and experiences in East Asia (and to grab some free food). The APAC-sponsored discussion drew from SIPA, the law school and the weary ranks of Columbia's PhD candidates.

Some participants commented on how refreshing it was to meet others from outside of their own programs. APAC hopes to host more such get-togethers in the coming semester. As always, we are open to suggestions about themes and venues. And choice of food.

If you have ideas, send them to Brandon (bjh2106) or Manfred (ime2106).



Coming next week from APAC News...

... a bi-weekly column profiling WEAI's visiting scholars.



More Photos from "Taste of Asia"

By Wen Li



Asia-Related Events On and Off Campus

Monday, January 29

APAC East Asia Concentration Info Session and Get-Together, Room 918 IAB, 7:00pm

Tuesday, January 30

The Eighth Annual Mitsui USA Symposium: "Investors Unleashed: The Rise of Shareholder Activism" 301 Uris Hall, Columbia Business School, 5:45-7:15pm. Make reservations online at www.gsb.columbia.edu/cjeb/8thmitsui.

Thursday, February 1

China Forum Discussion with Madeleine Zelin Room 918 IAB, 7:00pm

Monday, February 5

Panel for Undergraduates on Careers and Internships in Asia Time and Place TBA

Thursday, February 8

Brown Bag Lecture by Valerie Gelezeau : "Apartment Complexes and the Making of South Korean Modern Cities" 918 IAB, 12:00-1:30pm

Thursday, February 15

Brownbag Lecture by Christopher Atwood: "Mongol Society's Basic Unit: What it Was and Wasn't" 918 IAB, 12:00-1:30pm

Lecture by Stefano Carboni: "Transmission of Islamic and Chinese Artistic Motifs Along the Silk Roads" The Asia Society, 725 Park Avenue at 70th Street, 6:30-8:30pm. \$5 for students.

Jobs and Internships

Jobs and Fellowships

Nikkei America is seeking a someone with a strong understanding of written Japanese - good enough to fully comprehend the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* - and who is also a strong writer. Nikkei's New York office translates stories into English for publication on its English-language news website. E-mail Eriko Wada at wada_eln@nikkei.com if interested.

The National Korean American Service & Education Consortium is seeking an Immigrant Rights Program Associate to assist with planning, coalition-building, technical assistance for affiliates, publicity and research. Applicants should have a Bachelor's degree and three or more years of experience working on Korean American, Asian Pacific American or immigrant community issues and/or civic participation initiatives. Korean fluency is also a

plus. If interested, send a cover letter, resume, writing sample, and salary history and requirement to Jacqueline Chun, at jjchun@nakasec.org.

Boren Fellowships are available from the National Security Education Program for graduate students interested in "pursuing the study of languages and cultures in world regions critical to U.S. interests." For more information, visit www.iie.org/nsep.

Internships

The Japan Local Government Center is applications from graduate students interested in spending a summer working alongside www.iie.org/nsep gaining first-hand exposure to Japanese management in the public sector and also improving their Japanese language skills. More information can be found at: <http://www.jlgc.org/en/InternshipApplicationForm2007.doc>.

The New York Immigration Coalition has internships available for students interested improving immigrants' access to services; combating discrimination against immigrants; advocating for equitable immigration policies; educating the public immigration issues. For more information visit <http://www.thenyic.org/content.asp?sid=5>

CCE Hong Kong Internship Program, organized by alumni, is accepting five undergraduate interns for a number of different sectors. Students will be mentored by one alumnus and live in one location. Some funding is available for those students who are financial aid-eligible. For more information, visit <http://www.cce.columbia.edu/students/experiential/ceo.php>

Please send information on job or internship opportunities to: ime2106@columbia.edu

Please send APAC News submissions and comments to ime2106@columbia.edu.

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