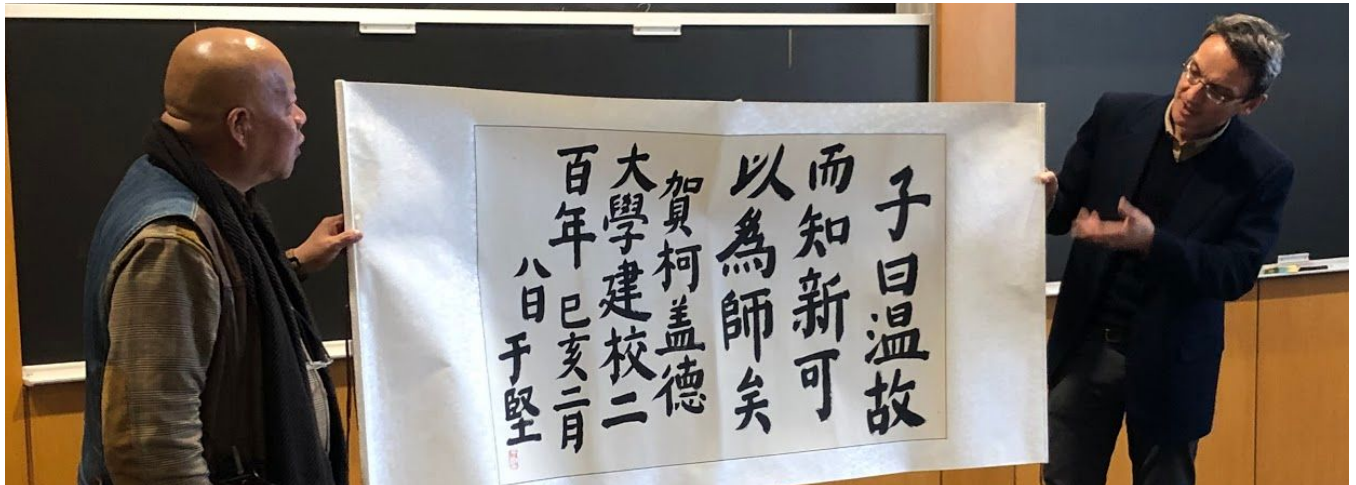

Asian Studies at Colgate

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2019

What's happening in Asian Studies at Colgate and Beyond



A person who brings warmth to the old while understanding the new can be a worthy teacher (see p. 7)

What's inside:

- Voices of graduating seniors
- Exploring Asia at Colgate
- Student activities
- and more!

Find us at: <http://www.colgate.edu/asian-studies>

From the Director

A student who was taking my class came to my office recently and said that there appeared to be many professors who could talk and teach about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict but few who could do so for the Kashmir conflict. Just one example, but I wonder if we can hear more such voices if we listen.



This year the Asian Studies Program is graduating seven students (five majors and two minors). For a small program like ours, this is a great number. But what's more impressive is the quality of the students. When Professor Mehl and I conducted a senior exit interview, I was impressed by how these students all spoke enthusiastically about the courses on Asia that they took, and about appreciating the different disciplinary and regional perspectives represented in these courses. Few found courses redundant even when they took two courses (let's say History and Political Science) that dealt with the same issue, because disciplinary approaches are markedly different. As of now, our concentrators seem to enjoy and take advantage the flexibility of our program to carve out their "own" program, finding and making connections among courses, within the broad perimeter of our program. There were also some voices that allude to the potential benefit of having some common courses that facilitate shared learning experiences among concentrators. Most also mentioned that they would have appreciated more course selections.

Surely part of the program's "flexibility" stems from a lack of well-accepted designed structure of learning in Asian Studies, and the insufficient range and frequency of course offerings (such as a course on territorial conflicts in Asia) is in part results of the relatively small number of concentrators (given the size, diversity, complexity of Asia!). But these are all "positively charged limits" to be overcome towards the goal of cultivating our students' ability to navigate themselves and to make a difference in the world both increasingly interconnected and divided and in which "Asia" is increasingly and undeniably a major player.

On a more administrative note, it has been a while since the last self-study and external review of the Asian Studies Program, and we will likely need to start thinking about them in the coming year. I hope that we can take advantage of the opportunity to enhance the quality of the program further by working together.

Daisaku Yamamoto

Why Study Asia?

Asia holds a unique and vital place within the globalizing world of the early 21st century. Home to an extraordinary range of linguistic and ethnic groups, this broad and dynamic region is rich in cultural and environmental diversity. In the spirit of liberal arts education, Asian Studies provides you with an intellectual space that accommodates and encourages your aspiration to engage with the whole of the place and people, rather than viewing them through a specific disciplinary lense alone. Our premise is that if you want to understand something about Chinese economy, for example, you cannot do so without knowing the country's historical experiences, geographical settings, political dynamics and its relations with other countries, changing social values and realities, evolving language, and so on. Engaging the many changes taking place in Asian societies today requires a diverse set of intellectual skills, which will prepare you to extend your career in and with one of the most dynamic world regions of our time.

Asian Studies Program at Colgate



Nine courses are required for the major, of which four courses must be at the 300 or 400 level.

The introductory course may count toward the five courses focused on a single subregion of Asia. Three other courses should be chosen from the list of Governed Electives and may address any region of Asia. Other courses may also serve as electives for this major if they are at the 300 or 400 level and if at least 40 percent of the course and of the student's work

concerns Asia. Students must gain approval from the director of Asian Studies prior to taking these courses for them to count toward the major.

Majors are strongly encouraged to acquire proficiency in one or more Asian languages, although no more than three language courses at any level may count toward the nine courses required for the major. Normally, the nine courses will include courses from at least two of these three divisions: arts and humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and mathematics.

We also offer a minor in Asian Studies.

For more information visit us at: <http://www.colgate.edu/asian-studies>

Voices of Graduating Seniors

Asian Studies Program is graduating seven concentrators (five majors and two minors) this year, including Logan Barnett, Phuong Mac, Oliver Moe, Jackson Painter, Annie Wang, Emma Wellington, and Aly Zoarski. Here are the voices of some of our graduating students.

Logan Barnett

Having spent much of my childhood in Japan and China, I developed a strong affinity for the far East from a young age. At the same time, I was immersed in Japanese society by attending private Japanese school in Tokyo as well as Japanese Saturday School from fourth grade onwards. This situation largely influenced my development psychologically and physically. For example, from even my pre-school era I realized that I was not, and would never be considered, Japanese. It was not only the obvious differences in appearance or family background that I internalized, but the subtle, day to day aspects of life were equally powerful. The other students all carried Lancel brand backpacks in an almost uniform fashion; their mothers would carefully prepare traditional Japanese lunches; teams were always divided between white and red on sports day. As I got older, I became very interested in the major and minor differences among both countries within Asia as well as Western and other regions, and how these qualities shape individual experience, philosophy, and faith. The interdisciplinary framework of the Asian Studies program allowed me to explore these questions further. Brenton Sullivan's Tibetan Buddhism course not only introduced me to the uniqueness of Tibetan religion and culture, but also the influence it had on Japan over many centuries. Through this, I feel as though I gained a strong understanding of many of the epistemological and ontological foundations upon modern Asia was built. The combination of language, religion, history, and sociology knowledge I gained through the program have greatly enhanced the depth of my understanding of Asian, the world, and myself.

Phuong Mac



As an Asian Studies student at Colgate, I had the benefit of immersing in a variety of disciplines that have really enriched my global perspective. With a concentration in China, I was able to cultivate social, environmental, historical, political, and other disciplinary perspectives regarding China's impact on its own nation and the world. I took advantage of the flexible requirement of the program to explore unfamiliar topics that I was intrigued in (e.g., *Experience Hinduism* and *Cities of the Silk Road*). One of the most rewarding parts of being an Asian Studies major is being able to engage in conversations with alumni and others within or outside of the institution using what I've learned from classroom discussions. From time to time I would see a news article online and thought to myself, "I learned that in class!"

Oliver Moe



I am very happy to have chosen to be an Asian Studies major! Its interdisciplinary focus allowed me to further explore interests I already had, as well as develop new ones. Asian Studies pushes students to understand the region through a more holistic approach, a skill that has served me well at Colgate and one that I will continue to use moving forward. I'm also grateful to have had the opportunity to work with many professors who keep classes engaging and are always willing to help students.

Aly Zoarski



I have loved my experience as an Asian Studies major at Colgate. I found that I really connected with my professors and helped to create the strong student-professor relationships that I was looking for in college, whether that be from traveling or professors taking a genuine interest in my life. Learning about new culture(s) I had not experienced before coming to Colgate allowed me to reevaluate how I think about the world and enabled me to have a different appreciation for Asian cultures. My Asian Studies electives were some of the classes I was most excited about and my passion for the topic is apparent to almost all people I meet. I am truly thankful for my Asian Studies major and would not have had such a great Colgate experience without it.

Annie Wang



I enjoyed the Asian Studies Program partially because it offered the unique opportunity to see through different media a congregation of geographical spaces. I started with the history of 19th- and 20th-century East Asia, plunged into Japanese films and literature, entered the route of Japanese language-learning (which brought me to Tokyo and Middlebury), and unexpectedly ran into the beauty of Japanese literature in its original language. Along the way, I also dabbled in Indian literature and history with an intriguing feminist lens. I also ended my college career with a history thesis on the Mongol Empire. Many of these steps have been unexpected, but along the path I have encountered countless beauties -- in learning, in people, and in the geographical spaces this learning and these people have brought me to. I am deeply grateful for this experience, and I will continue walking my path -- with which the path of Asian Studies has created many intersections that will organically grow into the future.

Jackson Painter



Most people who grow up in America tend to frame issues from an American point of view or, occasionally, a European point of view. My coursework with the Asian Studies Program has taught me that these points of view do not always fit well when it comes to Asian culture and society. Rather, there are unique Asian perspectives on different issues that are not understood by most western onlookers. As a Colgate Asian Studies minor, I've gotten to experience this unique perspective in a variety of subjects, like literature, political science, and religion.

Exploring Asia at Colgate

Korean Lunar New Year's Celebration

Korean Lunar New Year Celebration was hosted by Woolim Cho and the Korean Cultural Association with the support of Professor John Palmer on Saturday, February 2, at the ALANA Cultural Center. Over 60 people celebrated the occasion with delicious food.

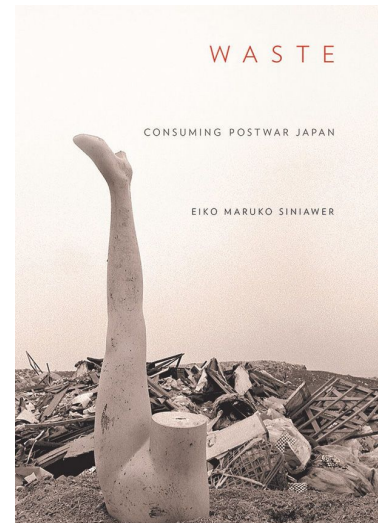


Waste and Well-being in Postwar Japan



On March 26, the Colgate University Division of Arts and Humanities and the East Asian Language and Literatures Department invited **Eiko Maruko Siniawer**, Professor of History at Williams College, to speak about waste and well-being in postwar Japan as a part of Colgate's Spring Colloquium Series. She spoke about the concept of *Mottainai*, or Wastefulness, in Japan, and how it has evolved

since the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, when waste reduction meant efficiency and modernity, through the bubble economic boom period, when luxurious consumption became socially accepted, and to present day when "throwing stuff away" is almost seen as virtuous (*à la Marie Kondo*). Professor Siniawer utilized various forms of media, from newspapers and magazines, to manga and Japanese animation, to explore these shifts and explain the popular mindsets on *Mottainai* alongside their real-world effects.



After Death: The Gendered Dynamics of Work in Bangladesh

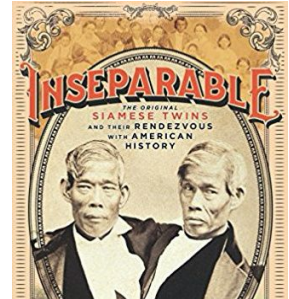


On March 27, **Lamia Karim**, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Oregon, invited by the Political Science Department, discussed the gendered dynamics of work in Bangladesh. Her research explores intersections of women, development, and globalization. By focusing on the singular case of a woman who faced domestic abuse, struggled to provide for her family, and had to work in the harsh conditions of a garment factory in Bangladesh, she highlighted the importance of understanding these female garment workers not only as agents of national economic growth, but

also as mothers, wives, and daughters. Professor Karim's discussion on such issues as the role of NGOs and the importance of investing in rural economies triggered many questions from the floor.

Inseparable: The Original Siamese Twins and Their Rendezvous with American History

On April 1, Professor Yunte Huang from the University of California at Santa Barbara came to Colgate to talk about the story of Chang and Eng Bunker who were born in present-day Thailand and moved to the United States in 1829. Huang's talk traced and casted light on their life paths, relationships, and aspirations.

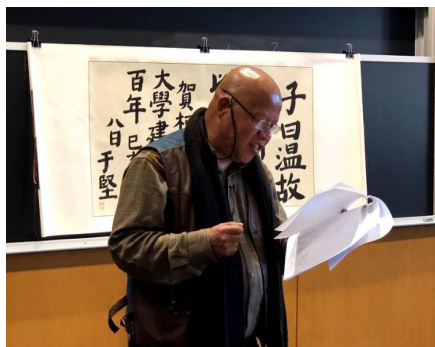


Rabindranath Tagore and the Social Theology of Universalism



On April 10, Professor **Pradip Datta** of Jawaharlal Nehru University visited Colgate to speak about universalism in the way Bengali intellectual Rabindranath Tagore interpreted it from the context of colonial India, and how this tied into theological thought at the time. Professor Datta established the background of British-colonized India, and in particular the growing popularity of certain theological and universalist ideas among Bengali and Indian intellectuals. He discussed how, from this background, the Hindu-ness of India gained traction, but Tagore rejected this idea as well as the idea of the Nation. Tagore's foundational concept of the Nation as a tool of human mobilization in a way which paints the Nation as a self-destructing religion lays a basis for discussing the idea of Universalization: the process of fostering a healthy, cohesive global community which enriches not only the society as a whole, but also the deep, spiritual strength of the individual which participates in that society irrespective of political or religious borders.

A Reading by Chinese Poet Yu Jian: A Long Poem on Being a Poet and Short Poems on Hamilton



On April 4, Chinese Poet **Yu Jian** returned to Colgate after fifteen years since his last visit. His personal poems discuss his upbringing during the Cultural Revolution in China, and give us insight on how this influenced him as a poet. His poetry explores both the politics and the daily life of the time. Lately, his poems have been exploring the effects modern technology and modern China have had on literary art and poetry, and the development of the recent wave of new poets emerging. During the event, students of Professor Crespi's read the English translations of Yu

Jian's poems, and the reading was followed by a Q&A session. Finally Yu Jian presented Colgate with a calligraphic scroll commemorating the University's 200th Anniversary (**see front cover photo**). The scroll quotes the Confucian Analects: "A person who brings warmth to the old while understanding the new can be a worthy teacher." Yu Jian also visited Professor Crespi's Core China class for a full period of answering questions on Chinese poetry and his experience as a writer.



Japanese Tea Ceremony

Japanese tea master Ruriko Yamakawa visited Colgate for the lecture/demonstration organized by Professor Yukari Hirata. Yamakawa introduced students to the tradition of the Japanese tea ceremony, and offered them an opportunity to learn how to perform it. One student described this as a "beautifully complicated art form", especially once they started learning basics of it. It takes a casual activity usually done without much thought, and adds a complex dimension of spiritual mannerism and mindset. To even receive a fraction of experience in this difficult art is valuable, students say, and it inspires one to learn even more.



Student Activities

Anime Society

The Colgate Anime Society is one of many clubs oriented toward Japanese culture, and it does this through Japanese animation. The Society meets every weekend, serving both as an informal respite from the school week through entertainment and as a space to discuss Japanese art and culture through animation. With this focus, the club provides an opportunity to explore Japan through this medium. It also provides a space for those involved with the underrepresented otaku subculture generated around anime and related media on campus. Anyone with an interest in this specific medium or Japan in general is welcome, and may be guided to connected forms of Japanese entertainment through the club.

The Colgate Anime Society takes a yearly trip to Boston for the Anime Boston convention. There, members may meet the creators and producers of anime, and the manga series they stem from. They also get the chance to meet others passionate about the medium, and who express this passion through art, cosplay, and other ways. This supplements the conversations and environment already fostered by the club, and introduces members to new realms of what is discussed.



Photo credit: Jonathon Aguilera @Bolumbia <https://www.flickr.com/people/jonathanagu/>

OASIS



The Organization of Asian Sisters in Solidarity, or OASIS, is a student organization which serves as a space of solidarity for individuals who identify as Asian, Asian-American, non-binary in gender, women, and the intersections of these identities. Core to their mission as well is standing in solidarity with other groups for people of color across campus, and providing education and support for activism in the realm of social justice for minority identities.

Internally, OASIS helps foster conversations about issues facing the Asian community on multiple levels; examples include tackling anti-blackness among Asian communities, the dynamic of navigating Colgate and the greater society it represents as an Asian minority, especially for international students who may be unaccustomed to the dynamic, and understanding the link the Asian community shares with other people of color in terms of oppression, privilege, and history.

Externally, OASIS strives to bring onto campus underrepresented voices to share their experiences and work. These voices include activists, poets, and other impactful individuals who inhabit minority spaces, and serve as examples of the solidarity and lives OASIS fosters and represents. The Organization provides not only a supportive, healing space, but also encourages its members to stand strong for their identities, and overcome the societal struggles which attempt to pin them down.

Nihon-Cafe

The Nihon Cafe is a valued resource for studying Japanese language and culture on campus. It is a space provided by students and faculty which offers an opportunity to practice the language with peers, learn more about the culture of Japan, and share experiences across levels, and between students and faculty. It supplements the formal courses, as well as the Table of Babel space which also helps with language practice. It serves students both who are deeply involved with Japanese language learning and who simply wish to learn more about the language and Asian culture. All interest levels are welcome.

Nihon-Cafe

Every Wednesday 4:00–5:30 pm
at the Japan Center (Lawrence 107)



Free Japanese snacks and tea!
No Japanese skills required.

Asian experience at Colgate: Kerr Braza

Kerr Patrick Braza is a Junior (double-majoring in Japanese and Computer Science) who has been involved in the Asian community on campus since his freshman year, and his desire to do so stems from his high school years. Though Kerr is not an Asian Studies concentrator, his experience over the past few years gives us insights into a way of pursuing interests in Asia at Colgate. Interview was conducted by our editorial assistant, Genesis Elias-Wilson.



What was your introduction to the study of Asia, and the Asian community on campus? What guided you towards it?

In all honesty, I sought out a good program on Asia during my search for a higher level institution. It was central in what I wanted for my liberal education. Thus, when I was admitted, I immediately sought out the Japanese information session and quickly got acquainted with my first Japanese professor, Hirata sensei. Stemming from her inspirational and immaculate persona, I was immediately drawn in to seriously pursue it as a Japanese language major. With regards to the broader Asian community, as a Filipino immigrant, I had often made contact with other people of Asian descent from the very moment I stepped into America. Using race and cultural shared experience as an anchor, I found it easier to find my place within the Asian American group. Carrying that mindset with me through high school and into Colgate, I found myself, again, actively seeking out that community. It was through myself that I was able to find many of these cultural groups outside of the classroom, and it was rather easy to learn more and more after gaining a connection within the intimate den that is Colgate. As a key example of this, I sought out the Anime Society on campus as I had wanted to find people who enjoyed the same hobbies as I, got to know them, and was then subsequently introduced to the Japan club/Omatsuri events. Showing interest and actively seeking out facets of Asian culture that interested me is what allowed me to navigate my way around the Asian community on campus.

Which Asian organizations have you been involved with?

I am currently the president of Colgate Anime Society and a Japanese major. On top of that, I am a member of Japan Club, Korean Culture Association, Colgate Vietnam Society, Chinese Interest Association, Kpop dance group, Cosplay Club, and OASIS.

What have been your favorite classes in the Asian Studies Program?

To preface, I honestly have enjoyed all of my classes on Asia here at Colgate. However, I must give special credit to Yamamoto sensei and Hirata sensei for Japan Study Group's JPN 481 *Urban Cultural Geographies of Kyoto*, GEOG315 *Sustainable Livelihoods in Asia*, and JPN121 *Elementary Japanese* respectively. These classes are representative of the Japan Study Group and my start within the Japanese program specifically. The study

group, as high as my expectations were, was way beyond what I imagined. To be able to visit different communities with Japan and directly interact with the Japanese people is something that I would never have experienced if not for the study group. Of course, none of this would have been possible had I thought little of the first elementary class. Elementary Japanese was such a fundamental class that determined whether or not one was going to major and pursue Japanese seriously. The professors are the greatest in the Asian Studies program, and I have them to thank for enabling me to get this far within the major.

What have been your favorite events and experiences?

There have been many, and it is difficult to choose, but some of my favorites include: Anime Boston, Japanese Festival (Omatsuri), Chinese New Year Celebration, Diwali, Anime Movie Screenings, The Japanese speech competition, Table of Babel (Come People!!), Cosplay Formal, Nihon Cafe, and the Japanese Tea Ceremony demonstrations.

What advantages do you feel you have from learning about Asia (culture, language, etc.) and being part of the Asian community at Colgate?

I feel that the moral, academic, and structural support that the faculty and staff gives you is the most excellent advantage that one obtains through here. Also, I should not forget all the benefits of meeting alumni at an Izakaya (casual bar-restaurant) in Japan, having upperclassman talk to me about their experience at the Japanese job fair, and constantly receiving emails about internships abroad. The Asian community in general is also excellent. It might feel cliquey at first due to cultural barriers and gaps in shared experience, but once



interacting with them, you quickly find that rather than alienation, one gains insight and newfound knowledge regarding their respective cultures. Once one gets past that point and demonstrate respect for their culture, those groups will welcome and celebrate you. While intimidating at first, I love interacting with those communities and overcoming those barriers. I can honestly say that I have garnered many introspective moments regarding my own identity as a result.

What are your thoughts on your academic training and the Asian community at Colgate?

As a double major who wanted to marry STEM and humanities into something unique and interdisciplinary, the Japanese side of higher education and it as a major is what really hampered me in my search of Liberal Arts education. Thus, the programs available here are truly unique to Colgate, and one would greatly benefit from simply being here with all these resources on campus. That being said, if one displays passion in the subject matter, it will definitely show through. The people who are pursuing their interest in Asia, particularly language, are the same ones who show up to a variety of events, both inside and outside the formal academic setting. These include more informal gatherings to do calligraphy or media screenings of East Asian films. In Table of Babel, the Japanese table consistently is among the biggest despite being one of the smaller languages. Small does not equate to weak. This is a very strong and vibrant community and feels like a family on Colgate. People of all races and socioeconomic background come together as a result of some curiosity regarding some facet of culture or language of Asia provides insight on, and through that, we are able to form a strong bond at Colgate.

Anything Else?

I spoke of my own experience in navigating my way around the Asian community, both intellectual and social, as a whole. However, I wish to stress that everyone is welcome! I am an advocate of this community precisely because of how welcoming it has been for me. I wish to gratefully extend the welcome they have given me. As an ambassador for the Japanese program as well as the president of the Colgate Anime Society, if anyone wishes to discuss anything regarding their own experiences and comments regarding studying about and in Asia, and the Asian Community in general, I am always open to discuss! As are my peers and the faculty. Let us move forwards, with gusto!



Recent Work by Asian Studies Faculty

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Kato, Takao, Naomi Kodama. 2018. "Deregulating Overtime Hours Restrictions on Women and Its Effects on Female Employment: Evidence from a Natural Experiment in Japan." *Oxford Bulletin of Economics & Statistics*, Vol. 80, No. 4 (August): 804-21.

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Rajasingham, Nimanthi. 2019. *Assembling Ethnicities in Neoliberal Times: Ethnographic Fictions and Sri Lanka's War*. Northwestern University Press.

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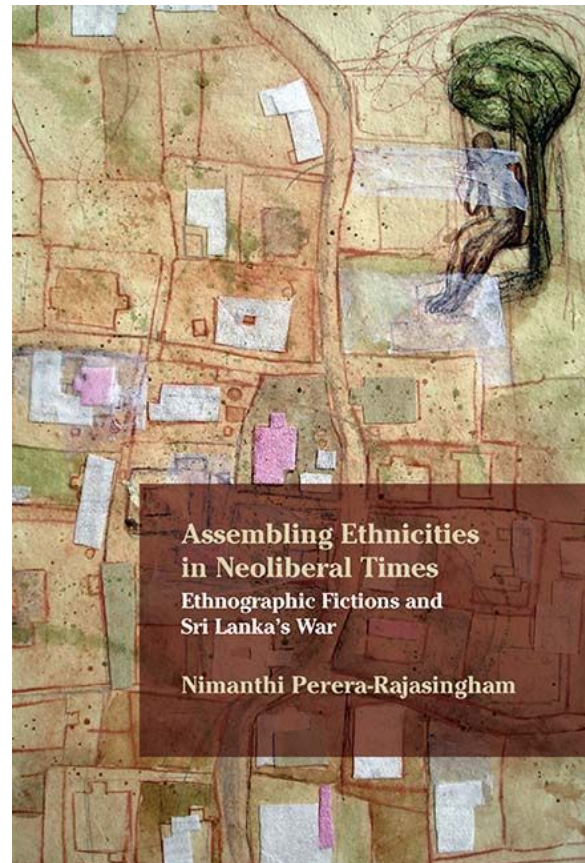
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Sullivan, Brenton. 2018. "The Manner in Which I Went to Worship Mañjuśrī's Realm, The Five-Peaked Mountain (Wutai)' by Sumba Kanbo (1704-1788)." (Introduction and Translation.) *Inner Asia*, vol. 20, no. 1: 64-106.

Yamamoto, Daisaku. 2019. "Life environmentalism." *Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*. Forthcoming.

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Abroad and Beyond

Studying Abroad with Asian Studies

The Asian Studies Program strongly encourages majors to participate in Colgate study groups and in approved programs in India or other locations in Asia. Faculty of the program serve as directors of study-abroad programs in China, Japan, and Korea.

China Study Group spends approximately four months in Shanghai, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, in intensive language training and firsthand observation of recent cultural, political, and economic changes.

Japan Study Group, based in Kyoto, provides lodging with Japanese families; intensive language training; and instruction in Japanese politics, economics, business, religion, art, linguistics, and literature.

Korea Study Group, hosted by Yonsei University in Seoul, serves the academic needs of students interested in educational studies and Asian studies.

Please also check out the Office of Off-Campus Study Program for various approved programs (<http://www.colgate.edu/academics/off-campus-study/approved-programs>)

Course offerings in Fall 2019

ANTH 252 AX	Muslim Societies in Transition	ENGL 335 A	Searching for Home in S Asia
ANTH 337 AX	Globalizn, Cult, Everyday Life	HIST 237 A	Empires, Places, Global History
ARTS 246 A	From Emperors to Anime	HIST 269 A	History of Modern India
ARTS 108 A	Lost in Tibet?: Buddhist Art	HIST 370 A	The Mongol Empire
ARTS 212 A	Destroying Images/Controv	JAPN 121 A, B	Elementary Japanese I
ARTS 344 A	Hindu Temple Architecture	JAPN 201 A	Intermediate Japanese I
CHIN 121 A, B	Elementary Chinese I	POSC 214 B	Compar Poltcs: East & SE Asia
CHIN 201 A, B	Intermediate Chinese I	POSC 368 A	American Foreign Rels China
CHIN 303 A	Films and Media	RELG 321 A	Religion in Modern India
CHIN 405 A	Reading Chinese Newspapers	SOCI 337 AX	Globalization and Culture
CORE 166C A, B	India		
CORE 167C A, B	Japan		
ENGL 202 A	Justice/Power-Postcolonial Lit		

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Geography, Russian and Eurasian Studies
Japanese
History, African and Latin American Studies
Sociology
Religion
Art and Art History, University Studies
Economics
History, Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies
Economics
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Political Science
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