



TGSC Commentaries

interpretations / illustrations / experiences

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Vanishing Heritage:

The ethnic minorities of China, Bolivia and Thailand

By John Kaplan

Professor, College of Journalism and Communications

During this past year, my research project on indigenous cultures in danger of extinction due to the rapid industrialization and globalization of world cultures expanded to document the plight of Hill Tribe peoples in Northern Thailand.

I believe that it is of significant importance to document the traditions of indigenous cultures that are rapidly fading throughout the world. As a documentary photographer, it is my goal to document such traditions before they disappear. In Thailand, the Akha minority group is now in the process of losing its cultural identity. As electricity comes to each village, in turn, its inhabitants begin to realize the homogenized and idealized life portrayed on satellite television. The young often choose to leave the simple village life behind, in search of work and the other lures of city life.

Previous fieldwork had taken me to China and Bolivia. Thanks to help from the Transnational and Global Studies Center, the Vanishing Heritage project may expand in the future to document the plight of minority groups in Laos, including the Hmong and Akha peoples, where per capita income is less than \$400 annually and the literacy rate in remote areas is only 20%.

The new Thailand work has been exhibited by the EBS television network, the Korean equivalent of our PBS, and was also exhibited as the major portion of my recent solo retrospective exhibition in Lima, Peru at the Instituto Cultural Peruano Norteamericano (ICPNA). Works from the project had earlier been also been shown in group exhibitions at museums and galleries in nine countries. Recent publications included a just published article featuring my

Thailand photography in the Chinese magazine, *Vision*. Works from the project have also been published in the magazine, *Photo World*. Recent presentations related to the project include a lecture at the *World Press Freedom Day Symposium* held at the National Press Club in Washington entitled *International Journalism: What's Our Responsibility?*



Chicken Man
In Northern Thailand, Apiang Bianglae, 48, stops to happily show off a plump chicken that will become his family's lunch.

During my 2004 visit to Thailand, collaborative research efforts included the development of relationships with Thailand's Chiang Mai University, and the Thai NGO, Development Agriculture and Education Project for the Akha (DAPA). Both organizations were instrumental in facilitating new research there. A local expert on indigenous peoples in Thailand, Dr. Lamar Robert, generously agreed to accompany me in the field. In the future, I hope that he and Chiang Mai University may become ideal international partners for a future goal of creating a new university-wide course in Humanitarian Assistance Coverage.

Professor Kaplan is a TGSC Faculty Research Award recipient.



Professors Receive 2005 Internationalizing the Curriculum Awards for Global Studies

As part of the continuing effort to meet the University of Florida's strategic goal of internationalizing the campus and curriculum, Research and Graduate Programs (RGP), UF International Center (UFIC) and Transnational and Global Studies Center (TGSC) granted 18 awards to faculty for proposals that add international components to an existing course or create new courses with substantial international content. The awards are granted annually. Awards were given in four categories: global studies, international, research and study abroad.

The TGSC granted two awards of \$3000 for courses dealing with global studies that will be taught in the 2005-2006 academic year.

Congratulations to this year's Internationalizing the Curriculum Awards recipients, **Dr. Victoria Rovine** from the School of Art and Art History and Center for African Studies and **Dr. Michael S. Gorham** from the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies.

Dr. Rovine will design a new course entitled *African Visual Cultures: Local and Global*. The course will offer students an opportunity to address how

objects function in a wide array of contexts, exploring their forms and meanings as they appear in religious and political ceremonies, art and natural history museums, local and international markets, and in a variety of mass media. The course will examine how objects contain diverse meanings and symbolize personal, ethnic and national identities.

Dr. Gorham will transform the *Russia Today* course into a multimedia and cross-cultural exploration of Russian culture from 1985 to the present day. The course will give students a comprehensive introduction to the various traditional and newly emerging institutions, practices, behaviors, beliefs, attitudes and symbols that shape everyday life and thought in late- and post-Soviet Russia.

Additionally, **Dr. Mark Thurner**, History, received a \$1000 travel award to further develop two short study abroad courses in Peru and Mexico.

For a complete listing of the 2005 Internationalizing the Curriculum Awards granted by RGP, UFIC and TGSC, please visit www.ufic.ufl.edu/tgscfca2005.htm.

Global Research Initiatives:

In 2004, TGSC granted four Faculty Research Awards to outstanding faculty who promote internationalization in their research and curriculum. The three-year awards are being used to host seminars, speakers, literature review, travel, and collaborative activities.

Dr. Berta Hernandez, UF Levin College of Law, is continuing her work on global governance and women's rights in the south and is planning to offer a small conference on women's rights in the Americas in Spring 2006.

Dr. Aida Hozic, Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science, started her seminar series on informal transitional economies in Fall 2004 and continued the series during the spring semester. This series will culminate in a book and a final conference in Spring 2006.

Topics and speakers included in Dr. Hozic's seminar class include: "Saudis in Europe: Wahhabism in the Balkans" by Isa Blumi; "Building Democracy After Dictatorship: Lessons from Post

Communist Eurasia" by Valerie Bunce; "Globalization, Competition, and Convergence: Shipping and the Race to the Middle" by Elizabeth De Sombre ; "How the Contemporary World-System Limits Revolutionary Outcomes: An Extreme Example of Chechnya" by Georgi Derluguian; "Shifting the Scale of Contention: From the Local to the Global and Back Again" by Sidney Tarrow; and "The 'EU' uniqueness of Turkey: On the Long Road to Membership" by Mine Eder.

Professor John Kaplan traveled to China last summer to continue his work with refugee and migrant communities.

Dr. Michael Leslie, College of Journalism and Communications, has continued his research on intercultural communications and is planning a videoconference with European, South African, and Brazilian colleagues. He has also, with TGSC support, begun developing a wide-ranging program in intercultural communications to serve staff, faculty, students and the community.

Faculty Research Award Recipients

- Dr. Berta Hernandez, Law
- Dr. Aida Hozic, Political Science
- Prof. John Kaplan, Journalism
- Dr. Michael Leslie, Journalism



Global Education Workshop Series for K-12 Teachers

"International Experience Without Leaving Alachua County"



Dr. Susan Cooksey, curator of African Art at the Samuel P. Harn Museum, lectures on "A Saint in the City: Sufi Arts of Urban Senegal" during the Religious Icons and Symbols Workshop.

TGSC conducted a series of workshops for K-12 teachers in collaboration with the Center for European Studies and the School Board of Alachua County. The six workshops on Migration and Refugees, International Food, Global Connections, Global Trade, Religious Icons and Symbols and Cross-Cultural Communication, were attended by a cohort of 18 teachers.

For more information on the K-12 workshops, please contact Nikki Kernaghan, Outreach Coordinator at (352) 392-8203 or email nikkik@ufic.ufl.edu.

TGSC Sponsors Short Course for Senior Citizens:

Natural Resources in a Global World

TGSC collaborated with the Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) to offer a series of seminars on Natural Resources in a Global World. Each seminar was attended by at least 35 senior citizens. The five-lecture series, which took place in March and April, included the following presentations:

- *The World Water Vision* by Dr. Joseph Delfino, Department of Environmental Engineering Sciences
- *Globalization and Infrastructure* by Dr. Sanford Berg, Director of Water Studies, Public Utility Research Center and Department of Economics
- *World Food Security in the 20th and 21st Centuries* by Dr. Abraham Goldman, Department of Geography
- *Applications of Climate Forecast for Improved Management of Agricultural and Water Resources* by Dr. Keith T. Ingram, Coordinator, Southeast Climate Consortium, Agricultural and Biological Engineering
- *Land use, Transportation and the Implications for Global Climate Change* by Dr. Ruth L. Steiner, Department of Urban and Regional Planning.

International Student Speakers' Bureau

The International Students Speakers Bureau (ISSB) continues to be hugely popular with local school teachers and school children. International graduate students visit area schools and speak about their home countries and cultures. During the 2004-2005 academic year, the ISSB visited twenty-four schools in the Gainesville area with an estimated audience of over 2,000 school children. The current roster of speakers for the ISSB contains 70 speakers from Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, England, Eritrea, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, India, Italy, Jordan, Japan, Kenya, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Senegal, Spain, South Korea, Sweden, Syria, Thailand, Turkey and Zimbabwe.



ISSB Speaker Ellie Kang from South Korea with second grade students at Gainesville Country Day School.

For more information on ISSB, please contact Leslie Owen at (352) 392-7074 or email lowen@ufic.ufl.edu.



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Upcoming Events

Summer Language Teacher Workshop July 18-29, 2005

The Summer 2005 Language Teacher Workshop is designed for middle school and high school language teachers who would like to cultivate new ideas for creating a more exciting and interactive classroom environment for their students. For two weeks, participants will enjoy morning sessions from 9am to 12pm on various topics related to applied linguistics. Afternoon sessions from 1pm to 3pm will be held in a computer lab and will introduce ideas for using technology as a vehicle to maximize language input in the classroom. Topics will be presented in a comfortable, interactive environment to stimulate discussion of new ideas.

The Language Teacher Workshop is a collaboration of the following academic departments and centers at the University of Florida:

- Center for European Studies
- Transnational and Global Studies Center
- International Center
- Department of English
- Department of Germanic & Slavic Studies
- Department of Romance Languages and Literatures

For more information, please contact Nikki Kernaghan at (352) 392-8203 or email nikkik@ufic.ufl.edu.

About TGSC

The Transnational and Global Studies Center (TGSC), housed within the UF International Center, is a Title VI National Resource Center funded in part by the U.S. Department of Education. The TGSC is part of a consortium: the Florida Network for Global Studies (FNGS). FNGS members include Florida International University (FIU), the University of South Florida (USF), the University of Central Florida (UCF) and Florida A&M University (FAMU). TGSC and the consortium, FNGS, promote and coordinate interdisciplinary research, instruction and outreach related to transnational and global issues.

Like all Title VI centers, TGSC focuses on language, area studies, and teacher training to foster interest and skills in international education. The current themes of the center are identity, diaspora, and migration; global governance and human security; and science, technology and communications. Please visit our website.

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