



Department of Applied Social Studies Serves the Society



The “Return” of Burma

Recently, in the World Economic Forum on East Asia (30 May – 1 June 2012) held in Bangkok, the newly elected Myanmar’s lower house (parliament) opposition leader and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi (Suu Kyi) openly shared her fear that Myanmar (Burma) would become a “battleground” between U.S. and China. In the midst of the “rise of China” and “U.S.’s return to Asia”, there is also an on-going process for the “return” of the Southeast Asian powers such as Myanmar, the Philippines and Vietnam. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight Myanmar’s valorous past and relook at its present in terms of the past.

Credit: GettyImages



CITY - YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROJECT - PAGE 3



WORDS FROM THE HEAD - PAGE 6

SS² on-line : <http://www.cityu.edu.hk/ss/newsletter>

The "Return" of Burma

(from the cover page)



Credit : GettyImages

Before British colonialism landed on Burma, like its neighbors, Burma was ruled by dynastic-polities, which actively expanded their influences rivaling neighboring states especially China and Siam (former name of Thailand). While simultaneously engaging with the imperial Qing troops over a border dispute in the north for the Sino-Burmese War (1765-1769), the invincible warrior King Hsinbyushin (1736-1776) of Burma spent fourteen months marching southeast into Siam and conquering the powerful Ayutthaya Kingdom (1350-1767) during the Burmese-Siamese War (1765 to 1767). Although King Hsinbyushin succeeded to siege and burn the starving Ayutthaya City into ashes, because of the on-going Sino-Burmese conflict, he immediately redeployed his 40,000-strong troops from Siam to the Chinese front, where the Burmese elephant-trampling army successfully drove away the horse-galloping Manchurian offensives. Dedicating his entire career in studying Burma, Professor Sunait Chutintaranond at Chulalongkorn University therefore suggested that pre-colonial Burmese war-craft provides the essential

blueprint for mapping contemporary Myanmar strategic culture. One characteristic is that being small does not necessarily mean to be weak and vulnerable. In fact, King Hsinbyushin's victories proved that the small can win over the powerful and the great. One therefore shouldn't underestimate the small's capability in reconstituting the great. The changing Sino-Burmese relations since World War II (WWII) would tell.

When the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) defeated the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) and seized Chinese state power in 1949, a few KMT troops retreated down into the Golden Triangle region (bordering Burma, Laos and Thailand) preparing for reinvasion while the KMT majority fled to Taiwan. Supported by U.S.'s Cold War campaign in countering communism in the region, the KMT offensives grew opium and became the major drug-warlords in the Golden Triangle. With Chairman Mao's policy in supporting the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) to counter KMT inside Burma, the Burmese military saw the urgency to neutralize the KMT intruders

and pacify the CPB insurgents, who are also known to mingle with and lead some of the armed ethnic insurgencies in communities of secessionist tendency such as in Shan and Kachin states. Up to the present time, although the KMT remnants have been absorbed into the mainstream Burmese society and the CPB insurgency was successfully pacified, armed ethnic insurgency continues to be a problem troubling Myanmar nowadays. In the eyes of the Burmese military and society, therefore, one of the root-causes of Myanmar's ethnic insurgency problem is perceivably related with China and U.S. Nonetheless, post-WWII trajectory proved that the junta has done a pretty good job in defending Burmese national sovereignty and territorial intactness by either neutralizing or eliminating the "enemies" one by one, may it be KMT, CPB, drug-warlords or the ethnic insurgents.

In 1962, General Ne Win initiated a coup and launched the "Burmese Way to Socialism" programme. Under the aegis of economic nationalism, in order for the Burmese people to be entirely free from British neo-colonialism, Indian and Chinese domestic economic dominance, the state monopolized private properties and the military controlled the national economy. From 1962 to 1988, Burmese people were under stress because of international isolation, economic impoverishment and repressive rule as well as continued ethnic insurgency. In order to re-engineer its faltering legitimacy, the junta conducted a nation-wide election in 1990. However, the military was unexpectedly defeated to the opposition party; National League for Democracy (NLD), which has been led by Suu Kyi. The junta then abruptly abolished the electoral results and house-arrested Suu Kyi. In the 1990s, facing severe western sanctions, Burma had no choice but to fully engage with socialist China's "Beijing consensus" for which it operates along the orbits of China's resource-led economic diplomacy and aids packages. Chinese capitals started to pour into Burma facilitating its economic and infrastructural development. As the Burmese economy gradually regained its foothold, as part of its "Roadmap to Discipline-flourishing Democracy" programme, in 2010, the junta carefully engineered and won the national election. In 2011, the reform-minded junta installed Mr. Thein Sein to be the President of the Union of Myanmar, preparing to organize a civilian government.



Credit : GettyImages

On 1 April 2012, with the endorsement of the Thein Sein administration, Suu Kyi and NLD members won more than forty seats in the lower house, signifying a historic collaboration between the junta and the opposition. Such collaboration is well designed to not just continue China's resource-led economic programme in Burma, but also to attract western capitals for Burmese development since the sanctions are being lifted. The future ahead will be significant not just for Burma, but also for China because China would require more mindfulness and sensitivity to handle Sino-Burmese relations for two reasons. First, the Burmese people will have more options and the Burmese government will have more bargaining power as western capitals and influences will enter into Burma. Second, Burma is undergoing democratic reform, which means that the kind of state-centric diplomatic approach that China is used to will become less effective in engaging Burma's "return".



*Dr. Bryan Pak-nung WONG,
Assistant Professor of SS*

City-Youth Empowerment Project Connecting Communities through Service and Learning

The Happy Carnival that took place on April 14 continued its tradition to provide a yearly celebration and a platform for all of City-Youth Empowerment Project's participants to meet and engage volunteers, service recipients, staff from collaborating community agencies, project staffs, donors, and other supporters from the university and the community at-large. We had the fortune of inviting Reign Lee, an independent music artist, to perform at our carnival. What made it more special this year was the addition of the Mustard Seed Outstanding Volunteer Awards. Last year, we introduced a number of awards to acknowledge the volunteers who demonstrated qualities valued in our project. Thankfully, our supporter, Mustard Seed Foundation offered us a generous award grant of \$30,000 to provide five award prizes to our outstanding volunteers this year. The grant allowed City-Youth Empowerment Project to further cultivate and acknowledge the qualities in our volunteers that are quintessential to building an effective service learning model. Each of the five awards is complemented with a personal grant, together with an available fund for the awarded volunteers to take charge in designing and implementing a service activity that is meaningful to them, for the project to benefit and give back to the community in return. Thus this has enabled our project to enhance the linkage between community service and academic learning by developing and encouraging volunteers to take the lead in identifying social needs and organizing community services. We also had the honor of having Mustard Seed Foundation's Trustee Member Mr. Wu Moon Hoi, as one of the award-presenting guests. The award recipients are as follows:





1. Leadership Award -

Aster, Fung Yuen Yee, BSocSc Policy Studies & Admin

- Apart from excellent performance and high participation rate, Aster demonstrated her leadership skills in initiating and self-organizing a computer workshop for new-arrivals mothers, whose children are also service recipients of tutoring services. That way, the mothers could learn a skillset that speaks to their imminent needs, while bonding with their children through participating in services with the same project.

2. Dedication Award -

Tu Cheng, BEng Electronic and Comm Engg

- Tu is a long-timer who has dedicated most of his time working with children living with disabilities at the Hong Kong Red Cross Princess Alexandra School. Through the course he has demonstrated exceptional patience, and to answer the special needs of these children, has expressed interest in building an on-site library for them.

3. Innovation Award -

Luk Chun Hin, BSocSc Psychology

- Luk participated in a wide range services this year. Always one to integrate innovative and creative ideas into his service to benefit the children he works with, he introduced the idea of a "society game" in a summer hall camp that allowed children to take up different roles in the society, in order to learn the different aspects that make up a society.

4. Potential for High Achievement Award -

Kwok Kin Hang, BBA Information Systems

- Kwok has demonstrated very consistent and dedicated participation through this year. In one of his services, an Environment Protection Workshop with children from low-income families, he organized an "Environmental-Friendly Fashion Show" for the children to part-take with their couture pieces made from recyclable materials.

5. Highest Number of Volunteer Hours Award –

Lau Ming Leong, ASocSc Applied Psychology

- Leong sees volunteering as an integrated part of his life, hence he has committed himself to various service programs such as Adventure Ship, Mentoring scheme with South Asian youth, Tutoring & Mentoring scheme with Children & Youth, Creative Class with children, Homeless visit, working with Children with Asperger's syndrome In one year. Leong has accomplished 240 hours of direct volunteer service.

On a different note - in order to raise awareness on women's issues, City-Youth Empowerment Project's first Creative Art Exhibition opened on May 18. The exhibition originated from a workshop series that consisted of creative arts (painting & photography), West African drum circle, and yoga to a group of women who are in crisis, in collaboration with SoulTalk, an organization that provides support for women who are in emotional and relationship crisis. The goal was to provide a platform to use creative expressions as ways to enhance self-understanding and empowerment. The exhibition has demonstrated to be an empowering avenue for these women as their works are being used to promote awareness and to call for more support from the community.

By Ms Constance Ching, Project Officer

SWRB Representatives' Talk

When it comes to the end of the last semester, final year students are concerned about their future development. City University of Hong Kong organised a talk about registration of social workers on 10th May, 2012, aimed at final year BSSSW students. Mr. Leung Sui Keung and Mrs. Woo Lee Kam Ling, representatives from the Social Workers Registration Board were the speakers. The talk was aimed at familiarising students with the Voluntary Continuing Professional Development Scheme for Registered Social Workers (CPD).

The talk was divided into two parts, including the introduction of the Board and the CPD. Mr. Leung introduced the background of the Board, its functions, registration matters and disciplinary procedures. To register as registered social workers, applicants are required to submit a copy of their recognized social work qualification. Fresh graduates who have not been yet awarded their social work qualification, may submit a testimonial letter issued by their respective institutes as temporary documentary proof of their social work qualification. Individuals should submit a copy of the certificate for their degree in social work after it is awarded formally. Or before the Board receives the graduate lists, if an applicant is fortunate enough to secure a social work post, they should submit a copy of employment contract or letter signed and issued by the employing agency.

Some participants were concerned about disciplinary procedures. Mr. Leung explained that the code of practice and guidelines would be received after the social work registration. He also shared cases with the participants and advised them that they should be careful with their spoken language and behaviours so as to prevent from misunderstanding or being complained.

Mrs. Woo introduced the background, rationale and contents of CPD, a developmental scheme aimed at encouraging social workers to have continuous professional development. Registered social workers are encouraged to accumulate sixty points within three years. Instead of linking up with social work registration, CPD involves voluntary participation, consisting of activities relevant to social work practice. For example, training and activities with social work content; activities aimed at facilitating personal enhancement of registered social workers and community services are also included in the CPD. The world keeps changing. It is essential for the registered social workers to continue to have professional development in order to better equip themselves to obtain personal enhancement and provide better human service.

From a personal point of view, it was great to invite the two representatives from the Board. As potential social workers, many students expressed their concern about registration matters and future development. The talk briefly outlined the Board and the CPD. CPD is meaningful and necessary to registered social workers. Nowadays, social, family and individual problems become complicated. The social and family structures are changing rapidly. CPD helps registered social workers to better equip themselves and to handle the future tasks with the renewed and related attitude, skills and knowledge. These can also promote the social work professional status. It is hoped that all the final year social work students can have good development and bright future.

*By Ms. Choi Kwan Han –
Year 3 BSSSW Student*



Department Highlights

Words from the Head

Dear Alumni, friends, and students of SS,

I am going to retire from CityU at the end of this coming June, after serving SS Department for 28+ years. I am sure many of you will like to know my reflection about all these years at CityU. I must say that I am thankful to God because He allows me to have all of you wonderful colleagues to work with during all these ever-changing years. You are the motivation and aspiration for me to work hard for SS and CityU. Thanks to your unfailing support and cooperation, also your kindness and forgiveness of my periodically pushing and pressing demands, my heart will always be with you folks wherever I go in the future. Probably you all know that I won't just be sitting idle and day-dreaming, I am merely changing the setting of my work, and will try my best to help develop professional social work education in Mainland China. Goodbye my friends, I am sure we will run into each other again sometime, someday, somewhere. I will love to listen to your success and accomplishments in SS. Finally, my advice to you all is to put SS's wellbeing as your priority in your mind all the time, nobody can succeed alone; you need wisdom to work collectively and survive. Please read carefully the following proverbs and hope you will know what I mean. God bless and good luck.

Proverbs 2:1-12

1. My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you,
2. turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding —
3. indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding,
4. and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure,
5. Then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.
6. For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.
7. He holds success in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless,
8. For He guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones.
9. Then you will understand what is right and just and fair—every good path.
10. For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.
11. Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you.
12. Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse,

箴言2章1至12節

1. 我兒、你若領受我的言語、存記我的命令、
2. 側耳聽智慧、專心求聰明、
3. 呼求明哲、揚聲求聰明、
4. 尋找他如尋找銀子、搜求他如搜求隱藏的珍寶、
5. 你就明白敬畏耶和華、得以認識神。
6. 因為、耶和華賜人智慧、知識和聰明都由他口而出、
7. 他給正直人存留真智慧、給行為純正的人作盾牌、
8. 為要保守公平人的路、護庇虔敬人的道、
9. 你也必明白仁義、公平、正直、一切的善道。
10. 智慧必入你心、你的靈要以知識為美、
11. 謀略必護衛你、聰明必保守你、
12. 要救你脫離惡道〔惡道或作惡人的道〕、脫離說乖謬話的人。

*By Professor Alex Kwan
Head of SS*



Psychology Graduates Awarded Overseas Scholarships



Miss MUI Ka Ki, Sheki and Mr. FOK Hao Nam, Franco

Two of our psychology graduates, Miss MUI Ka Ki, Sheki (2006 graduate), and Mr. FOK Hao Nam, Franco (2011 graduate), received scholarships from the University of Nottingham in December 2011. The scholarships were awarded by the International Office and the Department of Institute of Work, Health and Organization, to acknowledge their outstanding achievements. Each awardee was endowed with a 25% reduction of the course fee and £1500 (~HKD18,000) respectively. Congratulations to Sheki and Franco for their accomplishments!!

Sheki and Franco were honoured to receive these awards. Both are currently studying the 1-year master degree in Occupational Psychology in the University of Nottingham. Franco encouraged his fellow students to apply for scholarships if they were studying overseas. Sheki, who has previously worked in Marks & Spencer Limited as a human resources officer, enjoys being a student again. She recommended fellow students to enroll in a 2-year master programme, instead of a 1-year programme, in order to have more room to widen and deepen their knowledge, wisdom, and personal exposure.