



MAIDS NEWSLETTER

Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University

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Current MAIDS student Steven Siblesz (centre) participates in a panel discussion during the *Critical Connections* conference in October.

Keynote Speech: *Human Rights and Development* *By Ramesh Singh, CEO, Action Aid International*

I have chosen, for my focus, to explore the dynamics, or the changing concept and context of development, as well as some description of my work on the frontlines and the challenges that we face. Let me start by saying that the word “development” itself is very rarely used in my daily work. It is one of the most commonly used terms, but in contrast with more specific words like “social justice” it is a very generic term which is used, in my opinion, even by those who don’t really want to do development. For the purposes of communication, however, I am willing to work with this word here.

Having said that, I should point out that the concept of development, over the course of my 35 years in the field, has changed from being a fundamentally economics based idea to being much more broad based, and I am pleased to say that it is increasingly centered on people and communities rather than just money and markets. Development as freedom is another idea that has gained recognition in recent years, and this has led into the more recent ideas of development as justice and development as human rights. More recently, the debate about climate change has further extended development discourse beyond just people and places, to planet; beyond just this generation, to generations to come.

What does development mean to the practitioner? To me, development is all about people and development is for all people, not only for one part of the globe or for only some countries. It’s about dignity, it’s about freedom, it’s

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Master of Arts Program
in
International Development Studies
(MAIDS)

Faculty of Political Science,
Chulalongkorn University
Henri-Dunant Road, Bangkok
10330, Thailand
Tel. +66-2-218-7313
Fax. +66-2-252-6277
Email maids@chula.ac.th

www.ids.polsci.chula.ac.th

Newsletter Editor: Chris Gusen

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about rights, and it's about well being. As I said, it can be distilled as a matter planet, about flora and fauna, air and land and how these interact with people. It's also important to conceptualize development as a process. It's a continuous, never-ending process of change. In fact, it is useful to say that development simply *is* change.

Much of ActionAid's work has been about removing the constraints and blockages that hinder the process of development. Development is certainly about imagining a just society, but in a practical sense it is about removing barriers such as deprivation, exclusion, exploitation, and expropriation. Much of my day-to-day work is about removing these barriers to development with alternative ideas, actions and interventions.

Now, I'll move on to a little more of my practical experience. Before I start out, let me read out a few

startling statistics. I want to explain the context in which we are working:

- Every year 4 million newborn babies die within 28 days of birth;
- Since 1990 there has not been any change in the number of women dying in pregnancy or childbirth;
- Today, over 1 billion people are chronically hungry. That means 1/6th of the world's population, or the total population of Europe, USA, and Canada combined living in chronic hunger;
- 1/3 of children in the world are growing up hungry and malnourished;
- Women produce 70% of food in the world but own only 1% of the land;
- Between 2006 and 2009, 15 – 20 million hectares of land in developing countries have been grabbed by large multinational corporations and agri-businesses;
- At least 776 million people in the world are illiterate;
- At the end of 2008, the number of people who were forcibly uprooted by conflict and persecution worldwide stood at 42 million;
- At the 2005 G8 meeting, which was hailed as one of the biggest poverty consensuses, G8 countries committed \$50 Billion per year by 2010 to end poverty. So far, they have put forward only \$ 35 Billion. So, we are 15 Billion short of what was needed to address the immediate needs of poverty and we need more after the recent financial crisis.

The stories, in my opinion, behind these numbers, are stories of violation of human rights, stories of human insecurity, and an illustration of the massive indignity of so many people.

This all sounds a bit grim, but this should also energize you. Anger and outrage about these blatant injustices keeps me going. I'm angry about it. This is outrageous data, there is something wrong happening here, the system is not right. These figures are not there for us to be sad and passive about, they are there to be passionate about.

“This is what keeps me going. I’m angry about it. This is outrageous data, there is something wrong happening here, the system is not right.”

Through our work at ActionAid, I have observed some notable changes in the key contexts within which we are working. Very briefly, some of these shifts include: the shrinking of political space; the resurgence of identity politics, which overall has been impinging on our work; a loss of popular support for development aid hence the importance of moving away from aid to the larger concept of development finance, which takes into account anything from taxation to generating local production; clear changes in geopolitics, indicating that we are on the way to much more of a poly-centric and South-South politics; I'm not quite sure if it's Mr. Obama or the sense returning to the world, but certainly multilateralism is back in the global consciousness; I think that despite the spectacular financial crisis and recession the power of the corporation has not been reduced, and it is still deeply rooted in politics as well as consumption patterns; and, through the climate crisis and the financial crisis, we have begun to recognize that we are much more interdependent than we thought.

If I had to sum up this long list of contexts, I would say that we have a context of Crisis and Convergence. First, there are crises like the fuel crisis, the food crisis—which is a very real problem that will continue to worsen—and the

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financial crisis. However, crisis provides an opportunity to question the dominant model. The second key component is convergence: in the past, development people didn't talk to environment people, environment didn't talk to labour, etc... in the last five years, so many different fields are starting to talk and work together, and our frameworks are starting to converge.

It is in this convergence that I find a lot of energy and potential for redefinition, alternatives to development, new capacities, and the sharing of a much more interdependent burden.

Convergence is emerging, not simply between different sectors, but actually between the North and South. The climate crisis has made us recognize that our personal behavior has global consequences, and people see that they need to take more responsibility for their behaviors. People who used to think of themselves as "developed" now need to come back and reflect on the morality and sustainability of their ways of life.

Let me take a few moments to explain how convergence has affected ActionAid. More specifically, I want to talk about how we've been learning from and bringing human rights approaches into our work.

What has this done really? I think that a human rights framework has provided development with a much broader consensus area; a moral and legal consensus. It has allowed us to legitimize our work much more. It has also allowed us to move away from the word "poverty"—which, like development is a very coded and loaded word—towards ideas of community of identity and interests. I have never met someone who has introduced herself or himself as a "poor person"—that is not an identity. The human rights approach highlights the agency of the rights holders themselves.

For a very long period of time, civil society and NGOs used to take pride in the idea that we existed because the state was useless. We saw ourselves as running parallel to the state, or allowing the state to relegate their duties. Through the lens of human rights, NGOs and civil society now see that we cannot leave the state alone; we must hold them accountable to the duty that they bear.

I think that on the whole, development is not a charity, it's not even just solidarity, it is a duty. We have a duty to act. I work as a matter of duty to eradicate inequality and injustice. The elements of duty have been brought into our work by the human rights based approach.

In conclusion, I want to say that this an exciting period of time and a time to mobilize our energy and be angry. We need a little bit of outrage, but we also need to take the opportunities that have been provided by the recent crises, and by the successes of social movements and collective action in recent years. I think that there is a light at the end of the tunnel; equality can be reached and has been seen in some communities already. That is what I would like to leave you with, the appeal to become part of this larger movement, and that is what really keeps me going. Changes can be small. It may be a person who came to our literacy class 5 years ago who has now become the elected leader of the village development committee. There are many small changes we see. We must be able to add up these small changes and move towards social, economic, and environmental justice and equality and not be daunted by the size of the task. I would like to leave you with that appeal and express my solidarity. Thank you very much!



Critical Connections Conference Panels

Panel 1: Migration and Human Rights

Commentator: Philip Robertson
*Technical Advisor, Migration and Worker Rights, Southeast Asia
Regional Cooperation in Human Development (SEARCH)*

Panel 2: Political Issues and Human Rights

Commentator: Margaret K. McMillion
*Coordinator, Master of Arts in International Relations
Program, Webster University*

Panel 3: Human Rights Education

Commentator: Dr. Mike Hayes
*Director of the MA Program, Center for Human Rights
Studies
and Social Development, Mahidol University*

Panel 4: Concerns in Political Economy

Commentator: Dr. Varaporn Chamsanit
*Acting Director, Center for Human Rights Studies and
Social Development, Mahidol University*

Panel 5: Current Issues in Development

Commentator: Dr. Carl Middleton
*MAIDS Lecturer, Environmental Politics, Development
Theory*

Panel 6: Human Rights and Civil Society

Commentator: Dr. Michael Nelson
*Visiting Scholar at the Faculty of Political Science,
Chulalongkorn University*

MAIDS Student Interview: Betti Rosita Sari



Betti Rosita Sari, pictured on the left, with fellow students Matoon Supanusorn (center) and My Lo (right) is currently a student at the MAIDS Program. She comes from Indonesia, where she worked for the Research Center for Regional Resources at the Indonesian Institute of Sciences. Last year she was among the students awarded a scholarship to study at MAIDS by the Siam Cement Group Foundation. In the following interview Betti talks about her experience at MAIDS so far, her thoughts on living in Bangkok, and her advice for future students.

MAIDS: How did you first hear about the program? In general what drew you to pursue a degree in Development?

Betti: I was initially emailed by a friend who directed me to the MAIDS website, which is where I started to learn about the program. I saw that many of the courses were focused specifically on Southeast Asian issues and the Mekong region or at least used this part of the world as a lens for exploring development. This seemed very appropriate for my educational background in economics and development and relevant to my job in Indonesia at the Research Center for Regional Resources, Indonesian Institute of Sciences.

MAIDS: What aspects of the MAIDS program have you found to be the most interesting or stimulating so far?

Betti: Well, because the students come from all over the world I've been exposed to a lot of different perspectives and discussion. I think we've all learned to speak up if we don't agree or have a different opinion. I've also encountered some interesting subjects that weren't touched upon in my undergrad degree, like the Human Rights course.

MAIDS: What are some challenges that you've encountered during your time in the MAIDS program?

Betti: The biggest challenge that I see is going to be thesis writing. The program is only 12 months, so there is not a lot of time before the development of our theses has to start! Along with time, language is also going to be a challenge when writing the thesis in English.

MAIDS: Tell me a bit more about your preparations for the MAIDS thesis? How is that going? What has inspired your topic?

Betti: My research topic is going to center around women workers in the garment industry in Cambodia. I will be looking at this situation with a gender and human rights angle. I actually chose Cambodia because during my work at the Research Center for Regional Resources that country was my focus. The garment industry has been growing in Southeast Asia since the early nineties, but when the industry was affected by the market crash in 1997 even more factories moved to Cambodia from neighboring countries in search of cheaper labor. The issues surrounding female workers in the garment industry are compounded by the fact that women are quite shut out of the education system in Khmer culture. The relationship between the rural and urban communities of Cambodia will also be a part of my research.

MAIDS: What advice do you have for potential students about living in Bangkok and studying at MAIDS?

Betti: I really enjoy living in Bangkok. Language is the biggest barrier to overcome. I would recommend working on a little Thai for simple conversations. Overall, it's a fun place to study. My main advice, in terms of the program itself, is to be active in class. There is a lot of discussion in class, so keep up on your readings so that you can feel confident participating. To make this work, you have to be good at managing your time. There are a couple of things that I have found helpful in expanding my understanding of what we are learning: first, reviewing the material after class, or at the end of each week, helps to solidify the information; second, organizing a study group is a good idea, as it allows you to have an extended discussion with your fellow students.

Call for Heinrich Böll Foundation Scholarship Applications



*Heinrich Böll Foundation, Southeast Asia Regional Office, Chiang Mai, Thailand would like to encourage younger generation candidates from Myanmar/Burma to apply for specifically designed **Scholarship Programs** for Master of Arts Studies at the MAIDS Program for candidates who pass the requirements.*

NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS: 1-2 Full Scholarships

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- ▶ Applicants must be citizens of **Myanmar/Burma** who currently live in Myanmar/Burma and are likely to return after graduation.
- ▶ Bachelor's degree in any subject; good overall academic standing
- ▶ Evidence of English proficiency
- ▶ Commitment to development issues

SCHOLARSHIP COVERAGE:

- ▶ Travel Costs
- ▶ Tuition fees
- ▶ Living allowances
- ▶ Health insurance

APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 31st, 2010

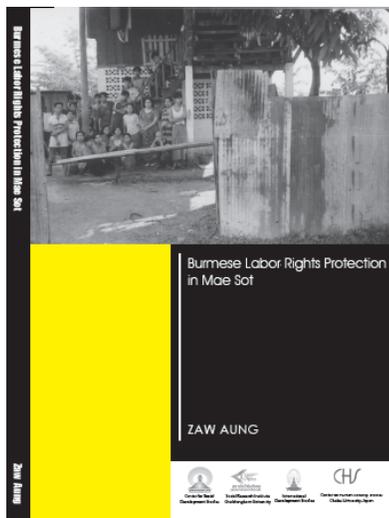
COMPLETE SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION:

www.ids.polsci.chula.ac.th
www.boell-southeastasia.org

Alumni Publication: *Labor Rights Protection in Mae Sot*

By Zaw Aung

Zaw Aung, a 2008 MAIDS graduate, has adapted his Master's thesis into a new book entitled Labor Rights Protection in Mae Sot. The publication is supported by the Center for Social Development Studies (CSDS), the MAIDS Program, the Chulalongkorn University Social Research Institute (CUSRI), and the Center for Human Security Studies at Chubu University, Japan. The following is a brief summary of the issues that Zaw Aung tackles in his book:



The way that Thailand's justice system has dealt with irregular migrant workers is the prime admirable factor of Thai society's overall dealings with migrant issues. It has also proved that the Kingdom has a strong justice system, since the Thai Labor Court administers justice in cases of labor rights violations without any discrimination between Thai workers and foreign migrant workers. However, the system has also shown its limitations in terms of settling these cases within a proper timeframe. There is no Provincial Labor Court in Tak Province. The Court based in Nakhon Sawan Province, in the central region of Thailand, is responsible for labor issues from nine provinces, seven of which are in the central region and two of which, including Tak, are from the western part of Thailand. Therefore, cases of migrant labor rights violations in Mae Sot have often been delayed for over three years, which is a major source of discouragement for migrants considering seeking justice at the labor court. Conversely, the lengthiness of the legal process encourages employers to seek opportunities to disrupt the activities of the migrants involved in cases against them and thereby weaken their resolve.

Student Perspective: MAIDS Fieldtrip to 2nd ASEAN People's Forum

By Tami Khumalo, MAIDS 2010

Late last October, hundreds of people with big ideas, different views and hopes of a better future, converged on the small Thai city of Cha-Am to pave a new step towards progress. The idea behind the 2nd ASEAN People's Forum was to create a space for stakeholders such as NGO's in ASEAN to raise their concerns and thematically bring them together so that they could eventually come up with a document that would articulate the priorities of the ASEAN people to the political leaders in ASEAN. An idealistic endeavor, the task itself proved to be difficult, with much to be learned by stake holders and observers alike.

The summit's major themes covered a range of issues, such as food security, economics, human rights, democracy in the region and labor and migration issues between the ASEAN countries. What would ideally have appeared as a team effort between representatives from different civil society groups proved, in reality, to be an emotionally taxing, draining and politically complex experience. At the same time, the challenging situation was engaging and informative for all present. Mistrust between some of the assembled groups, and the jostling of different organizations and agendas for airtime, mirrored the complex political dynamic that lies within the ASEAN region.

At a glance it was hard for me to see how different countries could come up with a unified voice, when even a single country didn't seem to have one. Vietnam and Burma/Myanmar exemplified how domestic politics is very much a part of regional politics, as their internal complexities had a tendency to dominate the stage. I feel that this misdirected the focus from the broader issues and slowed progress significantly for the other countries. It was plain to see, from this process, that the domestic politics of one ASEAN member are, in reality, not isolated. The problems of one country are very much a problem of other ASEAN countries and they affect their progress as interdependent states.

The delegates were eventually able to put forward representatives for their country. Every NGO, from each country had an agenda, everyone had concerns, and everyone wanted a voice. The challenge, and the big question, was to discern what would be included and what would be left out of the final statement to be submitted to the ASEAN leaders.

The papers presented at the various panels seemed to me to create a one-way conversation, which was in conflict with the dialogue and engagement that the people in the audience wanted to have. You could get a sense of the participants' yearning to be heard by the eagerness with which they spoke their opinions during question and answer segments between the papers. Although much effort was channeled toward the best possible outcome, the representative's efforts all seemed to be at the mercy the ASEAN governments. After all, the toil was in the end so that leaders would consider their pleas. Government representatives boycotted the meeting, with the ones who dared to show evading the concerns.

From my perspective, the representatives in the room seemed to have little power over the agenda of the impending ASEAN summit, and they thrived more on hope—a hope that their voices would be heard and considered by ASEAN leaders—than on a certainty. It all seemed like a gamble, so one might wonder what was the point? A simple but significant thing to take away from the summit, regardless of the government's actions, was that on a rare occasion so many NGO's, groups, and individuals dealing with issues of inequality and injustice in ASEAN were able to come together, share, engage and learn. For the most part, that was the biggest merit of being a part of the process. People appeared to know what to expect, so efforts were channeled to networking, sharing ideas, and building bonds with likeminded people. Overall, the summit was an enlightening look at the reality of civil society's place within ASEAN, and in this light it was possible for me to personally reflect upon the steps by which progress can take place in this region.



An audience member asks a question at the end of the "Politics and Security" seminar, on October 19th, 2009.

Thailand in Transition: A Historic Transition and What's Next?

By Chris Gusen, with notes from MAIDS Students My Lo and Mac Albert Gordon Shaw

On the evening of December 8th, 2009, the MAIDS program, the Center for Social Development Studies (CSDS), and the Foundation for Community Educational Media (FCEM) co-hosted a dinner talk entitled "Thailand in Transition: A Historic Challenge and What's Next?" The event was highly engaging and it featured four varied and informative takes on the question of "what's next?" by the speakers: Chulalongkorn University political science professor **Dr. Pasuk Phongpaichit**, University of Wisconsin historian **Dr. Thongchai Winichakul**, chief policy advisor to two former prime ministers **Pansak Vinyaratn**, and current Bangkok governor **Sukhumbhand Paribatra**. The following chart highlights the key themes introduced by each speaker.



Dr. Pasuk Phongpaichit

Dr. Phongpaichit focused on the need for Thailand to become *fairer* than it is today. She pointed out that this is one of the least equitable countries in the world, with a distribution of wealth and power comparable to war torn African countries and endemically poor Latin American states. As a society, she said, we have to emphasize equity. The entrenched cultural belief that people are wealthy because they work hard and poor because they are stupid and lazy is simply untrue.

She identified problems of inequality as systemic issues and proposed some steps to move Thai society in a fairer direction. For a start, she argued, Thailand does not collect enough public funds through taxation. Money gained through tax reform should be dedicated to fundamental changes in education—especially in rural areas. In Bangkok, a serious investment must be made in transportation. In short, Thailand needs more public goods, and not just for the rich; the country's government needs to ensure that powerful and powerless are subject to the same laws or Thailand will never be peaceful.



Pansak Vinyaratn

The former policy advisor opened by showing the famous scene from *2001: A Space Odyssey* in which a band of monkeys encounters a mysterious black slab that sparks their understanding of basic tools and sets in motion the long chain of technological development that characterizes our development as a species. Then he asked the audience: "are we the monkeys?" and "what are the black slabs?"

Paralleling the structure of *2001*, Pansak identified the three "black slabs" that he believes will bring success to Thailand during the coming years. The first slab, is finding a new model for domestic economic growth, now that global economic paradigm has shifted. In conjunction with this, is the second slab: value creation. Pansak argued that Thailand should lead the transition with domestic growth and drive it with the creation of real value. He identified the third, and final, slab as Thailand's relationship with China and Japan. Thailand can benefit from these countries' economic expansion, he argued, as long as it is ready to seize opportunities as they arise.



Dr. Thongchai Winichakul

Dr. Winichakul began his talk with a historical account of Thailand's 1932 transition, noting facetiously, that any parallel the audience might see between that time of upheaval and today's crisis was purely imagined.

In the second part of his talk, Dr. Winichakul moved to more recent times. Starting in the 1980s, he explained, globalization and economic growth transformed Thailand fundamentally: the majority of the Thai population ceased to be agrarian, free elections provided opportunities for the rural and urban poor to claim a voice, and the vote-buying that had occurred in the past became impossible.

He stressed that while the outcome cannot be predicted, a dramatic transition in Thai society is already well underway, or "the train has already left the station," as he put it. Accusing Thaksin, or any one individual, of causing a crisis is only scratching the tip of the iceberg; monumental forces of change are currently at play. Legislation that resists change, he predicted, will backfire. Political and royal elites who think they are preserving order may, in fact, hinder change for the better.



Sukhumbhand Paribatra

The current Bangkok governor started by joking that "there are two classes of people who speak about the future: those who don't know and those who don't know they don't know". The best way to prepare for the future is to identify certainties and uncertainties.

The uncertainties that Sukhumbhand discussed were political, economic, social, security/sovereignty (relating to the conflict in southern Thailand), and regional (concerning the future of the ASEAN community and the question of Myanmar).

The certainties in Thailand's future are: migration issues caused by population growth, stress on medical infrastructure caused by the country's aging population, a disparity between the life expectancies of men and women, increasing vulnerability to pandemics, "modern society syndromes" such as depression becoming true public health issues, increased public transport and housing pressure, and environmental challenges.

These looming challenges require major investments of money and effort, but at the moment we are wasting time.

Human Security Workshop Series: December 3rd and 14th

In December, MAIDS co-hosted a series of workshops on Human Security. The series started on December 3rd with Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning in Human Security Studies and was followed two weeks later with In Search of Theories in/of Human Security. The workshop series was conceived because MAIDS is currently developing an M.A.—Ph.D. Program in Human Security and International Development. Human Security is an ever-evolving field and it can be difficult to define, let alone teach, so before such a program can exist, it must first find its identity. The following notes come from the opening talk, delivered by Professor Thanh Dam Truong, who teaches at the Institute of Social Sciences at the Erasmus University of Rotterdam.

Dr. Thanh Dam Truong: Teaching Interdisciplinary Courses on Human Security

It has been a struggle to develop Human Security teaching and learning over the last 14 years. I have learned that teaching it as a mono-discipline is not enough, but for interdisciplinary teaching, how is it done?

National security is an old, European (Westphalian) concept. It's outdated, problematic, and suppresses differences. When it was extended (through colonization) to other parts of the world, it became even more problematic. We should not take it as a given, but should question it. In the 19th century, the nation state took on the roles of regulation, finance, and administration; monitoring, control, and decision making. The nation state was created to ensure a balance of power and to prevent war. Why hasn't this worked? Again, we need to question this model.

In terms of *collaboration* between disciplines looking at human security, the main problem is defining places and relations between disciplines. Structures of power make multidisciplinary collaboration very difficult. There is no representation of disciplines without power. For example, when it was founded, only lawyers were represented at the WTO. Political Scientists, Sociology, etc... were excluded because they were considered subversive.

In that sense, it is important for us to visit the idea of ontology and its meta-assumptions. Classical science had three levels, which were vertically linked: ontology, epistemology, and methods. With globalization, ontology became contested. The vertical structure was broken as different disciplines and world views came into contact. Even within an ostensibly uniform community like Europe, you have diverse ontology. We can't ignore it. We should see it as a window onto the world, rather than a religious question, which gets people very irritated.

People CAN deal with difference, but the tension lies in the fact that we put difference in a dominant/subordinate relationship. For example, if you want to be a member of the international community, you have to streamline the rules of your house. Some of these rules don't work in all contexts. We have to ask about the frictions in the normative framework? How compatible are "legal transplants" from the international to the local level? You will have sources of insecurity when people resist these changes, especially when they're being made improperly.

Now, let's deal directly with the idea of a multidisciplinary approach. Security is defined as what several disciplines



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working independently think it to be; and hard disciplinary boundaries are places around disciplinary facets:

- Human Security: human and society centered rather than state-centered;
- Economic Security: the ability of a government to assure every individual a minimum requisite income;
- Food Security: the guarantee of physical and economic access to basic nutrition;
- Health Security: the guarantee of a minimum protection from disease;
- Environmental Security: the protection from the short and long-term ravages of nature, human-made threats in nature, and deterioration of the natural environment;
- Personal Security: focused on individual safety;
- Community Security: as the protection from the loss of traditional relationships and values and from sectarian and ethnic violence;
- Political Security: as the full respect for basic human rights;

These dimensions can be seen as a call for multi-disciplinary collaboration on different scales. Human Security may be considered a normative framework to assess, guide or re-direct policy from a number of international conventions.

If you look through Human Security as a body of *theory*, you might get its ethics, but as a body of theory it is limited to *legal theory* and legal debate. It does not give enough theoretical attention to the important issues of geopolitics and power.

Human security also lacks the power of naming and framing issues. The state has that power and it's unquestioned. There is some challenge of "the west vs the rest", but the dichotomy/binary is still reproduced in alternative models. Conversation and collaborative learning is absent.

The most exciting paradigms are the interdisciplinary and the transdisciplinary. They are questioning conventional definitions, allowing for new definitions of security to emerge. State security and societal security are being seen as mutually constitutive. The social constructivist approach is important, with collaboration between political science, sociology of knowledge, anthropology as well as the Foucaultian approach to the knowledge/power apparatus.

Human Security thinkers must focus on overcoming binaries (self and other, west and the rest). Collaboration within and between disciplines using limited knowledge bases about a defined dimension of security (ex: migration,

“The ethics of modern science—from which the idea of development as modernization took its roots—is epistemologically wrong and contains the seeds of violence due to the promotion of a monoculture of the mind...”

development, security). Each discipline needs to be open to new concepts, allowing them to change its own. Examples are gender in economics, gender in health and medicine, gender in International Relations.

The literature of Critical International Relations developed by the Copenhagen school of thought cautions against straightforward application of knowledge and encourages us to look at how it all happens. There is more of an emphasis on securitization as a process rather than human security as a normative framework.

Cognitive justice is an idea derived from the term “epistemic injustice” coined by Edward Craig (1990), referring to non-egalitarian norms of credibility that tend to lean more in favor of the powerful than the powerless. The ethics of

modern science—from which the idea of development as modernization took its roots—is epistemologically wrong and contains the seeds of violence due to the promotion of a monoculture of the mind that excludes the validity and values of other ways of knowing and other knowledge systems. Violence stems from asserting one value system and excluding the rest. No system can continue to exist without the capability of recycling its own waste except through the domination of others as waste or shock-absorbers. The transformation of rational and ethical-political frameworks guiding policy is necessary. An interdisciplinary approach to teaching human security is the first step toward this transformation.



MAIDS Alumni Interview: Michael Paller



MAIDS alumni Michael Paller attained his B.A. in Politics and Sociology from Brandeis University, USA. Upon graduating he served as the Regional Field Director for the Young Voter Project in the 2004 U.S. presidential election. After the election he came to Thailand to conduct research for the Human Rights Education Institute of Burma (HREIB). He studied at MAIDS from 2006-2007 and is currently working as the HREIB's Deputy Director.

MAIDS: Can you briefly describe your role as Deputy Director of the Human Rights Education Institute of Burma?

MP: As HREIB's deputy director I am primarily responsible for writing and managing our grants, but I also work closely with the director, program coordinators, and field organizers on all of our projects. We have a staff of over 50 people, including 30 field trainers based inside Burma and along Burma's borders. I monitor their activities and analyze the impact the organization as a whole is having on the communities we work with. I also do a lot of regional and international advocacy. For example, in July I delivered a presentation to the UN Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict on the situation of child soldiers.

MAIDS: There is an interesting link between your current grant-related responsibilities at HREIB and your MAIDS thesis—*Towards Governance Reform: A Critical Review of Foreign Assistance to Burma*—in which you analyzed how the effects of foreign aid differ depending on how and where funds are allocated. Have your thesis work and findings influenced your approach to development work?

MP: The research I conducted for my MAIDS thesis strengthened my commitment to working with grassroots activists *inside* Burma. Although I still work at an organization with headquarters in Thailand, over the past several years we have shifted our focus from along Burma's borders to inside the country. We identify individuals and groups from Burma dedicated to changing their communities. In writing grant proposals and reporting on the progress of HREIB's projects I emphasize this aspect of our work.

That said, trends in foreign assistance to Burma have changed dramatically since I completed the MAIDS program. Just seven months after I defended my thesis, cyclone Nargis ravaged Burma's Irrawaddy delta region. Donors responded to the devastation with an unprecedented amount of aid. This aid opened a window for many countries and international nongovernmental organizations; they saw not only the damage caused by the natural disaster but also the tragic situation caused by the manmade disaster. The latter, characterized by abject poverty and widespread human rights abuses inflicted by the ruling junta, is far more difficult to address. Nonetheless, many governments and aid agencies recognized the extent to which years of isolation and neglect affected the people of Burma, and they have been compelled to review their foreign assistance strategies. It has yet to be seen if/how new promises of assistance will improve governance in Burma.

MAIDS: More generally, how has your experience at the MAIDS Program (classes, trips, other experiences) affected your perspective on development? How has it prepared you for your current work?

MP: I took several classes at Chula that prepared me for my current position at HREIB. The development project management course helped me improve my proposal writing skills and think more critically about how donors review grant applications. And, the migration course helped me understand the situation of migrants from Burma working in Thailand.

MAIDS: What advice would you give to students about to start their studies at MAIDS? What advice do you have for recent MAIDS graduates looking for post-graduation direction?

MP: Development Studies is a broad, multidisciplinary field that provides opportunities to explore a wide range of issues from an equally wide range of perspectives. However, the MAIDS program is only one year and therefore students should be focused. I would advise incoming students to choose a particular research topic early on in the program and concentrate their efforts on examining that topic in all their classes. I believe this focus will allow them to gain a deep understanding of an issue that is important to them. It will also help them complete the program, which can be quite rigorous at times, in the allotted three semesters. Also, I recommend making use of all the resources at Chula. Although MAIDS is in the Political Science faculty, there are many other places on campus with interesting and relevant information on development issues. As for recent graduates I recommend connecting with alumni working in their field of interest. Many of the graduates from my class and others have positions with leading development institutions.

MAIDS Scholarship Information

AF-MAIDS Scholarship Program



NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS: 1 full scholarship

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- ▶ Thai National
- ▶ Bachelor's degree in the Social Sciences with good overall academic standing
- ▶ 2 years work/volunteer experience in a related field
- ▶ Evidence of English proficiency

SCHOLARSHIP COVERAGE:

- ▶ Tuition fees
- ▶ Living allowances
- ▶ Health insurance

APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 31st, 2010

COMPLETE SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION:

www.ids.polsci.chula.ac.th/AF-MAIDSScholarshipProgram.htm

SCG Foundation Scholarship Program



NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS: 6 full scholarships

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- ▶ Applicants must be citizens of one of the following six countries:
Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines
- ▶ Bachelor's degree in the Social Sciences; good overall academic standing
- ▶ 2 years work/volunteer experience in a related field
- ▶ Evidence of English proficiency

SCHOLARSHIP COVERAGE:

- ▶ Round-trip airfare
- ▶ Living allowances
- ▶ Tuition fees
- ▶ Health insurance

APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 31st, 2010

COMPLETE SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION:

www.ids.polsci.chula.ac.th
www.scgfoundation.org

New Scholarship Agreement: ASEAN Foundation—Thabyay Education Network MAIDS Scholarship

On Friday, January 22nd, representatives from the ASEAN Foundation, Thabyay Education Network, and the Faculty of Political Science gathered for the signing of a new jointly funded agreement that will provide **six full scholarships** for study at the Master of Arts in International Development Studies (MAIDS) program over the next three years. The scholarships, which will be available to citizens of **Myanmar, Cambodia, and Lao PDR**, represent an exciting opportunity to assist students who want to contribute to the development of their home countries. The agreement was signed by Dr. Filemon A. Uriarte, Executive Director of the ASEAN Foundation; Ms. Jessica Work, Southeast Asia Fellowship Program Officer for Thabyay Education Network; and Dr. Charas Suwanmala, Dean of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University.

The application period for the 2010-2011 academic year has already passed, but interested candidates should visit the MAIDS website in September to find out how to apply for funding for the following academic year.

Pictured (from left to right are) Dr. Puangthong Pawakapan, MAIDS Deputy Director; Dr. Naruemon Thabchumpon, MAIDS Director; Dr. Filemon A. Uriarte; ASEAN Foundation Executive Director; Dr. Charas Suwanmala, Dean of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University; Ms. Jessica Work, Southeast Asia Program Officer, Thabyay Education Network; Ms. Renelle Ivy Adan, ASEAN Foundation Head of Programs; and Mr. Chris Gusen, MAIDS Program Officer.



Master of Arts Program in International Development Studies (MAIDS)

2010-2011 ACADEMIC YEAR

Application deadline: March 31st 2010

The Master of Arts in International Development Studies, known for short as MAIDS, is intended for people who are making, or have the potential to make, a meaningful contribution as researchers, practitioners, and leaders in the field of international development. The M.A. program expects applicants to possess an undergraduate degree and some work or volunteer experience in international development, generally in the non-profit or governmental sector. The program particularly encourages applications from citizens and residents of the Greater Mekong Sub-region countries.

The program is looking for individuals with sensitivity to and involvement in issues such as the promotion of social change, human rights, local community development, media freedom and humanitarian aid. The curriculum combines the study of a rigorous theoretical framework with field experience. Students have the opportunity to network with a wide range of practitioners working with government, international and civil society organizations. The thesis project allows the student to develop expertise in a particular area of interest.

MAIDS offers comprehensive and flexible training for, either for a career in international development, or further studies at the doctorate level. **The application form is available to download from our website.**

Program Structure

The M.A. in International Development Studies is a full-time, one-year (Oct – Sep) program divided in three four-month trimesters. The first two trimesters consist of four compulsory and four elective courses (3 credits each; totalling 24 credits). The third trimester is spent on thesis work in the student's area of interest (12 credits). Upon successful completion of the programme (36 credits) the student is awarded a Master of Arts degree in International Development Studies. The M.A. program in International Development Studies is taught in English.

Compulsory Courses

- Development Theory and Practice
- Globalization and Development in Asia and the Pacific
- Politics of Public Policy
- Research Methodology in Development Studies

Elective Courses

- Communication, Democratization, and Development
- Conflict Resolution
- Development Project Management
- Human Rights and Gender Problems in Asia and the Pacific
- Migration as a Development Issue
- Selected Topics in Development and Economy
- Environmental Politics and Policy
- Development Practicum

**Master of Arts Program in International Development Studies (MAIDS)
Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University
Henri-Dunant Road, Bangkok 10330, Thailand
Tel. +66-2-218-7313
Fax. +66-2-252-6277**

Email : maids@chula.ac.th

www.ids.polsci.chula.ac.th