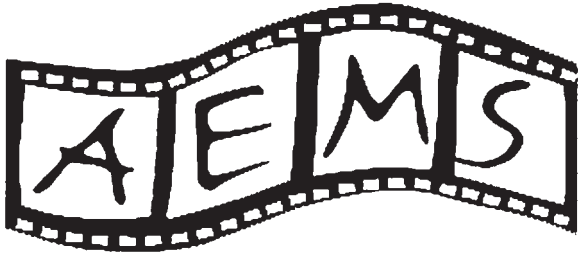


BRINGING SIGHT AND SOUND TO THE CLASSROOM

The Asian Educational Media Service



By Sarah I. Barbour

Few people will deny the power of media to bring far away places and events to life. Audiovisual media can be a vital supplement to printed material, not simply describing but showing everyday life in a distant country, putting a human face on wars and famines, and bringing music, dance and theater into the classroom. Most educators are aware that documentaries, slides, CD ROMS, and Internet sites about Asia exist, but few are aware of the breadth of subject matter available or how to find and choose the media most appropriate for their students' levels and interests.

The Asian Educational Media Service (AEMS) was created to help educators find the media material most appropriate for their classes and to help them use that material as effectively as possible. AEMS got its start as the Center for Educational Media at Earlham College under the direction of Professor Jackson Bailey. Originally, it tracked only media on Japan. In 1997, after Professor Bailey's death, the Center moved to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, under the new direction of Professor David W. Plath, and became AEMS, with an expanded mission to track media about East, Southeast, and South Asia.

At AEMS' core is a database located on our Web site that contains the titles of over 3,500 audio-visual materials. The database is searchable by title, media type, audience level, subject matter, and geographic region. Each entry includes an abstract, running time, distributor information, and cost. Wherever possible, entries also include reviews written by educators who have used the material in their classrooms. Some of these reviews are written specifically for AEMS; others have been reprinted with the gracious permission of *Education About Asia* and the *Journal of Asian Studies*. Users of the Web site can submit their own reviews and comments, as well. In addition, the Web site contains a comprehensive list of relevant links, images and essays about Asia, and message boards which we hope will facilitate the exchange of ideas and information.



At AEMS' core is a database located on our Web site that contains the titles of over 3,500 audio-visual materials. The database is searchable by title, media type, audience level, subject matter, and geographic region.

Another conduit for reviews is our quarterly newsletter, *News and Reviews*. Each issue contains eight to ten reviews written by educators assessing the effectiveness of particular items as teaching tools. *News and Reviews* also prints essays by teachers, producers, and scholars on a variety of topics related to educational media. *News and Reviews* has recently started reviewing Web sites, in addition to more traditional media, for content and accuracy. The newsletter is free—simply call or write to be put on the mailing list or download older issues from the Web site.

AEMS also offers a call-in/write-in help service. If you are looking for material on a specific subject or for a specific age level or if you are trying to track down an obscure title, please get in touch. We cannot guarantee that we will have the answer but we will certainly try!

In addition to finding and reviewing material, AEMS is involved in the creation of educational media. David Plath also directs the Media Production Group (MPG), which has created a number of videos and teaching guides designed for use in the classroom. Most recently, MPG produced the award-winning *Makiko's New World*. Gary Mukai, Director of the Stanford Program for International and Cultural Exchange, has created a secondary school teacher's guide for *Makiko*, which is available on the AEMS Web site. MPG also produced the *Asia Video Reports: Japan*, a four-part series of short videos about various aspects of Japanese culture. The Social Science Education Consortium has designed Teacher's Guides for the *Asia Video Reports* and now sells them as a package with the videos. MPG

ESSAYS



**SYRACUSE
STUDY ABROAD**

**Planning to Study Abroad?
Syracuse has your ticket!**

- Business Programs in Hong Kong
- Semester and Summer programs available
- Traveling Seminars to Beijing, Guilin & Shanghai
- Language instruction in Mandarin available at all levels.
- Generous Scholarships & Grants
- Internships available
- Direct enrollment into City University, Hong Kong

For more information contact:
Syracuse University
119 Euclid Ave
Syracuse, NY 13244
or 1-800-235-3472
or please see our website at
<http://sumweb.syr.edu/dipa>



is currently producing a documentary about Japanese expatriates living in Southeast Asia.

But AEMS' definition of media includes the personal, as well as the professional. In June, we sponsored our first Image Workshop, in which participants learned to organize, and save their own photos and slides in digital formats. We plan to hold more such workshops over the coming few years. We hope that these workshops will encourage the preservation and dissemination of visual images that might otherwise never reach more than a handful of people.

What does the future hold for AEMS? More workshops, more reviews, an ever-expanding database; but we are also seeking greater participation from the people who use our services. We would especially like to hear from K-12 teachers in the form of reviews, suggestions, and questions. Tell us what you think, tell us what you need, and AEMS will do its best to respond.

There is a great deal of discussion these days about technology and the opportunities it offers. We at AEMS believe that technology has much to offer but that its availability must be tempered with awareness. Educators need tools that will help them define what they need and then help them find the best of what is available. AEMS' goal is to be the tool that teachers will turn to when they want to bring sound and sight to their lessons on Asia.

AEMS is supported by generous funding from the Freeman Foundation and the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership.

For more information, please contact Sarah I. Barbour at the Asian Educational Media Service, Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Champaign, IL 61820. Telephone: 888-828-AEMS (2367). Fax: 217-265-0641. E-mail: aems@uiuc.edu. Web site: <http://www.aems.uiuc.edu>. ■

SARAH I. BARBOUR is the Program Coordinator of the Asian Educational Media Service. She has a master's degree in Film Studies from Northwestern University and worked in Japan for four years prior to moving to Urbana-Champaign, Illinois.

Future *EAA* Issues

WINTER 2000

A Special Section on Japan
in American and World History.

SPRING 2001

A Thematic Issue
on Teaching Asian Literature.