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WEDNESDAY EVENING SEMINAR

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*Education Program Presents*

## **Contesting the Past: Ancient Monuments and Nationalism in Southeast Asia**

Paul Lavy

Assistant Professor of South and Southeast Asian Art History

Department of Art and Art History

University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

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Wednesday, October 9, 2013

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Keoni Auditorium, Imin International Conference Center

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Throughout the world, ancient architectural monuments and ruins have played an important role in the formation of national identities. The complicated processes through which ancient monuments are elevated to the status of exclusive “national symbols” are not “natural” historical developments, but are instead often accompanied by tensions (and sometimes conflict) as nation-states develop competing interpretations of the past. A particularly revealing example of these processes is the contested temple site of Preah Vihear / Khao Phra Viharn, located at the border of Cambodia and Thailand and claimed by both countries. Embroiled in unresolved and conflicting interpretations regarding the legacy of the kingdom of Angkor, this temple is a useful case study for examining the ways that the monumental past can be used for political purposes in the present.

Paul Lavy is assistant professor of South and Southeast Asian art history at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. He received his B.A. in cultural anthropology from Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg, VA, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in South/Southeast Asian art history from the University of California, Los Angeles. He subsequently taught ancient art history at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, and Asian and Islamic art history at Pennsylvania State University, University Park. Dr. Lavy has conducted research in India and throughout Southeast Asia, including Vietnam, where he lived and worked as an independent lecturer and researcher prior to coming to Hawaii. His ongoing research, which has been funded by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Asian Cultural Council, and the National Security Education Program, investigates the links between art/architecture and politics in early historic Southeast Asia. He is currently writing a book on early sculpture from Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam entitled *The Crowned Gods of Early Southeast Asia*.

**To help make WES a sustainable gathering, please bring your own cup for a hot beverage and small plate for light refreshments. The public is invited to attend.**