





# Letter from the Director



## CONTENTS

Letter from the Director 2

CSAS International Student Programs 3

Sound and South Asia Conference 4

U-M Pakistan Conference 5

Seeking Social Justice in South Asia Conference 6

Endangered Heritage Conference 6

Graduate Student Conference 7

IIT-U-M Workshop 7

Faculty News 8

Building South Asian Curriculum 10

Teach in: Disappeared Activists in Pakistan 11

Being Brown in Trump's America 11

Graduate Student News 12

Summer in South Asia Fellows 14

CSAS Co-Sponsors Visit by Maldives ex-President 15

CSAS Supports SAADA 15

Library News 15

CSAS Events 16

**I write this at the end of an exciting summer** for the Center for South Asian Studies (CSAS). We ran pilots of two new international student programs, one with the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune (IISER), and the other with Habib University, Karachi (see more details on p. 3). These programs are the outcome of an effort at the CSAS over the past few years to expand our network of institutional collaborations in India and Pakistan, in order to create new opportunities for students and faculty—both at U-M and at the institutions we are engaging. As my tenure as Director draws to a close—this is my fifth and final year—I am pleased that the CSAS now has established relationships with Ashoka University, Delhi University, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), and Shiv Nadar University, all in and around Delhi, IISER in Pune; and with the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) and Habib University in Pakistan. We envision sending our students to these institutions, welcoming their students to U-M, and collaborating with their faculty.

Our summer activity came on the heels of another active year at the CSAS. In 2016–17, we hosted five conferences, four in Ann Arbor and one in New Delhi: Sound and South Asia (see p. 4); the IIT-UM South Asian Studies Workshop (see p. 7); a graduate Student Conference (see p. 7); and the 7th Annual U-M Pakistan Conference, on Gender and Sexuality (see p. 5); and in conjunction with other area studies centers, Endangered Heritage (see p. 6). In between, we hosted the Consul General of Pakistan (Chicago), the former (and perhaps future)

President of the Maldives, Mohamed Nasheed, thirteen eminent scholars, and a filmmaker. The CSAS also co-sponsored a diverse array of events, including two dance performances and the annual South Asia Awareness Network Conference, organized by our undergraduate students.

This year promises to be another robust one. Our year kicks-off with a lecture by our own Vikramaditya Khanna of the Law School, who will be speaking on dowry in India on September 8. This will be followed by a major international conference, “Seeking Social Justice in South Asia” (see p. 6); we are grateful to Ranvir and Adarsh Trehan for their support, which allows us to bring together leading lawyers, activists, scholars, and journalists to consider this important theme. We also look forward to welcoming His Excellency Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry (Ambassador of Pakistan to the US), a range of scholars in our 2017-18 Lecture Series (see p. 16 for details), a filmmaker; and to hosting a performance, “Lucknow in Letters: Endeavors, Achievements, and Tragedies.” We will also host our second Graduate Student Conference (January 26-27, 2018) and the 8th Annual U-M Pakistan Conference (April 6, 2018).

In the pages that follow you’ll find more information on the Center’s activities over the past year as well as those we have planned for the coming year. You’ll also read about research on and engagement with South Asia from across U-M.

As 2017–18 ends my tenure as Director, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our staff, faculty, and students for their support of the CSAS. Directing the Center has

been a challenge and a privilege. It has been a challenge because of the precarious times we live in, with the Department of Education’s Title VI programs that fund the Center under threat. The CSAS currently holds National Resource Center and Foreign Language Area Studies Grants from the Department of Education. The former allows for the work of the Center, and the latter allows it to fund undergraduate and graduate students to study South Asian languages (in the last 4 years we distributed \$1.2 million in student fellowships). Given geopolitics, the work of the Center—producing, enhancing, and disseminating knowledge about South Asia—is as critical as ever, at U-M, nationally, and globally. Putting the CSAS on a more solid financial footing is imperative if it is to continue its important work.

At the same time, directing the Center has surely been a privilege. Working with staff, students, and colleagues on the collective and interdisciplinary project of South Asian studies has been extremely rewarding intellectually and personally. I’d like to especially thank Janelle Fosler, the Center’s Program Specialist, not least for putting up with my almost limitless capacity to produce work for her over these past two years, and all with good cheer.

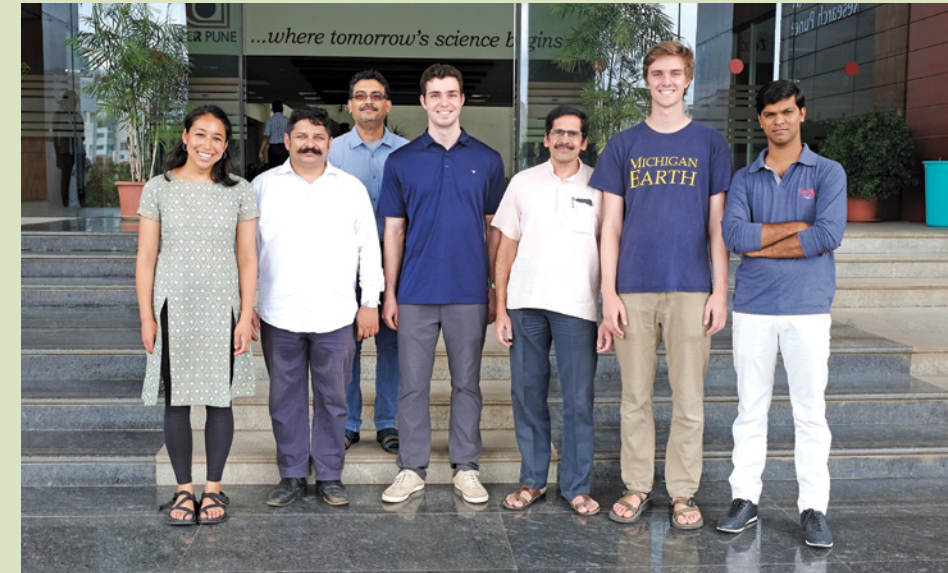
I am extremely grateful to have had this opportunity to work with you and to promote South Asian Studies at U-M.

Sincerely,

**Farina Mir**  
Associate Professor,  
Department of History

# CSAS International Student Programs

Janelle Fosler



U-M Students with IISER (Pune) faculty (from L-R): Rachel Hirsch (UM), Pushkar Sohni (IISER), Naresh Sharma (IISER), Andrew Beckman (UM), Milind Watve (IISER), Alec Reznich (UM), and Gyana Tripathy (IISER)



IISER Students at U-M. From L-R: Farina Mir, Jesil Jose, Ranjana Yadav, Prateek Yadav, Suraj Sharma, Harsha Gowda, James Penner-Hahn (not pictured: Prathamesh Datar).

In 2016, the Center for South Asian Studies signed agreements with Habib University (Karachi) and the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) (Pune), providing an opportunity for their students to study and/or do research at U-M. Both student programs ran for the first time in Spring/Summer 2017.

In late May, we welcomed six undergraduate students from IISER to Ann Arbor and sent three U-M students to IISER’s Pune campus under the auspices of the Michigan-IISER Science Exchange

Program. IISER students were placed in research labs to work alongside U-M students and faculty for approximately 10 weeks. Preliminary feedback from both students and faculty has been very positive, and we hope to have as many as 10 IISER students at U-M in 2018. We were pleased that three U-M students were able to take advantage of a reciprocal opportunity to study with faculty at IISER. We hope to see more U-M students take advantage of this opportunity to study science and the humanities in an international context and work with IISER’s renowned faculty in the future.

The agreement with Habib University—a newly established private liberal arts university—allows select students to enroll in summer semester courses at U-M’s Ann Arbor campus. In summer 2017, four Habib students joined us on campus: Maisam Hyder Ali, Infer Khalid Baig, Fatima Hamdini, and Safian Haq.



Habib Students at U-M. From L-R: Fatima Hamdini, Infer Khalid Baig, Safian Haq, Maisam Hyder Ali.

**“Travelling on my own for the first time, experiencing life in a different country, and meeting some of the kindest and most compassionate people in Ann Arbor have been truly remarkable.”—Infer Baig**

When asked about her experience, Infer Baig shared: “The Michigan Summer term 2017 has been by far the greatest growing experience of my life. Here at the University of Michigan, I am taking inspiring courses on “Anthropology of the Senses” and “Gender in the Middle East,” which are very relevant to my academic interests. But I am also learning so much about myself. Travelling on my own for the first time, experiencing life in a different country, and meeting some of the kindest and most compassionate people in Ann Arbor have been truly remarkable. I know that when I go back home, I will be carrying with me some of the most wonderful memories, friendships, connections, and wisdom that life has to offer.”



# Sound and South Asia

Madhumita Lahiri



Back (L-R): Gaurav Desai, Manan Desai, Nathan Tabor, Jayson Beaster-Jones, Corey Creekmur. Front (L-R): Christi Merrill, Madhumita Lahiri, Isabel Huacuja Alonso, Vebhuti Duggal, Pavitra Sundar, Amanda Weidman, Linda Hess, Madhuja Mukherjee, Neepa Majumdar.

The Center for South Asian Studies hosted an international conference on “Sound and South Asia” on October 7-8, 2016. The study of what we hear has conventionally been reserved for the medical specialist, the acoustic engineer, and the ethnomusicologist. However, in recent years the life of sounds—from the most refined of classical music to the most irritating of street noises—has become a topic for disciplines as diverse as history, law, economics, performance studies, and film studies.

## The sound of the body in South Asia has been increasingly defined along the often-rigid demarcations of women’s lives.

In keeping with the broad range of disciplinary and conceptual interests in sound studies, this two-day conference brought together twelve scholars from institutions in the United States and India. Faculty from the departments of Asian Languages and Cultures, American Culture, Comparative Literature, English, and Music served as chairs and discussants.

Linda Hess (Stanford University) and Nathan Tabor (Western Michigan University) launched our discussions through a historically nuanced consideration of the interactions between orality and literacy in South Asian cultures. Focusing on the overlapping currents of circulation between the songs of Kabir and the Urdu *mushai’ra*, Hess and Tabor covered centuries of South Asian literature in performance, elaborating on what happens when a text is a song, and what this might tell us about South Asian cultures of listening.

Much as the first panel focused on aurality, orality, and performance in the northern part of the subcontinent, the second panel elaborated the performance and sound cultures of southern India with presentations by Davesh Soneji (University of Pennsylvania) and Amanda Weidman (Bryn Mawr College). Both focused on the musical repercussions of gender: Soneji on the seemingly continuous but continually reinvented world of traditional performance, and Weidman on the carefully consolidated cultures of playback recording in the Tamil film industry. The sound of the body in South Asia, we learned, has been increasingly defined along the often-rigid demarcations of women’s lives.

Moving from these nuanced local considerations of sonic cultures, Isabel Huacuja Alonso (California State University, San Bernardino) and Vebhuti Duggal (Sarai-Center for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi) presented their research on the most transnational and ephemeral of sonic media: radio. Through their work on All-India Radio’s Urdu service and on the use of postcards for radio request shows, respectively, this panel detailed how sound’s famous capacity for non-directional dissipation makes it both tempting and resistant to the desires of the nation-state.

Sound studies is a burgeoning field across disciplines, and in the South Asian context it has focused most insistently on the famous sonic conventions of Indian commercial cinema. In keeping with this strong sub-field, the conference staged two conversations on film sound. The first panel on the topic considered the sonic conventions of particular historical moments in Indian filmmaking, whether in the silent and sound periods of non-digital filmmaking in the early and mid-twentieth century, as in the research of Neepa Majumdar (University of Pittsburgh), or in the digital environment of commercial filmmaking today, as explored by Madhuja Mukherjee (Jadavpur University, Kolkata). The second panel on the topic, featuring Pavitra Sundar (Hamilton College) and Corey Creekmur (University of Iowa), articulated future directions for the study of Indian cinema sounds, considering the bodily sound associated with particular singers and the imagined sound of history.

The conference concluded with a discussion of the valuation of sound, through the work of Michele Friedner (Stony Brook University) and Jayson Beaster-Jones (University of California-Merced). Whether in the priorities of India’s Deaf cultures or in the virtual networks of South Asia’s music sales, both demonstrated that our understandings of sound are socially constituted and commercially influenced.

This conference was made possible by generous support from Ranvir and Adarsh Trehan and the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, with additional support from the: School of Music, Theatre & Dance; Departments of Communication Studies, History, English Language and Literature, and Screen Arts and Cultures; the Global Media Studies Initiative; and the U-M Initiative on Disability Studies. This conference was also funded in part by the Center’s Title VI federal grant from the US Department of Education.

## U-M PAKISTAN CONFERENCE 2017

# Gender and Sexuality

Salman Hussain

The 7th annual U-M Pakistan Conference was held on April 7, 2017. Organized by the Center for South Asian Studies (CSAS) and the Pakistani Students’ Association (PSA), the U-M Pakistan Conference is an initiative aimed at highlighting new research and research areas on Pakistan and fostering conversations between artists, activists, and academics. The theme of the 2017 U-M Pakistan Conference was gender and sexuality. The conference sought to highlight the role of gender and sexuality in shaping varied experiences of everyday life in Pakistan.

After brief opening remarks by Farina Mir (Department of History) and Salman A. Hussain, (Program in History and Anthropology), Mrinalini Sinha (Department of History) chaired a panel on “Masculinities in Everyday Life,” with papers by Nida Kirmani (Lahore University of Management Sciences) and Omar Kasmani (Freie Universität). In her paper, “Gender, Mobility and Urban Violence: the View from Lyari,” Kirmani discussed Baloch men’s experience of traversing everyday life and gendered discourses of fear in Karachi in the context of both state and non-state violence. Kasmani’s paper, “Neither. Nor. Trans: Notes on Dispensable Masculinities and the Promise of Thirdness,” addressed how the question of non-normative gender identities is in flux, and how the state, media, and community are involved in the project of naming such identities.

Aswin Punathambekar (Communication Studies) chaired the day’s second panel, “Gender in Public and Online Spaces.” Fizzah Sajjad’s (Center for Economic Research in Pakistan) paper “Gender Equity in Transport Planning” examined how Pakistani urban women navigate public transportation, while Zehra Hashmi’s (Program in History and Anthropology) paper, “Biometric Belonging: Infrastructures of Security and Identity in Urban Pakistan,” addressed the entanglements of the state security apparatus and the digitization and (re-)definition of kinship and ethnic identities in post-9/11 Pakistan.



Back (L-R): Shilo Shiv Suleman, Farina Mir, Fizzah Sajjad, Arsalan Khan, Salman Hussain. Front (L-R): Nida Mushtaq, Faiza Mushtaq, Omar Kasmani, Nida Kirmani, Anjali Arondekar, Zehra Hashmi

Farina Mir chaired the next panel, on “Gendered Selves in the Islamic Revival,” which turned the conversation toward gendered movements of Islamic revival in Pakistan. Faiza Mushtaq (Institute of Business Administration) discussed the composition and self-definition of a women’s religious organization in her paper, “Organizational Routines and Religious Commitments: The Innovative Traditionalism of Al-Huda.” Paired with this paper was Arsalan Khan’s (Union College) paper, “Pious Masculinity: Gender, Ritual and Ethical Reflexivity in the Tablighi Jamaat in Pakistan” which theorized the enactment of a specific sort of masculinity amongst the men of Tablighi Jamaat.

## The presentations generated questions about how gender ideologies traverse state programs and society at large, and how these notions are both contested, negotiated, manipulated, and actively (re)produced by individuals and groups in various situations.

The last panel was on “Public Art: Writing on the Wall.” Osman Khan (School of Art and Design) chaired the panel in which Nida Mushtaq and Shilo Suleman of The Fearless Collective presented their work on murals in urban Pakistan, painted in collaboration with local residents. The Fearless Collective also screened two short films about community and transgendered people in Pakistan. Mushtaq and Suleman’s presentation was accompanied by an exhibition of their work in the gallery space of the International Institute.

The conference presented work on gendered experiences of moving through spaces, transit, roads, shrines, and religious gatherings, and how these spaces and encounters are negotiated through relations of power that are themselves shaped, mediated, and regulated through notions of masculinity and femininity. The presentations generated questions about how gender ideologies traverse state programs and society at large, and how these notions are both contested, negotiated, manipulated, and actively (re)produced by individuals and groups in various situations. Anjali Arondekar (University of California, Santa Cruz) concluded the conference by leading a lively discussion with the audience which considered the place of gender and sexuality in the study of Pakistan, and also how scholarship on Pakistan could impact the field of Gender and Sexuality Studies.

This conference was made possible by generous support from the American Institute of Pakistan Studies, as well as the U-M Institute for Research on Women & Gender, Islamic Studies Program, Residential College, Rackham Graduate School, LSA Central Student Government, Institute for the Humanities, Multi-ethnic Student Affairs, Residence Halls Association, Newberry-Barbour Hall Council, East Quad, Office of Multicultural Initiatives, Asian, Pacific Islander American Studies, Penny W. Stamps School of Art & Design; and the Departments of: Anthropology, Asian Languages and Cultures, Communication Studies, History, History of Art, and Women’s Studies. This conference was also funded in part by the Center’s Title VI federal grant from the US Department of Education.



# Seeking Social Justice in South Asia

Farina Mir

The Center for South Asian Studies is pleased to host an international conference on September 21-23, 2017: "Seeking Social Justice in South Asia." The aim of the conference is to focus attention on stark and persistent political, economic, and social inequalities and the ongoing struggles to address them in contemporary South Asia.

The conference will bring together a group of internationally-renowned lawyers, activists, academics, and producers of media (journalists/filmmakers) to consider a range of interconnected struggles for social justice, including religious and ethnic polarization, gender and sexuality, caste politics, minority rights, urbanization and displacement, and media and information access. Presentations will address these issues in the Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, and Sri Lankan contexts.

The conference gives us the opportunity to consider such issues not only in their national contexts, but also in regional and international frames. As such, we hope to be able to consider the following issues:

- How are struggles for social justice interconnected? That is, what are the common structural causes that produce the varied forms of oppression and social inequality that each of the conference participants works on? We will think of these causes in national, regional, and global terms.

- Where are the opportunities for solidarity between movements—nationally and regionally? And relatedly, what are the fractures that hinder broad-based coalitions?

- What are the shared colonial legacies that structure social oppression, injustice, and inequality in South Asia? One place we might focus attention given the expertise of the participants is on the shared inheritance of colonial jurisprudence across these four postcolonial states.

- What role—if any—can international advocacy play in effecting social justice in South Asia? And what role does the international context play in producing and/or buttressing oppression and injustice in South Asia?

This conference will take a comparative approach to reflect on the complex cross-border implications

of struggles against discrimination, marginalization, and the mechanisms of social exclusion and oppression that shape the lives of millions of people across the region.

We look forward to welcoming:

**Flavia Agnes**, *Majlis Legal Centre, Mumbai*

**Khalid Anis Ansari**, *Glocal University (UP, India)*

**Sara Hossain**, *Bangladesh Legal Aid Services and Trust*

**Alan Keenan**, *Sri Lanka Senior Analyst, International Crisis Group (London)*

**Zainab Malik**, *Justice Project Pakistan*

**P. Sainath**, *Founder Editor, People's Rural Archive of India*

**A.R. Vasavi**, *National Institute of Advanced Sciences (retired), Bangalore*

**Bezwada Wilson**, *Safai Karmachari Andolan*

This conference is made possible by the generous support of Ranvir and Adarsh Trehan, and the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

# Endangered Heritage Conference

Janelle Fosler

**War, climate change, globalization, and economic development** pose significant threats to the world's natural and cultural heritage. Societies around the world share many of the same concerns, even as specific regions, countries, and communities face unique challenges.

The Center for South Asian Studies (CSAS) collaborated with the Museum Studies Program, African Studies Center and the Centers for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Middle Eastern and North African Studies, and Southeast Asian Studies to hold a two-day symposium to establish a dialogue surrounding global heritage. International experts and the U-M community were invited to identify threats to heritage and develop strategies to mitigate these dangers in both global and local contexts.

The CSAS sponsored two speakers to share their expertise on the South Asian region. Gurmeet Rai (Director, Cultural Resource Conservation Initiative, New Delhi) stressed the importance of working with local communities in appreciating both the tangible and intangible aspects of heritage. Uthara Suvrathan (Bard Graduate Center) participated on a panel on "Expanding

Heritage," and shared perspectives gained from her involvement in preserving archaeological heritage in Southern India.

The conference began with a film screening of *Destruction of Memory*, which tells the story of the "war against culture" in Syria and Iraq, looking not just at the ongoing actions of Daesh (ISIS), but also revealing past decisions that played a role in allowing for the destruction of heritage sites. The conference was comparative in scope, with speakers representing South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, Latin America, and Africa and the Middle East who presented on topics related to preserving global heritage in their various regions. This conference provided a much-needed conversation on the complexities and challenges of protecting heritage around the world.

The Endangered Heritage conference was made possible by the Departments of Anthropology, Asian Languages and Cultures, History of Art, Near Eastern Studies, and the International Institute, Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, Museum of Anthropological Archaeology, and the Museum Studies Program. This conference was also funded in part by Title VI federal grants from the US Department of Education.

# Graduate Interdisciplinary Conference on South Asia

Mrinalini Sinha

The Center for South Asian Studies hosted an interdisciplinary conference on South Asia for graduate students on March 24, 2017. Graduate students from any discipline at the University of Michigan were invited to present papers that focused on any period or aspect of the study of South Asia. A selection committee comprised of Professors Aniket Aga, School of Natural Resources and Environment, Aswin Punathambekar (Department of Communication Studies) and Mrinalini Sinha (Department of History) selected the eight students who presented their work at the day-long conference. The conference ended with a keynote address by Professor Douglas E. Haynes, Department of History, Dartmouth College.

**Graduate students from any discipline at the University of Michigan were invited to present papers that focused on any period or aspect of the study of South Asia.**

Presenters represented several different academic departments and were at different stages in their graduate career. The following students presented their work at the conference: Hoda Bandeh-Ahmadi, Anthropology ("Scenes of Inheritance: Intellectual Kinship and the Ethnography of Academic Anthropology and Sociology in Delhi"); Tapsi Mathur, History ("How to Become a Native Explorer: English Education and the Making of a Professional"); Vybhavi Balasundharam, Economics ("Can Cheaper Generators Help Small Firms Under Chronic Electricity Shortages? Evidence from a Generator Subsidy Program for MSME's in India"); Sikandar Kumar, History ("Hindi Literary Criticism and the Challenges of Developing a Social Aesthetics in India (1920-1950): A Survey of Premchand, Ramchandra Shukla and Ramvilas Sharma"); Matthew Schissler, Anthropology ("Footnote to Partition, 1938? Burma in India, Riots in Burma"); Meenu Deswal, History ("Intractable Women: Adultery and Abduction in Colonial Punjab (British India)"); Anil Menon, Political Science ("Historical Warfare and Long-Run Economic and Political Development in India"); and Sangita Saha, History and Women's Studies ("Transforming Domestic Labor, Constructing 'Worthy' Selves: A Study of Selected Women's Autobiographies from Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Bengal").

The keynote lecture, "Brand-Name Capitalism, Advertising, and the Making of Modern Conjugality in Western India, 1918-1940," by Professor Douglas E. Haynes (Dartmouth College), wrapped up the day: it was not only characteristically insightful but, fortuitously, it also touched upon many of the themes that had arisen during the day-long conversations on the student papers. Professor Haynes' audience was able to pick up on the resonances of the various themes that had emerged earlier in the day and later to follow-up on conversations in the informal setting of a conference dinner sponsored by the Center.

The successful outcome of the day found both the university community and Professor Haynes exposed to the kind of work undertaken by our students and the student-presenters exposed to the range of faculty expertise on campus, beyond their individual disciplines, from which they might potentially in the future draw.

The success of the conference owed to the willingness of the student-presenters to share their work as well as to the faculty, students, guests, and visitors who gave their time, many for the entire day, to take part in the conference. The enthusiasm and support of the graduate student volunteers, notably Leslie Hempson (History), Zehra Hashmi (Anthropology and History) and Salman Hussein (Anthropology and History), who chaired individual sessions at the conference were imperative to the success of the conference.

# IIT-UM Workshop on South Asian Studies

Farina Mir

The IIT-UM Workshop on South Asian Studies, held at the Indian Institute for Technology, New Delhi, on February 24, 2017, stemmed from a larger CSAS initiative to expand institutional relationships in India. CSAS has sought to expand engagement with higher education institutions in India since 2014, when then U-M President Mary Sue Coleman visited India. The CSAS has been supported in its efforts to establish new relationships with Indian Institutions, particularly those that focus on the humanities and social sciences, by a grant from the Office of the Vice-Provost for Global Engagement and Interdisciplinary Affairs. The IIT-UM Workshop provided humanities and social science faculty at U-M the opportunity to share research with faculty and students from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences (DHSS) at the IIT, New Delhi, and to consider areas of joint research interest.

The workshop was jointly organized by Farina Mir of U-M and Farhana Ibrahim of IIT, and brought together twelve faculty (six from each institution) with complementary intellectual interests to exchange research and consider areas of future collaboration. Convergent themes in scholarship led to five panels on: (1) Politics and Publics, with Mrinalini Sinha (History, U-M), Arudra Burra (DHSS, IIT), and Aswin Punathambekar (Communication Studies, U-M); (2) Spatial Imaginaries, with Bharati Puri (DHSS, IIT), William Glover (History, U-M), and Farhana Ibrahim (DHSS, IIT); (3) Ethics and Interiorities: Textual Considerations, with Farina Mir (History, U-M) and Milind Wakankar (DHSS, IIT); (4) Translations & Interruptions: Language, Caste, Nation, with Simona Sawhney (DHSS, IIT) and Christi Merrill (Comparative Literature and Asian Languages & Cultures, U-M); and (5) Religious Transformations, with Sarbeswar Sahoo (DHSS, IIT) and Varuni Bhatia (Asian Languages and Cultures, U-M).

It is our hope that the discussions initiated in New Delhi will continue in Ann Arbor. To that end, the CSAS is planning to host Farhana Ibrahim and Simona Sawhney for short residencies at U-M in 2017-18. We hope that in the coming years, we can further solidify the relationship between our institutions by sending U-M faculty to IIT as visiting scholars and U-M students to study there.







**Aniket Aga,** Assistant Professor, School for Environment and Sustainability, and

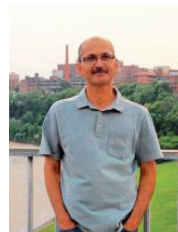
Postdoctoral Fellow, Michigan Society of Fellows, was awarded the 2016 Sardar Patel Award for his PhD thesis, *Genetically Modified Democracy: The Science and Politics of Transgenic Agriculture in Contemporary India*. The award is given to the best doctoral dissertation on Modern India in the US across the fields of humanities, social sciences, education, and fine arts. Aga co-authored an article (with Chitrangada Choudhury) on the cascading impacts of demonetisation on the tomato farmers of Western Maharashtra, which was published in *Economic and Political Weekly* and the *People's Archive of Rural India* in January 2017. A short article on government responses to agrarian distress in the wake of demonetisation is forthcoming in the Hotspots series of *Cultural Anthropology*.



**Arun Agrawal,** Samuel Trask Dana Professor, School for Environment and Sustainability,

published a number of articles this past year, including: M.F. Gebara & Arun Agrawal, "Beyond Rewards and Punishments in the Brazilian Amazon: Practical Implications of the REDD+ Discourse," *Forests*, 8(3), 2017; J. Erbaugh & Arun Agrawal, "Clarifying the landscape approach: A Letter to the Editor on 'Integrated landscape approaches to managing social and environmental issues in the tropics,'" *Global Change Biology*,

2017; R.Y. Bakkegaard, Arun Agrawal, et al, "National socioeconomic surveys in forestry: Guidance and survey modules for measuring the multiple roles of forests in household welfare and livelihoods," (No. FAO Forestry Paper no. 179, p. 172p). FAO, CIFOR, IFRI, World Bank, Rome, Italy; L.V. Rasmussen, C. Watkins, & A. Agrawal, "Forest contributions to livelihoods in changing agriculture-forest landscapes," *Forest Policy and Economics*, 2017; and Meriem Bouamrane, Marja Spierenburg, Arun Agrawal, et al, "Stakeholder Engagement and Biodiversity Conservation, challenges in socio-ecological systems: some insights from Western Africa and French biosphere reserves," *Ecology and Society*. 21(4), 2016.



**Syed Ekhteyar Ali,** Director of the South Asian Language Program,

Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, is participating in the Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTL) Partnership. This project (a collaboration of the Big Ten Academic Alliance), funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, seeks to transform the way LCTLs are taught by leveraging cutting edge research and advances in instructional technology. Ali will be part the three-person team that will be developing materials for the teaching of Hindi. Ali is also participating in collaborations at U-M on language-learning that received two grants: the Gilbert Whitaker Fund for the Improvement of Teaching from U-M's Center for Research on Learning and Teaching; and a Level II Faculty Project Grant from LSA's Instructional Support Services (ISS).



**Mousumi Banerjee,** Research Professor at the School of Public Health, presented

"Analysis of Case-Control Studies at the Workshop on Quantitative Methods for Public Health Researchers from SAARC Countries" at the University of Calcutta in December 2016; and "Statistical Methods in Cancer Research" at the National Institute of Cancer Research and Hospital Workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Banerjee visited Bangladesh as part of a School of Public Health Dean's delegation to explore research, education, and scholar exchange opportunities. Additionally, Banerjee did outreach work at Pioneer High School to bring Rabindranath Tagore's music to high school students.



**Matthew Boulton,** Senior Associate Dean for Global Public Health at the School of

Public Health, in collaboration with the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education & Research, Chandigarh, received a small pilot grant from the Michigan Institute for Clinical & Health Research for validation of an anti-measles IgG assay using saliva samples from children and adolescents in Chandigarh, India. This work builds upon a previously awarded study in Chandigarh funded by the Trehan Foundation. Boulton published: "Have community health workers increased the delivery of maternal and child healthcare in India?" in the *Journal of Public Health*; and

"Application of the revised WHO Causality Assessment Protocol Following Immunization in India" in *Vaccine*.



**Leela Fernandes,** Glenda Dickerson Collegiate Professor of Women's Studies and Political

Science, has been conducting research for her book, *India's Liberalizing State: Urbanization, Inequality and Water Politics in India*. She published "Disciplinary Quandaries: A Meta-commentary on The Relationship Between Political Science and the Interdisciplinary Study of Asia," *Verge: Studies in Global Asias* (3.1, Spring 2017), and completed *Feminists Rethink the Neoliberal State: Inequality, Exclusion and Change* (New York University Press, forthcoming [2018]). Fernandes served as a member of the American Institute for Indian Studies and continues to serve as the South Asia editor of *Critical Asian Studies*.

**Ram Mahalingam,** Department of Psychology, was promoted in 2016–17 from Associate Professor



to Professor. Mahalingam was selected by the LSA Executive Committee for the 2017

John Dewey Award for his ongoing commitment to the education of undergraduate students. Winners of the Dewey award model the full range of John Dewey's own considerable talents: scholarly productivity, provision of leadership, and engagement with and care for students.



**Christi A. Merrill,** Associate Professor, Departments of Comparative Literature and Asian Lan-

guages and Cultures, was awarded a Michigan Humanities Award with sabbatical leave in 2016–17 to write her latest book project, *Genres of Real Life: Mediating Stories of Injustice Across Languages*. The book is based on research conducted in India in 2013-14, which was supported by a National Endowment for the Humanities/American Institute of Indian Studies Senior Fellowship. The book is linked to another current project: translating Kausalya Baisantriy's *Dohara Abhishap [Doubly Cursed]*, a Dalit woman's "life story" in Hindi that offers an eloquent protest against the discrimination Baisantriy experienced because of her (untouchable) caste and gender. As part of that work she has recently begun collaborating with Laura Brueck (Northwestern University) and John Vater (University of Iowa) to co-edit a special issue of *Words Without Borders* on activist literature translated from Hindi; and with Swarnim Khare (Asian Languages and Cultures) and the Language Resource Center to publish an accompanying digital archive of source materials for the Hindi classroom.



**Farina Mir,** Associate Professor, Department of History, was the recipient of the 2017

*Matthews Undergraduate Teaching Award* from the College of Literature, Science and the Arts. The award recognizes excellence in the teaching

of early undergraduate students, and was awarded for Mir's work with Paulina Alberto (Department of History) on the course, "History 101: What is History?" Mir gave public lectures at the Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies at U-M and the Dhar India Studies Program at Indiana University on her current research project, *Producing Modern Muslims: Everyday Ethics in Colonial India*. She also presented at the Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference. Mir completed her term on the Council of the American Historical Association and as Vice-President of the American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS). She continues to serve on the Board of Trustees of the American Institute for Indian Studies and the AIPS.



**Ritesh Mistry,** Assistant Professor of Health Behavior and Health Education at the

School of Public Health, received a National Institutes of Health research project grant for \$2.1M to complete a longitudinal study of adolescent tobacco use and tobacco control policy in India, working with the Healis Sekharia Institute for Public Health. Mistry published "Antenatal tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure in the home in India" in *Nicotine & Tobacco Research* (February, 2017).

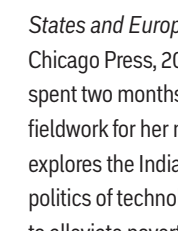


**Bhramar Mukherjee,** John D. Kalbfleisch Collegiate Professor of Biostatistics

in the School of Public Health, was awarded MCubed Diamond funding

to evaluate and track maternal and child health in rural villages in West Bengal in collaboration with the School of Information and University of Michigan Health System.

**Shobita Parthasarathy,** Associate Professor, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, recently published her second book, *Patent Politics: Life Forms, Markets, and the Public Interest in the United*



*States and Europe* (University of Chicago Press, 2017). Parthasarathy spent two months in India conducting fieldwork for her new project, which explores the Indian and international politics of technological interventions to alleviate poverty. An article from this research entitled "Grassroots Innovation Systems for a Post-Carbon World: Promoting Economic Democracy, Environmental Sustainability, and the Public Interest," is forthcoming in *Brooklyn Law Review*. University of Michigan's Institute for Research on Women and Gender has provided a seed grant to support development of this project.



**Stephen Rush,** Professor of Performing Arts Technology at the School of

Music, Theatre & Dance (SOMTD), led the Summer Program in India (study of music/yoga/dance), a month-long opportunity for students from U-M to go to India that has been in place for a decade now. Over 130 students from SOMTD have gone to Mysore, India with Professor Stephen Rush to

study music and dance, one-on-one, in the homes of professional music and dance gurus, specially selected by Dr. Rush for this program. Students perform a final concert in India at the end of the program, then perform at the School of Music upon their return. The host organization for the program (in Mysore) is the Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement, voted the "#1 NGO in India in 2016."



**Mrinalini Sinha,** Alice Freeman Palmer Professor, Department of History, spent the

2016-17 academic year as the Helmut Stern Fellow at U-M's Institute for the Humanities, working on her third monograph, *Complete Political Independence: The Strange Genealogy of a Nationalist Indian Demand*. Sinha was also Visiting Professor at the Centre for Historical Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi. She gave lectures at several institutions, including Ambedkar University (Delhi) and the University of Glasgow. Her essay, "Nations in an Imperial Crucible," in *Gender and Empire: The Oxford History of the British Empire Companion Series* (Oxford University Press, 2004), was recently translated to Greek in the volume *Φύλο και αυτοκρατορία* (2017). Sinha also completed a four-year term on the Executive Board of the Association for Asian Studies (AAS), which included, among other things, the finalization of the AAS-in-Asia Conference in Delhi in summer 2018.



## New South Asia Faculty



**Savithry Namboodiripad** will join U-M this fall as a Collegiate Postdoctoral Fellow in the College of Literature, Sciences, and the Arts and the National Center for Institutional Diversity. In fall 2019, she will begin a tenure-track position in the U-M Linguistics Department. Namboodiripad's research interests include language contact, language use in post-colonial societies and immigrant communities, and language emergence and change. She completed her PhD in 2017 from University of California, San Diego. In her PhD thesis, she conducted field experiments in Kerala, India, measuring variation in Malayalam word order. She is interested in how language use and contact can lead to language change, focusing on how use of English is resulting in changes to Malayalam phonology, lexicon, and syntax. Future work will investigate the relationship between language use and language structure by comparing immigrant speech communities to different communities of Malayalam-speakers in India. A native speaker of Malayalam who grew up in Minnesota, Savi received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Linguistics from the University of Chicago. She is looking forward to returning to the Midwest after her time in Southern California.



**Meha Jain** is an Assistant Professor in the School for Environment and Sustainability and is also part of the Sustainable Food Systems Initiative at the University of Michigan. Jain's research examines the impacts of environmental change on agricultural production and strategies that farmers adopt to reduce negative impacts. Her work combines remote sensing of satellite imagery and geospatial analyses with household-level and census datasets to examine farmer decision-making and behavior across large spatial and temporal scales. To date her work has focused on the impacts of weather variability and groundwater depletion on agricultural production in India, and whether smallholder farmers are able to adapt their cropping practices to mitigate these impacts. Jain currently has several ongoing projects related to sustainable agriculture in India, including: (1) examining the impacts of more efficient fertilizer use in Bihar; (2) identifying the impacts of warming temperatures on wheat yields across the Indo-Gangetic Plains (IGP) and how farmers may be able to adapt to reduce negative impacts; and (3) the effects of groundwater depletion on agricultural production in the IGP and how farmers are adapting to falling water tables.

### #exstrange Rebekah Modrak

**#exstrange** was an online curatorial project generating a collection of artworks meant to be encountered, auction-style, by the users of eBay. The artists creating the artworks-as-auctions on #exstrange used the eBay interface and listing template as the tool of production for their work. Launched on January 15, 2017, #exstrange presented a new artwork-as-auction each day until April 8, 2017. The project is the creation of Rebekah Modrak, U-M Stamps School of Art & Design and Marialaura Ghidini, a curator who teaches at the Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology in Bangalore, India. All #exstrange works are archived online at [exstrange.com](http://exstrange.com). A book documenting was published in July 2017 by Maize Books, with support from the Center for South Asian Studies.



U-M Participants in San Juan, Puerto Rico. From L-R: Andrew Walker, Alana Rodríguez, Dan Cameron, Zehra Hashmi, Samuel Farris, Ellen Myers, Sriram Mohan, Karin Tice, William Thomson, Juan Cole

## Building South Asian Curriculum in K-12 Education

Dan Cameron

The Center for South Asian Studies co-sponsored two major curriculum outreach programs this year—The World History & Literature Initiative (WHaLI) and the UM-University of Puerto Rico Symposium.

The aim of these programs is to connect experts in world area studies with K-12 teachers to build a more global curriculum. Teachers who attended either program were given access to a resource bank compiled over the past years, including videos, photos, presentation slides, databases, and other resources suggestions by area studies experts.

The 11th World History & Literature Initiative (WHaLI) Conference was held at the University of Michigan's School of Education on June 21-23, 2017. Titled "Resistance & Rebellion in World History & Literature," the conference drew participation of over 40 teachers from the local area, Chicago, and Puerto Rico. The conference was partially funded by Title VI federal grants and is a collaborative project between the School of Education and the five National Resource Centers in the International Institute. Presentations on South Asia were made by Farina Mir (History), who spoke on "Gandhi and His Historical Significance," and by Zehra Hashmi (Anthropology and History), who spoke on "Feminist Resistance to Military Dictatorship in Pakistan."

The third annual UM-University of Puerto Rico Symposium focused on "Citizenship & Identity in the Classroom," and was held at the University of Puerto Rico on March 2-3, 2017. The symposium featured presentations by scholars from various disciplines, with expertise on different areas of the world and historical periods. The conference sought to create a space in which faculty and graduate students from the University of Michigan and the University of Puerto Rico could share the innovative and diverse ways in which they are studying the concept of citizenship with over 45 teachers and teacher candidates from San Juan, Puerto Rico and surrounding areas. South Asia content was provided to the group by Sriram Mohan (Department of Communication Studies), who spoke on "The Photoshop State: Image Manipulation, Visual Culture and Electoral Politics in Digital India," and Zehra Hashmi (Program in Anthropology and History), who gave a talk entitled, "Biometric Belonging: Identification and Security in Urban Pakistan."

## Teach-in: Disappeared Activists in Pakistan

Salman A. Hussain

On January 16, 2017, South Asia Solidarity in Michigan (SASMi)—a network of graduate students at the University of Michigan—and the Center for South Asian Studies hosted a teach-in on the disappearances of activists and bloggers in Pakistan. Between January 4-7, 2017, four Pakistani bloggers and an activist went missing: Salman Haider (poet, actor, playwright, writer, and a lecturer at the Fatimah Jinnah University in Rawalpindi); Ahmed Waqas Goraya (medical anthropologist); Aasim Saeed (IT specialist); Ahmed Naseer Raza (shopkeeper); and Samar Abbas (rights activist, and President of Civil Progressive Alliance Pakistan). Haider, Goraya, Saeed, and Raza had each been involved in online activity. At the time of the teach-in, all were unaccounted for, however all were returned to their homes one month after their abduction.

The teach-in began with Salman A. Hussain (Program in Anthropology and History) providing an overview of the specific cases of the five disappeared activists/bloggers, and a brief history of the blasphemy law that was mobilized in the Pakistani media to malign these activists after their disappearance. Farina Mir (History) described the vibrant culture of dissent in urban Pakistan, the particularities of the spaces of dissent, and how the crackdown on web activism in urban areas presented a troubling new development in the history of state-civil society relations in Pakistan. Zehra Hashmi (Program in Anthropology and History) discussed what the implications of the disappearances and the securitization of cyber-spaces for intellectual and political freedom in Pakistan and elsewhere. The discussion that followed these three presentations was enriched by Bruno Renero's (Program in Anthropology and History) comments on enforced disappearances in Latin America. The teach-in addressed the specificity of enforced disappearances and the victimization of political activists in Pakistan, while also placing these issues in a global context of the increasing repression of dissent.

## Being Brown in Trump's America: A Roundtable on Hate Crimes Against South Asians in the United States

Salman A. Hussain

In the aftermath of a racially-motivated shooting that killed one Indian-American and wounded another in February, 2017, the Center for South Asian Studies co-sponsored a roundtable discussion on the political climate for South Asians in the United States. Organized by two U-M student organizations, Tricontinental Solidarity Network (Tricon) and South Asia Solidarity in Michigan (SASMi), the roundtable was held on March 20, 2017. Panelists included Manan Desai (American Culture), Hafsa Kanjwal (History & Women's Studies), Salman A. Hussain (History & Anthropology), and Shama Lakdawala (Chai Tea Party). Discussion was moderated by Tapsi Mathur (History).

In introductory remarks, Hussain presented a brief sketch of the post-9/11 escalation in hate crimes against South Asian Americans, and connected this history to the immigration-related state measures that target them. He then argued that the term "South Asian" ought not elide the many differences that exist among South Asian communities and individuals, urging that South Asian-American solidarity be based on the acknowledgement of these differences. Kanjwal focused her comments on growing up as a Muslim South Asian woman in the US. She connected the post 9/11 increase in Islamophobia and state surveillance targeting Muslims to US foreign policy. She also highlighted some of the political postures and positions Muslim-Americans have adopted in this context. Desai deepened the discussion by historicizing contemporary events by talking about three moments: the Asiatic Barred Zone Act of 1917, the Bhagat Singh Thind case of the early twentieth century, and the late-twentieth century wave of anti-South-Asian violence known as "dot-busting". Lakdawala, a South Asian cultural and media activist spoke about the shockwaves of Trump's election. These brief comments were followed by a robust discussion.

## FLAS Fellowship Awards

The CSAS is pleased to announce that 10 undergraduates and 6 graduate students have been awarded Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships for the 2017-18 academic year. The Center for South Asian Studies offers FLAS awards in Bengali, Hindi, Punjabi, and Urdu.

### UNDERGRADUATES

- Hanisha Arora** (Hindi) Sophomore, Computer Science and Data Science Major
- Ruchica Chandnani** (Hindi) Junior, Biopsychology, Cognition, and Neuroscience Major
- Vaidehi Dongre** (Hindi), Senior International Studies Major
- Sara Farooqui** (Urdu) Sophomore, Intended Chemical Science Major
- Shreya Gangal** (Hindi) Junior, Business Major
- Ibrahim Ijaz** (Urdu) Senior, Public Policy Major
- Tarana Joshi** (Hindi) Junior, Asian Studies Major
- Syeda Mahmood** (Urdu) Senior, Sociology Major
- Shriya Suresh** (Hindi) Junior, Gender and Health Major
- Rohan Wagle** (Hindi) Junior, Computer Science Major

### GRADUATE STUDENTS

- Shahla Farghadani** (Urdu) is a PhD student in the Near Eastern Studies Department.
- William Hall** (Persian) is pursuing a Master's degree in South Asian Studies from the Center for South Asian Studies.
- Rachel Hirsch** (Hindi) is pursuing a Master's degree in South Asian Studies from the Center for South Asian Studies.
- Salman A. Hussain** (Hindi) is a PhD student in the Interdepartmental Program in Anthropology and History.
- Sierra LaPoint** (Hindi) is pursuing a Master's degree in South Asian Studies from the Center for South Asian Studies.
- Janaki Phillips** (Hindi) is a PhD student in the Department of Anthropology.



# Graduate Student News

## 2017 GRADUATES

**Harjeet Singh Grewal** is currently finalizing his dissertation, “Re-reading the Janamsākhī,” for submission in



August 2017, when he will receive his PhD from the Department of Asian Languages and

Cultures. In it, he argues that, contrary to popular understanding of the *janamsākhī* as a form of biography or hagiography of Sikhism’s founder, Gurū Nānak, the *janamsākhī* constitutes an exegesis of Sikh scripture (*Sī Gurū Granth Sahib*, or SGGGS). By reading intertextually between the *janamsākhī* and the SGGGS, Grewal’s work offers new interpretations of this genre, in which he shows that Nānak’s philosophy posits a form of non-oppositional being, unaffected by notions of identity and difference, that could help us approach issues of pluralism and diversity even today.



**Sara Hakeem Grewal** is an Assistant Professor of World Literature in the

Department of English at MacEwan University in Edmonton, Canada. She was awarded a PhD by the Department of Comparative Literature in 2016. Her dissertation, “Urdu Through Its Others: Ghazal, Canonization, and Translation,” examines the codification of Urdu language and literature around a highly popular form of poetry called the ghazal. By analyzing both academic scholarship and popular narratives that link the ghazal to proximate literatures and

languages—including Hindi, English, and Persian—Grewal argues that the boundaries of the Urdu language itself are constituted and reified via comparison and translation.

**Hafsa Kanjwal** received a PhD from the joint program in History and Women’s Studies in August 2017.



Her dissertation, “Building a New Kashmir: Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad and the Politics of State-Formation in a Disputed Territory (1953–63),” examines the state-building practices of the early postcolonial Kashmiri state in the aftermath of its disputed accession to India. Hafsa will be joining Lafayette College in Fall 2017 as Assistant Professor of South Asian History.



**Jane Lynch** graduated in December 2016 with a PhD in Anthropology. Her doctoral

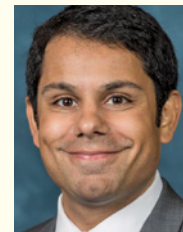
dissertation is entitled, “The Good of Cloth: Bringing Ethics to Market in India’s Handloom Textile Industry.” It traces the history, networks, and corporate projects of the Delhi-based company *Fabindia*—the largest private retailer of craft in India—as they intersect with regimes of property, efforts to support rural livelihoods, and the interests and ambitions of middlemen (*seths*) and weavers who produce cloth sold in *Fabindia* stores. With the support of an Engaged Anthropology Grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation, Lynch is currently working with local weavers to collaboratively design

and execute a “pop-up” exhibition in Chanderi, a historic weaving town in Madhya Pradesh. Lynch was a Visiting Scholar at the American Academy in Rome in 2016-2017, and continues to be affiliated with CSAS as a Research Scholar.



**John Mathias’** dissertation, “Contentious Ethics: Creativity and Persuasion Among

Environmental Organizers in South India” is an ethnographic study of activists in Kerala’s “people’s struggles,” a mode of grassroots community organizing primarily concerned with the impacts of industrial pollution, land rights, and other environmental conflicts. The study follows activists as they transform their own ethical lives—learning protest songs, going to marches instead of going to work, or giving up tea and Western medicine—and also as they attempt to persuade others with magazine articles, roadside speeches, and guided tours of pollution. Describing the entanglements of changing oneself and changing others in people’s struggle activism, Mathias attempts to attempt to push beyond binaries between freedom and determinism in ethical life, arguing for the importance of various “unfreedoms” in even the most strategic, norm-contesting ethical projects. He received his PhD from the Department of Anthropology and the School of Social Work in Spring 2017. In August 2017, Mathias will join the Florida State University College of Social Work as an assistant professor, where he looks forward to conducting further scholarship on politics, community organizing, and the environment in India.



**Alexander Persaud** won the New Researcher Prize at the 2017 Economic History Society

conference at Royal Holloway, University of London for his paper, “Risk Mitigation and Selection under Forward Contracts: Nineteenth-Century Indian Indentureship.” His paper focuses on out-migration under indentureship as a means of insuring against economic fluctuation. Persaud’s larger research agenda encompasses both historical and contemporary migration within and out of South Asia. He completed his dissertation, “Three Essays in the Economics of Migration”, and received his PhD from the Department of Economics this spring and will start as an Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of North Carolina at Asheville in the fall.

## CONTINUING STUDENTS



**Farida Begum,** Phd Candidate in the Department of History, spent 2016–17

in Kolkata conducting research. Her research was supported by a Fulbright fellowship and the Rackham International Research Award. Her dissertation, “Ties that Bind, Ties that Break: the World of Bengali Women’s Friendships”, examines the social world of Bengali women in the twentieth century, with an emphasis on everyday experiences of sociality and friendship. She will be continuing her research in Dhaka in Fall 2017.

**Zehra Hashmi,** a PhD candidate in the Program in Anthropology and



History, received the Social Science Research Council’s International Dissertation Research Fellowship, Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research Dissertation Fieldwork Grant, and the National Science Foundation’s Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant for her dissertation. Hashmi will be in Pakistan conducting research during the 2017-18 academic year.



**Leslie Hempson,** a PhD candidate in the Department of History, is completing her dissertation, “Making the Khadi Economy: A Political Economy of Non-Violence for Twentieth-Century India.” She will be teaching a course in the History Department in Fall 2017 on Islam and Muslim communities in the Indian Ocean World.



**Randeep Hothi,** a PhD candidate in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, was awarded the Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship from The Woodrow Wilson Foundation for his project titled “Global Disseminations of Sikhism: An Ethnographic Study of Sikh Television Production in Punjab.”



**Swarnim Khare** is a PhD student in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures.

Her PhD project focuses on nonfiction accounts of imprisonment produced by political prisoners in India. Her work is concerned with the way the Indian state responds to figures who challenge mainstream political discourse, and how this dynamic is chronicled within accounts written in Urdu, Hindi and English. Khare spent the summer of 2017 in Lucknow and New Delhi, working as a Research Assistant for Christi Merrill (Comparative Literature; Asian Languages and Cultures), to create an archive of Hindi Dalit literature connected to the Translation Networks digital projects.



**Sriram Mohan** is a PhD student in the Communication Studies program. His dissertation

examines how digital media technology and culture entwine to transform what it means to ‘do’ politics in South Asia today. He is currently engaged in preliminary ethnographic fieldwork in Chennai and Bangalore on the use of mobile payment apps in the aftermath of demonetization in India. Mohan is co-editing a volume on global media and digital culture in South Asia with Aswin Punathambekar (Communication Studies). The volume stems from the conference, “Digital South Asia,” sponsored by the CSAS in Fall 2015.



**Janaki Phillips** is a doctoral student in the Department of Anthropology. This summer

Phillips began doing preliminary research for her dissertation project in Himachal Pradesh. Her summer project investigated encounters with British ghosts and local spirits in the Shimla hills through the lenses of memory, colonialism, enchantment and the supernatural. In addition to her research, Phillips received a summer FLAS award for Hindi at AIIS’s program in Jaipur, as well as an academic year FLAS award for Hindi for 2017-18.



**Sangita Saha** is a PhD student in the Joint Program in History and Women’s Studies. Saha is

interested in exploring daily domestic practices and new family relationships produced in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Bengali households. She received an International Institute Individual Fellowship for summer archival research in India. She was also awarded a Community of Scholars fellowship for summer 2017 by the Institute for Research on Women and Gender.



**Matt Schissler** is a PhD student in the Department of Anthropology. His dissertation

research seeks to understand shifts in the organization of violence and vul-

nerability for Indians in Burma since the late colonial era. In Summer 2017, he completed a second period of archival research in the British Library in London, supported by the Islamic Studies Program and a Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant. Also during the summer, he and colleagues in Burma and at St. Antony’s College, Oxford, neared completion of an 18-month project in gathering oral histories of inter-religious life across the country. In 2017-18 he will be preparing for field research and preliminary exams, supported by an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship.



**Syed Abdul Akbar Shah** is a visiting graduate student in Anthropology at the

University of Michigan, writing his dissertation “Practices and Perceptions of Bureaucratic Corruption: An Ethnographic Study of Land Revenue Administration in Pakistan.” He is interested in a detailed description of how the *Patwar* system which is notoriously perceived as corrupt works today and how bureaucratic structure and procedures, state policies and socio-political and economic organization of post-colonial *Pakhtun* society facilitate and create room for corruption in Pakistani bureaucracy. Syed is the recipient of a four-year Split-PhD Scholarship under the faculty development program of Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad, Pakistan.



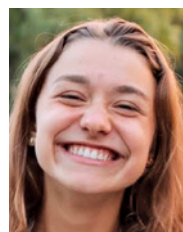
# Summer in South Asia Fellows 2017

**Organized in 2006** with a generous donation from an anonymous donor, the Summer in South Asia Undergraduate Fellowship (SiSA) has provided 83 students with funding for research and internships in India. Please join us on October 6th for the Summer in South Asia Symposium or visit the blog ([sisa2017.iislsa.umich.edu](http://sisa2017.iislsa.umich.edu)) to learn more about the 2017 SiSA fellows' time in India.



**Natalie Andrasko** is a senior with a major in International Studies and minors in Program

in the Environment and Asian Languages and Cultures. Natalie spent two months interning with Frontier Markets in Jaipur, Rajasthan where she researched how Frontier Markets addresses rural electrification by partnering with local entrepreneurs and training rural women to sell their solar products to other women in a program called Solar Sahelis.



**Marianne Drysdale** is a sophomore with an intended major in Public Policy with minors in

Community Action & Social Change and Gender & Health. Marianne was in New Delhi at Prajna, an NGO devoted to enriching the lives of children through art, dance, and meditation programs. Marianne's final project explored how creative activities benefit children living in conditions of need.

**Addison Kamb** is a senior double-majoring in Biology and Creative Writing & Literature. She was in Dharamshala working for Lha Chari-



table Trust, the largest organization serving the Tibetan refugees living in the area. Addison

served as a contributing writer to their magazine along with teaching English and leading conversation classes. Her final research project investigated the role of Buddhism and culture in the everyday lives of the refugees she worked with.



**Christopher Olson** is a junior planning to major in Political Science and minor in Community

Action and Social Change. Chris conducted independent research on urban planning, examining the master plans of Bangalore and Amritsar to learn what values are motivating planning in the two respective cities and why those motivations are present.



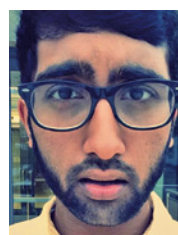
**Jo Ellen Pellman** is a senior majoring in Musical Theatre and minoring in Creative Writing.

Jo Ellen was in Mumbai volunteering for Khula Aasman, an organization dedicated to blending expressive arts therapies with social change. She facilitated creative theatre workshops with various communities across Mumbai, including women in incarceration and women in trafficking. Jo Ellen's final project focuses on the immediate emotional effects of the workshops on the participants and what forms of art therapy resonated with them the most.



**Caroline Richburg** is a junior studying Biomolecular Science and Anthropology. Caroline was

in Mumbai with the Foundation for Mother and Child Health (FMCH), an organization focused on individualized care for malnourished infants, community education, and support for local mothers. Caroline's project explores what is meant by the term "actionable knowledge," as used by stakeholders, and the uniformity of knowledge dissemination to local clinics.



**Neel Swamy** is a senior studying Neuroscience with a minor in Gender & Health. Neel interned

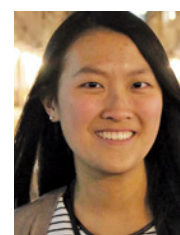
with Swasti on the Avahan India AIDS Initiative, an HIV prevention and health resource centre in Bangalore that focuses on structurally and systematically addressing the health needs of marginalized populations, initiated by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Neel's project focuses on the ways in which the initiative have proven to be successful and how Swasti has empowered individuals through community engagement.



**Neha Tiwari** is a senior with a major in International Studies and a minor in Biochemistry.

Neha was in Goa working with Sangath, an NGO dedicated to improving health by empowering existing community resources to provide appropriate physical, psychological, and social

therapies. Neha's research explores the integration of community-based lay counseling in a traditional mental health treatment program.



**Coleen Truong** is a junior pursuing a dual-degree in Business Administration and Biopsy-

chology, Cognition, and Neuroscience. Coleen was in Hyderabad with Family Planning Association of India, an organization dedicated to providing quality reproductive health information and services through educational and clinical services. Coleen's project focuses on examining the socio-cultural and operational challenges affecting the sustainability of a family planning and reproductive health clinic in India.



**Vijay Vobilisetty** is a junior majoring in Biomedical Engineering. He interned at inStem,

an autonomous research institute in Bangalore. Vijay studied disease modeling techniques to bridge the gap in our understanding of the molecular mechanisms underlying inherited cardiomyopathies by analyzing the effects of certain genetic mutations on the physiology and function of cardiomyocytes, muscle cells that compose heart tissue.

## Ousted Maldives President's Struggle for Environmental Justice and Democracy

Nataša Gruden-Alajbegović and Bryna Worner

**The Center for South Asian Studies** co-sponsored a visit by President Mohamed Nasheed, the first democratically elected president in the history of the Maldives, on March 6, 2017. "The Island President's Struggle for Democracy and Environmental Justice in the Maldives," sponsored by the Donia Human Rights Center, featured President Nasheed (in office from 2008–2012) along with renowned international human rights lawyer, Jared Genser, and U-M Associate Professor of Natural Resources and Environment, Rebecca Hardin. The panel, moderated by Donia Human Rights Center director and U-M associate professor of sociology Kiyoteru Tsutsui, examined how global challenges of climate change, environmental justice, human rights, and democracy converged in the Maldives, and explored possible ways forward as the next presidential election in the Maldives looms in 2018. Currently in exile in London, President Nasheed is planning to participate in these upcoming elections.

## Library News

### Access to "East India Company" Archive

Jeff Martin

**The University of Michigan Library**, with the support of the CSAS, recently purchased a new database from Adam Matthew called the East India Company. This digital resource allows students and researchers to access a vast and remarkable collection of primary source documents from the India Office Records held by the British Library, the single most important archive for the study of the East India Company. The manuscript records included in this database consist of over 1.2 million pages of digitized content. If there are any questions concerning the database please feel free to contact the South Asian Librarian, Jeff Martin ([jeffmart@umich.edu](mailto:jeffmart@umich.edu)).

## CSAS Supports SAADA

**The Center for South Asian Studies** supported a collaboration between the South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA) and the Department of American Culture in summer 2017. SAADA is an independent national non-profit organization working to create a more inclusive society by giving voice to South Asian Americans. It does this by documenting, preserving, and sharing stories that highlight their unique and diverse experiences.

Tizarat Gill, an LSA senior, worked with Manan Desai (Communication Studies; and a member of SAADA's Academic Council) to develop the SAADA collection by examining archival materials at U-M, particularly those in the Labadie Collection and the Bentley Library. Gill is currently translating Punjabi materials in the SAADA collection which date back to the 1940s. Together, Gill and Desai are planning to co-author a piece for SAADA about Hucheshwar Mudgal, a migrant from Karnataka who became the editor of *The Negro World* in the 1920s and worked closely with Marcus Garvey.



## HOW TO MAKE A GIFT

**OUR CENTER DEPENDS** upon your generosity. If you would like to make a gift you may do so online by going to our website at: [ii.umich.edu/csas](http://ii.umich.edu/csas) and clicking on the "Give Online" button.

You may also call the Gift Help Hotline from Monday through Friday, any time between 8 am and 5 pm:

**1-888-518-7888**

Thank you for considering a gift to the **CENTER FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES!**



# CSAS Lecture Series 2017-18

**September 8, 2017**

**Vikramaditya Khanna**, *University of Michigan School of Law*

Changes in Dowry Practices?: Insights on Dowry and Its Regulation

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**September 21, 2017**

**P. Sainath**, *People's Archive of Rural India*

Telling the stories of 833 million Indians in the digital age: The People's Archive of Rural India

4pm • North Quad Space 2435

**September 22-23, 2017**

**Seeking Social Justice in South Asia Conference**

**September 29, 2017**

**Ronit Ricci**, *Department of Asian Studies, Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

Sarandib, Lanka, Ceylon: Banishment and Belonging

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**October 6, 2017**

**Summer in South Asia Fellowship Symposium**

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**October 11, 2017**

**Mohsin Hamid**

Exit West: A Novel

4:30pm • Rackham Amphitheatre

**October 13, 2017**

**Farhana Ibrahim**, *Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi*

Marriage, 'Trafficking' and the Transnational Family: Moral and Legal Regulation of Nineteenth Century Women's Mobility in the Western Indian Ocean

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**October 20, 2017**

**Veena Das**, *Department of Anthropology, Johns Hopkins University*

Inordinate Knowledge: Intimacy and Publicity in a Slum in Delhi

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**November 2, 2017**

**Iffat Fatima**, *Filmmaker*

Film Screening and discussion of *Khoon di Baarav* (*Blood Leaves its Trail*)

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall



**November 6, 2017**

**Thirumalachari Ramasami**

Policy Talks at the Ford School

4pm • Annenberg Auditorium

**November 13, 2017**

**Ranjani Mazumdar**, *School of Arts & Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University*

The Highway, Automobility and New Promises in 1960s Bombay Cinema

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**November 17, 2017**

**Nathan Tabor**, *Department of History, Western Michigan University*

Eating the Audience's Brain: Persianate Sociability in 18th-Century Delhi's Poetry Salons

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**December 1, 2017**

**Chitrallekha Zutshi**, *Department of History, College of William & Mary*

Self and the World in a Life Narrative: Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah's Aatish-i-Chinar

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**December 8, 2017**

**Kajri Jain**, *Department of Visual Studies, University of Toronto*

"Minimum Government, Maximum Governance": Modi's Statue of Unity and the Sense of Scale

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**January 8, 2018**

**Nayanjot Lahiri**, *Ashoka University*

India's Archaeological Heritage Since Independence: Challenges and Dilemmas

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**February 2, 2018**

**Asher Ghertner**, *Department of Geography, Rutgers University*

Atmospheric Citizenship: Distributions of Life in the Wake of Delhi's Airpocalypse

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**February 16, 2018**

**S.V. Srinivas**, *Azim Premji University*

Reactive Viewing: Screens and Publics in 21st Century India

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**March 9, 2018**

**Sanjay Muttoo and Saman Habib**

Lucknow in Letters: Endeavors, Achievements, and Tragedies

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**March 30, 2018**

**Munis Faruqui**, *Department of South & South-east Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley*

The Rise of the Imperial Eunuchate under Emperor Aurangzeb, 1658-1707

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall

**April 6, 2018**

**8th Annual UM-Pakistan Conference**

**April 13, 2018**

**Amita Baviskar**, *Institute of Economic Growth, University of Delhi*

Consumer Citizenship: The Social Life of Industrial Foods in India

4pm • Room 110 • Weiser Hall