



**CENTER FOR  
SOUTH ASIAN  
STUDIES**

**Indian Ambassador  
Ronen Sen to  
Visit Michigan**

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# From the Director

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
**Center for South Asian Studies**  
 Fall Lectures 2008

Friday 9/12

**ANSHU MALHOTRA**

*Abduction, Conversion, and a Scandal in Mid-Nineteenth Century Punjab: Religious Conflict and Syncretistic Culture in Peero's 160 Kafis*

Thursday 9/25

**AAMIR MUFTI**

3222 Angell Hall, 12-2pm  
*Orientalism and the Institution of World Literatures*

Friday 9/26

**SALONI MATHUR**

*Contemporary Indian Art and the War in Iraq: On Vivan Sundaram's Engine Oil Work*

Friday 10/24

**THOMAS BLOM HANSEN**

*The Unwieldy Fetish: Desire and Disavowal of Indianness in South Africa*

Friday 10/31

**K.(SHIVI) SIVARAMAKRISHNAN**

*Nature, Nationalism, and Public Intellectualism in India*

Friday 11/7 • **ARINDAM DUTTA**

*Calcutta Coefficients: Styles of State-Building, Styles of Computations*

Friday 11/14

**JAWED ASHRAF**

*Democratic Relations: India and the US in an Age of Economic Cooperation*

Friday 12/5

**SANJAY KAK**

*Screening of documentary "Jashn-e-Azadi" and post screening discussion*

Unless otherwise noted, all events held at 4:00pm in Room 1636 of the International Institute/School of Social Work building located at 1080 South University.

CSAS website: [www.ii.umich.edu/csas](http://www.ii.umich.edu/csas)

*Dear Friends and Colleagues:*

This Fall we kick off a vigorous new year of programming at the Center, with a range of talks, performances, initiatives, film screenings, and fellowship competitions suited to the wide variety of interests held by all of you. Thinking about recent world events, it strikes me that variable formats for discussing and learning about South Asia have perhaps never been more urgently needed than they are now. In the last several months, multiple suicide bombs have been directed at government targets in the border areas of South Asia that for years now have witnessed all-out—if vaguely defined—war; even more dramatically, civilian populations have been targeted by bomb attacks in middle-class districts of Delhi, Jaipur, Islamabad, and other cities where those kinds of attacks have previously been extremely rare. Pakistani territory has been unilaterally declared part of the US military's theatre of operations, despite protests from a newly emergent government in Islamabad attempting to defend their country's territorial sovereignty. In Nepal, the monarchy has been thrown out and a new government, headed by a Maoist party, has

been resoundingly ushered in. A domino-like string of failures in the US's investment banking and insurance sectors has revealed once again (with great clarity) both the interconnectedness of financial systems worldwide, and the importance of insuring our economies—including, importantly, the economies of South Asia—against the vicissitudes of corporate greed and inequitable multi-national economic agreements and governance structures. The upcoming presidential elections in the United States will have an impact on the way each of these developments is perceived, both at home and abroad, and on the styles and goals of engagement that will emerge between the US and South Asian governments and peoples.

Thinking through these and other events, and through the many ways they foreground US/South Asia interconnectedness in the present, is a central task for the scholars, activists, and concerned citizens who form the "community" at the core of our Center. Several events planned for the upcoming year approach that task directly. Among them, I would highlight in particular the October 22 visit by His

Excellency Ronen Sen, Indian Ambassador to the United States, to discuss US/India relations; and also the inauguration of the Trehan India Initiative at the University of Michigan's first theme year, "State, Space, and Citizenship: Indian Cities in the Global Era," beginning in early January. There are many other rich topics to be explored this year, and many extraordinary scholars and performers coming to the Center to explore them with us. You will find a calendar of these and other upcoming activities in the pages of this newsletter. At the start of a new academic year, let me just convey how much I and all of the staff members at CSAS consider it our privilege to help make these opportunities possible. It is also our privilege to join with you in a mutual effort to build knowledge about, and share the richness of, South Asian societies and cultures as an integral part of our lives here at UM. I hope I will see many of you often this year; as always, all of our events are free and open to the public.



Will Glover

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Cover photo by Hyunmin Han

# Faculty News

## FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

**Arun Agrawal**, Professor, School of Natural Resources & Environment

Agrawal, A. and A. Chhatre. 2008. "Forest Commons and Local Enforcement." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*

Agrawal, A., A. Chhatre and R. Hardin. 2008. "Changing Governance of the World's Forests." *Science* Vol. 320, (issue 5882, June 13): 1460-62

Agrawal, A. 2008. "Patronage or Participation? Community-based Natural Resource Management Reforms in Sub-Saharan Africa." *Development and Change*.

**Tom Fricke**, Professor of Anthropology

Fricke, Tom. 2008. "Tamang Conversions: Culture, Politics, and the Christian Conversion Narrative in Nepal." *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*.

Fricke, Tom. 2008. "Working Selves, Moral Selves: Crafting the Good Person in the Northern Plains." In Elizabeth Rudd and Lara Descartes, eds., *The Changing Landscape of Work and Family in the American Middle Class: Reports from the Field*: 17-39. Lexington Books.

Fricke, T. and B. Hoey. 2007. "From Sweet Potatoes to God Almighty: Roy Rappaport on Being a Hedgehog." *American Ethnologist* 34(3): 581-599.

**William J. Glover**, Associate Professor of Architecture, Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning

Glover, William J. 2007. "Construing Urban Space as 'Public' in Colonial India: Some Notes from Punjab." *Journal of Punjab Studies* 14.2 : 211-224.

**Stewart Gordon**, Research Scholar at the Center for South Asian Studies

*When Asia was the World*. 2008. Da Capo Press.

Gordon, Stewart. 2008. "Epistemologies Concerning the Past in Maharashtra." In Jha, D. N. and Eugenia Vanina, eds., *India: Studies in Medieval Mentality*. Tulika Publishers.

Gordon, Stewart. 2008. "A Tale of Three Cities: Burhanpur 1400 – 1800." In Kenneth Hall, ed., *Secondary Cities and Urban Networking in the Indian Ocean Realm*, c. 1400-1800. Lexington Books.

Gordon, Stewart. 2008. "Suitable Luxury" *Aramco World* (Sept.-Oct.).

Gordon, Stewart. 2008. "Social Networking in pre-Modern Asian History." *IIAS Newsletter* (#48).

**Christi A. Merrill**, Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature and Assistant Professor of Asian Languages and Cultures

Two related books published by Fordham University Press, New York: *Riddles of Belonging: India in Translation and Other Tales of Possession* and *A Straw Epic and Other Stories*, a translation of the stories of Vijay dan Detha, co-published with Katha Press in New Delhi.

**Robert M. Stern**, Professor of Economics and Public Policy, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

Barua, A. and Robert M. Stern (eds.). 2008. *The WTO and India: Issues and Negotiating Strategies*. Orient Longman, New Delhi.

## FACULTY HONORS

**Arun Agrawal** was promoted to Full Professor in the School of Natural Resources & Environment.

**Ram Mahalingam**, Associate Professor of Psychology, College of Literature, Science and the Arts and Assistant Research Scientist, Institute for Research on Women and Gender.

Ram has been chosen to receive the "Class of 1923 Memorial Teaching Award." This is a prize from LSA which recognizes the best teacher among the group of faculty being promoted to tenure for the year. The letter from Dean Terry McDonald particularly notes the skill with which Ram teaches classes that cover controversial and difficult topics such as gender, social class, immigration, etc. The reviews and notes of acclaim from his

students paint a picture of a dedicated and skilled teacher.

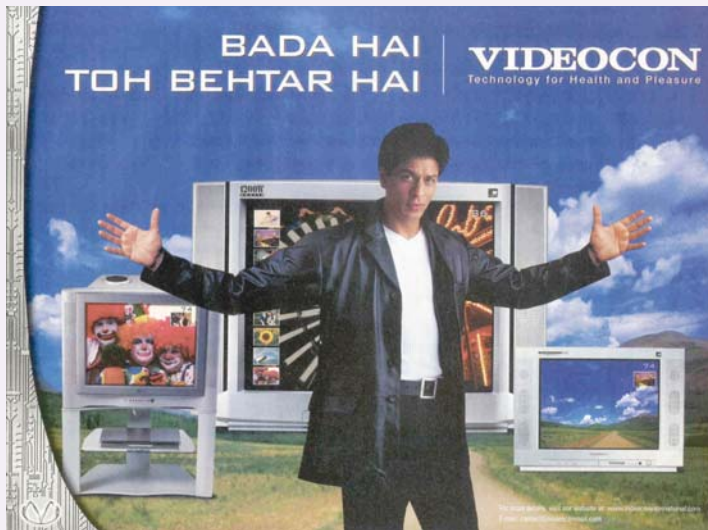
## SPOTLIGHT ON FACULTY RESEARCH

**Aradhna Krishna**, Isadore and Leon Winkelman Professor of Marketing, Ross School of Business

Several countries in Asia (e.g., Singapore, Japan, and India), Europe (e.g., Holland, Belgium, and many West European nations), North America (e.g., United States) and North Africa (e.g., Morocco, Algeria, Chad, Tunisia), have bilingual populations. Many of these populations are fairly fluent in a "foreign" language (typically English or French) as well as at least one local or native language. Advertising to these populations includes an additional layer of complexity, i.e., the choice of language for advertising. A number of options exist: the advertisements could be in either one of the primary languages or could have a bilingual format, containing a mixture of the two languages (e.g., Spanglish, Hinglish or Singlish which combine English with Spanish, Hindi and Malay/Cantonese, respectively). This issue is becoming increasingly crucial for multi-national corporations (MNCs) who need to weigh the logistical advantages of single language use across markets (e.g., English) versus the complexities of communicating their message in the local language or a mixed language advertisement. One option may be to follow the lead of local companies in making



# Faculty News



advertising language choices. This research sheds some light on the feasibility of this decision rule.

The results reveal the existence of asymmetric language effects for MNCs versus local firms when operating in a foreign domain, such that the choice of advertising language affects advertising effectiveness for MNCs but not local companies. Also, different language formats (e.g., the local language versus English or a mix of the two languages) are shown to vary in their advertising effectiveness for different types of products (luxuries versus necessities). The results indicate that language choice for advertisements is an important decision for MNCs. Also, MNCs cannot mimic local companies in their choice of advertising language.

A pilot study establishes the urban Indian population as being proficient in both English and Hindi, perceiving both languages favorably. Additionally, English is strongly associated with sophistication, while Hindi has

its strongest associations with items that denote belongingness. Study 1 then tests the role of company (local versus MNC) in advertising language choice, using single language ads (Hindi or English). The findings reveal that language choice is likely to matter to a significantly greater extent to MNCs than to local companies. As such, across the two product categories (detergent for necessities, and chocolate for luxuries), language did not influence advertisement evaluations for the local company. However, English emerged as a more effective choice for luxury goods and Hindi led to more favorable evaluations of necessities when the company was an MNC. Results of this experiment suggest that MNCs need to be more cognizant about language choices in global bilingual markets, and it would be ill advised for them to simply follow the choices that appear to be working for the local corporations. Thus, the choice of advertising can be extremely

important for MNCs, especially for positioning the product.

Study 2, consequently, was designed to provide deeper insights into the role of language for MNCs. It attempted to (a) zero in on the processes underlying language effects on advertisement evaluations, and (b) extend the scope of research from single language slogans to mixed language advertising. The results revealed that consumers tend to use the perceptual associations of languages that are most relevant for evaluating the product category (sophistication for luxuries, belongingness for necessities). The study reveals that the unexpectedness of Hindi language choice by an MNC focuses a lot of attention (more than even the mixed languages) on the language of the advertisement, heightening the perceiver's skepticism as reflected in increased counterargumentation, thereby, reducing the advertisement's persuasiveness. As such, the belongingness advantage that is implied by the use of Hindi for necessities might be wiped out for consumers who elaborate extensively on the slogan. These data appear to suggest that MNCs should observe caution in the use of local language, even in the domain of necessities (the findings suggest that use of local language is clearly expected to backfire in the domain of luxuries). In other words, localization of the advertisement language may be a good strategy for necessities (for whom belongingness is important), but MNCs need

to be cautious about going completely local, and might be better off using mixed language advertisements for bilinguals.

In this regard, the findings highlight an important advantage of mixed language messages for MNCs—they are able to capitalize on the favorable associations of both languages, without drawing excessive attention to the language choice, and therefore, present the “safe bet” option for advertising products that fall in the category of necessities, in global bilingual markets. Mixed language advertisements, in addition, might be the most feasible (and low risk) option, if a product does not clearly fall in the luxury/necessity distinction, since they are likely to elicit relevant and favorable associations for both languages. They are also likely to be relatively effective in the domain of luxuries, as study 2 demonstrates. It is important to note that the two mixed language forms did not differ from each other in terms of their perceptual associations (sophistication, belongingness) as well as overall persuasiveness (slogan evaluation) for the two product categories tested in this research.

An interesting finding from the studies is that local firms don't necessarily have to use English to market luxuries in India. While this seems to be the prevailing practice in India, the results show that language choice, even for luxuries, has little impact for local firms.

# New Faculty Profiles

**Meilu Ho** will join the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance as an Assistant Professor of Musicology. A recent graduate of the University of California, Los Angeles, Professor Ho received her Ph.D. in Ethnomusicology in 2006. Prior to her time at UCLA she worked in a variety of areas, including as a research assistant on a Smithsonian Institution project, as a freelance music journalist, and as a Lecturer at the Science University in Malaysia. Most recently Professor Ho was a visiting fellow at the Center for Asian and Pacific Studies at the University of Iowa. Professor Ho's research concerns the historical relationship between Hindu temple music and (largely Muslim-based) Indian classical music. Though her specialty is Hindustani music,

she is also a historical musicologist of the Indian raga system and a student of contemporary trends in Indian music. Professor Ho has received numerous honors and awards including an International Scholarship and Music Guild Award from Stanford University. From UCLA she has received an International Fellowship, Edna Yu-Shan Han Award, the Clifton Webb Award, a Graduate Distinguished Scholar Award, and a Chancellor's Dissertation Year Fellowship. She was also awarded a Charles Seeger Prize from the Society for Ethnomusicology, and a junior fellowship from the American Institute of Indian Studies. CSAS extends a warm welcome to Professor Ho who will arrive in Ann Arbor and begin her Michigan career in January.



**Sujata Visaria** is a development economist currently visiting the Ford School of Policy and the Ross School of Business during the 2008-09 academic year. A 2005 recipient of a Ph.D. in Economics from Columbia University, Dr. Visaria's research uses micro-level data to study institutional constraints to economic development, with specific reference to India. Examples of her research include her recent examination of the effect of judicial quality on credit market outcomes in India. In particular, she found that the newly instituted debt recovery tribunals reduce judicial delays, cause borrowers to repay loans more regularly, and lead to cheaper future credit. Another project examines the economic factors that may underlie the patterns of religious violence in Ahmedabad, India. In a recent co-authored paper, she presents suggestive evidence that the hiring practices of textile mills, together

with the long-term tenancy rights created by rent control, may have distorted residential choices in such a way that the riots may have also been a territory war. Currently, she and her co-authors are collecting new data on residential patterns and health outcomes in an attempt to examine the riots' effects on segregation, and socio-economic outcomes. Dr. Visaria is also interested in examining the constraints that small farmers face in marketing their produce. In collaboration with colleagues she is running a randomized field experiment with potato farmers in West Bengal, where randomly selected villages and farmers are provided daily updates about the price of potatoes in neighboring markets. In preliminary results, the authors find that this intervention may be causing small farmers to receive higher net prices for their produce, while large farmers receive lower prices.



# Summer in South Asia

Thanks to a special grant made available to the Center for South Asian Studies by a generous anonymous donor, six UM undergraduate students had an opportunity this past summer to design and carry out their own programs in India. On October 3, 2008 these fellows offered presentations about their projects and internships at a CSAS symposium. There was a wide range of scholarly disciplines represented by the projects, and the work the students did was impressive. The symposium gave the CSAS community an opportunity to learn about the students' experiences with the NGO's, the research they carried out, and the incredible opportunities for learning that were offered to them. Below are summaries of their observations.

## **SASHA PRESTON-SUNI**

My work in India was invaluable. It served to both confirm and undermine generalizations that I had made from collegiate coursework. I was able to apply insights from courses as well. I completed two internships; one for SVARAJ organization in Bangalore, Karnataka, and the second at Byrraju Foundation in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. Both studied women's economic and social empowerment, though research at SVARAJ involved social benefits less directly.

My initial interest in travelling to India was in general development and an investigation into the extent to which microfinance contributed to rural progress. My desire to be involved in the empowerment of women arose after a brief and unsettling initial internship for what I ultimately judged to be a somewhat corrupt organization in south India. Even though I had never studied women's empowerment at a collegiate level, gender deprivations in this organization were ugly and apparent. It became clear to me quickly that the empowerment of women is integral to the developmental process, if not a prerequisite, particularly in India. At UM I had studied the deprivation of women in India, resulting in their staggeringly lower literacy rates and greater childhood mortality. These facts and their social enforcement were particularly more moving when witnessed in person.

Once I moved on to SVARAJ, my research centered on the potential for the establishment of a water treatment plant in villages of Karaikal, Tamil Nadu, owned and operated by women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and financed by a microloan. Field interviews sought the simultaneous presence of water quality problems—facilitating likely high demand and ample social as well as economic benefits for citizens—and the business experience and entrepreneurial motivation of SHGs needed for the plant's financial viability. Because of so much prior deprivation, most women were using their loans for personal and home use. Few had established their own businesses, and those who did, had not met with much success. An SHG was tentatively chosen for its ability to meet these

criteria, though further market and skills research is necessary to solidify this choice.

Next, I worked in Andhra Pradesh for Byrraju Foundation. I studied the economic and social benefits experienced by women who had undergone livelihood training. The program had not allocated enough resources to establish the training infrastructure necessary for surmounting women's social barriers, and so the conclusion of research was that further investment was imperative for real benefits. Because women's starting position is much lower than men's; any program that undertakes to offer employment to women requires much higher levels of investment.

The developmental, aggregate optimism that I derived from several courses was not altogether absent from my fieldwork, but I began to understand the staggering odds associated with non-profit work, and the difficulty of seeing things from an aggregate perspective when the real changes are witnessed at a local level. It is also certain that the bright reviews of microfinance's benefits are misguided. The conclusion I can take from field work is that any efforts made for rural development must be incredibly intensive. Things like microfinance or livelihood training require a massive amount of additional training, ranging from business skills to women's rights awareness. Even financial success will be precluded without the necessary educational spectrum.

## **MOUNICA VALLURUPALLI**

Krishnappa, an elderly flower seller in Veerapura village, sat hunched over in the shade trying to endure the heat and torpor of midday. As we asked him about the well water in the village, he sat with his frail hand precariously supporting the weight of his head. His glassy eyes gave us as powerful an answer as his words. He told us of the unacceptable condition of the well water, of the poor taste and the corrosion it caused on pots and storage vessels. No, the villagers weren't drinking the well water; rather, they were spending what little they had to buy drinking water. Krishnappa told us that he spends up to 15 rupees for every 100 rupees he makes to buy fresh drinking water from another village. I wondered where those 15 rupees came from, but it was obvious looking at Krishnappa that it must have come from daily sacrifice. Krishnappa, just like the other villagers we spoke to, recognized the inequality of lack of access to clean water but felt powerless to do any more.

SVARAJ (Oxfam India) and local activists recognized the value of grassroots mobilizing. They had spent years collecting information about the Veerapura area and also determined how the lake water was being polluted by local industries. I, along with fellow student Jane Xiao, was able to assist SVARAJ in determining the extent of the pollution of the lake water and well water. We collected lake water samples, soil samples, and well water samples and performed chemical analyses at the

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Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB). The quantitative analysis of the water was supplemented by interviews of local villagers. We determined that lake water contained contaminants from effluent streams being released by the industries. Our research will assist SVARAJ in preventing the continued pollution of the area, enabling villagers to have access to better water.

The experiential learning experience funded by the Center for South Asian Studies, taught me more than any individual class at the University of Michigan. Conducting field work and interviewing the villagers showed me how the environment and socio-economic status interacted to influence human health. My work has also helped me develop new questions that I want to explore. I hope to continue to work with SVARAJ to determine how well water and lake water sources are linked, to evaluate the safety of the systems used for storage of drinking water in the village and to create an epidemiological map of diseases associated with exposure to non-potable well water. In a future career as a physician, I hope to use science and the humanistic side of medicine to study human health from varied social and cultural perspectives. Understanding the living conditions at Veerapura has helped me envision these future goals as I integrated my research background with social activism in order to bring about positive social change.

## LAINIE KOKAS

Art is my passion and helping people is my goal. My work for the NGO, Dastkar this summer demonstrated the possibility of uniting these dual desires. Classes that I have taken thus far have incorporated one or the other, but because Dastkar is an organization that works to improve the status of craftspeople in India, thereby promoting the survival of traditional crafts, this experience with Dastkar linked the two.

I began my experience by examining the inner workings of the office to gain an understanding of how an NGO of this magnitude can function. I found that even though the Dastkari office was a mere fifteen people, the impact that they had on India was so great it is immeasurable. I utilized my skills and expanded my understanding of the social sciences and art. Writing and designing informational pamphlets on different craft groups taught me about the many crafts that are so unique to India, while designing products for the craft groups pushed me to incorporate two very different styles and increase my understanding of both cultures. The most valuable part of my experience though was my trips into the field.

As the weeks passed, my duties became more and more exciting, and frightening.

The outskirts of Delhi are flooded with poverty, but hidden in homes, alleys and corners of annexed villages are beautiful

crafts whose secrets remain in the hands of their creators. I was assigned to photograph these craftspeople, which often left me as the only white woman for miles. Each craft group was entrusted with its own products and missions. While some used recycled materials, others cherished precious woods and metals. My ability to photograph people candidly and naturally was tested, and I learned not just about the crafts being produced but about the lives lived by these artisans.

The extraordinary combination of working with Dastkar and visiting their craft groups offered me unthinkable opportunities to grow as a student, artist, humanitarian, and citizen of the world. I now approach life differently, focusing on what really matters. I put life into perspective, not just in the life that I am used to, but in a greater scheme of the world. I appreciate what I have and understand what I need and what is extraneous. I want to commit myself to fulfilling the basic needs of others who have, by birth place and unfortunate social order, not been given enough opportunities to live with securities that everyone deserves. My mission to learn how to do such things during my undergrad years has been affirmed, and this new outlook has given me direction for my senior year.

I found that my dream of living a socially responsible life that incorporates photography, writing and design came true in this internship position. The information gathered from this trip will undoubtedly play a vital role in my senior project as I delve further into the importance of art related non-profit organizations in developing countries. Most importantly this experience has made me a stronger candidate as I apply to graduate programs in Urban Planning.

I would like to thank the Center for South Asian Studies for giving me the most enjoyable and influential experience of my life.

## HYUNMIN HAN

Initially I had planned my 2008 Summer CSAS internship to be focused on the conservation of the Ganges River Dolphin, an endangered, freshwater dolphin native to the waters in Bihar State, India, but the logistics and the equipment available at the sites led me to a study focusing on the broader biodiversity of the Ganges river.

I conducted this project with the guidance of researchers at UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization) and at A.N. College in Patna, Bihar. Drs. Wiley and Omair introduced me to the community level biological structure in the Ganges and to the hypotheses that, because of significant human influence, the biological diversity in the Ganges river was predicted to be greatly decreased. However up to that point insufficient research had been conducted in the area due to lack of awareness and funds.

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Consequently, the study was redirected to determine zooplankton food web assessment and hydraulic mapping of the Ganges. The food web assessment was done by collecting zooplankton samples in the vicinity of Patna and Bihar to make a compositional analysis and determine hernia rates among the zooplankton to compare with existing data. The hydraulic mapping was done to obtain physical cross-section data on the Ganges River using GPS and fish depth finder as a pre-survey for a Doppler Sonar data collection that University of Michigan School of Natural Resources researchers plan to conduct next year.

The zooplankton studies on hernia rates revealed that the hernia rates were highest at a large discharge point. Also, the compositional studies revealed that high eutrophillic zooplankton were highly concentrated at the same discharge point. Of special concern was a Rotifer species called *Brachionus*, which, because they feed heavily on *E. Coli*, can serve as an indicator of heavy pollution levels. These results suggest that the zooplankton hernia percentage is indeed linked to water quality issues. On this finding, we concluded that filtering programs should be suggested for these unregulated discharge points, and we further concluded that it may be necessary to consider a halt to eutrophication activities, such as the depositing of cremated human remains into the rivers. Further analysis of the data will be required for final academic assessment.

Through the CSAS 2008 internship, I have come to greatly appreciate the efforts required for field work in the area of ecology and evolutionary biology. It was an enlightening experience; before my research in India I was content with the facilities and resources available around me and did not push toward the ultimate limits. However, working under difficult conditions alongside colleagues who had a passion for environmental issues, I realized that I had not been offering my best and I pushed myself beyond my comfort zone. By confirming for me that in spite of the challenges field work can be fun and enjoyable, this internship in India and the experience I had with Indian friends strengthened my desire to pursue further research in graduate school. And recognizing the presence within myself of a desire to look for new academic discoveries has made the experience all the more amazing.

## JANE XIAO

This summer I worked as an intern at the Society for Voluntary Action, Revitalization, and Justice (SVARAJ) studying water pollution near Lake Veerapura. I travelled and worked with Mounica Vallurupalli, a fellow University of Michigan student, over the course of one month. Together we designed a study to investigate the reports of uncontrolled waste dumping in the area and to enquire about health effects observed by the local villagers. The purpose of the study was to provide quantitative

evidence, if present, that would aid SVARAJ in improving the water quality for the villagers.

The first aim of the study was to evaluate the extent of water pollution in Lake Veerapura and surrounding village bore wells which may be connected to the lake through underground aquifers. The lake itself receives water through rainfall and waste effluent streams from more than 300 industries. The lake used to provide water for drinking, bathing, and agriculture for the local village of about 1000 people. Fluid samples were collected from effluent streams, the lake, several bore wells, and the public water supply and analyzed for general water quality parameters (inorganic and biological) at the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB). Soil samples around the lake were also collected as they provided a more long term chemical record. We collected and analyzed just two sample sets due to the time constraints. The results of the analysis indicated:

- 1) industrial effluent streams violated KSPCB industrial waste standards,
- 2) lake water contained contaminants common to effluent streams,
- 3) bore well water exceeded ISO drinking water standards for hardness.

The effluent streams were extremely acidic and contained excess levels of heavy metals, which proved that industries needed to improve their waste elimination methods. Although the bore well water was very hard, hardness has no known adverse health effects other than being unpalatable and causing corrosion of water storage containers. Bore well water, used by the villagers for bathing only, was within permissible ISO standards however many villagers had complained of ailments including muscle weakness, diarrhea, fever, and skin irritations. The second aim of the study was to find if there was a connection between pollutants detected and the symptoms reported by the villagers. Nineteen families or family representatives were interviewed in a door-to-door approach. They were asked about how they obtain water for drinking and bathing, how water was stored, and their experience with the bore well and lake water. The responses were very similar in their observations of the water, health problems attributed to poor drinking water, and dissatisfaction with the bore well water. The quantitative results did not correlate with the ailments reported by the villagers. One possible reason was that most villagers purchased drinking water from the public water supply, which was assumed to be unpolluted.

Our quantitative results may have been affected by the monsoon rains which may have diluted the second set of collected samples and the small number of data points ( $n=2$ ). A more effective study could be conducted in the future by sampling several times throughout the year and by comparing bore well locations to a map of underground aquifers as it has



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been shown that pollutants may spread to bore wells connected to the lake by underground aquifers instead of spreading radially out from a central point. Another topic for future research includes the method of water storage for the public water supplies since data collected from one of the public water tanks had biological contamination.

As a biomedical engineering student, I have had some experience conducting research in the lab facilities of the university. However as a pre-medical student, I was interested in applying my research skills in a way that would more directly benefit someone's quality of life. My trip to India not only allowed me to help SVARAJ in their efforts to obtain safe drinking water for the villagers of Veerapura, but it also illuminated the importance of the environment on human health. I learned that health is interrupted not just by pathogens or genetic aberrations or financial barriers, but also by our natural environments. Biomedical engineering, likewise, isn't just about making devices to fix our bodies inside, but also mediating between our bodies and the outside environment when the two are incompatible. I would like to thank the Center for South Asian Studies and the International Institute for providing the funding that allowed me to have this experience.

## GINGER CLINE

As a political science major, I believe that education and healthcare are basic rights to which all people should have access, but of course the reality is that millions are in want of them. In India, only 11% of the population is covered by any form of health insurance, and millions of children never have the chance to receive a first class education. The Summer in South Asia Undergraduate Fellowship gave me the opportunity to learn more about and work in the areas of both women's healthcare and elementary education.

My purpose in traveling to India was to conduct a health needs assessment for the artisans of SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association) in the northeastern city of Lucknow. SEWA-Lucknow is a nongovernmental organization that trains women in the art of chikankari, a traditional type of embroidery. The purpose of SEWA is to give women the benefits of self-employment and financial independence. Ashish Chakraborty, a consultant for SEWA told me that "the reason for male domination in society is the economic dependence of women." Although many of the 7,000 artisans that make up SEWA have greatly improved their lives by joining the organization, the vast majority is still very poor. My goal was to help SEWA determine which health problems were most prevalent among workers and to provide suggestions on how to get around barriers to care.

I interviewed eleven female artisans about their health, focusing on the areas of eye care, occupational injuries, and family planning. These were in addition to seven interviews that

another student had completed in 2006. Some of the stories I heard were truly heartbreaking. I spoke to women who needed glasses but could not afford them, a woman who could only afford to get half the prenatal shots she needed during her pregnancy, and one whose husband abused and even tried to kill her. Many of the women were struggling so much to pay for food and schooling for their children that they could hardly think of their own health needs.

Because the nature of the embroidery work, especially as it is done on the floor, often causes eyestrain, backache, and neck pain, I contacted an organization that provides used glasses to those in need to see if the women of SEWA could be the recipients of some of the glasses. I also suggested raising the level of work to prevent so much strain.

Family planning is another aspect of health that needed attention. Almost all of the women I interviewed said that they would greatly appreciate it if SEWA could provide contraceptives free of cost or for a nominal fee. Some stated that they already had more children than they had originally wanted or could afford to take care of. Many suggested family planning classes, which could be taught either by local experts or by medical students.

Finally, I asked all respondents about health insurance, and all were in support of it. When asked how much artisans would be willing to contribute to a health insurance plan, answers ranged from ten to sixty-five rupees per month. I spoke to a representative from a local insurance company who suggested that SEWA act as their own insurer, so that they might determine themselves which services would be covered.

While I came to India to work with SEWA, I stumbled upon another project as well. Along with Beth Norford, a former New York elementary school teacher, I worked on a book-making project for classes six, seven, and eight at Acharya Navrendra Dava Academy in Lucknow. The goal was to get the students to write and illustrate their own stories and to bind and decorate their own books. To assist with this project I went to the academy one- to three-times a week to help the students with their books. It was a wonderful and challenging experience to lecture in front of a class of students who had never written a story in their lives and who had very limited English skills. The final products were exquisite and the progress that the students made along the way was impressive.

I am very grateful to have had this opportunity. It has made me question which career path I will take. I have always enjoyed working with children and would like to go to law school, possibly to pursue a career in child advocacy. However, health care is also something that interests me greatly and I am considering going into public policy to focus in that area. I certainly miss India and all of the amazing people I had the privilege of working with, and I intend to return someday soon!

# Student News

**Vandana Baweja** defended her dissertation on May 6, 2008 in the doctoral program in Architecture. She has a new appointment as Visiting Assistant Professor of Art at Oberlin College where she was awarded the Michigan-Oberlin Exchange Postdoctoral fellowship for 2008-09.

**Eric Eide**, a graduate student in the Department of Sociology was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out his project, "Industrial Upgrading in India's Information Technology Enabled Service Industry."

**Chandan Gowda** received his PhD in sociology last summer. He is presently an Associate Professor at the Centre for the Study of Law and Social Exclusion, National Law School of India University, Bangalore, India.

**Azfar Moïn** is a PhD student in History, working on early modern South Asia and the Mughal Empire. He received an American Institute of Pakistan Studies fellowship to do research in the UK and a Fulbright Doctoral Dissertation Research Award to do archival work in India for this academic year.

**Kirk Thomas Ott** will be advancing to candidacy to work on his dissertation on 19th century Tamil Saivism and Dravidian identity politics. His English translation of a 19th century Tamil journal article (with the help of Dr.

Karunakaran) is being printed in India, and will be available for purchase at Shaman Drum bookstore in Ann Arbor.

**Sudipa Topdar** received the Barbour Fellowship for the 2008-09 academic year.

**Jane Lynch**, having spent the summer in India, interning with Fabindia in their Delhi offices and studying Hindi in Rajasthan, returns to Ann Arbor to begin her second year in the doctoral program in anthropology. This summer, she was the recipient of an International Institute Individual Fellowship and a Summer FLAS Fellowship. She has been awarded a FLAS Fellowship for the 2008-2009 academic year for her further study of Hindi.

**Jennifer Young Yim**, a former CSAS master's student, has recently entered a two-year position as Director of the Global Scholars Pilot Program at the University of Michigan's Program on Intergroup Relations. Jennifer will be working half time during the Fall 2008 semester while she completes her doctoral program in Psychology and Women's Studies at UM. The Global Scholars Pilot Program, which is currently in the second year of its three-year plan, focuses on social justice issues using intercultural exchange via on-campus dialogue classes with international and domestic students, video conferencing

to link UM students with students internationally, and participation in the Global Intercultural Experience for Undergraduates Program (GIEU). Jennifer's disserta-

tion focuses on the well-being and masculinity ideologies of Asian American male college students, particularly those of South and Southeast Asian descent.

## Graduate Student Research and Field Work Experiences



PHOTO: NEHA SAMI

### Neha Sami, PhD student in Urban and Regional Planning

As I came out of Bangalore's HAL airport, the first thing that met my eye was a huge billboard announcing "RG Villas – India's most exclusive gated community" – an Italian themed community with luxury villas, an international school, malls, movie theatres, an equestrian and polo center, swimming pools, a 'village square' and a Jack Nicklaus signature 18-hole golf course – all located on Bangalore's periphery. RG Villas and other similar developments are in various stages of construction in several Indian cities. They range from private enclaves or gated communities spread over 30 to 40 acres of land to large integrated townships

that are sprawled over 3000 acres of land. The building of these projects, particularly in the Indian context, is accompanied both in rhetoric and physical design by the aspiration to become 'global' or 'world-class'. Intended to be largely self-sufficient, they include large tracts of residential and office space as well as shopping and entertainment complexes, schools, hospitals and hotels. Some also provide physical infrastructure such as roads and dedicated water and power supply.

For my doctoral research I am studying large projects like these and the processes behind their development. I will be looking at one or two projects each in Bangalore, Kolkata and Pune. I am particularly interested in the



role that the changing urban politics in post-liberalization India plays in this process and the key players who drive the development.

Developments such as these constitute a departure from the way Indian urbanization had been taking place since India's independence in 1947 to the early 1990s. Earlier, townships and large housing projects built in and around Indian cities were linked to state-sponsored industrialization projects. They were built and designed by government agencies at the national or regional level. The projects being built today are largely designed, built and sold by private developers, increasingly targeting the upper income groups. Many of these projects are being built in collaboration with international investors as well as with architects and designers from abroad. This has changed the dynamic in Indian real estate development.

Indian cities are seeing a flurry of real estate development. Although several large projects have been proposed, not all of these have begun construction or even acquired land, as I found out on my recent field trip this summer. Some have been stalled as a result of political outcomes (like the lack of a state government in Karnataka) while others have faced opposition from the community. As a result, those projects that do get built tell a fascinating tale of how real estate development is taking place in India.

The construction boom that India is witnessing right now has been building up since the late 1990s. As the economy opened up and the corporate sector grew, the demand for housing, especially high-end housing increased. In the case of Bangalore, the growth of the IT industry in the city is undeniably connected with the growth of real estate development. As neighborhoods like Electronic City and Whitefield emerged as IT hubs, they also attracted large developments.

In Bangalore, these projects are usually developed in the following manner. After the project is conceptualized, the developer acquires the land outright or enters into a joint venture with the owner(s) of the land. After land is acquired, a master plan is drawn up based on appropriate density, type of development and projected land use. Typically the master plan is conceptualized and developed by a well known international architect or firm. This architect or firm continues to be a part of the project in a supervisory role, but once the plan has been created and approved by the company, local architects do the actual execution of working drawings etc. Similarly, construction is outsourced to individual contractors – for water, electricals, and civil engineering.

Although there are several city and state level agencies involved in the development process, they are stepping away from actual construction

and are adopting a more regulatory stance. The few cases in which they are still involved in construction have been stalled due to bureaucratic and political delays. The relationship between the government and the real estate sector has also undergone subtle changes. In the last state election in Karnataka (May 2008), about half of the candidates, independent of party lines, were actively involved in real estate development. That there was a strong real estate lobby was always known and was no surprise. However, what is interesting is that the members of this lobby now have political aspirations themselves. Another fascinating trend is

the growth of what James Heitzman calls 'the third force' (Heitzman 2004). There are a number of non-governmental organizations involved in the process of urban governance and development. They almost seem to be acting as consultants to governments, acting as liaisons between government, the corporate sector and civil society.

Through my research, I hope to highlight the relationships between the different players in real estate and also understand the processes by which these projects get built.

Heitzman, J. (2004). *Network City: Planning the Information Society in Bangalore*. New York, Oxford University Press.



PHOTO: NEHA SAMI



PHOTO: JEREMY SAUL



A transformation ritual from Himachal Pradesh in the Himalayas.

**Jeremy Saul, PhD student in Asian Languages and Cultures**

**Over the summer** I traveled for one month in Myanmar and two and half months in India. During my trip, I made use of Hindi, Tamil and other Indian languages while also studying Burmese for one month in Myanmar, as many people are descendents of colonial-era migrants. I arrived in Myanmar on the evening of June 1, the day before the cyclone hit. Nobody mentioned anything about a storm coming as I took a bus

out of Yangon that evening as the rains got heavier. I spent most of my time looking at ancient historical sites in Rakhaing region, adjacent to Bangladesh, and observing festivals. When I came back to the Yangon area to leave I could see the destruction, as trees had been uprooted everywhere. Everyone assumed I must have come for some kind of United Nations relief work.

PHOTO: JEREMY SAUL



A "wishing tree" festooned with strings at a goddess shrine in Himachal Pradesh.

The Indian segment was accomplished with a summer research grant from my academic department. I visited pilgrimage shrines in north-western India to acquire Hindi-language devotional literature. What I ascertained is that literature from these sites tends to emphasize personal transformation through step-by-step instruction, through austerities, vow-keeping, devotion, and so forth. However, I observed that the most popular instructional material

tion of the deity, in a village ceremony in the Kullu-Shimla area, in which the deity is carried about and ritually given a new mask, shaken, and subjected to a priest's incantations while away from the temple. Second, I observed transformation of the religious specialist, in which mediums go into trance at semi-annual devotional gatherings for the "naga" (serpent) deity, ritually flagellating themselves with chains, and channeling the voice of the deity on matters



A goddess ritual from Himachal Pradesh.

PHOTO: JEREMY SAUL

for the average pilgrim now seems to be the religious devotional CD video, which I intend to use in research as well. This may prompt me to take a fresh look at some of my previous Bollywood studies.

During this journey, I observed three kinds of transformation in ritual, a subject that I had explored in recent coursework. First, transforma-

of importance to the village. And third, I observed transformation of the non-specialist religious pilgrim, where devotees afflicted with mental disease are subjected to violent exorcism with spiritual counseling in the presence of the image of the deity, to the accompaniment of drum music. In addition, at certain kinds of shrines devotees make wishes at auspicious



## NEW STUDENTS

trees while tying sacred ribbons on their branches. I was able to take at least a few photographs of each of these events. A lingering question to explore is how the print and video material supports or even instructs this sort of behavior. Can we speak of a contemporary vernacular literature of personal transformation at pilgrimage sites?

I also encountered some potential hazards in going to pilgrimage sites, due to crowds and natural surroundings. Two days before I arrived at Naina Devi shrine in southern Himachal Pradesh during the Navaratri devotion period, 150 people died in a mob stampede. Order seemed to be restored on the day I arrived. I also went the round circuit of the Shri Khund Yatra, which I can vouch is among the most dangerous of pilgrimages. Over a six-day period on this walk to a Shiv shrine at 18,000 feet in the snow, I continually questioned whether I was sane to have embarked on this, as it entailed walking over numerous glaciers, often poised at precipitous angles over sheer cliffs hundreds of feet down, and crossing raging rivers without bridges by skipping over stones among the ice flows. My rubber sandals started to break on the first day, so I had to do it the traditional way, largely barefoot, which was a challenge on the glaciers. The pilgrims on the path kept insisting that faith in Shiv Shankar would see them through safely, and I followed this philosophy.

**Huzefa Khalil** is a first year PhD student in Political Science. He completed his undergraduate work at the University of Mumbai with a degree in Engineering. Huzefa has lived in Ann Arbor for the past three years where he has completed his Master's degree in Engineering. His particular interests are in the intersection of religion, and identity and politics. Huzefa ultimately hopes to conduct research on Muslim politics in India.

**Ranjanpreet Nagra** begins her pursuit of a Master's degree in South Asian Studies this Fall. She graduated from California State University in Bakersfield with a Bachelor of Arts in Literature. She also studied at the University of Central Lancashire in Northwest England for one year and traveled in England and Scotland. Ranjanpreet left Punjab, India and moved to the United States when she was 15. She enjoys long distance running, playing badminton, reading novels and cooking in her leisure time.

**Stuart Strange** is originally from Virginia, where he did his undergraduate work in Anthropology at Mary Washington College. He lived in



*From the left – Lia Wolock, Ranjanpreet Nagra, Huzefa Khalil and Stuart Strange.*

Sri Lanka for a year between 2004 and 2005 before returning to the US to complete his Master's degree at the University of Chicago. Stuart is beginning the PhD program in Anthropology this Fall. He was most recently employed at a non-profit doing homeless outreach in Brooklyn, New York and has done fieldwork in Haiti, Ghana, Suriname, Sri Lanka, and New York City. His interests include the Caribbean South Asian diaspora; popular Hinduism; interethnic interaction and transculturation; Afro-Atlantic religion and Maroon studies; Creole linguistics; the cultural impacts of indenture and slavery; morality; cosmology; spirit possession; ideology and Marxist social theory.

**Stephen Tyndall** joins the PhD program in Linguistics. He is from Atlanta, Georgia

and completed his Bachelor's degree in Latin and his Master's degree in Historical Linguistics at the University of Georgia. Stephen has studied Sanskrit and Avestan from an Indo European perspective. His interests include Proto Indo Iranian, Proto Indo European, and Sanskrit Philology.

**Lia Wolock** earned her Bachelor's degree in South Asian Studies and English at the University of Michigan in 2007. She returns this Fall to begin her Master's degree in South Asian Studies with a FLAS fellowship for the study of Hindi. Her research interests include analyzing cross-cultural art, literature, and performance pieces to understand how they write, negotiate, and interpret religious and gender identity.

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# Indian Ambassador to the United States RONEN SEN to visit the University of Michigan



**October 22**  
**6:00 P.M.**  
**Alumni Center**  
**200 Fletcher Street**  
*The event is free and open to the public.*

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**Mary Sue Coleman (ex officio)**

The Center for South Asian Studies at the University of Michigan is pleased to announce an October 22 visit and public lecture by Indian Ambassador to the United States Ronen Sen. Ambassador Sen will speak on US/India foreign relations at 6:00 PM at the Alumni Center, located at 200 Fletcher Street. An open reception will follow the talk. Ambassador Sen's visit helps inaugurate a major new three-year initiative of scholarly programs focused on contemporary South Asia, entitled "The Trehan India Initiative at the University of Michigan." The initiative is made possible by a generous grant from Ranvir and Adarsh Trehan and the Trehan Foundation Fund.

Ambassador Sen is one of India's most distinguished senior diplomats. As such, he has lived and served in inter-

esting times. Sen was India's first Ambassador to a newly configured Russia following the demise of the former Soviet Union (1992-1998), and also served as ambassador to Germany during that country's tumultuous reunification (1998-2002). Sen's service in Moscow helped reestablish a longstanding friendship between India and Russia at a time when relations between the two countries were at a low ebb. He helped build a lasting partnership with Russia in part by underscoring a perennially valid set of shared interests between the two—not least among them a fervent Russian appreciation for Bollywood actor Raj Kapoor!

In addition to his service in the Russian Federation and in Germany, Ronen Sen was also the Indian Ambassador to Mexico (1991-1992), and most recently the High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, from 2002-2004. Notably, he also served as a special envoy during the Rajiv Gandhi-Benazir Bhutto talks of 1989. In a 2004 *India Abroad* interview, just weeks before he assumed his post in Washington, Ambassador Sen spoke of his belief that the many Americans of Indian origin living in the United States had helped pave the way for him, by serving as unofficial ambassadors contributing to the American

economy and culture in so many ways. His role, he said, was to continue to strengthen the special relationship between "the world's biggest democracy and the world's most powerful democracy."

In the four years since he first took his post, Ambassador Sen has ably nurtured a relationship between India and the United States, one in which "many families in both countries have a vital stake." In a recent speech in Philadelphia, Ambassador Sen spoke of the "irrevocable transformation of our relations with the United States" as both countries negotiate an increasingly inter-connected world, and reminded his audience that "India-US relations encompass the most wide-ranging engagement that India has with any country today."

Please mark your calendars and join us in welcoming Ambassador Sen to the University of Michigan!

Ambassador Sen's visit is sponsored by the Center for South Asian Studies, The Trehan Foundation, the International Institute, the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Office of the President of the University, Mary Sue Coleman.



# New Staff Profiles



## Nancy Becker

Nancy Becker joined CSAS in May 2008. She comes to us from the Michigan Ross School of Business where she worked with the Executive MBA Program and was the Project Coordinator in Academic Services for the past several years. Nancy worked directly with both BBA and MBA students, doing academic advising, and coordinating the Washington Campus Program as well as the International Exchange Program. Guiding the students through the programs was particularly satisfying for her as well as orienting the new students each Fall to Ross. Nancy is a graduate of Western Michigan University with a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education. Her special interests include practicing yoga on a regular basis, personal training and fitness, and reading of all types.

## Stacey Pratt

Stacey Pratt joined CSAS as our new Administrative Assis-

tant in July 2008. A native of Detroit, Michigan, Stacey graduated from the University of Michigan this past April with a Bachelors degree in Asian Languages and Cultures, focusing on Japanese Studies. In addition to being a UM alumnus, Stacey has worked with the Ross School's Institute for Research on Labor, Employment and the Economy (IRLEE), which assists incubators in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana to create projects to strengthen their organizations and their communities. Away from work, Stacey enjoys participating in Toastmaster's International—a public speaking organization dedicated to peer mentoring in honing public speaking skills. Additionally, she enjoys watching everything from Japanese dramas to Bollywood movies, swimming, reading up on current events, and visiting family. With such a diverse array of knowledge and energy, we consider Stacey a strong addition to our staff.



## HOW TO MAKE A GIFT

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### **312354: S Asian Studies, President's Challenge for Grad Support**

Purpose: To provide funds for graduate student support. Donations to this fund will receive a 50% match from the University of Michigan President's Challenge, i.e., each dollar donated will be matched by an additional 50 cents from the President's Fund.

### **362651: South Asia Studies**

Purpose: To provide general funding for CSAS programming needs.

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Thank you for considering a gift to the Center for South Asian Studies.

# Summer Teacher Workshop

## A REPORT ON THE CSAS HIGH SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS WORKSHOP IN JULY 2008

**IN FALL 2007**, the Michigan Department of Education introduced new World History mandates for a much-revised Social Studies curriculum for high schools in the state. Both the State and local school districts realized that Social Studies teachers would need considerable professional training to teach World History, especially in an exciting, relevant manner. The Center for South Asian Studies offered the expertise of its faculty to teachers in an interactive workshop on July 22, 2008.

The first session, run by Dr. Stewart Gordon, Research Scholar at the Center for South Asian Studies, was devoted to strategies for teaching World History and aligning content to the new Michigan mandates. In the second session, Steven Boyce from Pioneer High School in Ann Arbor presented a thematic unit on the Silk Road, focusing on materials that teachers are already using in World History. The teachers also played a simulation game on the Gupta period of Indian history. Handouts included an annotated bibliography of appropriate World History studies, sources, and websites.

The third session, on the history and culture of South Asia, was presented by Carla Sinopoli, Professor of Anthropology and Director of the Museum of Anthropology. She introduced her work on Iron Age sites and also on the interactions of history and archeology in the South Asia setting.

CSAS is very pleased with the success of the workshop. Fifteen high school and middle school teachers from various school districts in Southeastern Michigan attended. It enabled fruitful interactions between the teachers and the UM faculty. Designed as a pilot workshop, it allowed CSAS to understand the needs of the teachers as they prepare to teach the new World History curriculum. The feedback from the teachers was a valuable source of information for planning and designing future workshops. We expect this to be the first of several such workshops as we expand the scope of what the Center offers in terms of educational outreach to teachers.



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