

# South Asia Center

OUTREACH BULLETIN

Spring 2006

## New Faces at Syracuse: Subho Basu

### Dr. Subho Basu



Born in the artistic community of Shantiniketan in West Bengal, made famous by Nobel Prize winning author Rabindranath Tagore, Dr Subho Basu didn't exactly walk down the literary path. Harboring dreams of one day writing the great Bengali novel, Basu stayed in Shantiniketan till he completed a Master of Arts in History. Frequent discussions with his father, who was a history teacher, stimulated his interests. From his ring-side view in the island of prosperity that was Shantiniketan, he observed dramatic political changes in West Bengal including the rise of Marxism, the peasant movement and the dramatic impact of land reforms. Dr. Basu then left the cultured environs of Shantiniketan, not with a manuscript that would make him Shantiniketan's next Tagore, but for a Graduate degree from New Delhi's elite Jawaharlal Nehru University. Journeying to the hallowed halls of Cambridge as a Fellow, he focused on researching Workers' politics in Bengal, concentrating on strikes and national movements of Bengal's workers. In an illustrious career, he then went on to teach at the College of St. Mark & St. John, Exeter University and at the London University affiliated School of Oriental and African Studies. In 2000 he visited the United States where he was impressed with the education system and in 2002 he shifted base from the UK to the US, and began teaching at Illinois State University. In the fall of 2005, Dr Basu moved to the History Department of Syracuse University and joined the Maxwell faculty.

Dr Basu has observed some radical differences between teaching methodologies in US schools and the rather rigid structures prevailing in the UK. Courses in Britain, he says, are decided by the faculty, and students must accept the courses set out for them. Examinations are held at the end of the year and the influence of bureaucracy is unshakable. In contrast, he finds that within American academia, personal relationships between professors and students, teacher-centric programs and students' abilities to design individualized courses of study, make the system more dynamic. Dr Basu feels his work as a professor is made more interesting within the US education system. It strikes him that while students in the UK may be far more aware of their surroundings and environment than their American counterparts, most of them carry stereotyped ideological baggage of the past. American students on the other hand, he feels, are far less informed, but for that reason they are more eager for stimuli with respect to their environment.

Dr Basu's current research foci include state-society relationships, radical politics and labor issues in South Asia. He is interested in viewing history through the literary representations of diverse groups and is currently researching perceptions of non-Indian societies by Bengali travel writers between 1880 and 1930. Within the scope of this project his big questions are, how did these writers view the concepts of Nation, citizenship and global social hierarchy and how did they bridge between all three?

### Special points of interest:

- South Asian Religious Transnationalism Symposium
- South Asia Human Rights Film Festival
- IAS Training Project
- Indian civil servants
- New Film Reviews

### Inside this issue:

New Faces	1,2
NGO	3
IAS Training Project	3
IAS/IIM-B	4,5
Faculty Updates	6,7
Religious Transnational Symposium	8
Spring Events	9
South Asian Human Rights Film Festival	10
Film Reviews	11,12 2
DIPA in Mysore	13
Summer in Madurai	14
Student Updates	15

## New Faces at Syracuse: Gulshan Sooklall

### Gulshan Sooklall



You would think eight generations of toiling under the hot African sun, and swimming in the warm waters of the Indian Ocean thousands of miles from India would have erased the remaining links Gulshan Sooklall had to the land of his ancestors. But language makes fading relations come to life. Gulshan belongs to a very traditional family whose roots are deep in the culture and language of rural India. Growing up, he watched his family and village move from subsistence farming and extreme poverty to the fruits and benefits of Mauritius's economic boom that began in 1968. He watched as farming became an occupation relegated to the past. Gulshan was introduced to the concept of social status when he enrolled in an elite High School in a town some distance from his village. Boys from families like his faced the decision of whether to use the family's funds to go to school or for their father to go to work; other children would drive up in chauffeured cars. When other boys would spend time after school trying to catch the eye of pretty Mauritian girls, Gulshan and his friends would run back home to work the fields. And every morning he'd start his day being teased about the smell of tomatoes emanating from his body!

Gulshan's ties to Hindi only strengthened when he won a scholarship from the Indian government to study at Delhi University's Hans Raj College. It was in Delhi that he developed a passion for Ghazals and began writing his own. So also began his long involvement with Indian literature with all its emphasis on religion and culture. As he read,

he moved on to post-independence poetry which struck a chord within him. While not as aesthetically pleasing as traditional Indian poetry, he felt that the genre brought home significant truths about life's realities.

Upon his return to Mauritius, Gulshan began research for his PhD where he focused on the social side of poetry, specifically the depiction of cultural change within Mauritian poetry. Currently his work revolves around economic changes and external influences which are causing social changes within Mauritian society. Having worked at the Mauritius National TV & Radio (MBC), Gulshan's work on Transnationalism attempts to prove how the State, through media and education, can bridge cultural, religious and ideological differences.

As a Fulbright scholar at Syracuse, Gulshan has found an added perspective to the issue of transnationalism. The experience and perspectives gained during his stay in the US, he says, are influencing the way he looks at individuals and groups. The courage that is derived from a pure democracy combined with political freedom is what most fascinates him. He says Syracuse itself is a dramatic experience for someone used to digging his toes into the warm sands of the beaches of Mauritius. The cold snow and the warmth of a well stocked library have made his sojourn into central New York even more of an adventure. Digging through the library, he has found treasures no longer available in Mauritius. These include books on his homeland that went out of print long ago, and even one book that its own Mauritian author no longer possesses. Gulshan's dream is now to take the knowledge in those books back home where it may serve generations looking at their past, their present and their future.

### Education in a Globalizing India

During a too-brief trip to India in December, South Asia Center Director, Ann Grodzins Gold, attended an unusual conference in the city of Varanasi. Focused on "Children, Youth, and their Education in a

Globalizing India," the conference was organized and hosted by the Centre for Postcolonial Education located just inside Ravidas Gate in the part of Varanasi called Lanka. This research center is run from the grounds of an innovative school, "Vidyashram, the Southpoint" founded in 1988 with aims "to expand education at many levels, to teach the arts of citizenship, and to integrate popular and folk arts into formal education." The conference program covered a wide range of educational topics and settings. These included broad and informative approaches such as a presentation on Islamic education in India as well as more closely focused case studies such as an inspiring example of efforts to create flexible educational opportunities for severely disadvantaged children who live right near some of Delhi's wealthiest neighborhoods. Syracuse anthropology alum, Chaise LaDousa -- now an Assistant Professor at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven -- launched a lively discussion and attracted the attention of the local Hindi press with his paper based on ethnographic research in Varanasi and dealing with ideas about Hindi versus English language instruction. Gold's paper, co-authored with Bhoju Ram Gujar, focused on Mr. Gujar's experiences as headmaster of a rural government middle school in Rajasthan and the ways his travels in the United States and England have influenced his approach to primary education. More details of the conference, as well as copies of the papers, are available at <http://sitemaker.umich.edu/varanasidecember2005>



## The NGO Initiative at Moynihan Institute for Global affairs

Globalization, global market integration, migration, and democratization have unleashed a plethora of cross-national challenges and opportunities unimaginable a few decades ago. They have contributed to change, uncertainty, and disruption in the world. Transnational non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are an increasingly important “organizational resource” for helping people manage these concerns focusing as they do on such global issues as poverty alleviation, refugee flows, human rights, fair trade, environmental degradation, and broadening the participation of underrepresented citizens (e.g., women, disabled). In tackling these problems, transnational NGOs have exhibited a clear ability to foster collaboration among the various actors involved in global governance, but they have also contributed at times to increasing the level of conflict, depending on their mission, style, and the strategies they have employed.

While the growing role that transnational NGOs play in meeting the challenges of globalization and democratization has come under increasing study, the factors contributing to their organizational effectiveness—or relative ineffectiveness—remain under investigated. The present project is intended to begin to fill this void by helping us better understand what transnational NGOs are—how they are organized and how governance and leadership choices influence their effectiveness as agents of change. The study reports on a large-scale, systematic interview study of the leadership of such organizations at both the regional and international levels. The focus is on creating indicators and baseline data for scholars and the NGO community to use in understanding how such organizations are evolving, the nature of their leadership, their funding strategies, how they perceive issues of transparency and accountability, the ways in which they evaluate their organizations’ impacts, the challenges they experience in working along side governments and international organizations, and the effects that they believe governments and international organizations are having on the nature of their activities.

It was with this goal in mind that Jishnu Shankar, Associate Director for the South Asia Center, visited Delhi and interviewed the heads of five different transnational NGOs in December 2005. The participating NGOs were chosen for diversity across considerations of area of specialization, relative size, and diversity of clientele. It was a very rewarding experience in terms of gauging the commonality of issues of concern across divergent NGO communities, as well as ideas for the role a university community can play in working with NGOs to make their working even more efficacious.

## Maxwell School Bags Prestigious IAS-Training Program with India Govt.

The Maxwell School recently received word from the Government of India that it has been awarded a prestigious three year contract to design and deliver an annual two month training program in India for 150 Indian Administrative Service officers. This is a major accomplishment for the school – winning a global competition for this project – and will involve faculty from across Maxwell departments. Programs such as this assist the school fulfill its mission to “Advance Citizenship, Scholarship and Leadership around the World.”

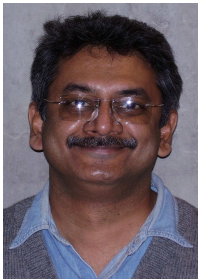
IAS officers today face a number of new challenges due to the changing domestic and international environment. Growing needs for innovative policy design and increased effectiveness in policy implementation and programme delivery go hand in hand with more vociferous demands for greater citizen participation and inclusiveness within a complex environment marked by rapid political and economic changes. These changes include not only the globalisation and liberalisation of the economy but an uncertain security environment, rapid technological shifts, and a changing interface between the government, the private sector, and the non profit community.

The goal of the training program is to increase IAS officers’ ability to analyze and formulate public policy. The officer’s experience to date is from the field level as well as Secretariat postings involving programme management and supporting policy formulation. The main focus of the training will be consolidation and assimilation of what has been learned from the field and from the time spent in the Secretariat, as well as preparation for the next phase during which their main task will be policy formulation in different sectors and overseeing implementation, as well as management of large public sector organizations.

Maxwell’s contract is for designing a program that will become part of a mandatory mid-career training program that all IAS officers will attend sometime during their 14th and 16th year of service. As part of the program, Maxwell is arranging for the IAS officers to spend two weeks visiting with academic institutions and government officials in China. The first program will take place during the summer of 2006. Please contact Executive Education if you are interested in additional information.



## Profile of Indian IAS officers in the



### Chandan Sinha

Born in the State of Jharkhand, Chandan grew up in quintessential small town India. In a move that took him from Hazaribagh to New Delhi, he was one of the selected few to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature at St Stephen's College, India's most prestigious Undergraduate institution. A very young Chandan was then chosen to take up a Liberal Arts Certificate Course at Davidson College from where he went on to a Master of Public Administration program at the University of South Carolina. Graduating in 1987, he left behind dreams of becoming a journalist to return home to work in the Public Administration field in India. After enrolling in a Master of Philosophy program, he joined the IAS in 1989. Attached to the West Bengal cadre, Chandan received two years of training in which his MPA gave him core skills in organizational understanding, personnel, public & data analysis. Placed as district magistrate of Cooch Bihar and West Midnapur -- two extremely backward areas plagued with problems -- Chandan has, like every IAS officer, faced an uphill battle to put into practice the theories learnt in graduate school. A successful public servant, Chandan believes the bureaucracy takes too much heat for being closed-minded. According to him, "Contrary to popular opinion, the bureaucracy is innovative, perhaps too innovative!" He believes that although there has been an erosion of some public institutions in India, administrative systems are evolving to accommodate the changing expectations of the people. Yet, as he says, "they are not changing fast enough." He believes civil servants can play a proactive, advocacy role in helping to bring about change.

According to Chandan, understanding the various dynamic aspects of administration requires constant skill updates. Enrolled in his second MA-PA, through the Maxwell School's Executive Education program, Chandan is now working towards two advanced certificates in 'conflict resolution' and 'management of International, public and NGOs'. He is also independently researching and working on developing teaching methodology for the IAS. He says, "Very little theory is being created in India and I hope to see the project bearing fruit for the IAS." Chandan will return to the IAS upon completing the MA-PA degree in a policy making position.

### L.K Atheeq



It is the story of many in India who aspire to join the elite ranks of the Indian Administrative services. Many aspire, but not many achieve what LK Atheeq has. Born on the border of the States of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka in a village called Pavagada, Atheeq crossed the invisible line between village life and governance through sheer grit and hard work. Inspired by his government employed father, a primary school teacher, Atheeq had the opportunity to move constantly between villages and to understand both the issues facing India's deprived and government apathy first hand. After completing a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Marketing, Atheeq moved to the state of Gujarat to work in India's most elite business school, the Indian Institute of Management in Ahmadabad, as a research assistant. After two and a half years of researching rural management, he joined the IAS in 1991. Atheeq

says, even though he worked in the IIM, surrounded by corporate influences, he never thought about joining the private sector, and still doesn't. Posted with the Karnataka cadre, he began his career as the Assistant Commissioner of a subdivision of the city of Mangalore. He dealt with issues concerning new industries, fisheries and rehabilitation of workers. The project closest to his heart in his career with the IAS has been the rehabilitation of 700 workers and their displaced families. The displacement had occurred when one of India's largest refinery and Petrochemicals Company MRPL, bought out land from the State to build its factories. The workers were successfully rehabilitated although there were political and cultural upheavals, within the premises of the factory. There was resistance to the project at every level and the key challenge for Atheeq was a moral dilemma of how to first displace and then rehabilitate the workers. His other pet projects were building housing for 1500 small scale beedi (local cigarettes made of rolled tobacco leaves) workers and the upgrading of slums by giving land rights to squatters. His strength he believes was his ability to connect to the people in his jurisdiction and his ability to redeem the government in their eyes. He says, "As officers become more bureaucratic, they lose the larger point, which politicians can't afford to do. Bureaucrats don't steer the country in new directions, politicians do. Examples of such visions are Chandra Babu Naidu (Former Chief Minister of the State of Andhra Pradesh who brought about a technology revolution in the state) and Manmohan Singh (Current Indian Prime Minister who in his former role as Finance Minister liberalized the Indian Economy)."

His interest in studying in the US was born in 2002 when he visited Washington DC to participate in a short term course on Public Private Partnership. Currently enrolled in Maxwell School's MA-PA certificate program, he is fo-

ocusing on issues of Macro Economic nature and believes the program has given him a more international outlook in his approach to issues in India. Despite his on-ground experience, Atheeq believes the Maxwell experience goes beyond more than just the classes he is taking. "Doing a graduate program at this stage of my career is bringing about a rigor in my thinking, and encouraging my questioning ability, something I had forgotten I had." A career officer, Atheeq returns to the IAS upon the completion of his program and hopes to work with an NGO, in a few years.

### IIM-Bangalore

Every year, Indian civil servants from the Indian Administrative Services, Indian Railways, Indian Police, the Forestry Service, and Telecommunications visit Syracuse to participate in a seven week training seminar on public policy analysis. A joint collaboration between the Indian Government and IIM (Indian Institute of Management) Bangalore, the program is sponsored by the Government of India, the United Nations Development Program and IIMB with the Maxwell School's Executive Education Program serving as the administrative unit coordinating all events. The participants are students in a special Executive program at IIMB, and spend seven weeks, of their one year stint, at Maxwell. Now into its fourth year, the program, headed by Professor Larry Schroeder and his team, lead discussions that range from US domestic policies to those of international concern. The program seems to have hit a bull's eye with the participants, who, with an average work experience of 12-15 years, aren't exactly new kids on the block. According to Brajmohan Agarwal, Secretary of Rail Coaches in the Indian Railway Services, "IIM gives you the Indian perspective. I came here [to Syracuse] with the expectation that I would gain international perspectives." Most participants found different policy coverage as the critical learning of the seven weeks.

The 2005 batch spent a week in Washington DC, where they interacted with US government officials, the EPA and the CSIS. While many were disappointed about being unable to meet their specific counter-parts, the over-all enthusiasm of being able to observe and interact with US officials was high. According to Sanjiv Srivastav, Additional Commissioner of Indian Customs who is working on a project to develop programs to counter money laundering and other financial crimes, "The library proved to be my greatest resource and learning experience. While it wasn't possible due to various security reasons to arrange meetings with Law Enforcement officials here in the US, the program did ensure that I received full access to their vast resources on the subject."

Upon completion of the seven week program, participating officers submit two policy analysis papers on countries other than India. The benefit from the analysis is the possibility of implementing the lessons drawn from the seminar and their real life experiences as civil servants. According to Prem Narayan, Deputy Chief Vigilance Officer of the Indian Railways, "I had expected a lot from this experience and I believe I got whatever I had expected and maybe even more. I believe the most valuable experience here for me was the perspective from the functioning of the Federal and State bodies here in the United States. The best practices of these bodies can now be implemented in India." D.S. Ravindran, Conservator with the Indian Forest Service, adds, "A lot of what was taught was pre-determined, but in terms of solutions, it gave us an opportunity to observe some very innovative ones influenced by the approaches of different countries."

Seven weeks, while not a long duration, was enough to make many participants homesick. But Maxwell students didn't let the homesickness last for long as Prem Narayan explained, "I was a bit lonely in the beginning. But students here are so forthcoming! They are extremely interested in India and the functioning of the country and interactions with them ensured that my homesickness didn't last too long!

Most participants agreed that the theoretical framework of analyzing a problem was the most important piece of knowledge they had gained during their time at Maxwell. But most also echoed the sentiments of Jyotishankar Choudhary, Director of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare when he said, "While we all absorbed the various academic and practitioner opinions on public policy, I believe the wealth of knowledge and information that exists within this team from India was also well utilized by Maxwell."

As civil servants must have the last word, suggestions to enrich the experience of the participants of the 2006 program flew fast and furious. According to Vikram Kapur, Director, at the IAS, 80% of the participating officers were engineers by profession, with a technical approach to problem solving. The program had shown him to think in a more out-of-the-box manner. Brajmohan Agarwal added that interactions with relevant US officials could be tailor-made to participating officers' core career tracks, while D.S. Ravindran felt the variety of the issues touched upon could be expanded and given further depth for an even more successful program.

## Faculty Updates

Our heartiest congratulations to Tula Goenka who was awarded tenure in the Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse University, in December 2005.

**Subho Basu**, History, recently published *Rethinking Indian Political Institutions* with Crispin Bates (Anthem Press, London) and "Knowledge for Politics: Partisan Histories and Communal Mobilization in India and Pakistan" with Suranjan Das in Max Paul Friedman and Padirac Kenney (ed) *Partisan Histories* (Palgrave, New York).

**Tej Bhatia**, Language, Literature and Linguistics, has a number of recent publications including, "Convergence of English in Russian TV Commercials" in *World English*. He was also invited to give a talk at Purdue University for the 11th Annual Conference of the International Association for World Englishes. His paper was titled, "Mentioning the Unmentionable." Bhatia was the plenary speaker at a conference on "Language, Culture, Globalization: Perspectives from South Asian Languages" at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign where he delivered a lecture on "Media Modalities, Multilingual Contexts and Marketing: Adverstiting in Rural India."

**Richard Breyer**, Television, Radio and Film, directed *Freedom's Call*, a documentary which examines the turbulence of the 1960's in the Deep South and two veteran journalists who covered the important stories of the Civil Rights Movement – Dorothy Gilliam, the first African American female reporter at The Washington Post, and renowned photographer Ernest Withers, whose photographs appeared in the black press, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and galleries and museums around the world.

**Tula Goenka**, Television, Radio and Film, produced and edited a short Spanish language documentary, *El Charango*. The film explores the relationship between the charango (a Bolivian string instrument) and the colonization of South America by the Spanish. She also organized the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual South Asia Human Rights Film Festival in April 2005. A chapter of her upcoming book -- an interview with Aparna Sen -- *Bollywood and Beyond: Conversations with Indian Filmmakers* was published in the literary magazine *Catamaran*.

**Ann Grodzins Gold**, Religion and Anthropology, was appointed as one of two William P. Tolley Distinguished Teaching Professors in the Humanities for 2005 – 2007. She has co-edited with Meena Khandelwal and Sondra L. Hausner an anthology, currently in press with Palgrave Macmillan, titled *Women's Renunciation in South Asia: Nuns, Yoginis, Saints, and Singers* for which she wrote an afterword, "Breaking Away." She presented a paper, "Turn to Stone: Anthropologizing Miracles in Rajasthan," at the University of Michigan's Center for South Asian Studies Scholarly Lecture Series and spoke about "Moral Vision in Rajasthani Narratives" at a plenary panel of the Society for the Anthropology of Religion in Vancouver. In

December she presented two invited papers, both co-authored with Bhoju Ram Gujar, at conferences in India.

**Tazim Kassam**, Religion, was on leave in 2005 doing research on the performance of *ginans*, the devotional song tradition of Ismaili Muslims. She co-edited a volume with Françoise Mallison titled *Ginans: Texts and Contexts: Essays on Ismaili Hymns from South Asia in Honor of Zawahir Moir* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, forthcoming). It includes her article, "Reframing Ginanic Studies: Thoughts on Multiple Positions and Interpretive Tropes." She also submitted an article on "Signifying Revelation in Islam," to appear in *Theorizing Scriptures*, edited by Vincent Wimbush (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, forthcoming 2006). She was invited to London in the summer to conduct seminars on Gender in Islam and Satpanth Ismaili Literature at the Institute of Ismaili Studies, and in the fall she participated in a conference in London on Abrahamic Traditions: Civil Society and Pluralism sponsored by the Chautauqua Institution.

**Prema Kurien**, Sociology, published several articles including, "Being Young, Brown, and Hindu: The Identity Struggles of Second generation Indian Americans" in *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*; "Caste Mobility, and the Gilding of Rituals: The Impact of Gulf Migration on Ezhavas in South Kerala" in the book *Stagnation, Retrograde Change, or Positive Progress? Vignettes from the Journey of the Other Backward Class Communities in the Process of Change in India*. She also edited a special issue of the *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* on the impact of immigrants on American institutions.

**Jishnu Shankar**, Hindi Instructor and Associate Director of the South Asia Center, Moynihan Institute, Maxwell, presented three papers, one at the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Conference, Rochester, New York, November 3-6, titled "Context, Pre-text and Text: Modern Aghor Literature"; another at the Second International Conference on Religions and Cultures in the Indic Civilization, New Delhi, India, December 17-20; and the third on Hindi pedagogy at Hindi PBIS Workshop, University of Texas at Austin, Texas, January 20-22. While in India, he also interviewed several heads of transnational NGOs for the Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs NGO initiative. He also completed and published the Extended Vocabulary list for the Hindi lessons pages at Syracuse University, sortable by Hindi alphabet and parts of speech, funded by the South Asia Language Resource Center.

**Cecilia Van Hollen**, Anthropology, received a 2006-07 American Institute for Indian Studies (AIIS) Senior Short Term fellowship for her research project on "HIV/AIDS, Women, and Childbearing in Tamil Nadu, India." She recently published, "Nationalism, Transnationalism and the



## Faculty Updates

Politics of 'Traditional' Indian Medicine for HIV/AIDS" in *Asian Medicine and Globalization*. She was invited to be the keynote speaker for the World AIDS Day at SUNY-Potsdam where she presented a paper on "Women and HIV/AIDS in India."

**Susan S. Wadley**, Anthropology, has spent eight weeks in India over the past year, on two separate trips with funding from the American Institute of Indian Studies for a project examining rural-urban connections, and the transformations of consumer culture. She has begun investigating the transformations of the 'performance' of rural weddings. She also published the book *Essays in North Indian Folklore* (Chronicle Books, New Delhi).

**Joanne Punzo Waghorne**, Religion, gave several presentations in spring 2005 on her new work concerning the rising popularity -- in urban India (Chennai), Singapore and beyond -- of Hindu-oriented, guru-based new religious movements: "Making Hinduism Global: New Guru Centered Religious Movements as Confluent with or Counter to Hindutva?" at UC Los Angeles; "Sannidhi/Samadhi: the Temple Tomb in Tamil Nadu" at UC Berkeley; and "New Religious Movements in the Era of rapid Globalization: From Urban India to the World" at Siena College in New York. She also received a senior fellowship from the American Institute of Indian Studies for research this coming summer in Chennai.

### Faculty Grants

Three of the core South Asia faculty, Susan Wadley, Joanne Punzo Waghorne, and Cecilia Van Hollen received highly competitive senior research fellowships from the American Institute of Indian Studies.

Jishnu Shankar, Hindi Instructor, received the South Asia Language Resource Center's minigrant for development of an online vocabulary list.

### Awards

**Professor Joanne Waghorne**, in the Department of Religion was selected to receive the American Academy of Religion's Award for Excellence in the Study of Religion in the Analytical-Descriptive Studies category for her innovative 2004 book published by Oxford University Press and titled *Diaspora of the Gods: Modern Hindu Temples in an Urban Middle-Class World*. The award was presented at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting in Philadelphia.

**Associate Professor Prema Kurien**, in the Department of Sociology, received the 2005 Distinguished Article Award from the American Sociological Association's section on the Sociology of Religion at their Annual Meeting.

View from the rooftop, Karimpur, India, Nov 3, 2005 - (Kavin Gunj)



**Prof. John Thompson, Illustrator, Visual and Performing Arts** went to India for two weeks in October and etched his observations skillfully on paper. We present them here for your visual delight. The sketch here is titled "View from the Rooftop, Karimpur, 2005." You will see other sketches on pages 8, 9 and 12.

## South Asian Religious Transnationalism: Regional Dynamics, Global Passages

The Syracuse-Cornell University South Asia consortium announces a symposium on South Asian Religious Transnationalism. This event will take place in the Killian Room, 500 Hall of Languages, beginning 4 pm on Friday, 21 April and running all day on Saturday, 22 April 2006.

Economic globalization is only one face of the increasing interconnections between disparate parts of the world. In the long run, even more significant may be the transnational forging of religious identities. These transnational networks and the mechanisms through which they operate remain relatively understudied. South Asia is a particularly important node in the rise and spread of global religious networks. It is home to most of the major religions of the world; is a significant exporter of unskilled, skilled, and professional migrants to various countries around the globe; and is well-integrated into international economic and mass communication circuits. While this conference will focus on religious networks that originate in South Asia, we track these networks as they emanate into other areas of the world.

Our symposium has several goals. We will examine a range of transnational movements within various South Asian religious traditions. We will also study the characteristics and impacts of different types of transnational religious movements emanating from the sub-continent including those espousing religious nationalism, those whose goal is the reproduction of homeland traditions in diaspora, and those sustaining or diffusing spiritual teachings. Our ultimate objective is to situate the rise of South Asian religious transnationalism against the backdrop of contemporary international developments. What types of social, economic, cultural, and political forces condition the emergence and form of South Asian religious movements? How do South Asian religious movements manifest themselves in other countries in the world and what

accounts for similarities and differences? What connections do South Asian religious movements forge with groups around the world and how do these connections impact such movements? While our modest symposium cannot provide definitive answers, we hope to achieve better understandings of these issues by the end of the conference.

**Mark Juergensmeyer**, Director of Global and International Studies and Professor of Religion and Sociology, University of California, Santa Barbara, will deliver Friday afternoon's opening keynote address on "The Global Dimensions of Religious Terrorism in South Asia." Dr. Juergensmeyer has studied a variety of South Asian religious traditions and the politicization of religion in the sub-continent. He has published more than two hundred articles and a dozen books including the widely-read *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*.

### Other invited speakers include:

**Ahmed Afzal**, Visiting Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Colgate University and recent Ph.D. in anthropology from Yale University. Afzal's research on Pakistanis in Houston concerns multiple aspects of Islamic identity.

**Brian Axel**, anthropologist and author of *The Nation's Tortured Body: Violence, Representation, and the Formation of a Sikh "Diaspora"*. Axel will speak about his forthcoming book entitled *Vulnerable Citizenship* which addresses questions of violence, diaspora, technologies of communication and Sikh life.

**Meena Khandelwal**, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Women's Studies, University of Iowa and author of *Women in Ochre Robes*. Professor Khandelwal will present some of her latest research on persons of non-Hindu origins who have established themselves as gurus in India.

**Vineeta Sinha**, Assistant Professor of Sociology from the National University

of Singapore. Professor Sinha will present her work on the Tamil goddess Mariamman's new life in Singapore.

**Maya Warriar**, Lecturer in Indian Religion at the University of Wales, Lampeter and author of *Hindu Selves in a Modern World*. Dr. Warriar specializes in the study of religious practice in the Hindu diaspora and transnational Hindu guru organizations. She will address the increasing popularity of South Asian gurus such as Mata Amritanandamayi (also known as Amma or mother) in the west.

Participants from the Cornell-Syracuse South Asia consortium include

**Angela Herrald** (Anthropology); **Tazim Kassam** (Religion); **Prema Kurien** (Sociology); **Moushumi Shabnam** (Anthropology); **Joanne Waghorne** (Religion); **Andrew Willford** (Anthropology).

Co-sponsors include the Departments of Religion and of Sociology, the Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs and the Religion and Society program.

For further information please contact:

Prema Kurien, Associate Professor of Sociology and Conference Organizer [pkurien@syr.edu](mailto:pkurien@syr.edu) or Ann Gold, Director, South Asia Center, [aggold@syr.edu](mailto:aggold@syr.edu)





# Spring Events

**Gulshan Sooklall**, University of Mauritius

The Search for National Identity amid Reinforced Diasporic Links and Reinvented Roots: the Case of Mauritius

**January 31, 12:30-1:50 pm, 341 Eggers**

**Dia Mohan**, Hobart & William Smith Colleges

Spoiled Sons and Sincere Daughters: Schooling, Security, and Empowerment in Rural West Bengal.

**February 07, 12:30-1:50pm, 341 Eggers**

**Susan Wadley**, Anthropology, Brown bag Series

Transforming Weddings in Rural India: Borrowing from Bollywood.

**February 8, 205 Maxwell**

**Nandini Sengupta**, Syracuse University

The British Woman Traveler in India: Narratives of Interracial Intimacy.

**February 28, 12:30-1:50pm, 341 Eggers**

**Sanjukta Mukherjee**, Syracuse University

Social reproduction and the India State: Compromises between market forces and gender regime.

**March 21, 2.- 3:15 pm, 341 Eggers**

**Gayatri Reddy**, University of Illinois, Chicago

With respect to the Third Sex: Hijras and the negotiation of social difference in Hyderabad.

**March 23, 4:00 pm, 341 Eggers**

**Ray Smith Symposium**

Mirror for the Muslim Prince: Islam and the Theory of Statecraft.

**March 30– April 1 , Maxwell 204**

**South Asian Human Rights Film Festival**

**March 31–April 2, Shemin Auditorium, Palace Theater**

**Irfan Habib**, National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies.

Transmission of Science through Translations: A case study of Urdu in 19th Century India.

**April 11, 4:00 pm, 341 Eggers**

**South Asia Center Spring Symposium**

South Asian Religious Transnationalism: Regional Dynamics, Global Passages

**April 21- April 22, Killian Room**

*inside courtyard with well and crow  
November 3, 2005, Kanchipuram, India.*



Well and Crow (2005). Prof Thompson

# South Asia Human Rights Film Festival

**Friday, March 31 through Sunday, April 2, 2006**

**Shemin Auditorium, Shaffer Art Building, SU & The Palace Theater, East Syracuse.**

The three-day film and video festival features dynamic full-length films and documentaries by well-known South Asian directors and independent filmmakers throwing light on gripping issues, such as mental health, deafness, HIV/AIDS, LGBTQ issues, women's rights, etcetera. Screenings will be followed by a discussion on the issues raised. *Cosponsored with Breakthrough and The Asia Society.*

*All screenings are free and open to the public*

*Some of the films to be screened include:*

***Sancharam*** (Ligy Pullappally, 107 minutes, 2004, India) - LGBTQ issues

This stunning feature film debut chronicles a romance between two young women living in Kerala. But the relationship is discovered, and a both tragic and triumphant ending is triggered.

***15 Park Avenue*** (Aparna Sen, 116 min, 2005, India) – Mental Health

The narrative pivots around the relationship of two sisters – one a successful professor with a powerful personality and the other battling schizophrenia.

***A Human Question*** (T. Jayshree, 53 minutes, India/Italy/US) – HIV/AIDS/Health

This documentary forces us to rethink the relationship between Intellectual Property and Human Rights as it traces the story of the global struggle to make HIV/AIDS drugs more affordable and available.

***In Whose Name*** (Nandini Sikand, 11 min, 2005, India) – Identity and Conflict

This experimental short explores the co-opting of icons by political agendas and is told through personal narrative, Super 8mm home movies, Bollywood film clips and comic book art.

***Kashmiriyat*** (Munizae Jahangir, 25 min, 2005, Pakistan)

The documentary meets some of the largely dispersed Kashmiri Pandit community who still live in the midst of violence-torn Kashmir and tries to understand their reasons for doing so.

***The House on Gulmohar Avenue*** (Samina Mishra, 30 min, 2005, India)

Set in a part of New Delhi called Okhla, an area that is predominantly inhabited by Muslims, the documentary traces the personal journey of the filmmaker through the areas of identity and belonging, and the political context in India today.

This event is partially funded by the Division of Student Affairs U Encounter Program.



Another major film event, **Syracuse International Film and Video Festival**, April 6-9, will be showing seven films by Indian film-makers. These include *Reflections* by Bejoy Namblar, *The Bypass* by Amit Kumar, *Hazaaron Khwahishein Aisi* by Sudhir Mishra, *Rich Man's World* by Thomas George, *War and Peace* by Anand Patwardhan, *Kalahaar* by Tejas Degskar, and *Continuum* by Anand Gandhi. In addition, Anand Patwardhan will be a judge at the festival. The Festival will feature approximately 130 films from all over the world. For more information, check out their website at: <http://www.syrfilmfest.com>.

## New Additions to the South Asian Film Library

**Banaras Muharram and the Coals of Karbala**, Directed and produced by Marc Katz (70 minutes, 2004, DVD)

Marc Katz's film, "Banaras Muharram and the Coals of Karbala," provides a close look at the celebration of Muharram, an Islamic festival, in the pilgrimage center of Varanasi which is situated at the confluence of three sacred rivers, the Ganges, Yamuna and Sarasvati and considered by many Hindus to be the holiest site in India. The Muharram festival commemorates the massacre of Hussein, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad and the second son of the Prophet's cousin 'Ali who was married to his daughter Fatima.

Katz begins the film with beautiful shots of Varanasi and a haunting voice of a woman singing, "O Mustafa, this is my wish, this is my waiting; from my lips constantly flow the words, Mustafa, Mustafa". He then deftly narrates the horrific and tragic events that led to the division between the Shi'a and the Sunni only a few decades after Muhammad died. On the 10th day of Muharram in 680 CE, Hussein and his family and supporters were on their way to Karbala. They were intercepted by Yazid's army and tortured, starved and massacred. Shi'a communities annually recall, reenact, and mourn this tragedy for ten days during the month of Muharram.

In addition to providing sufficient historical details to appreciate the significance of Muharram to the Shi'a, Katz also carefully situates the festival within the particular multi-religious setting of Banaras. What unfolds is a story of a distinctly *Banarasi* Muharram festival that extols the spirit of Kabir's exhortation that Turk and Hindu, like different pots, are made of the same clay. The film documents the sequence of Muharram rituals and preparations including the construction of *taziyas* (replicas of Hussein's mausoleum), *majlises* or gatherings where grief-stricken men (and women in their own spaces) cry as they hear the story retold, processions that include scores of young men literally running over the "coals of Karbala" and wounding themselves to feel the suffering of Hussein and his family, and distribution of sweets, sherbat and khichdi at the end of the festival.

Emphasized and illustrated throughout the film is the way that the festival of Muharram in Banaras creates shared ritual gestures and spaces that enhance cordial relationships between not only Shi'a and Sunni Muslims, but also non-Muslim neighbors including Hindus, who participate in the performances of *qawwali*, visitation to tombs, and even sword and stick-wielding skills during the *taziya* procession. A fascinating example of this transference and sharing of religious symbol is a *taziya* in the shape of a Hindu temple constructed and contributed by Hindu potters. Katz endeavors to convey that in addition to mourning Hussein, the locally specific message of *Banarasi* Muharram is one of peaceful relations. During the breast-beating ritual of *matam*, the men chant: "I will beat myself, beat myself, before I beat my brother! Never again Karbala! Never again Karbala!"

*Review by Tazim Kassam*

**Nalini by Day, Nancy by Night**, Directed By Sonali Gulati (26 mins 40 secs, 2005, DVD)

"Nalini by Day, Nancy by Night" takes the viewer on a journey from the U.S. to New Delhi, India, to explore the terms under which hundreds of call-centers and their Indian employees have been integrated into the transnational economy. Directed by Sonali Gulati, this 26-minute documentary captures how college-educated youth in India—as Anne Scott, Carol Jones, and Toby Smith—provide customer service to consumers in the U.S., the U.K. and Australia. Gulati's footage is multi-angled: it covers the managers' perspectives on outsourcing, call-center workers' impressions of their work, and the imprint that the burgeoning industry has been leaving on India's economic, cultural, and social landscape.

According to the managers and executives running this industry, the twelve hour time difference between India and the U.S. and the availability of a large English-speaking workforce at a low cost explains the rapid proliferation and success of the industry in India. The foreignness of Indian first names and the potentially distracting quality of the country's regional accents, however, posed the only snags in this ideal set-up, ordained primarily by colonial history and present economic restructuring, and partially by fortuitous placement in the geographical order of things. The fact that what can be exotic and dreamy in novels can be rather infuriating and agonizing in the midst of an exchange about rebooting computers or billing disputes did not escape the executives charged with establishing this industry.

Thus, in order to bring its western consumers psychologically closer to their customer service providers, this industry has done two things: it has given Christian first and last-names packaged with U.S. or U.K.-specific cultural knowledge to the call-center workers, and it has deployed the assistance of spoken-English institutes to blot traces of confusion-inducing



“regional” accents out of Indians’ speech. Gulati’s camera captures a scene where a young male, with a post-graduate degree, appears for a language screening test for a job at a call-center. He explains how he has been denied call-center jobs before given his heavy “regional accent,” a north Indian accent to be precise. He also states that to improve his English, he has started watching the National Geographic channel and to emulate speech-patterns used in its shows. Others following a similar path of linguistic ablution were prescribed a simple but presumably compelling dose: a daily fifteen minute viewing of channels such as Discovery, Animal Planet, or National Geographic. Culture training provided to aspirant telemarketers includes coverage of information on lifestyle, cars, interests and hobbies, sports, movies, foods, and festivals of people in the U.S. or U.K. Halloween, for example, has made it into Indian call-center employees’ archive of cultural knowledge about the U.S.

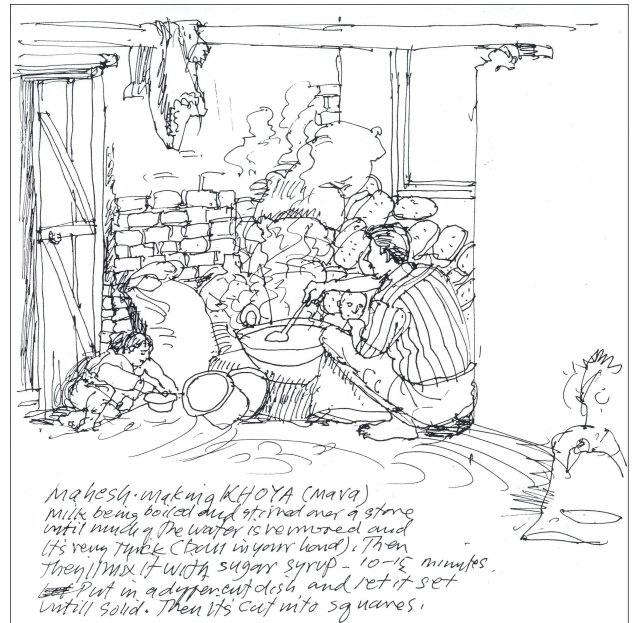
This documentary also captures the cultural and economic consequences of the call-center industry in India. Gulati mentions that although she had gone to India expecting these call-centers to be sophisticated sweatshops, it appeared that call-center jobs are highly sought-after by millions and that employees have access to facilities such as transportation, meals, recreation rooms, and relatively decent pay. Anne (neutral pseudonym), one of the persons interviewed, earned a monthly salary of \$210, which according to Gulati is equivalent to the pay of a fresh MBA graduate in India. Typically, people interviewed mentioned that they have made good friends and in general enjoy their work. Incentives, contests, and prizes—in the form of burgers, pizzas, or coffeehouse visits—have been designed to break the monotony of customer-service work and to make this employment appealing to young people. Tracing the economic ripple-effect this industry has had in India, a manager states that each telemarketing job generates extensive employment opportunities for others in services and industries that sustain call-centers. People employed as caterers, waiters, security guards, equipment manufactures, architects, interior designers, construction site workers, cab drivers, petrol pump attendants, voice and accent trainers, technicians, and janitors, to name a few, have seen a surge in job openings.

This documentary provides an evocative and accessible overview of the economic, cultural, and transnational implications of the growing call-center industry in India. It can be used a resource for students in courses on South Asia, globalization, gender, culture, and language.

*Review by Payal Banerjee*

### VICHAAR: A Student Initiative

This year marks the second year of the reconstituted Vichaar Graduate Student Group. This year we have continued our previous activities, while we have also attempted to experiment with new types of events. During the group's fall meetings, several group members continued our tradition of graduate students sharing their on-going research with a diverse group of their peers. As our membership represents people who work in areas throughout South Asia from a variety of disciplines and with a variety of theoretical interests, these presentations were a point for us to share ideas and engage one another concerning diverse happenings drawn from across South Asia. This year Vichaar has also introduced a new seminar series and reading group. In the fall semester we held the first two seminars in the Vichaar Afternoon Seminar Series. These seminars feature Syracuse South Asia faculty. Although scheduled during the normal meeting time of the South Asia Center Seminar Series, they differ in format, including a longer discussion period after the speaker's presentation so that a deeper dialogue may develop between speaker and audience – an interdisciplinary gathering of faculty and graduate students. In the spring semester the Vichaar Group plans to further diversify scholarly interactions by forming a peer reading and discussion group. In this new format we hope to experiment with ways in which the group can collectively address diverse issues and texts from across the South Asian subcontinent. The first theme of the semester will be regional and state politics in the pre-independence and postcolonial periods. For further information contact Ian Wilson at [IAWilson@maxwell.syr.edu](mailto:IAWilson@maxwell.syr.edu).



Mahesh making Khoya (mava), (2005)

Prof Thompson

## DIPA in Mysore:

### SU Undergraduate Kristin Swanton Describes her Fall Semester



Mysore is a lovely city, located in southern Karnataka, about 3 hours southeast from Bangalore. It is considered a small city despite its population being over 1 million. It has a relatively high elevation, which allows the temperature to be more consistent throughout the day, as well as the year. When I arrived in mid – August, it was hotter in New York than it was in Mysore, being around 75 degrees Fahrenheit.

Historically, Mysore has been an important place, as it was once the home of the Maharaja and now has many attractions, including over 10 palaces, various colleges and universities, Brindavan Gardens, and a Chamundi Hindu temple. Based on this background, Mysore is considered to be more conservative, yet many tourists and students help to balance this out. These are just some of the many reasons why the DIPA program for India was perfectly located. Our home in Mysore was the Dhvanyaloka Centre for Indian Studies, a small campus that provided housing for up to 22 students, with a small library, auditorium, computer facility, dining room, and kitchen. Our courses lasted 10 weeks and were mostly in the morning and early afternoon, allowing us to eat out for dinner and travel to some of the places that makes India famous. Additionally, we were able to complete a research project, internship, or independent study in a specific area of interest, which provided me the opportunity to learn more about Indian archaeology and paleontology.

One of the most obvious differences was with Indian food, which was often spicier and predominantly vegetarian, especially in the south. There were many inexpensive and tasty restaurants nearby, though it took me a while to become accustomed to the flavors and manners of eating. I now very much enjoy and miss eating with my fingers and have found American food to be quite bland.

One of the most common characteristics was the warmth that many Indians gave to us foreign students. Though with some men this wasn't always the case, but for the most part, we certainly felt welcomed, which was a wonderful feeling when we had traveled half way around the world and sometimes felt lost and confused.

In particular, Indians certainly responded and encouraged our acculturation into Indian society, as I often would wear the bindi, salvār kamiz or sari, and make my best attempt at speaking Kannada or Hindi. The sooner that I made this transition, the easier it became to travel around and be more widely accepted as an outsider making an effort to be a part of India. With Mysore as “small” as it is and after spending most of my four months there, I truly felt like I had become a part of the community, which is something that I have never experienced before in my travels throughout North America and Western Europe.

DIPA and Syracuse have certainly given me an opportunity to learn about a culture that is so remote from mine, as well as allowed me to learn more about myself than I ever anticipated. For more information about DIPA's program in India see <http://suabroad.syr.edu/programs/other/area.asp?where=india>

### A Reminder to South Asia Faculty & Staff at SU

Mr. Gurnek Singh, South Asia Librarian at SU, reminds us that the Syracuse University Library provides a variety of instructional services to assist Syracuse University students, faculty, and staff in locating, assessing, and using information for research.

He is available in the Library for Group Tours and Group Instructions, as well as for on one on one discussion, on Library's available resources, services and web based research tools. Faculty and staff can also contact him at any time to discuss their ongoing or forthcoming papers and projects vis-a-vis available library resources on their topics. Email: [gxsingh@syr.edu](mailto:gxsingh@syr.edu)

## Summer in Madurai: Immersion is what you put into it!

by Connie Etter, Syracuse University

*Connie went on an AIIS summer language program to South India. While she learnt a lot during her trip, her astute assessment is that immersion must be an active process of consciously taking in the culture.*

A few days before taking an overnight train from Madurai to Chennai last August, I sat with 12 classmates and 6 teachers writing out reflections on the summer. I was a student in the American Institute of Indian Studies Summer Tamil Language Program. I remember thinking about how the intensive language program fell short of its “immersion” goal. With 12 classmates from North American universities, a trip to the English language theatre to see *Batman Begins* with my friends, and almost daily excursions across town to Coffee Day for cold espresso drinks and study sessions accompanied by Linkin Park and Michael Jackson, my dependence on things familiar – linguistic and cultural – seemed unshaken. I continued to emphasize this familiarity as my friends and family asked how my summer was when I returned late last August. My reply was to say that I was a student with a daily schedule not unlike the one I engage with here in Syracuse. I went to class, studied, wrote emails, drank coffee, and watched movies. I did, however, always make sure to say that my idli and dosai breakfasts with chutney in Madurai were significantly better than the usual cold cereal breakfasts that start my days here!



couraging new friends and shrugged my shoulders skeptically. We waited at the door. Miraculously, our rickshaw driver appeared. A success.

Rickshaw drivers continued to be some of my most important teachers throughout the summer, as did Alice, a young woman who worked in a tiny shop near our house. I would often stop on my way home from class, park my blue bike (many days have the tires filled with air at the bike shop next door), buy some Cadbury chocolate or Masala Cheetos, and be invited to sit behind the counter to talk. The sentences were not complex. Nonetheless we talked creatively, building a friendship with conversations about families, futures, marriages, school, food, and even 9/11. I made other friends at a music store downtown and developed a plan for future visits. Each time I found myself in a rickshaw with music, I would ask the driver which movie it was from. Then I would take this information to the music store and enquire about the movie and soundtrack. I left Madurai with a few too many CDs, but the friendships and conversations were worth it!

While mediated by cell phones, masala Cheetos, cappuccino, and CDs, I was immersed in Tamil life and language all along. Together with formal classroom training and fieldtrips to temples, my daily life in Madurai offered unique experiences invaluable for myself and my classmates in the AIIS Tamil Summer Language Program. Echoing the insights offered by the feminist theories that inform my study of anthropology here at SU, I learned last summer that immersion is never complete, predictable, or passively experienced. Studying Tamil in Madurai was an immersion experience that was unpredictable, fragmented. It was a continuously active process of seeking friendships and alliances. Only when I engaged in this always difficult and challenging process did I learn how to build community in a globalized world, to learn about language and life as a Tamil language student in Madurai.

As I reflect more on the summer, I must admit that some of my most vivid memories and best stories center around awkward, but somehow eventually effective, Tamil conversations. Two days after moving in to a three-story house with three students from the University of Texas-Austin, I found myself the Tamil spokesperson for our house. Although none of us could boast about our spoken Tamil capabilities, I had one summer more practice than they did (having spent the previous summer at the University of Wisconsin in Tamil classes). We needed to go out and get dinner, so someone handed me their cell phone to call the rickshaw driver whose number we were given by one of our teachers. Thus began my summer of Tamil! I didn't even have the exaggerated facial clues and hand gestures to guide the conversation. I was on the phone for quite awhile. Always fumbling for words, finding phrases and repeating them over and over again, a couple lengthy silences, and finally I heard “I know. Okay. [something something] 5 minutes.” I turned off the phone, looked to my en-



## Fellows and Student Updates

### FLAS FELLOWS

The South Asia Center has named eight Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellows for this academic year, whose studies will reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the Fellowship and its focus on language. We are proud to welcome to the Center's family the following individuals. For the 2005-2006 academic year, Foreign Language Area Studies fellowships were awarded to:

<b>Emera Bridger</b>	<b>Anthropology</b>
<b>Sangeetha Ekambaram</b>	<b>Religion</b>
<b>Connie Etter</b>	<b>Anthropology</b>
<b>Cassidy Perrault</b>	<b>Anthropology</b>
<b>Carolyn Rodal</b>	<b>International Relations/ Anthropology</b>
<b>Lindsey Reider</b>	<b>Anthropology</b>
<b>Angela Rudert</b>	<b>Religion</b>
<b>Mukesh Vidyasagar</b>	<b>International Relations</b>

### BHARATI SUMMER RESEARCH GRANT

#### AY 2005-06

The friends and family of Agehananda Bharati established a memorial grant in his honor in the early 1990s. Each year, one to three awards of up to \$1500 are made to doctoral students in the Maxwell School for research leading to their dissertation research on South Asia. This year's recipients were:

<b>Payal Banerjee</b>	<b>Sociology</b>
<b>Kasturi Gupta</b>	<b>Sociology</b>
<b>Sanjukta Mukherjee</b>	<b>Geography</b>

### Student Updates

**Sadaf Ahmed**, doctoral candidate, Anthropology, is currently teaching in the Religious Studies Department at Hobart and William Smith College. Her research is geared towards understanding why an increasing number of middle-and-upper class women have been actively turning towards and engaging with a rigid form of Islam propagated by Al-Huda, an Islamic school for women that was established in Islamabad in 1994.

**Payal Banerjee**, doctoral candidate, Sociology published an essay with co-author Frank Ridzi, titled "The Spirit of Outsourcing: Corporate and State Regulation of Labor under H-1B Visa and TANF Policies in the U.S" in *Worker Participation: Practices and Possibilities*, Vicki Smith (ed.). *Research in the Sociology of Work*, Volume 16. Oxford: JAI/Elsevier Press, 2006.

**Jamie Johnson**, doctoral student, Anthropology, spent the summer of 2005 conducting preliminary ethnographic fieldwork among Ladhaki Buddhists and Kashmiri Muslims in Leh, the capital of Ladakh. This study is a part of her ongoing project on "Accommodating Change: the Dynamics of Place in a Changing Urban Environment" which examines how long term residents and newcomers have perceived the physical transformation of Leh, and subsequently navigate the expansion of built environment resulting from tourism.

**Sanjukta Mukherjee**, doctoral candidate, Geography, has been working on her dissertation tentatively titled 'Restructuring the Global Software Industry: Gender, Geography and the Indian Miracle'. She recently presented some of her findings in the International Conference on New Global Workforces & Virtual Workplaces: Connections, Culture & Control (Bangalore, India), International Critical Geography Conference (Mexico City, Mexico) and Annual Association of American Geographers Conference (Colorado, Denver).

**Nandini Sengupta**, doctoral candidate, English, is currently working on her dissertation "Representations of Interracial Mixing in the Literature and Culture of British India: 1835-1885 which examines the representations of interracial relationships in a range of texts produced by Anglo-Indians between 1835-1885.

**Bandita Sijapati**, doctoral student, Social Sciences, won the Best Paper Award at Women In International Security Summer Symposium at Georgetown University on "The Bhutanese Refugee Crisis: From Ethnic Expulsion to Bilateral Stalemate". She published two articles, (1) "The Perils of Higher Education in Nepal" in the *Journal of Development and Social Transformation*, Volume 2, 2005., (2) "Children of the People's War," in the *Harvard South Asia Journal*, Volume 3, Issue 1, Spring 2005.

## SOUTH ASIA CENTER: OUTREACH SERVICES

Funded as a National Resource Center by the Department of Education, the South Asia Center at Syracuse University serves as a liaison between Syracuse University faculty with research interests in South Asia, educators, and the wider public in the Central New York area. Our resources and faculty interests cover the South Asia region, broadly defined as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. Our audience includes educators in area schools and colleges, the general community, individuals interested in the region, and the Syracuse University community. South Asia Outreach presents workshops, seminars, lectures, film and video screenings, school and college lecture and discussion programs, cultural programs, and other public events. In addition, Outreach loans a wide variety of educational materials to educators at no cost. These resources include books, maps, videotapes, slide sets, comic books, and "hands-on" kits. We also have curriculum units and our staff is available to offer teachers advice on curriculum development. A list of our comic books and videotapes may be obtained by sending us a request with a self-addressed stamped envelope to South Asia Center, 346F Eggers Hall, Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY 13244 or on our web page at <http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/programs/sac/>. Our phone number is (315)443-2553, email: [southasia@maxwell.syr.edu](mailto:southasia@maxwell.syr.edu).

South Asia Center  
346F Eggers Hall  
Syracuse University  
Syracuse, NY 13244-1090

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



The South Asia Center News is the official outreach bulletin of the South Asia Center, Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs, Maxwell School of Citizenship, and Public Affairs, Syracuse University.

*Director*

Ann Grodzins Gold

*Associate Director*

Jishnu Shankar

*Outreach Coordinator*

Kasturi Gupta

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY  
SYRACUSE, NY