



Cornell University

SOUTH ASIA PROGRAM



2022 BULLETIN

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A Joy, A Bliss

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decaying into the homefield
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is a joy, a bliss to a stick of straw

Translation by Chamini Kulathunga of selected poetry from the 2013 collection *Next Sweet Wines (Milaṅga Mivita)* by Ruwan Bandula, from the Sinhala. (See p. 15)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FEATURES 1
Director's Letter
Afghan Women Scholars
Afghanistan: From the Inside Out
Sharif Hozoori's Journey to Ithaca
Meeting a Poet
An Awe-Inspiring Semester
My Cornell
Cornell-Keystone NFLP Summer Program

NEWS 10
The Next Monsoon
New NRC/FLAS grant
50 Years of Bangladesh
Rhythms of the Land
Oxfam India internships
ICM Global South Fellowship

EVENTS 14
Writing Sri Lanka
12th Annual Tagore Lecture
Poems by Cheran
Music, Dance & Art
Threads and Pebbles
Distinguished Visitors
Genealogies of Anti-Asian/Asia Violences
SAP Events 2021-2022

OUTREACH 23
Outreach & Collaboration
Holi in Dryden
Identities, Inequality, and Justice

ANNOUNCEMENTS 26
Daniel Gold Retires
Emera Bridger Wilson Leaves
Alaka Basu Retires
FLAS testimonial
Dipali Sudan Gift
Hillary medal
Fulbright Scholars
Three Minute Thesis Winner
Asiya Zahoor

ACHIEVEMENTS 32
Selected Faculty Publications
TCI Scholars
Recently Graduated Students
FLAS Fellows



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Front Cover: Nipun Prabhakar, a 2019 South Asian Studies fellow at Cornell, A large birdhouse in the village of Sinugra, in the western state of Gujarat. The structure not only houses birds but also has space to store the birds' grain.

Back Cover: Nipun Prabhakar, A *chabutra* (birdhouse) with a crescent moon and star, an Islamic symbol, at its peak.

Editor: Daniel Bass
Design: Scarlet Duba

From the Director

by Iftikhar Dadi, John H. Burris Professor of History of Art & Binenkorb Director, South Asia Program

As I write this letter during the month of August 2022, I am reminded of significant historical milestones that have shaped South Asia. About a year ago, the United States withdrew from Afghanistan, leaving behind challenging conditions for scholars, women activists, human rights advocates, and the youth. The Cornell South Asia Program has collaborated with the Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies and the Institute of International Education Scholar Rescue Fund to bring Afghan scholars facing difficult circumstances at home to campus. Sharif Hozoori (p. 5) arrived in Ithaca at the beginning of 2022, and we are committed to bringing several others, despite the challenges such rescue efforts necessitate. In conjunction, SAP has also programmed discussions on the state of Afghanistan (p. 4). Cornell has also brought female undergraduate Afghan students to campus in the aftermath of the American withdrawal (p. 2-3).

August 2022 also marks the 75th anniversary of the independence of India and Pakistan from colonial rule and the resulting bloodshed and hostilities of Partition that persist today. While there is much to celebrate, South Asia continues to face enduring and daunting challenges. These include low levels of economic and human development, persistent social inequality, antagonisms among its nation-states, growing majoritarianism, hollowing out of democratic norms and procedures, and increasingly urgent crises precipitated by climate change. The inhabitants of South Asia constitute about a quarter of the world's total pop-

ulation, and so the challenges this region faces have an enormous impact. Many of these problems are nation-specific yet also transnational in character. Cornell's disciplinary rigor and geographic breadth allow for faculty and graduate students to address many of these topics in comparative registers. A good example of an interdisciplinary and transnational approach to climate change was the major international conference *Rhythms of the Land: Indigenous Knowledge, Science, and Thriving Together in a Changing Climate*, organized by Karim Aly-Kassam and held on the Cornell campus in October 2021. It brought together community members, scientists, policy-makers, artists, and students "to discuss applied research to anticipate climate change at the level of communities." The regions of focus included the Pamir Mountains (which extend across Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan), the Standing Rock Sioux Nation, and Oneida Lake Watershed in the US (p. 13). Another project focusing on climate change in a transnational register is the National Endowment for the Humanities funded project *The Next Monsoon: Climate Change and Contemporary Cultural Production in South Asia*, which will result in a conference at Cornell in October 2023 and a publication (p. 10). SAP also marked the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence by co-sponsoring a major virtual conference, *50 Years of Bangladesh: Retrospect & Prospect*, organized by the Dhaka-based Centre for Policy Dialogue in December 2021. Over several days, panelists assessed transformations in Bangladeshi economy,

society, and culture, critically evaluating the remarkable progress the nation has achieved during five decades (p. 12). We have continued to adjust to living and working with COVID-19 as an on-going reality in our lives and adopted a dual approach towards our programs and seminar series during the 2021-22 academic year (p. 22). Virtual events allow us to invite speakers who may not be able to visit the Cornell campus easily, and our audience is also diverse and global, including attendees from South Asia, Europe, and elsewhere. In-person events are also valuable, especially for giving students the opportunity to engender scholarly networks and connections. Also, after a two-year hiatus, we resumed our Annual Tagore Lecture featuring Cheran, a distinguished Sri Lankan Tamil-Canadian poet (p. 17). The event was held in person in conjunction with the Sri Lanka graduate student conference that SAP regularly hosts on campus (p. 16). The US Department of Education under Title VI has supported SAP, in a consortium with the South Asia Center at Syracuse University, for many decades with National Resource Center (NRC) and Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) funding. We are delighted to report that we have received both awards for the 2022-26 grant cycle, totaling nearly \$2.74 million, which will enable us to continue to support faculty and student research and pedagogy at the highest levels (p. 11). This federal recognition bodes well for the future of the South Asia Program, providing us with critical resources to address myriad challenges across the region.

AFGHAN WOMEN SCHOLARS

find safe haven at Cornell

by Susan Kelley

As the Taliban took control of Afghanistan this summer, 150 women – all students at Asian University for Women, trying to flee the country so they could continue their educations – circled Kabul Airport on rented buses for 64 hours. “It was really risky,” said Diana Ayubi, because the Taliban were attacking buses and firing their guns, killing people. The students were at particular risk, because the Taliban routinely beat and killed women unaccompanied by male relatives. And, Simah Sahnosh said, “the Taliban were taking young women for themselves.” They decided to try one more time, at 1 a.m.

Sepehra Azami, a senior majoring in economics at Asian University for Women, led the effort to evacuate 150 students from AUW via one of the last flights out of Kabul, Afghanistan, in late August. “It was so dark. I could hear a lot of gunshots around us,” said Sepehra Azami, who singlehandedly supported her family by working for an NGO and translating for a journalist while going to school full time. “But there was a strong feeling of power that pushed me all the time, to go ahead, to not give up.”

Thanks to an international effort and a robust cross-campus collaboration, Azami, Ayubi and Sahnosh are among nine Afghan women undergraduates who arrived at Cornell in the fall semester of 2021. The support at Cornell includes housing, academic assistance, orientation sessions, care packages, donated laptops, financial aid and cultural training for the staff assisting them. “We are so glad to welcome these students onto the Cornell campus and into the community,” said Provost Michael I. Kotlikoff. “We are enriched by having them here with us.”

The students had started their undergraduate careers in Chittagong, Bangladesh, where AUW enrolls about 800 women from across Asia. But because of COVID-19, all AUW students studied remotely from their home countries during the last academic year. As the Taliban began controlling remote provinces, AUW administrators planned to evacuate the students over a period of months, said Tim DeVoogd, professor of psychology in the College of Arts and Sciences, who serves on the AUW board of trustees. But as the Taliban’s takeover accelerated, the urgency escalated. AUW rented seven buses and reached out to the US military for assistance. But because AUW administrators were in Bangladesh, the students would have to make it out on their own.

Azami, a senior majoring in economics, led the bus convoy and student coordinators, one per bus, and kept in constant touch with AUW administrators by WhatsApp. Babies screamed as the Taliban fired guns just a few feet away. Thousands of other Afghans jostled at the airport gates. “Anyone could have lost their life at any moment,” said Ayubi, who is one semester away from graduating with a bachelor’s degree in public health. “We were all trying to save our lives and our futures.”

Through a long chain of contacts, ultimately involving the White House, the students got past the Taliban guards. They collapsed on the floor of one of the last flights out of Kabul. But the click of the closing door on the US military transport brought no relief, Ayubi said. “When the door was closing, I felt it was shutting down everything I had left behind: my memories, dreams and hopes for my family and Afghanistan.”

They eventually landed at a US Army installation in Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, where they were for several months. When they found themselves among 13,000 other Afghan refugees at the base, they started schools to teach basic English to Afghan children, DeVoogd said. “These students are all leaders and innovators.”

Meanwhile, AUW officials were reaching out to colleagues, including DeVoogd, to place the students at US universities. DeVoogd proposed that Cornell become involved. “The Office of the Vice Provost for International Affairs (OVPIA) was enthusiastic and worked through a huge number of logistical challenges to make this happen,” he said. The students now have an immigration status—humanitarian parole—that allows them to work in the US for one year while they apply for another status, said Nishi Dhupa, associate vice provost for international affairs. “It gives them a year of breathing room.”



Photo by Jason Koski

At Cornell, they are considered visiting interns until they are officially accepted as undergraduates. “The events that brought these students here are traumatic, but their stories demonstrate real bravery and leadership,” said Wendy Wolford, vice provost for international affairs. “They are an inspiration, and I am grateful for all of the people from across the university and town who have mobilized to support them.”

The South Asia Program is also working to bring several Afghan scholars and a threatened artist to campus (see p.5).

Cornell’s support began long before the students arrived, led by the OVPIA. The South Asia Program and Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies organized a cultural orientation for staff who would be assisting the students. Zinab Zhra Attai, an Afghan doctoral candidate in government, encouraged staff to “offer normalcy and friendly support,” she said. “These women are the opposite of fragile.” The Einaudi Center and the Office of Global Learning also organized orientation sessions for the students, as well as care packages, gift cards and a tour of the local supermarkets. Cornell Information Technology donated laptops.

Yasin Ahmed, Muslim campus minister with Cornell United Religious Work, has recruited peer mentors from the Muslim Educational and Cultural Association, a student group. The local Muslim community will hold a welcome party at Al Huda Islamic Center and will introduce them to local families who speak the students’ native languages. “Especially with international students, we try to focus on familiarity and stability,” Ahmed said.

Undergraduate Admissions is assessing their academic needs and organizing financial aid packages. Meanwhile, DeVoogd has placed them in labs with faculty from nearly every undergraduate college and

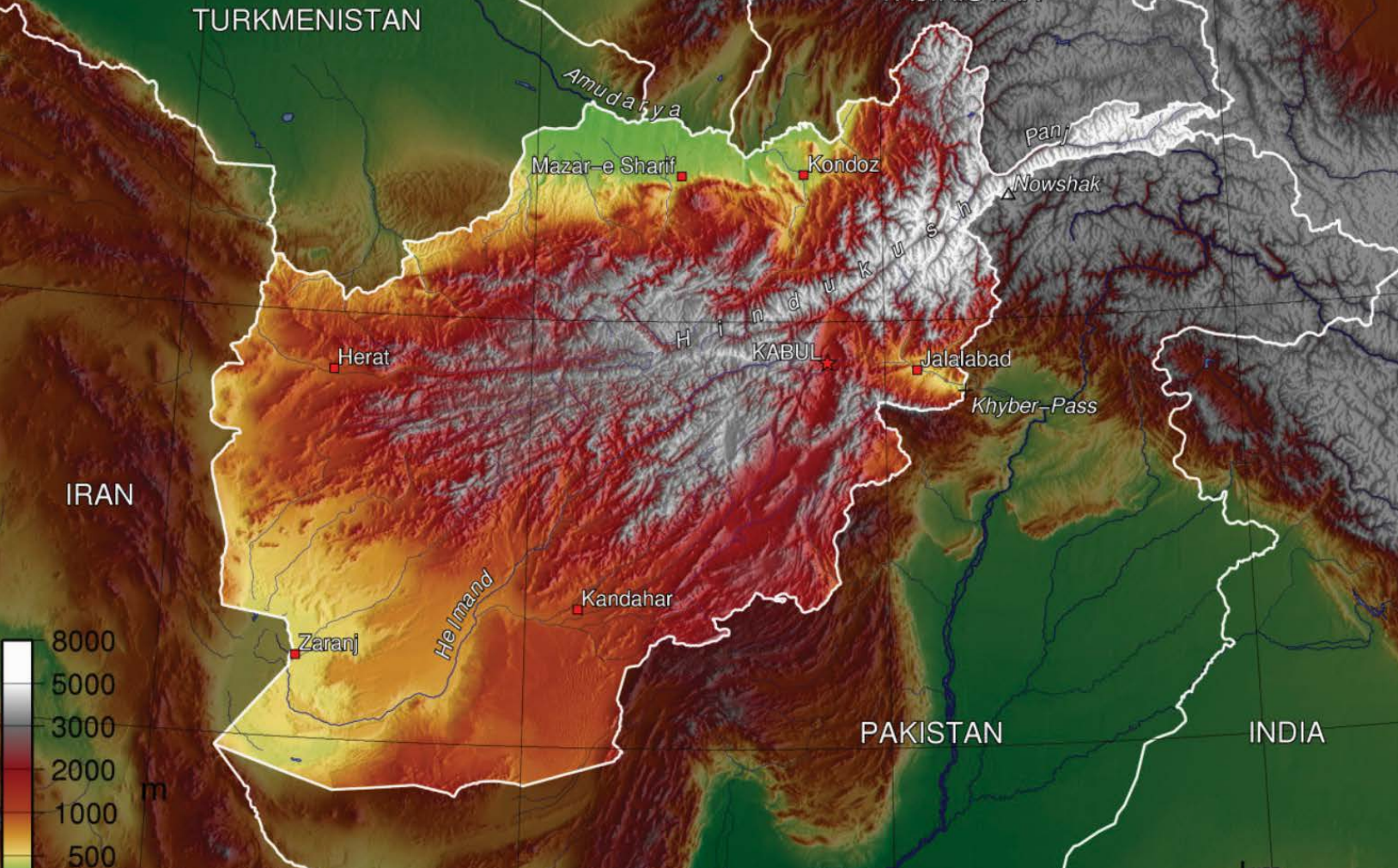
school on the Ithaca campus. In the spring semester, the women worked part-time at Cornell University Library, providing a source of income. Also providing support are Cornell University Police and the English Language Support Office.

The women are determined to continue their education, they said. “I knew that I may lose my life by leaving Afghanistan,” Azami said. “But I want to study properly, and create opportunities for my younger siblings to continue their education as well.” So far, they feel comfortable on campus, they said, which has a similar international academic environment as AUW. They dress in Western clothing, as they did at AUW. Members of the Women’s Higher Education Now student group are running a clothing drive and raising funds for the students.

The students say they are grateful for the safety and support Cornell is providing. “I am fortunate that I am here,” Azami said. “It was one of my dreams to come to the United States to continue my higher education.” However, they also say they feel overwhelmed by their experiences. Azami tries not to look at the lovely surroundings when she walks around campus; she feels badly thinking of those back home who don’t have the same opportunities. When Sahnosh eats in the dining hall, she thinks of the stories her brother in Kabul tells her, of Afghans lining up outside of bakeries, begging for food.

“The truth is, right now I am homeless,” Ayubi said. “Before, I was proud of my country, culture and religion. Now, whether people like it or not, they must follow the Taliban’s rules. This is not the Afghanistan I call my homeland.”

Original version appeared in *Cornell Chronicle* (December 7, 2021)



AFGHANISTAN: FROM THE INSIDE OUT



The fall 2021 SAP seminar series began on September 3 with a special virtual event, *Afghanistan: From the Inside Out*, with two scholars from the American University of Afghanistan:

Haroun Rahimi, Assistant Professor of Law, and Muska Dastageer, Lecturer of Political Science and Public Administration (right-left, above). The event was chaired by Durba Ghosh and moderated by Mostafa Minawi, both Professors of History at Cornell. Just weeks after the American departure from Afghanistan and the resulting takeover by the Taliban, this event provided an opportunity for these two Afghan academics to discuss current conditions for themselves, their colleagues, and their students.

Ghosh and Minawi were the central organizers of this event, and they were adamant that we highlight Afghan voices, and not just American talking heads, as had been saturating US media for weeks. Dastageer was grateful for the opportunity to speak at length, saying that she had turned down opportunities to speak on television, as she could not reduce the complex reality and her complex feelings to short soundbites. Ghosh and Minawi excelled in making the speakers comfortable, allowing for a frank

and open discussion, which was eye-opening for the hundreds of people in attendance.

This event sparked further efforts by SAP and Cornell to support Afghan Scholars at Risk (see p. 5) and students (see p.2-3) throughout this academic year. In his role as Director of the Critical Ottoman and Post-Ottoman Studies initiative at the Einaudi Center, Minawi developed a series of events on other countries “From the Inside Out,” over the past year, featuring scholars from Turkey, Iraq, and Armenia.

SHARIF HOZOORI'S JOURNEY TO ITHACA

Sharif Hozoori is originally from Afghanistan, and holds a Ph.D. in International Relations from the Center for International Politics, Organization and Disarmament (CIPOD), School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and a Master's in International Relations from South Asian University in New Delhi. He has taught both undergraduates and post-graduates in Afghanistan and was the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs of Afghanistan University before leaving the country in 2021. Since January 2022, he has been an Institute of International Education Scholar Rescue Fund (IIE-SRF) fellow and Visiting Scholar at the South Asia Program.

Hozoori had traveled to Turkey for research in July 2021, leaving his wife and toddler son behind in Kabul. Once the Taliban took over in Afghanistan, he contacted IIE-SRF, as he feared that he would be a target, given his research, his criticism of the Taliban, as well as his identification as a Hazara, a Shi'a minority community that has faced decades of discrimination and violence from the Taliban. Cornell worked with IIE-SRF to arrange a visa for Sharif, and in October he had a visa appointment at the US consulate in Istanbul. Unfortunately, he was not able to enter the consulate, due to his temporary visa status in Turkey.

He was in limbo, waiting for Turkey to grant him residency, to allow him to have a visa appointment. Unfortunately, on December 21, he received notice that the Turkish authorities had rejected his visa application, and he had ten days to leave the country. IIE-SRF was able to work their contacts with the US State Department. On December 27, he had a visa appointment at the US consulate in Istanbul and picked up his visa on December 28. SAP Manager Daniel Bass worked countless hours, arranging and rearranging flights, hotels, cars, and more for Hozoori, while on a family vacation.

On December 31, he was set to fly from Istanbul to New York City, and onward to Syracuse, where SAP had arranged a car to pick him up and take him to a hotel in Ithaca, where he could rest for a night, before SAP Director Iftikhar Dadi would meet him the next morning and take him to his apartment. However, Hozoori was not able to board his first flight, as he did not have full documentation of his covid vaccination. Thankfully, staff at IIE-SRF were able to point him to a waiver for citizens of Afghanistan. So, he was able to board the next flight to New York City. However, that meant he missed his connection in JFK to Syracuse and was booked on the next flight, leaving in the morning of January 1. He thus spent New Year's Eve at JFK airport.

On the morning of January 1, his flight from JFK to Detroit was delayed, due to covid staffing shortages at the airline, leading him to miss his connection to Syracuse. SAP rebooked him on a flight to Ithaca, which left four hours later. However, Ithaca was surrounded by fog that evening, and the plane was diverted to Syracuse. The airline then sent him and his fellow passengers on a bus from Syracuse to Ithaca, where Iftikhar Dadi met him, over 24 hours after he was initially supposed to arrive in Ithaca. Despite this almost comic series of transportation headaches, Hozoori remained calm, thankful to the assistance of Cornell and IIE-SRF staff, who were able to work seeming miracles, working odd and long hours during the Christmas vacation, to bring him to safety in the US after months of delays.

Soon after he arrived in Ithaca, Cornell arranged for his wife and son to get US visas. However, they could not have a visa interview in Afghanistan, due to the lack of a US embassy there. They applied for visas to Pakistan, which came quickly. They claimed that this was a medical visa for their toddler child, hoping that this would mean that the Taliban would allow an adult woman to travel without a male “guardian.” They were able to board their flight to Islamabad, and



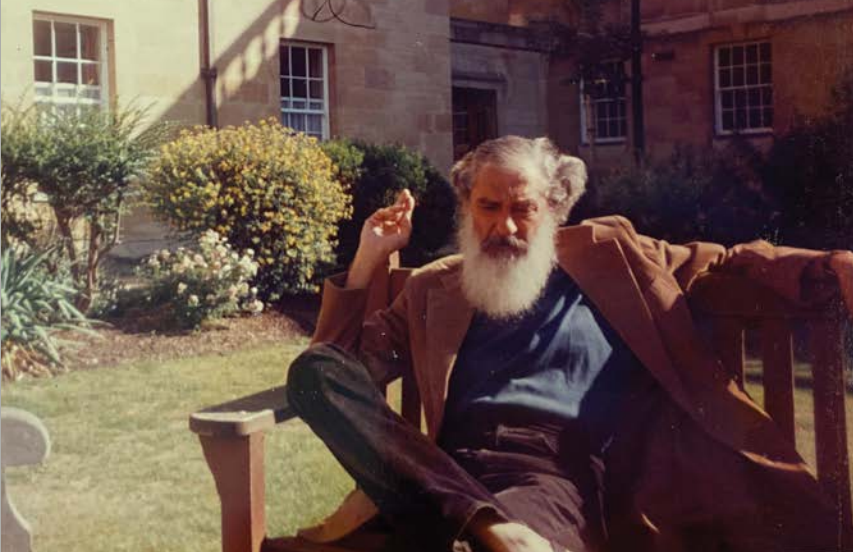
stayed for several days at the guest house run by the American Institute of Pakistan Studies, of which Iftikhar Dadi is the treasurer. Dadi's efforts ensured that Sharif's family not only had accommodations in Pakistan, but someone to pick them up at the airport, take them to their embassy interview, and provide support during this tense transition period. They had their visa appointment a few days later and flew to the US the next day. Thus in late February 2022, the entire family was reunited in Ithaca, after about six months of being apart.

Since his arrival at Cornell, Sharif Hozoori has made a series of presentations at Cornell and in the surrounding community, sharing his research on Afghanistan politics and foreign policy, ethnic identity, South Asia politics, cultural studies, and conflict resolution and peace. On March 14, as part of the South Asia Program weekly seminar series, he spoke on “Political Elites Matter: An Inside-out Approach explaining the Peace, Conflict and Foreign Policy of Afghanistan.” On March 30, he presented “Women's Rights Are Denied Under the Taliban” during the all-campus “college hour” at Monroe Community College in Rochester, and on April 25, he spoke to a “Modern US History” class, on “Radical Changes in Afghanistan Since 2000” at Tompkins Cortland Community College in Dryden. Sharif Hozoori has written several articles on Afghanistan while thriving at Cornell, which are available on his personal website, sharifhozoori.com.

Meeting a Poet:

Material Legacies and Archival Encounters

by Avani Vieira



In the basement of Cornell's Olin Library, among thousands of papers in the Rare and Manuscript Collections, is a photograph of Indian poet, publisher, and critic Arvind Mehrotra. In it, Mehrotra reclines on a park bench in the sun: brow furrowed, beard a brilliant white, two fingers held up as though summoning his next thought. Pulling the photograph from a folder in January 2022, many decades and thousands of miles from where it was taken, I knew, without having to turn it over, that I was looking at a familiar place: Oxford University, where I had earned a master's degree in English.

In an online lecture in June on *The Secret Lives of Archives*, Mehrotra said that “in archival photographs,” as in letters and manuscripts and scraps, “it is as though the person appears before you.” Mehrotra was speaking of the poets, and the materials, that I had spent weeks poring over earlier this year. He was speaking, also, of the feeling that came to define my time in the archive, that attending to the vast, material traces of a person's life is not so much an act of study as a moment of meeting.

My “meeting” with the Bombay poets had long been deferred. Through successive waves of the pandemic, I had made, canceled, and remade plans to visit the Bombay Poets Archive at Cornell, convinced that once I found my way to the material, I would also find the answers that would guide my work. Two years into my graduate degree, having finally arrived at the archive, I realized that little could have prepared me for the fullness of its contents. The Bombay

Poets Archive is, in one sense, a collection of documents, manuscripts, correspondence, contracts, and notes, spanning over four decades of work by three major Indian poets: Arvind Mehrotra, Adil Jussawalla, and Dilip Chitre. In another, truer sense it is a testament to the breadth of a literary life.

I came to Ithaca to find materials relating to the little magazine movement in Bombay. Instead, I found myself reading far beyond this limited concern, studying love letters, birth announcements, diary entries, and



obituaries. The archive shifted and moved under me, slipping seamlessly between the literary, the private, and the mundane. Plans for publishing houses sat beside updates about family members, requests for material alongside reports of hospital visits. The texture of daily life was inseparable from the dynamics of literary creation.

In the beginning, this lack of separation frustrated my work. As I immersed myself in the archive, it expanded it. Working with this unwieldy material day after day, I realized that much of what I had deemed insignificant was essential to a more complete

understanding of the people I was studying. The literary document was not separate from the personal because I was dealing not with isolated acts of creation and circulation, but with a network of writers, presses, and texts that was as much a community of friends as it was a set of literary relationships.

As the line between the literary and the everyday blurred in the archive, so did the separation between my work and the moment I was in. Days into my time in Ithaca, amid the December campus omicron spike, I caught COVID. A trip that I had imagined solely in terms of documentation and research was now consumed by questions of testing, isolation, and recovery. As the university shut down, I had to rely on my own networks of colleagues and supervisors, at my own university and at Cornell, whose support I needed if I was to access the material that I had traveled so far to see. Aided by the generosity of the South Asia Program, I managed to return to the archive in January.

In dealing with this crisis, I became doubly aware of the geographical implications of my work. I thought of how far I had traveled: from Cambridge, UK to Ithaca to look at material from my home city of Bombay. Discovering the image of Mehrotra on a park bench in Oxford, the place where I was first introduced to his work, felt like a reunion, a known face in a familiar place. Working in the Bombay Poets Archive offered a similar opportunity, to meet the writers I had known from afar through the intimate, material legacy of their life's work.

AN AWE-INSPIRING SEMESTER

by Daniele Cuneo



The brisk blue sky welcomed me while almost hurting my eyes, used as they were to the gloomily grey hue of the urban palette in Paris.

On that day in early fall 2021, under the peeping eyes of a gracious deer family, my destination was set: Cornell's Kroch Library Asia Collections. Little did I know that a steep hill was standing between me and the abode of culture that is Cornell University, my daily objective in the formidable four months I spent in Ithaca. Luckily enough, I quickly discovered that frequent buses would

become my greatest friend in overcoming that steep hill, literally the only obstacle in the smoothest and most productive semester of my academic life.

It was a serendipitous blend of passion, perseverance, and sheer chance that brought me to Cornell to pursue my research on Sanskrit aesthetics and literary theory. My home university, Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris, generously offered me a sabbatical semester to complete a monograph valid as *habilitation de recherche* to become a full professor in the French system. My inspiration to study the 10th-century Kashmiri author Sahadeva's unedited manuscript on Sanskrit poetics was Lawrence McCrea, Professor of Asian Studies at Cornell, who mentioned this work in one of those dense, scholarly footnotes that seem to promise numerous articles or monographs to come.

When my stubbornness managed to get me a research visa to the US against all odds during the second year of a global pandemic, I was thrilled. However, I could not imagine how much weekly readings with Lawrence

McCrea would help me understand the Sanskrit manuscript I had been struggling with for some years, and how much I would improve as a scholar thanks to his astonishing generosity.

The incredible facilities at Cornell University, the library, in particular, allowed me nearly instant access to a wealth of scholarly material I could not dream of in my home university in Paris. I also benefitted greatly from the introduction to a wide network of researchers in South Asian Studies and several related fields, who shared their knowledge and their kindness.

Back in Europe, months after my experience at Cornell, I still marvel at how much I accomplished in Ithaca: one long article in press and a meandering first draft of the book. I can only hope that my path will take me again to Cornell, its library, and its knowledge incarnated in so many I can now call friends, but also to its deer family and that steep, awe-inspiring hill.

MY CORNELL

by Sudath Rohan Munasinghe



I came to Cornell in September 2021 as a Fulbright Scholar in the Department of Global Development.

Back in Sri Lanka, I am a Professor in Robotics at the University of Moratuwa, where I work in smart agriculture, human-elephant conflict, drone applications, and adaptive traffic control, with a particular interest in technology commercialization. Though I initially was planning on focusing on technology transfer, I soon realized that

there was nothing I could not do at Cornell. It's amazing to discover the breadth and depth of various disciplines at Cornell, and it was so easy to get connected with Cornell faculty across disciplines.

It was the perfect place for me, due to the multi-disciplinary nature of my research. I was thus able to make connections with Cornell faculty at the Lab of Ornithology, AgriTech, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Aerospace Engineering, Entrepreneurship at Cornell, Center for Technology Licensing, and the South Asia Program. These collaborations helped me to fast-track the implementation of my research in Sri Lanka, even during the prevailing tough times.

From October to January I stayed at Hasbrouck apartments, a short walk to campus on the trails through the foliage around Beebe Lake. The scenery was so pleasing and settling, perfect for a scholar to get into a solid start to the day. The support of the office staff was spot on, helping me hit

the ground running from day one. I even was able to have nearly 24-hour access to my workspace at Mann Library, which helped me to spend my time very productively. The library support too was similarly remarkable, and I never expected support of that nature. Cornell has looked after every practical aspect for visiting scholars, to facilitate that they can spend their full time on scholarly development. Time waste at Cornell was nearly zero.

My hosts, Lori Leonard, Ronnie Coffman, and Richard Cahoon were so nice and caring. They gave me the strength, guidance, and support in preparing my study plan and working independently across disciplines. It was such a close and friendly relationship that made me feel at home. It was a very productive, experiential experience with a lot of long-lasting memories.

Thank you, my Cornell.

Cornell-Keystone Nilgiris Field Learning Program

by Andrew Willford



Left: Students resting after climbing to hilltop temple in Tirukalukundram, near Chennai

Right: Meeting with traditional Alu Kurumba healer at her home (Andrew Willford second from left)

Bottom: Students lighting a ceremonial oil lamp before presenting research projects to the community at capstone event at Keystone



The Cornell-Keystone Nilgiris Field Learning Program (NFLP) launched a six-week summer program in June 2022. The course, Anthropology 4530 Mental Health, Healing Systems, and Community-Based Care: Community Resilience and Culture in the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve, focused on health and wellbeing among the Irula and Alu Kurumba indigenous communities of the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve, near Kotagiri, Tamil Nadu. Our special lens into health and wellness in these communities was driven by the economic and social challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic caused, as well as the severe health-related repercussions.

The six-week field-based course focused on community-based health interventions

that have been forged between local indigenous communities, local NGOs, primary healthcare providers, and traditional healers. Cornell students were paired with Irula and Kurumba students, who also happened to be community health workers working within the Keystone Foundation’s Wellbeing Program, which focuses on general health, mental health, and counseling (see below for students’ testimonials).

As has been the case with the extant spring semester Nilgiris Field Learning Center (NFLC) program, NFLP students conducted field research. This summer, three teams of students pursued primarily ethnographic research on three interrelated components, all of which addressed local

healthcare and the community impact of the pandemic within one sub-district. One team conducted interviews with doctors, nurses, and social workers working within the government and private sectors. Another team focused on community health workers and the challenges they faced during the pandemic, and more generally, in their ongoing work to address vulnerabilities and stress-related factors within local indigenous communities.

A third team interviewed traditional healers within the Irula and Kurumba communities to better understand how they interacted with clients during the pandemic and beyond, and to grasp their conceptions of health and wellbeing.

Taking this holistic and interconnected perspective proved fruitful, especially during final presentations of student research to the Keystone staff and members of local Irula and Kurumba communities. While we used the opening provided by the pandemic to look at local health systems, and how well they were integrated, among other related topics, the research also pointed to more general challenges to health and wellbeing within local communities, as well as to sources of resilience and aspiration located in cultural, and, in particular, spiritual traditions.

To gain a wider perspective on community-based medicine, and to better contextualize the uniqueness of the Nilgiris

Biosphere and the cultural dynamics of community life within this mountainous area, we traveled to Chennai for one week. In Chennai, we studied the work of The Banyan, an influential NGO that provides mental health care and rehabilitation services to vulnerable populations in the region, and elsewhere in India. The Banyan played a role in the development of the community wellbeing program at Keystone and has created a novel system with significant integration among doctors, social workers, traditional healing centers, and community health workers at the grassroots level.

In Chennai, students met local indigenous community members from a different Adivasi community and visited clinics, a healing

Hindu temple, and a *dargah* (Sufi saint’s shrine) that attracted those suffering from mental illness. They also had a chance to see local heritage sites and architectural wonders, and to rest a bit on the beaches along the Coromandel Coast. I enjoyed spending six weeks with these highly motivated and adventurous students and community members, and learned much from my colleagues at Keystone, particularly from Jyoti Krishnakumar and Lakshmi Amarneethi, my partners in both the classroom and in designing and organizing the fieldwork.

“

Classes in the NFLP was an enriching experience for me. I was able to see how culture and tradition play a big role in mental health and well-being of a person. The concept of nature vs nurture was new to me and made me realize how important families and traditions are in a person’s life. Through my research, the importance of the role of community health workers in the villages was quite evident, and being a health worker myself, it made me feel proud. Interacting with Irulas in Chennai was an exciting experience for me. The overall experience gave me the understanding to not let go of my traditions and our healing methods and the need to bridge the gap between traditional and modern medicines. And finally, the language exchange with my fellow classmates was the most fun for me!

– Rani, Irula community member

This program has given me an experience that I will never forget. I thought traveling across the world and living with people for two months that I just met would be challenging, but it was quite the opposite. The Cornell students clicked right from the start and we became an inseparable group. When we met the Keystone students, there was a language barrier, but that didn’t stop us from forming the same bond. Learning in the field as opposed to a lecture hall made this opportunity so much more exciting because we would be going somewhere new each week. Spending a few nights in the village and connecting with community members was so memorable and a great experience. If anyone has the opportunity to participate in this trip, they should do it because it has honestly changed my life forever!

– Alexis Timmerman

”

The NFLP Summer Program was a truly life-changing experience. As an Indian American, I hadn’t considered living in India for months at a time before this trip. Although learning within a classroom is important, actually visiting Irula homes and speaking about health issues with community members was an invaluable experience. Also, from helping me drape a sari to teaching me phrases in Tamil, I will never forget the moments shared with the community health workers.

– Gargi Rao

The NFLP program allowed me to learn about the region’s people, culture, and location through the lens of anthropology. I would say that the field research was my favorite part of the program. It was my first time conducting field research related to anthropology, but it was also the first time I could interact with the local people and learn about their culture and problems. The program was a fantastic experience that made me want to explore the field of anthropology more.

– Ajitesh Narayan

Beyond our research on the local health system and learning about mental health in indigenous communities, we’ve fostered close relationships with local community members. This experience extends beyond the walls of the classroom to allow us to fully immerse ourselves in our learning environment. My time in India has matured me into a more open-minded, considerate individual. I’m so grateful that I’ve had the privilege of spending my summer here and will carry what I’ve learned for the rest of my life.

– Lily Soeter



THE NEXT MONSOON

by Linda B. Glaser

In October 2021, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) awarded the South Asia Program a \$65,000 grant for its project, “The Next Monsoon: Climate Change and Contemporary Cultural Production in South Asia.”

The grant will fund a three-day conference, scheduled for October 2023, and an open-access volume on the topic of humanistic approaches to climate change and the impact of climate change on cultural production in South Asia. The project will explore two interrelated research themes: how climate change is rendered in visual arts, cinema, literature, and architecture in South Asia; and how projects of cultural expression render visibility to place-based narratives in South Asia.

“Our goal is to explore the imaginary of climate challenges from the view of the ‘global south.’”

“The conference is intended to analyze the diversity of experiences of a changing planet in South Asia, as well as to contribute to the emerging field of environmental humanities,” said Iftikhar Dadi, Binenkorb Director of the South Asia Program and John H. Burris Professor of History of Art and Visual Studies. “Most of the humanities’ contribution to the field of climate change has been grounded in the viewpoint of the ‘global north,’ where imagining climate change appears most readily in apocalyptic visions that highlight individual heroics, ingenuity, and survival atop blasted landscapes,” said Dadi.

In addition to Dadi, the Cornell-led international team of researchers includes Sarah Besky, Associate Professor in the Departments of International and Comparative Labor & Labor Relations, Law, and History at Cornell’s School of Industrial and Labor Relation; Sonal Khullar, W. Norman Brown Associate Professor of South Asian Studies at the University of Pennsylvania; and Rupali

Gupte, Co-founder and Professor at the School of Environment and Architecture, Mumbai. “Unbearable heat, unpredictable rain, and uncertain futures are becoming the norm across the ‘global south,’” Besky said. “South Asia is an empirical microcosm of the ecological and epistemological upending caused by climate change. Forming a quarter of the world population and inhabiting tremendous cultural and geographic diversity, South Asia provides a unique case study for the examination of the challenges of climate change on diverse cultural forms.”

In addition to the open-access volume, the project will include monthly reading groups and a podcast series. To foster broader dissemination of the results of the conference, the project plans to also include a social media platform and a dynamic website designed as an online teaching tool, equipped with an interactive map, streaming videos, the podcasts, and a blog.

Originally appeared in *Cornell Chronicle* (October 7, 2021)

SAP RECEIVES NRC & FLAS GRANTS

Photo by Alejandro Gonzalez-Suarez

In August 2022, the Cornell-Syracuse South Asia Consortium was awarded nearly \$2.75 million in Title VI grants under the federal National Resource Centers (NRC) and Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships programs. The Cornell-Syracuse South Asia Consortium consists of SAP, which will receive roughly \$1.75 million, and Syracuse University’s South Asia Center, which will receive about \$1 million.

The four-year grants, administered by the US Department of Education, support language instruction, fellowships, outreach to K-12 teachers and faculty at community colleges, international partnerships, conferences, and other activities. The Foreign Language and Area Studies grants will provide tuition and stipends for six Cornell graduate students and four Syracuse students each year, and enable eight graduate and undergraduate students from both schools to pursue intensive language study during the summers (see p. 34 for this year’s fellows).

“The National Resource Center designation is a hard-earned honor,” said Wendy Wolford, Cornell’s vice provost for international affairs. “It is really a testament to the world-class faculty, students, and staff of these extraordinary programs.” The Cornell-Syracuse South Asia Consortium has been a National Resource Center since 1985 and is one of only six South Asia NRCs, and the only consortium.

“These awards enable Cornell students to study critically important



languages that are necessary for any in-depth engagement with South Asia,” said SAP Director Iftikhar Dadi.

“These awards will enable us to continue to support faculty and student research and pedagogy at the highest levels,” aid SAP Director Iftikhar Dadi. “Unlike many of our peers, SAP has long been distinguished for covering the geographic breadth of South Asia, which includes focusing on Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. We support instruction in key languages of the region, including two that are not taught anywhere else in the nation at the advanced level.”

Along with the Southeast Asia Program, which also received NRC and FLAS grants, and the Latin American & Caribbean Studies Program and Institute for African Development, both of which received Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language (UISFL) grants through Title VI, SAP collaborates on outreach activities for New York state educators, including teacher-training workshops and the annual International Studies Summer Institute for K-12 teachers (see p. 25).

In 2020, Alejandro Gonzalez-Suarez, a faculty member at Tompkins Cortland Community College, went to India, supported by our NRC grant, and took the photos on this page.



50 YEARS OF BANGLADESH:

Retrospect & Prospect

by Tanveer Mohiuddin

In recent years, Bangladesh's success in maintaining high economic growth has drawn the attention of international agencies and the Western media. "The country is now being called by some as a 'development miracle' and by some others as a 'paradox' which refers to Bangladesh's record of sustaining high economic growth despite deficits in good governance," says Rounaq Jahan, distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD).

These brandings by western media, whether positive or negative, are usually based on a superficial understanding of the enormous changes that have taken place in Bangladesh over the course of the last 50 years, she further said while speaking at the inaugural session of a four-day virtual international conference in December 2021. Organized by the CPD and co-sponsored by the South Asia Program, *Fifty Years of Bangladesh: Retrospect and Prospect* aimed to explore the country's developments across different sectors: politics, economy, society, and culture.

Jahan noted that the story of Bangladesh's progress is generally being told from a quantitative perspective, for example, the upward or downward trends in life expectancy, mortality, fertility, school enrolment, labor force participation, poverty reduction, export earnings, forex reserves, and GDP. "The numbers do indicate significant gains in social and economic development, but they do not adequately capture the depth of the changes that have taken place in peoples' lives in the economy, politics, society, and culture of Bangladesh," she explained.

Bangladesh today is vastly different from what it was 50 years ago when it emerged as an independent state. "At her birth in 1971, many outside observers doubted the viability of the new state. Some called it 'an international basket case.' But through the hard struggle of the people to pull themselves up from poverty and by innovative actions unique to Bangladesh, we made steady progress in key indicators of human development during the first quarter-century of our independence," she added.

Rounaq Jahan said that CPD has planned the conference with several objectives in mind, including telling the story of Bangladesh's developments not in fragments, in terms of only gains made in indicators of social and economic development. "We think limiting ourselves to the discourse of only 'development,' which has dominated the attention of our academia and the media in recent years, constrains our vision," she said. Presenters discussed not simply the achievements, but also noted shortfalls and mistakes so that the country can learn lessons from them for course correction in the future. "Most importantly, we want to identify the challenges that lie ahead, particularly in the post-Covid-19 changing world order when competition for survival and domination will be more intense," Jahan said.

She added that through the conference, the organizers want to challenge established wisdom, analytical frameworks, and easy branding that have long been used to craft the narrative of Bangladesh. "The paper writers and discussants have been encouraged to feel free to propose new theories and analytical frameworks based on Bangladesh's own experience and not try to 'fit' the Bangladesh story to established theories based on the experiences of other countries," she said. Moreover, by bringing together scholars, based in Bangladesh or outside Bangladesh, Bangladeshis as well as on-Bangladeshis, the conference took stock of the state of scholarship on Bangladesh in different fields, and identified gaps in research.

The conference brought together 47 participants from different countries, and 20 papers were presented in eight different panels. Iftikhar Dadi, Director of the South Asia Program, also spoke at the inaugural session and chaired a panel on "Culture". The other panels focused on "State, Society, Politics," "Bangladesh's Economic Transformation," "Towards a Just Society," "Social Transitions," "Costs and Challenges of Development," and "Bangladesh in a Changing World Order."

Original version appeared in *Dhaka Tribune* (December 6, 2021)

RHYTHMS OF THE LAND:

Indigenous Knowledge, Science, and Thriving Together in a Changing Climate

R*hythms of the Land: Indigenous Knowledge, Science, and Thriving Together in a Changing Climate* was an inclusive and innovative international conference held at Cornell October 11-13, 2021, bringing together communities, scholars, and policymakers. Participants presented research findings from Indigenous and rural societies in the Pamir Mountains of Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, as well as the Standing Rock Sioux Nation and Oneida Lake Watershed in the US. These Indigenous and rural communities have contributed the least to the anthropogenic climate crisis but are facing its harshest consequences. There is an urgent need to build anticipatory capacity, that is, the ability to envision 'just', 'equitable', and 'sustainable' futures and develop a plan of action to deal with uncertainties, for food and livelihood security in these communities. The conference presented findings from the Ecological Calendars for Climate Adaptation Project (ECCAP) undertaken by a team of students and scholars from the US, Germany, Italy, and China, led by Karim-Aly Kassam, International Professor of Environmental and Indigenous Studies.

Ecological calendars are knowledge systems to measure and give meaning to time based on close observation of one's habitat. They reveal seasonal indicators that integrate ecological phenomena (such as the first snowfall, last frost, the flowering of a tree species, or the arrival of a particular migratory bird) with cultural systems. Understanding these relationships has enabled Indigenous and rural communities to anticipate weather and other seasonal processes, and thereby coordinate their livelihood activities.

This three-day conference brought Indigenous community members, scientists, high-ranking policy makers, artists, and our students from around the world to discuss applied research to anticipate climate change at the level of communities. The conference began with presentations of research findings on building local level anticipatory capacity for climate change through implementable ecological calendars. In addition to discussing the findings, prominent Indigenous artists from around the world presented diverse calendars from each community.

The second day was devoted to policy formulation, communication of climate adaptation strategies, and next steps in applied research. On the final day, participants identified specific initiatives for action. The conference included several public events including a variety of



keynote addresses; panel discussions involving scientists, artists, and community members; and exhibits at the Cornell Botanic Gardens and the Johnson Museum of Art. In addition, artist Tekaronhiákhwa Santee Smith gave a multimedia dance performance at the Schwartz Center for the Performing Arts.

During the fall semester, the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art hosted an exhibition, *Art and Environmental Struggle*, in conjunction with the conference. The exhibit brought together the work of twenty artists from regions experiencing some of the most acute consequences of resource extraction and climate variation, responding to environmental challenges occurring in their countries and communities. At the same time, the Cornell Botanic Gardens held an exhibition at the Nevin Welcome Center, *Ecological Calendars: Finding Hope in the Face of Climate Change*, which interpreted and explained the significance of the Ecological Calendars and Climate Adaptation Project. The exhibit showed how the calendars were created by using a photographic narrative of the research project, prints of the ecological calendars created by the respective communities and the research team, and two installations of art inspired by the research.

The compelling ways in which artists confront these crucial topics, simultaneously with the presentation of critical research at a major conference, represented a means for engaging contemporary thinking about this most universally human of issues. The conference included scholars in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities, along with Indigenous activists and artists, bringing together a broad range of theoretical and methodological perspectives to a shared problem, one shared by all humanity, in fact.

The South Asia Program provided the initial seed funding for the conference through our National Resource Center grant from the Department of Education. Other conference sponsors were the American Geophysical Union, Central New York Humanities Corridor, American Indian & Indigenous Studies Program, Cornell Botanical Gardens, Johnson Museum of Art, Atkinson Center for Sustainability, Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Performing and Media Arts, Judith Reppy Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, Syracuse University South Asia Center, American University of Central Asia, and the University of Central Asia.



OXFAM INDIA INTERNSHIPS

URBAN POOR IN BANGALORE

by Kaylin De Silva

This summer, during my virtual internship, I was able to deepen my understanding of the issues that the urban poor face through research in Bangalore and throughout India. Though my career interests are specifically related to public health, I was able to learn more about all of the various social issues that contribute to the health challenges of slum communities. I used my knowledge from previous classwork at Cornell to guide my research and projects, and I was able to learn so much from the Oxfam India team and the amazing work that they have been doing so far.

My projects were aimed at providing an insight as to where the organization could expand in its work with slum communities, specifically with informal sector workers, gender justice, health and nutrition, and WASH (water, sanitation, & hygiene). I conducted two peer program analyses (one specifically within Bangalore and one throughout India) that highlighted opportunities for possible partnerships to expand the reach of Oxfam India and other NGOs working in the country. I compiled a report of the best practices amongst these other organizations, as well as governments of other developing countries, to highlight some of the work that was already being done in similarly underprivileged communities.

My final project was focused on an analysis of the issues faced by the urban poor in Bangalore and the field-work strategies that the organization could implement to combat them. Working with my supervisors from Oxfam India, I conducted research through a public-health lens and utilized reports related to efforts in slum communities across the country.

The primary focus of my final report was on the importance of community engagement when implementing any sort of program or initiative.

While conducting my research, I furthered my understanding of the importance of prioritizing issues that the target community has identified as being important to them. Working alongside the community is the only way to implement positive, long-term change, which I highlighted in my report about the best practices for public health-related work within the slum communities of Bangalore. The importance of community engagement, however, is relevant to almost every field in which NGOs like Oxfam India conduct their work. My internship with Oxfam India gave me an opportunity to apply what I have learned in my classes to real-world contexts, and the experience that I gained will certainly shape my future endeavors.

SUGAR SUPPLY CHAINS

by Nabiha Qureshi

During my virtual internship with Oxfam India, I had the opportunity to witness first-hand how nonprofits leverage remote experiences to promote social justice in communities affected by poverty. I learned how Oxfam India reoriented during the pandemic towards a research lens to learn more about different anti-poverty strategies for migrant workers in the sugar supply chains in Maharashtra. I discovered how virtual work and research into social policy informed how Oxfam India interacts with on-the-ground nonprofits and community organizations.

I researched different social policies to research different social policies local to the sugar supply migrant workers, and different anti-poverty programs suggested by nonprofits to combat migrant worker abuse. I learned about how education and gender empowerment are central in the struggle against the exploitation of migrant workers in Maharashtra. The experience taught me that virtual internships can still make an impact through research and written communication, both of which are important to nonprofits like Oxfam India in their work to bring awareness to social justice causes.

තව තවත් භාරගෙන අඳුරු මඩ තුළ ගිලී යනු මිස

ICM Global South Translation Fellowship

Former SAP Visiting Scholar Chamini Kulathunga was one of five recipients of the inaugural 2021 Global South Translation Fellowships from the Institute for Comparative Modernities (ICM) at Cornell. This is a non-resident, remote fellowship designed to allow the recipient to complete translations of works from the Global South. The Institute for Comparative Modernities addresses the transnational scope of the modern in its multifarious articulations with capitalism and colonialism, and their legacies. With an emphasis on developments outside the historical West, it promotes the study of artistic, intellectual and social movements attending formations of the modern. Kulathunga's fellowship was for a translation of selected poetry from the 2013 collection *Next Sweet Wines*

(*Mīlaṅga Mīvita*) by Ruwan Bandujeewa, from the Sinhala, including the two poems, below. The work of this highly acclaimed contemporary Sri Lankan poet addresses class inequity, and describes the harsh realities of groups living on the economic margins of an exploitative capitalist system. The collection won two of the most prestigious national literary awards in Sri Lanka, the Vidyodaya Literary Award and Godage National Literary Award, and is now in its eighth printing. Chamini Kulathunga is a Sri Lankan translator and is a graduate of the Iowa Translation Workshop. She was a Visiting Scholar at SAP in the summer of 2019, during which she assisted South Asia Curator Bronwen Bledsoe in cataloging the donation of Prof. James Gair's collection to the Kroch Asia Library. A former editor at *Asymptote* and

Exchanges: Journal of Literary Translation, her writings, interviews, and translations have appeared in *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, *The Los Angeles Review*, *The Massachusetts Review*, *The World Literature Today*, *Asymptote*, *Project Plume*, and elsewhere. Another former SAP Visiting Scholar, Sumathy Sivamohan, Professor of English at University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, and the Tamil Studies Visiting Scholar at Cornell in 2017, was awarded one of seven 2022 ICM Global South Translation Fellowships, for her translation of a collection of 101 Sri Lankan poems, dating from the 1930s to the present, from Tamil. This anthology collects Sri Lankan Tamil, Malaiyaha Tamil, and Muslim voices that both represent and speak to one another about nationalism, ethnic conflict, sexuality, class, and caste concerns.

Earthworms	ගැඹවිල්ල	A Joy, A Bliss	සැපකි - සතුටකි
“Dear father, why don’t we attend the Ploughing Festival? Even the king is coming to the field today. Shouldn’t we break this silence and announce it is us who manured this soil from within the bowels of the earth?”	“පියතුමනි කිමද අප නොයන්නේ වජ මගුල් උළෙලට රජතුමාත් එව් අද කුඹුරට ගැරපියා මේ මුනිවන කියා පෑ යුතු නොවෙද ඔබ ඔවුනට අප විසින් සාරවත් කළ බැව් මේ පස පොළෝ කුහරය තුළ සැඟව හිඳ”	Rather than joining in creating yet another scarecrow, decaying into the homefield is a joy, a bliss to a stick of straw	නවත් එක් පඬියෙක් හඳන්නට ගිහිත් එක්කනු වෙනව් වෙනුවට උපන් කමනට පොහොර වෙන එක් සැපකි - සතුටකි පිඳුරු ගසකට
“Little earthworm son, a hoe’s blade knows not those who manured the soil and those who did not. Therefore, rising into the open air is not wise. Drill your way deeper to the dark depths of mud. Doing otherwise, my son, is unadvised.”	“කුඩා ගැඹවිල් පුත උදුලු නලයකට පුරුද්දක් නැත හඳුනගෙන පස සරු කළ සහ නොකළ උන්ගේ වන නව තවත් භාරගෙන අඳුරු මඩ තුළ ගිලී යනු මිස ඉහළ එළිමහන වෙත යෑම නුසුදුසුය පුත.”		

WRITING SRI LANKA

In April 2022, the South Asia Program hosted an in-person conference for the first time since 2019. *Writing Sri Lanka*, this year's Sri Lanka Graduate Conference, co-sponsored by the American Institute of Sri Lankan Studies, was held April 22-23 at the Kahin Center.

As in its earlier incarnations, the aim of the conference was to encourage cohort building among graduate students across disciplines and to provide an academically rigorous atmosphere for graduate students working on Sri Lanka to present work and receive feedback. After having a virtual pre-dissertation workshop in 2021, hosting an in-person conference was a great success, although several people did participate virtually.

A graduate student committee, consisting of Geethika Dharmasinghe (Asian Studies), Kaitlin Emmanuel (History of Art), Praveen Tilakaratne (Comparative Literature), and Bruno Shirley (Asian Studies) drafted the conference title, Call for Papers, and schedule. Additionally, Shirley provided guidance for the hybrid aspects of the conference, and Dharmasinghe and Tilakaratne hosted visiting graduate students on a tour of the Cornell campus and local dining establishments.

A Pre-Dissertation Proposal Workshop started the conference on Friday April 22, with three students: Yajna Sanguhan

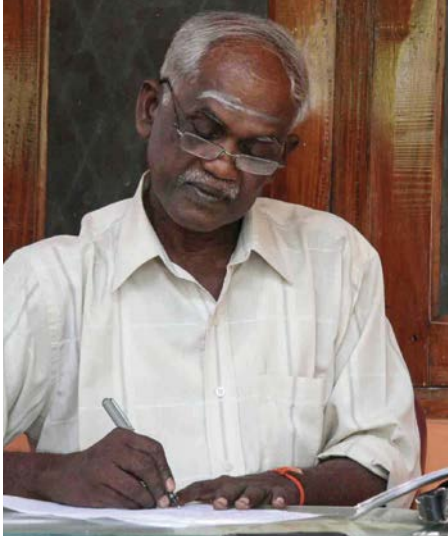
(Political Science, University of Pennsylvania), Shibanee Sivanayagam (Anthropology, CUNY), and Samanmali Alujjage Don (Sociology, University of Essex). The faculty for the workshop were Mythri Jegathesan (Anthropology, Santa Clara University), who participated virtually, as well as three in-person: Elizabeth Bittel (Sociology, SUNY-Cortland), Anne Blackburn (Asian Studies), and Daniel Bass (South Asia Program). The students were all appreciative of the discussion and excited to be attending their first in-person conference, after two years of Zoom events.

The public conference presentations on Saturday April 23 began with a warm welcome from SAP Director Iftikhar Dadi. In the first panel, “Writing the Sri Lankan Nation,” Chamila Somirathna (Sinhala, University of Kelaniya), Soraya Zarook (English, University of California, Riverside), and Thiagaraja Waradas (Social and Policy Sciences, University of Bath) presented their research, with the first two participating virtually, on nationalism, literature, and identity in Sri Lanka.

The second panel, “Writing Sri Lankan History,” featuring Crystal Baines (English, University of Massachusetts, Amherst) and Tom Peterson (Music, SOAS, University of London), focused on issues of genre, identity, and history in Sri Lankan literature and music. Viranjini Munasinghe (Anthropology)

the sea from both personal and communal perspectives. Drawing on and reading from his various poems about the sea and other water bodies, he charted an alternative imagination for Tamil identities. The evening ended with a rousing reading of one of his poems in the original Tamil.

Cheran has authored over fifteen books in Tamil, and his work has been translated into twenty languages. Several volumes of his work have been published in English translation, including *The Second Sunrise* (translated by Lakshmi Holmstrom, 2010), *In a Time of Burning* (translated by Lakshmi Holmstrom and Sascha Ebeling, 2013) and *You Cannot Turn Away* (translated by Chelva Kanaganayakam, 2011). His poems in English translation have been published in numerous literary magazines, such as *Bomb*, *Modern Poetry in Translation*, *Many Mountains Moving*, *Exiled Ink*, *Mantra Review*, and



served as a discussant for the first panel, and Elizabeth Bittel was the discussant for the second panel.

The third panel was a “Research Roundtable” with Mythri Jegathesan, Cheran Rudhramoorthy, and Asiya Zahoor (Asian Studies, Cornell University), discussing the ethics and logistics of researching and writing on vulnerable populations. Zahoor’s discussion of research in Kashmir and Rudramoorthy on working with Rwandan refugees in Uganda provided numerous parallels to the Sri Lankan situation discussed by Jegathesan.

The conference ended with a dinner held outside the Kahin Center on a glorious Ithaca spring evening. Throughout the conference, we allowed ample time for socialization and networking to facilitate cohort building and mutual support, opportunities for which have been glaringly absent at recent virtual events.

Talisman. His poems have been included in several anthologies, including *Singing in the Dark: A Global Anthology of Poetry Under Lockdown* (edited by Nishi Chawla & K. Satchidanandan, 2020), *Many Roads Through Paradise: Sri Lankan Literature* (edited by Shyam Selvadurai, 2014), and *In Our Translated World: Global Tamil Poetry* (edited by Chelva Kanaganayakam, 2014). Cheran was the recipient of the International Poetry Award from ONV Kurup Foundation in Dubai in 2017.

The Rabindranath Tagore Lecture Series in Modern Indian Literature is made possible by a gift from Cornell Professor Emeritus Narahari Umanath Prabhu and his wife, the late Sumi Prabhu. Inspired by Rabindranath Tagore’s expansive imagination, unbounded by geopolitical boundaries, the series has regularly featured prominent writers from across South Asia and its diasporas.

On this Street Anytime

On this street anytime awaits
an unfilled pothole
Rain during the winter season
leaves that fall in the cold
The wind that freezes in the chill
Fill that hole

Near it

A white policeman
Shot.
Two boys.
Multiple times.

That pothole
twice filled up with blood.
Both of them looked exactly
like my son

Height. Beauty. Black. Brave.

UNENDING WAR

I wished
to believe
that the time of war
was over

Yet
the world is crooked

Death cannot steal
the mahilampoo perfume
of life

She writes poems
that would melt
great walls

Sorrow stands
with her

Even while the world
drowns in a tempestuous storm
the bird returns to
its nest.
The baby bird sings

Its song
would block
and stop
at least
a single missile

I believe.

இந்தத் தெருவில் எப்போதும்

இந்தத் தெருவில் எப்போதும் காத்திருக்கிறது
செப்பனிடப்படாத ஒரு குழி

கார்காலத்தில் மழை நீர்
கூதிரில் உதிரும் இலைகள்
பின்பனியில் உறையும் காற்று
அந்தக் குழியை நிரப்பும்

அதனருகே
வெள்ளைப் பொலிஸ்காரன்
சுட்டான்.
இருவரை.
பலமுறை.

இரண்டுமுறை அந்தக் குழி
குருதியால் நிரம்பிற்று.

இருவரும் என் மகனைப் போலவே இருந்தனர்
உயரம். அழகு. கறுப்பு. துணிவு.

(June 2021)

முடியாத போர்க்காலம்

போர்க்காலம் முடிந்து விட்டது
எனத்தான்
நம்ப விரும்பினேன்
எனினும் உலகம் கோணலானது

உயிரின் மகிழம்பூ நறுமணத்தை
இறப்பு
திருட முடியாது

நெடுஞ்சுவரைக் கரைக்கும்
கவிதைகளை ஒருத்தி எழுதுகிறாள்
அழகை துணை இருக்கிறது

பெரும் புயலில் உலகம் தத்தளிக்கும்
போதும்
பறவை கூடு சேர்கிறது
குஞ்சுக் குருவி பாடுகிறது

அதன் பாடல்

ஒரு ஏவுகணையையாவது
தடுத்து நிறுத்தி விடும்

நம்புகிறேன்.

(Feb 22, 2022)

Poems by Cheran



MUSIC, DANCE & ART



During the 2021-2022 school year, SAP co-sponsored four events organized by the Cornell chapter of the Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music and Culture Among Youth (SPICMACAY). Two of the events were virtual, one was in person, and one was hybrid, allowing for a range of artists to present to the Cornell community.

On October 30, Jayanthi Kumaresh performed a lecture/demonstration on the Saraswathi Veena, *Cup O Carnatic: A Journey to Make Friends with Carnatic Music* via Zoom. In addition to numerous venues and festivals in India, Jayanthi has performed at many international festivals and venues, including the San Francisco Jazz Festival, Darbar Festival London, Celtic Connections in Scotland, Queensland Music Festival, Darwin Music Festival, Adelaide Music Festival, BBC Proms London, the United Nations, New York, and Théâtre de la Ville, Paris.

The Sakhyam dance collaborative brought in-person performance back to Cornell, with *Rasanubhuti*, a Mohiniattam dance of Kerala at Sage Chapel on

November 19, 2021 (see above). Sakhyam is an Austin, Texas based collaborative established in 2015 as an expressive extension of each of its members. *Sakhyam*, the Sanskrit word for “divine friendship”, celebrates the artistic diversity of Arathi Remesh, Divya Shanker, Sarita Warriar and Suja Pillai, who connect with each other and the divine spirit, through their shared passion for Indian classical dance. Sakhyam performs works from the vast repertoire of Mohiniyattam under the guidance of their Guru, Dr. Sunanda Nair, senior-most disciple of the Mohiniyattam exponent Padmabhushan Dr. Kanak Rele.

Uday Bhawalkar performed *Morning ragas: A Dhrupad Concert* with Pratap Awad accompanying him on pakhwaj, on March 12 via Zoom. Uday Bhawalkar is among the foremost Dhrupad vocalists and has been a strong force in its growing popularity worldwide. He’s a disciple of Ustad Zia Fariduddin Dagar (vocal) and Ustad Zia Mohiuddin Dagar (Rudra-Veena). In recognition for his artistry, Bhawalkar has received many prestigious awards including the Kumar Gandharva Samman (2001) and the Raza Foundation Award (2007).



SPICMACAY ventured into new territory on April 23, with a hybrid Mithila Folk Painting Workshop with Manisha Jha. Jha was present via Zoom, while the assembled students and community members each had supplies to create a painting of their own, following her guidance. (see above)

Manisha Jha is an award-winning artist in Mithila paintings, architect, interior designer, planner and author. She established the Madhubani Art Center in New Delhi in 1998 and has collected more than 3,000 Madhubani/Mithila paintings. Her works are in the permanent collections of Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts, Essl Museum, Albertina Museum, International Folk Art Market and several private collectors all over the world.

Threads & Pebbles AT CORNELL CINEMA

Cornell Cinema reopened for in-person screenings at the start of the 2021-2022 academic year, and the South Asia Program sponsored two film screenings in April 2022.

Threads: Sustaining India's Textile Tradition, a documentary film by Katherine Sender, Professor of Communication and Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and Shuchi Kothari, a New Zealand-based filmmaker, was shown on April 13, followed by a post-screening discussion with Sender and Denise Green, Director, Cornell Fashion & Textile Collection. *Threads* follows the stories

of fashion designers and fabric artisans as they transform traditional textile practices for contemporary fashion markets. The film features interviews with designers in Delhi and Jaipur, hand weavers in Chanderi, bandhani tie-dyers in Bhuj, and block printers in Rajasthan. *Threads* argues that sustainability involves more than environmental stewardship and improved economic circumstances for workers.

On April 16 & 17, Cornell Cinema hosted the Ithaca premiere of *Pebbles*, a Tamil film directed by P. S. Vinodhraj. Set in Tamil Nadu, *Pebbles* tells the story of an impoverished, alcoholic man named Ganapathy, fueled by bottomless reservoirs of

rage while on a mission with his young son to retrieve his wife, who has left him on account of his abusive behavior. The 13-kilometer trek through the desert is fraught, with Ganapathy and his son Velu walking along sun-baked plains and dirt paths, encountering along the way the people who live in this desolate region, whose briefly glimpsed lives illuminate a complex view of this remote society. Winner of the Tiger Award at the International Rotterdam Film Festival, and India's submission for Best International Feature Oscar, this debut film was also nominated for an Independent Spirit Award for Best International Film.



Distinguished Visitors

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS WITH BHARAT PATANKAR



On April 27, 2022, renowned Indian intellectual-activist Bharat Patankar visited Cornell, presenting *Toilers' Movements, Freedom Dreams: Class, Gender, and Caste Struggles in India*. This talk, moderated by Natasha Raheja, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Performing & Media Arts, focused on his decades of work as leader of the *Shramik Mukti Dal* (Toilers' Liberation League), which has organized farmers and laborers across Maharashtra. Patankar reflected on his decades leading farmer-labor movements in land and water struggles, over development and climate concerns, while forging dreams of a radically transformed economy and ecology. He also spoke to the theory and practice of leftist and liberation work, forging solidarity across caste, gender, religion, and class struggles, towards emancipation for all.

THE DEVELOPMENT DIPLOMAT, FATEMA SUMAR



On October 20, 2021, Fatema Sumar '01 presented *Development Diplomacy in South Asia*, discussing case studies of her work in Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka from her new book, *The Development Diplomat: Working Across Borders, Boardrooms, and Bureaucracies to End Poverty*. Sumar is the Vice President of Compact Operations at the US Millennium Challenge Corporation, an independent US government foreign aid agency that reduces poverty through economic growth. She previously served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asia at the US Department of State, and worked for three US Senators, including as a Senior Professional Staff Member on the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee.



Genealogies of ANTI-ASIAN/ASIA VIOLENCES SYMPOSIUM

by Antonio T. Tiongson, Jr.

On March 24-25, 2022, the “Genealogies of Anti-Asian/Asia Violences” symposium took place on the campus of Syracuse University, organized by the Cornell-Syracuse South Asia Consortium. The event was the brainchild of Susan Thomas, assistant professor in Cultural Foundations of Education at Syracuse, who brought in Antonio T. Tiongson, Jr., Associate Professor of English at Syracuse as a co-organizer and collaborator. The symposium convened a cohort of scholars, students, and activists whose work collectively and critically scrutinize the genealogies and geographies of anti-Asian violence.

Presenters hailed from different disciplines, including Black Studies and Critical Indigenous Studies, allowing a wide range of perspectives to be brought to bear on the issue of anti-Asian violence. Richard Morrison, Editorial Director at Fordham University Press, also attended the symposium because of a strong mutual interest in the possibility of putting together a volume based on the symposium.

The impetus for the symposium was the urgent need for a more expansive framework for how we talk about anti-Asian violence, one that amplifies how the current narrative around anti-Asian violence has become a form of violence itself, irredeemably hitched

to the discourse of anti-Asian hate and the dominant logics of recognition, rights, visibility, respectability, and the recuperation of social value. The symposium aimed to re-narrate anti-Asian violence within longer histories of US settler colonialism, carcerality, and racial capitalism, ultimately resulting in a more nuanced and rigorous understanding of anti-Asian violence.

Symposium highlights included the opening keynote from Thenmozhi Soundararajan, Director & Founder, Equality Labs, and the closing keynote from Iyko Day, Associate Professor of English and Critical Social Thought at Mount Holyoke College. The keynote speakers did a commendable job of de-exceptionalizing anti-Asian violence, situating it across national contexts and within larger historical trajectories. Another highlight was Esther K's presentation that shed light on the need to engage in labor organizing and anti-trafficking in order to meaningfully intervene in anti-Asian violence. She offered an invaluable perspective as an organizer with Red Canary Song, a grassroots collective that centers massage workers in its organizing efforts across national boundaries.

In addition to the two keynote presentations, the symposium featured a roundtable, a virtual panel, and an in-person panel in which scholars from different

disciplines interrogated and critiqued popular understandings of anti-Asian violence. The roundtable examined possibilities for solidarity that consider not only race, but also caste and gender. The virtual panel aimed to nuance anti-Asian violence through the deployment of disability and transnationalism as critical optics while the in-person panel centered feminist and decolonial critiques in its engagement with anti-Asian violence. Most of all, the symposium provided an opportunity to reconnect with colleagues from Syracuse and Cornell in person, which takes on added significance given the restriction of meetings and events in the wake of the pandemic.

The symposium was cosponsored by Cornell University's Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, East Asia Program, Southeast Asia Program, and Asian American Studies Program, and Syracuse University's Graduate School, Humanities Center, Hendricks Chapel, Department of Cultural Foundations of Education, Department of English, Department of Religion, Department of Women's and Gender Studies, East Asia Program, Asian/Asian American Studies Program, Disability Studies; Disability Cultural Center, Intergroup Dialogue, and Democratizing Knowledge Collective, with funding from the Department of Education Title VI Program.

SAP SEMINARS & EVENTS 2021-2022

September 3: “Afghanistan: From the Inside Out” Haroun Rahimi (Law, American University of Afghanistan) & Muska Dastageer (Political Science & Public Administration, American University of Afghanistan)

September 9-10: “Dismantling Global Hindutva: Multidisciplinary Perspectives” conference

September 13: “Deterritorializing Kashmir: Migration, History and the Literary Ecumene” Asiya Zahoor (Asian Studies, Cornell University)

September 20: “Rehearsal Broke My Bones’: Labor, Skill, Virtuosity and Hindi Cinema’s Dancing Women” Usha Iyer (Film & Media Studies, Stanford University)

September 27: “The Thespian Experience: Sanskrit Sources on the Emotional Life of Actors” Daniele Cuneo (Sanskrit & Indian Civilization, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, France)

October 4: “Becoming Organic: Nature and Agriculture in the Indian Himalaya” Seshia Galvin (Anthropology & Sociology, Graduate Institute of International Development Studies, Switzerland)

October 11-13: “Rhythms of the Land: Indigenous Knowledge, Science, and Thriving Together in a Changing Climate” conference

October 19: “Feeling Subjects: Emotion and Affect at the Makli Necropolis” Fatima Quraishi (Art History, University of California, Riverside)

October 20: “Development Diplomacy in South Asia” Fatema Sumar (Vice President of Compact Operations, US Millennium Challenge Corporation)

October 26: “We the Seditious People” Ammar Ali Jan (Journalist, Pakistan)

October 30: “Cup O Carnatic: A Journey to Make Friends with Carnatic Music” Jayanthi Kumaresh

November 1: “Whose Force is Violence? Sangha Sovereign and Authority of the Tradition” Geethika Dharmasinghe (Asian Studies, Cornell University)

November 8: “Virtual Uncertainties: Disaster, Climate Science, and the Political Ontology of an Avalanche in the Langtang of Nepal” Austin Lord (Anthropology, Cornell University)

November 15: “Natural Monopoly: Colonial Science, Orders of Access, and the East India Company in London, 1757-1833” Jessica Ratcliff (Science & Technology Studies, Cornell University)

November 19: “Rasanubhuti” Mohiniattam dance performance, Sakhyam

November 22: “Monsoon Voyagers: An Indian Ocean History” Fahad Bishara (History, University of Virginia)

November 29: “In Search of an End to Human-Elephant Conflict” Rohan Munasinghe (Electronic & Telecommunication Engineering, University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka)

December 6-9: “Fifty Years of Bangladesh: Retrospect and Prospect” conference

January 31: “Art of Brand India: Aesthetics and Economy of Hope in the early Twenty-First-Century” Ravinder Kaur (Modern South Asian Studies, University of Copenhagen)

February 7: “An ‘Unlawful Object of Gathering’: Stealing a Corpse in 1927 Delhi” Kelsey Jane Utne (History, Cornell University)

February 14: “Revolution and Slums in Bombay” Juned Shaikh (History, University of California, Santa Cruz)

February 21: “Caricaturing Religious Difference and the Pop Culture Muslim” Samah Choudhury (Religious Studies, Ithaca College)

March 7: “Separating Sindh, Connecting Partitions: Territorialising Minority Representation before Partition” Uttara Shahani (Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, UK)

March 9: “Beyond the Camp and the Surgery: Cochlear Implants and Complex Dependencies in India” Michele Friedner (Comparative Human Development, University of Chicago)

March 12: “Morning ragas: A Dhrupad Concert” Uday Bhawalkar

March 14: “Political Elites Matter: An Inside-out Approach explaining the Peace, Conflict and Foreign Policy of Afghanistan” Sharif Hozoori (South Asia Program, Cornell University)

March 21: “Crooked Cats: Beastly Tales from India” Nayanika Mathur (Anthropology, University of Oxford, UK)

March 24-25: “Genealogies of Anti-Asian/Asia Violences” symposium

April 11: “Futures Past: Revolution, Communism, and Decolonization in Colonial India” Ali Raza (History, Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan)

April 13: *Threads: Sustaining India’s Textile Tradition* film screening

April 15: “Of Karma and Grace: Mediating Religious Difference in Millennial Sri Lanka” Neena Mahadev (Anthropology, Yale-NUS College)

April 15: “Herding in the Wake: Afterlives and Material Ethics Within Unsettled Moral Ecologies” Austin Lord (Anthropology, Cornell University)

April 16-17: *Pebbles* film screening

April 18: “Collision Amid Collusion: Women’s Activism Across the Wings of Pakistan” Elora Shehabuddin (Transnational Asian Studies, Rice University)

April 22: “The Sea Forsaken” 12th Annual Tagore Lecture in Modern Literature, Cheran

April 23: “Writing Sri Lanka” conference

April 23: “Mithila Folk Painting Workshop” Manisha Jha

April 25: “Sectarianism or Separatism: The Shia Dilemma and the Discourse of Azadi in Kashmir” Syed Jaleel Hussain (Nelson Mandela Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Jamia Millia Islamia, India)

April 27: “Toilers’ Movements, Freedom Dreams: Class, Gender, and Caste Struggles in India” Bharat Patankar (President, Shramik Mukti Dal)

May 2: “Gokul Joshi and Revolutionary Asceticism among Nepali ‘People’s Singers’” Anna Stirr (Asian Studies, University of Hawaii at Manoa)

June 28: “Inequalities, Identities and Justice” International Studies Summer Institute workshop

Paying it forward in OUTREACH & COLLABORATION

by Kathi Colen Peck



Since 2019, SAP has awarded 11 community college faculty fellowships to facilitate access to South Asia-focused curricular content for community college students and faculty, in disciplines ranging from philosophy to construction technology, English to biology, and photography to chemistry. In April 2022, we welcomed a new cohort of faculty fellows, of whom three will focus on South Asia for their course development projects: Angelique Stevens, at Monroe Community College (MCC), will add works on South Asia into her *Literature of Genocide* course, Emma Draper-Reich, at Corning Community College (CCC), will bolster her writing composition and children’s literature for future teachers courses with South Asian authors, and Sri Kamesh Narasimhan, also at CCC, will develop labs for Organic Chemistry that incorporate plant extracts drawn from Ayurveda medicine. With these last two awards, we welcomed Corning Community College as a new partner.

In May, Jasna Bogdanovska (Photography, MCC) and Laura Penman (Biology, MCC), both deeply engaged faculty at MCC in Rochester, completed their projects: Bogdanovska worked to amplify a diversity of visual voices by highlighting & cataloging women visual storytellers in South & Southeast Asia, and Penman highlighted sustainability & food security issues among the Hilsa of Bangladesh as a case study.

Global Education Faculty Fellows Lin Lin (SUNY Cortland) and Diana Baker (Hobart & William Smith Colleges) also completed their year-long focused projects on South Asia. Lin, who teaches pre-service K-6 teachers, incorporated children’s books from the South Asia Book Award to demonstrate concepts of identity, skills, intellectuality, social structure, power, and joy, using Google Earth to contextualize these

stories for her students. Baker, who teaches *Narratives in Disability*, focused on disability in the global south and India, which was new for most of her students. In March, SAP sponsored Michele Friedner (Comparative Human Development, University of Chicago), who researches deafness and disability in India, to visit Baker’s class, as well as speak at Cornell and Syracuse universities. As a Deaf woman who uses a cochlear implant, Friedner was an excellent connection and role model for students interested in Deaf studies and/or who identify as having disabilities themselves.

In addition, in November 2021, in celebration of International Education Week, SAP visited Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) in Dryden with Kashmiri poet Asiya Zahoor (Asian Studies, Cornell) who shared her and other Kashmiri women’s journeys in expressing their most ardent beliefs and most censored dreams through poetry, in her talk, “To Write is to Love,” and gave a reading from her book of poems, *Serpents Under My Veil*.

SPICMACAY Cornell, a student group of exceptional classical Indian musicians and singers, also visited TC3 and shared the tunes and rhythms of Carnatic music in a lively, lunchtime concert (pictured above). SPICMACAY Cornell also visited Onondaga Community College in Syracuse in February for an in-person and live-streamed concert, which was wonderfully attended and enjoyed by many in India. In March, SAP Visiting Scholar Sharif Hozoori (see p. 5), shared his insights with MCC faculty, staff & students on the diminishing rights of women under the Taliban, and with TC3 students in April on the radical changes that have taken place in Afghanistan since 2000.



Holi *in Dryden*

by Pratiksha Khanduri

I have never been too interested in celebrating festivals or holidays, but when the Southworth Library in Dryden reached out to the Afterschool Language and Culture Program (ALCP) to organize a Holi festival event for children, we knew the opportunity was too good to be missed. Holi heralds spring's arrival and symbolizes the triumph of good over evil. After more than two years of canceled large holiday gatherings, Cornell volunteers Zihan Hossain, Rishabh Mukerjee, Ashish Ochani, and I took the festival of colors to Dryden to teach children about South Asian cultures and languages. It was an apt pairing, considering Holi is the one time in the year when kids can smear color and throw water on each other without fear of parental repercussions!

Holi heralds spring's arrival and symbolizes the triumph of good over evil.

Offered through the Einaudi Center and managed by SAP and the Southeast Asia Program, the Afterschool Language and Culture Program aims to introduce K-12 students to world languages and cultures. During the pandemic, ALCP could not engage directly with children, since in-person programming was restricted at schools and libraries. However, with pandemic restrictions being eased in 2021-2022, outreach to local children to foster meaningful engagement was once again possible for our volunteers.

The event began with a storybook reading of why Holi is celebrated, followed by books on the Hindi alphabet and vocabulary. Next, volunteers taught the children how to perform Bhangra. With its peppy beats and dance steps, this traditional Punjabi dance form is a favorite of young and old alike. After dancing, the children were pumped up for the piece de resistance: Holi color fight! As children growing up in India, we eagerly looked forward to Holi and had our arsenal of dry color powders, water guns, and water balloons ready for the big day. In images reminiscent of Holi in India, kids in Dryden went at each other (under parental supervision, of course) with colors in unparalleled excitement and gusto. That day the festival of color found new champions in Dryden.

The event also included various arts & craft activities, a Holi photobooth, and traditional Indian food for the children to acquaint themselves with the festival. While the fun was not lost on the children (and parents!), they also learned the importance of the holiday among South Asian communities.

As pandemic restrictions lift, we will continue to expand our outreach activities and introduce children to the diversity of the world's languages and cultures. The program is rebranding as the Foreign Language Introduction Program (FLIP) this fall, reflecting its expansion to include libraries and other opportunities to engage with local children. We encourage anyone with knowledge of foreign cultures and languages to join us. Please email outreach@einaudi.cornell.edu if you are interested in volunteering in the community with FLIP.



Identities, Inequality, and Justice: International Summer Studies Institute 2022

Three dozen elementary, middle, and high school teachers from across central New York travelled to Cornell's Ithaca campus on June 28 for this year's International Summer Studies Institute (ISSI). The summer institute gives teachers an opportunity to explore their curiosity about international topics, make professional connections, and discover strategies for bringing the world into their classrooms. This year's focus on "Identities, Inequalities, and Justice," a research priority at the Einaudi Center, attracted teachers from Rochester to Utica, Syracuse to Binghamton, and many points in between.

Working alongside teachers from other districts, teachers learned about historical and contemporary examples of systemic and overlapping inequalities from Latin America, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa, and East Asia through presentations at the A.D. White House and a hands-on workshop at the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art. "It was such a joy to be able to attend this year's workshop in-person," Alanna Kramerson, a history teacher at Skaneateles High School said, adding that "the topics were so cutting edge, and with such a fantastic non-Western focus, they could be ripped from the headlines of any international newspaper."

The first speaker, Fábio Zuker, Pre-Doctoral Visiting Research Scholar at the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program, discussed his work as a journalist and anthropologist with indigenous communities in the Brazilian Amazon forest. He explained how deforestation, discrimination, mining, indigenous rights, and adverse health outcomes were linked during the COVID-19 pandemic. N'Dri Thérèse Assié-Lumumba, the Director of the Institute

for African Development and Professor of Africana Studies, followed with a discussion of gender barriers to education and social transformation in Africa. Noting the diversity of African nations, and within these nations, she examined the gender gap in higher education in Africa, as well as the factors underlying access to higher education. She pointed out that, while the situation in Africa is not unique, it is exacerbated by fewer resources and opportunities.

Mona Bhan, Ford-Maxwell Professor of South Asian Studies at Syracuse University, then examined Hindu exceptionalism in India. She began with a discussion of Orientalism as a framework of knowledge, and the real effects of stereotypes due to disproportionate power relations. The demonized other of this Hindu nationalism are Muslims, whether in India itself or neighboring Pakistan. Next, Kyaw Yin Hlaing, Visiting Scholar at the Southeast Asia Program and executive director of the Center for Diversity and National Harmony in Myanmar, considered Rohingya in Myanmar's Rakhine State. He provided a history of violence in Rakhine, from late colonial power plays to the twenty-first century, underlining how memories of violence are still fresh today. Building on his many years of governmental and non-governmental work in education and peacebuilding in Myanmar, he highlighted efforts to bring Rakhine and Muslim youth together, exposing them to a positive future.

The last speaker, Andrew Harding, Global Racial Justice Postdoctoral Fellow at the Einaudi Center and Visiting Lecturer in Japanese Studies, analyzed the history of area studies, in which a geographic area is

both the medium and object of knowledge. By providing the "villain origin story of Japanese imperialism," he showed how Japan identified as a nation and civilization, not only against the West, but also its Asian neighbors in China and Korea. This concluding presentation provided teachers with a way to apply postcolonial theory to pedagogical practice, a goal furthered by the next activity.

Teachers walked to the Johnson Museum, where a trio of curators, led by Carol Hockett, the Hints Family Manager of School and Family Programs, divided teachers into three groups to visit three locations in the museum, to examine artworks that reflected the workshop's themes, and ways to engage their students with the museum's collections. The curators helped the teachers look at ways of seeing the identities and inequalities represented in the various photographs and other images, which provided a grounded ending to a productive workshop.

Afterward, one teacher said "I can incorporate a lot of the information from the presentations into my classroom lessons. Very relevant!" Another teacher stated that this year's ISSI "was super engaging and curiosity-building," which left them feeling "invigorated after a long year of teaching." This year's sponsors included the South Asia Program, Southeast Asia Program, Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program, Institute for African Development, East Asia Program, Institute for European Studies, and Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies at Cornell; South Asia Center at Syracuse University; TST-BOCES; and the US Department of Education Title VI Program.

DANIEL GOLD RETIRES

by Anne Blackburn

Daniel Gold, Professor of South Asian Religions, retired from Cornell University in December 2021. A dedicated scholar of languages with a first degree from the University of California-Berkeley in Slavic Languages & Latin, Gold subsequently completed doctoral studies in the History of Religions at the University of Chicago Divinity School in 1982. He joined Cornell University as an Assistant Professor in 1986 and was promoted to Professor of South Asian Religions in 1997.

While generously mentoring junior colleagues like myself in the Department of Asian Studies, as well as serving as Chair from 2017 to 2020, Gold contributed critical service as Director of the South Asia Program, in 1991-1994 and again in 2008-2013. At the same time, he taught many popular courses at Cornell, like Meditation in Indian Culture, and supervised a steady stream of thoughtful and capable graduate students.

As a close reader of texts, Gold is well able to document and analyze theological currents and discursive patterns in writings, for instance, by and on the Hindi Sants of later premodern India. At the same time, he has a keen eye for “lived religion.” Gold is perspicacious about historical changes in



religious environments and practices within the rapidly changing urban settings of contemporary north India. This unusually broad range of intellectual gifts is reflected in Gold’s oeuvre, which includes books such as *The Lord As Guru: Hindi Sants in the North Indian Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 1987) and *Provincial Hinduism: Religion and Community in Gwalior City* (Oxford University Press, 2015), as well as numerous articles and chapters.

Bridging the domains of specialized research and undergraduate teaching, Gold became engaged with documentary film, producing *Living Above Hippopotamus Street: Religion and Community* (2006) and *Being Sindhi in Central India: Religion, Community, Identity* (2007).

Throughout his career, Gold has shown strong and durable commitments to his interlocutors and scholarly collaborators in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Gold unites these commitments with a dedication to understanding modern and contemporary Indian expressions of devotion and religious authority in relation to deeper historical and literary contexts. *Comprehending the Guru: Towards a Grammar of Religious Expression* (Scholars Press, 1988) and *Aesthetics and Analysis in Writing on Religion: Modern Fascinations* (University of California Press, 2003) address the aesthetic and intellectual challenges involved in scholarly writing about religious knowledge, perception, and authority. He also draws attention to the heterogeneous ways that devotees/practitioners perceive, and choose whether or not to assent to, religious authority. Along with my colleagues, I look forward to Daniel Gold’s continuing contributions while also wishing him enjoyment of the more flexible schedule made possible by retirement.

Emera Bridger Wilson LEAVES SYRACUSE



a new career as a collections development librarian at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, Michigan. Bridger Wilson had worked at SAC, our consortium partner in our National Resource Center grants for 13 years. She began at SAC as Outreach

Coordinator while she was still working on her Ph.D. in Anthropology. In 2017, she completed her dissertation, *Working for Dignity: The Authorized Sightseeing Rickshaw Drivers of Keoladeo National Park*.

Bridger Wilson became the SAC Associate Director, as well as continuing as Outreach Coordinator in 2013, working closely with the SAP Manager, first Bill Phelan and then Daniel Bass, to coordinate shared activities, speakers, conferences, symposia, and more. In recent years, she has also been the awards coordinator for the South Asia Book Award. This interest in literature led her to pursue an M.S. in Library and Information Science at

Syracuse University, which she completed in May 2022.

For over a decade, Emera Bridger Wilson was a valuable colleague to the staff at SAP and other Einaudi programs with Title VI funding for outreach, providing innovative ideas, grounded strategies, and ceaseless dedication. The South Asia Program wishes her the best of luck in the next stage of her career, and looks forward to maintaining our long-term relationship with the South Asia Center and Syracuse University in the next phase of our consortium.

ALAKA BASU RETIRES

by Durba Ghosh

When Alaka Basu announced that she was retiring from her position at Cornell, I knew that she was not retiring from the life of scholarship, reading, mentoring, and writing for which she is so well known. Indeed, one of the reasons for her retirement is so that she can work more!

Alaka Basu has spent the better part of the last two decades at Cornell. For six years, she served as the director of the South Asia Program and sponsored vibrant programming that brought together her passions in culture, literature, arts, and public policy. She taught courses across the South Asia curriculum in Development Sociology (now Global Development) in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences on demography, policies about population dynamics and family planning, and women’s sexual and reproductive health in India and Bangladesh.

In tandem with her teaching, she has published widely in journals such as *The Lancet* and *Economic and Political Weekly* as well as policy papers for the Brookings Institution. She also serves on the Board of Trustees for the Population Reference Bureau, Washington, DC, the Guttmacher-Lancet Commission on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, and the editorial board of *Asian Population Studies*.

In her spare time, she is an avid novel reader, deeply engaged grandmother, and ambitious cook, collecting recipes of meals she might or might not cook (according to members of her family). For those of us who came to Cornell as young faculty members with small children, she has been the kind of welcoming role model who makes it possible to imagine how to be a mother and a scholar.

—
*With Alaka,
every meeting is a joyous
and generous
occasion for laughter
and conversation.*
—



While Tamil is my family’s mother tongue, growing up in the US and Cameroon didn’t allow me a true opportunity to study and learn the language. This was something I always regretted. When I saw the FLAS opportunity with the South Asia Program, I was ecstatic.

I had already committed to a research trip to Tamil Nadu to study agribusiness. The Tamil lessons transformed my research experience in India, allowed me to completely immerse myself in the culture, and broadened the scope of my work.

Now in my own agricultural business in central Africa, having Tamil as a skill has helped to engage and convince Tamil speaking stakeholders to join me. It also gave me brownie points with my grandparents, since now I am the only grandchild that can speak to them in Tamil.

Kamala N. Eyango
MPS ‘20, Global Development
SAP FLAS Fellow 2019-2020



Dipali Sudan Gift of Indian Textiles

In October 2021, the estate of Dipali Sudan, former Dance and Bengali instructor at Cornell, and her husband, Rajan, a former Physics professor, contacted the South Asia Program about “a large suitcase of dancing costumes & jingly accessories to go with them. Silk fabric - lots of it!” After visiting the Sudans’ former home in Cayuga Heights, SAP collected several boxes and suitcases of their books, clothing, and other items. The Sudans’ children had already gone through these materials, and these remaining items were donated to Cornell University.

All of the books in Bengali were given to the South Asia Collection at the Kroch Asia Library at Cornell. SAP donated several of Dipali Sudan’s Indian garments and Odissi dancing outfit to the Cornell Fashion + Textile Collection, with the assistance of Bronwen Bledsoe, South Asia Curator at Cornell University Library, and Durga Bor, former SAP Administrator and Outreach Coordinator. The donated clothing will be a valuable contribution to the teaching and research programs in the Department of Fiber Science & Apparel Design in the College of Human Ecology.

The Cornell Music Library was unfortunately not interested in the Sudans’ CDs and LPs, mainly of Tagore Sangeet, due to their somewhat musty condition. However, the music has been heard, appearing on SAP Manager Daniel Bass’s bi-weekly radio show, “Monsoon Radio,” on WRFI, a community radio station in Ithaca.

Lastly, SAP contacted several South Asian dance and music groups on campus, and donated some of the remaining sari blouses, petticoats, salwar pants, dupattas, and other garments to the students. With all of these donations, the Sudans will continue influencing Cornell students for generations.



David Holmberg and Kathryn March win 2021 HILLARY MEDAL

by Seth Sicroff



Cornell anthropology faculty emeriti David Holmberg and Kathryn March received the 2021 Sir Edmund Hillary Mountain Legacy Medal for remarkable service in the conservation of nature and in the equitable advancement of human welfare in mountainous regions at a ceremony in Ithaca in December 2021.

Beginning in the 1970s Kathryn March and her husband David Holmberg have carried out ground-breaking ethnographic research in Nepal and continued in this work for over 46 years. Their early field work and publications contributed substantially to international interest in and an appreciation of the culture and history of the ethnically diverse mountain communities of Nepal, and especially of Tamang people and culture. The March-Holmberg legacy stands as a shining example of a lifetime commitment to scholarship, teaching and service.

First, and noteworthy among their achievements, is that they established and administered the Cornell Nepal Study Program. From the beginning, their emphasis has been on service to their hosts: Tribhuvan University, with whom they collaborated, and the Tamang communities

in which they and their students carried out research and development projects. All American participants learned Nepali. Nepali graduate students were embedded within and participated in the program on a one-to-one basis. Nepali scholars were also brought to study, carry out research, and teach at Cornell.

Second, March and Holmberg have engaged in a sustained relationship with the Tamang communities in which they carried out their own research. By bringing their students and organizing treks, they created an ecotourism sector in communities where none had existed before. They have provided economic support at difficult times, including during the Maoist insurgency and the earthquake recovery period.

Third, at a time when isolationist tendencies have dominated politics in their country, they built a vibrant, outward-looking program at Cornell, held public lectures and informational events featuring notables such as the ambassador of Nepal, and organized festivals (notably for the annual Dasain holiday) that brought together the larger Nepal community in Ithaca. They have also supported local institutions such as Namgyal Monastery, as the American

repository and archive of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s and of all previous Dalai Lamas’ collected works.

In their anthropological research, Holmberg and March have tried to lift the veil that obscures comprehension of precarious conditions and forms of exclusion, thereby revealing the profound cultural strengths and meaning of local cultural practices and expressions that prevail in a region of extraordinary natural and cultural wealth.

All in all, it is clear that March and Holmberg have made remarkable contributions to mountain communities; that these contributions are consistent with the Hillary Model of development assistance, predicated on long-term bottom-up collaboration, and also project the evolution of that vision into the more complicated context of the twenty-first century; and that broader acclaim and recognition of their work might serve to sustain and promote their projects in Nepal and at Cornell University, a legacy worthy of Sir Edmund Hillary and the mountain people he loved.

Original version appeared on Sir Edmund Hillary Mountain Legacy Medal website



Two Fulbright-Nehru Scholars at Cornell

In March and April 2022, SAP welcomed two Fulbright-Nehru postdoctoral fellows from India, Dipti Tamang and Syed Jaleel Hussain. After over a year of pandemic-related bureaucratic delays, they were both finally able to come to Cornell to begin their research.

Dipti Tamang holds a Ph.D. in International Politics from Jawaharlal Nehru University and has been an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Darjeeling Government College since 2015. Her areas of interest are gender, feminist security studies, identity, citizenship, social movements, and conflict in South Asia, with a focus on the Darjeeling Himalayas. She has published in journals such as *International Studies* and *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, and writes regularly for online publications, including *HIMAL*, *The Wire*, and *Mint*. She is also a recipient of the Zuban-Sasakawa Young Peace Scholarship and a co-founder of the Confluence Collective. The Collective comprises early career researchers and practitioners from the Darjeeling-Sikkim Himalayas exploring oral/visual mediums to build collaborative-community-based archives of the region. She will be on campus through November 2022.



Syed Jaleel Hussain is Assistant Professor at Nelson Mandela Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. His research focuses on areas of culture and strategy, global nuclear issues, ethnic conflicts and peace processes in South Asia. He earned his Ph.D. in Peace and Conflict Studies from Jamia Millia Islamia in 2017. He is a University Gold Medalist, an Indian Council for Social Science Research doctoral fellow, and a recipient of UGC's Senior Research Fellowship and Gandhi Smriti Fellowship. His articles have been published in national and international journals, such as the *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*, *Journal of Defence Studies*, *Economic & Political Weekly*, and *South Asian Journal of Diplomacy*. His op-ed articles have appeared in Indian English dailies, including Indian Express, the *Sunday Guardian*, *Afghan Zariza*, *Greater Kashmir* and others. He has previously been associated with Delhi Policy Group, a think-tank based in Delhi. On April 25, he presented *Sectarianism or Separatism: The Shia Dilemma and the Discourse of Azadi in Kashmir* at the SAP seminar series. He will be on campus until March 2023.



Supriya Pandit Awarded Fulbright

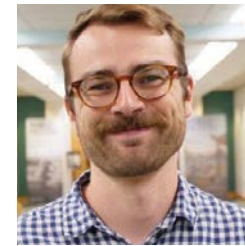
Supriya Prasad Pandit was one of 15 Cornell students awarded Fulbright US Student fellowships for 2022-2023. Pandit graduated from the College of Human Ecology in May 2022 with a major in Human Biology, Health and Society and minors in Global Health, Gerontology, and Human Development. She is traveling to India in summer 2022 for research in Uttar Pradesh on “Capturing Desire for Parenthood in India During and After COVID-19.”

She plans to explore how family planning and desire for parenthood have changed in India since the pandemic began. As people have navigated infection risk, lockdowns, remote work, and vaccination for two years, ideas surrounding family building may have also changed to accommodate significant disruptions. With this in mind, she will be affiliated with the Centre for Social Medicine and Community Health at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi. Using mixed methods, she hopes to understand more about the previous and current norms, concerns, and expectations surrounding reproductive intention and behavior.

In the districts of Banda and Kaushambi, she will spend time learning about sex education and conducting interviews and focus groups with parents, asking questions about how people altered or interrupted their plans to pursue parenthood. She expects to construct a narrative-driven landscape of the nuances in these trends to inform future research about population dynamics and healthcare interventions in the wake of the pandemic. Ultimately, she would like her work to help contextualize the allocation of reproductive health resources.

Bruno Shirley Wins Three Minute Thesis Competition

by Katya Hrichak



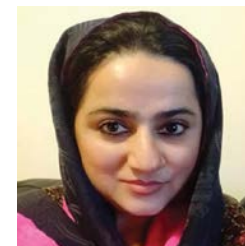
“So, this is a coin from 12th century Sri Lanka. And, like many coins, it’s inscribed with the name of the monarch who commissioned it,” began Bruno Shirley, a doctoral candidate in Asian literature, religion, and culture at the seventh annual Cornell University Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition in March 2022.

Alongside seven other finalists, Shirley presented his dissertation research in just three minutes to a panel of judges and a virtual audience from across campus and around the world. Presentations were judged by how clearly and compellingly students summarized their research to a general audience, using only one static slide. His presentation, “Constructing Buddhist Kingship in Medieval Sri Lanka,” earned him first place and \$1,500.

For Shirley, whose fieldwork plans were disrupted by the pandemic, entering the 3MT enabled him to reengage with his dissertation research. “These three-minute talks are more than just elevator pitches; the process helped me to really hone-in on what’s most important in my dissertation topic,” he said. “It’s so easy to lose sight of the woods for the trees when we’re deep into dissertation-land, and this was a valuable opportunity to step back and re-orient.”

The 3MT competition was first held in 2008 at the University of Queensland and has since been adopted by over 900 universities in over 85 countries. 3MT challenges research degree students to present a compelling story on their dissertation or thesis and its significance in just three minutes, in language appropriate to a non-specialist audience. Original version appeared on Cornell University Graduate School website (March 29, 2022)

Post-Doctoral Fellow Asiya Zahoor at Cornell



Starting in 2021, Asiya Zahoor has been a Sanford H. Taylor Post-doctoral Fellow in the Department of Asian Studies. Originally from Baramulla, Kashmir, she studied Caribbean literature, Kashmiri literature, and psycholinguistics, at the University of Kashmir and Oxford University, before earning her Ph.D. at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

“When I first came to Ithaca to search for an apartment,” Zahoor remarked, “everything was still at the cusp of the ‘new normal’ of pandemic-imposed restrictions. The loneliness on the streets fell over me, yet at times I felt a strange happiness to have the whole place all to myself: the lakes, the gorges, and the trails. Ithaca had always evoked a sense of homecoming because the literature student in me compulsively associated Ithaca with Homer’s mythical island to which Odysseus returned after ten years of the Trojan War. The year of communication lockdown in Kashmir followed by a year of pandemic seemed no less dramatic than a war.”

Zahoor’s research explores issues of migration, representation, identity, and cognitive processes involving language learning. She is also a poet, translator, and filmmaker. Zahoor has translated short stories from Kashmiri to English, and her latest book, *Serpents Under my Veil* (2019) is a collection of critically acclaimed poems. Her film, *The Stitch*, won the Critics’ Award for the Best Short Film at the South Asian Film Festival and Best Short Film at Third Eye Film Festival, Mumbai.

“Lockdown restrictions aren’t new to me,” Zahoor added. “Growing up in Kashmir, I had experienced months-long shutdowns and curfews. It is hard to imagine why people who can afford to dissocialize themselves find it hard to do so.”

At Cornell, she has taught “Revisiting Kashmir: A Survey of Literature and Cultures” and “South Asian Poetry and Narrative: From Ghazals to Film.” Additionally, she presented “Deterritorializing Kashmir: Migration, History and the Literary Ecumene” as part of the SAP Seminar Series in September 2021. She also spoke on “Literary Imaginaries of Kashmir” at the South Asia Center at Syracuse University in October 2021, and “To Write is To Love” at Tompkins Cortland Community College in November 2021.

Selected SAP Faculty Publications 2021-2022

Alaka Basu & Sneha Kumar. “Bride price, Dowry, and Young Men with Time to Kill: A Commentary on Men’s Marriage Postponement in India.” *Population Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/00324728.2022.2080858, 2021

Kaushik Basu, Aviv Caspi & Robert Hockett. “Markets and Regulation in the Age of Big Tech.” *Capitalism & Society* 15 (1): SSRN 3985585, 2021.

Kaushik Basu. “The Bangladesh Economy: Navigating the Turning Point.” *Innovations: Technology, Governance, Globalization* 13 (1-2): 29-40, 2021.

Kaushik Basu. “The Samaritan’s Curse: Moral Individuals and Immoral Groups.” *Economics and Philosophy* 38 (1):132-151, 2022.

Sarah Besky. “Teawords: Experiments with Quality in Industrial Tea Production.” *American Anthropologist* 123 (1): 96-107, 2021.

Anne Blackburn “Circulations: Linked Spaces and Divergent Temporalities in the Pali World.” in *Routledge Handbook of Theravada Buddhism*, Steven Berkwitz & Ashley Thompson, eds. New York: Routledge, 58-69.

Ifrikhar Dadi. “Between Neorealism and Humanism: *Jago Hua Savera*.” in *Forms of the Left: Left-Wing Aesthetics and Postcolonial South Asia*, Lotte Hoek & Sanjukta Sunderason, eds. New York: Bloomsbury, 97-134, 2021.

Ifrikhar Dadi. “Timepass.” in *Best! Letters from Asian Americans in the Arts*, Christopher Ho & Daisy Nam, eds. Brooklyn: Paper Monument, 251-255, 2021.

Ifrikhar Dadi. “Legacies and Futures: An Interview with Iftikhar Dadi.” in *Twentieth-Century Indian Art*, Partha Mitter, Parul Dave Mukherji & Rakhee Balaram, ed. London: Thames & Hudson, 671-680, 2022.

Shelley Feldman. “In-Situ Displacement: Institutional Practices and the Making of the Hindu Other.” *Journal of Historical Sociology* 34 (2): 271-286, 2021.

Shelley Feldman. “The Decline of Democratic Governance: Protests at the Phulbari and Rampal Coal Mine.” in *Routledge Handbook of Autocratization in South Asia*, Sten Widmalm, ed. New York: Routledge, 220-232, 2022.

Shelley Feldman. “Displacement and the Production of Difference: East Pakistan/Bangladesh, 1947-1990.” *Globalizations* 19 (2) 187-204, 2022

Julia L. Finkelstein, Amy Fothergill, Christina Johnson, Heather Guetterman, Beena Bose, *et. al.* “Anemia and Vitamin B-12 and Folate Status in Women of Reproductive Age in Southern India: Estimating Population-Based Risk of Neural Tube Defects.” *Current Developments in Nutrition* 5 (5): nzab069, 2021.

Julia L. Finkelstein, Amy Fothergill, Jesse Krisher, Tinku Thomas, Anura Kurpad & Pratibha Dwarkanath. “Maternal Vitamin B12 Deficiency and Perinatal Outcomes in Southern India.” *PLoS One* 16 (4): e0248145, 2021.

Julia L. Finkelstein, Amy Fothergill, Heather Guetterman, Christina Johnson, Beena Bose, Yan Ping Qi, Charles Rose, Jennifer Williams, **Saurabh Mehta**, *et. al.* “Iron Status and Inflammation in Women of Reproductive Age: A Population-Based Biomarker Survey and Clinical Study.” *Clinical Nutrition ESPEN*. Volume 49: 483-494, 2022.

Marc Fleurbaey, **Ravi Kanbur** & Dennis Snower. *Efficiency and Equity in a Society-Economy Integrated Model*. CESifo Working Paper No. 9259. Munich: Center for Economic Studies & Ifo Institute, 2021.

Ravi Kanbur, Eduardo Ortiz-Juarez & Andy Sumner. *The Global Inequality Boomerang*. WIDER Working Paper 2022/27 Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2022.

David Grusky & **Ravi Kanbur**, eds. *Poverty and Inequality*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2022.

Haakon Gjerløw, **Sabrina Karim** & Gudrun Østby. “When Governments and International Organizations Shut Down: The Impact of COVID-19 on Refugees’ and Host Community’s Use of Educational Services in Cox’s Bazar.” *Frontiers in Education* 6: 696176, 2021.

Karim-Aly Kassam, Morgan Ruelle, Isabell Haag, Umed Bulbulshoev, Daler Kaziev, *et. al.* “Engaging Transformation: Using Seasonal Rounds to Anticipate Climate Change.” *Human Ecology* 49 (5): 509–523, 2021.

Karim-Aly Kassam. “Transdisciplinary Research, Indigenous Knowledge, and Wicked Problems.” *Rangelands* 43 (4): 133–141, 2021.

Anna Ullmann & **Karim-Aly Kassam**. “Has the Adaptation-Mitigation Binary Outlived its Value? Indigenous Ways of Knowing Present an Alternative.” *Community Science* 1: e2022CSJ000008, 2022.

Sarosh Kuruvilla & Chunyun Li. “Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining in Global Supply Chains: A Research Agenda.” *Journal of Supply Chain Management* 57 (2): 43-57, 2021.

Mehr Shafiq, **Jyoti Mathad**, Shilpa Naik, Mallika Alexander, Su Yadana, *et. al.* “Association of Maternal Inflammation During Pregnancy With Birth Outcomes and Infant Growth Among Women With or Without HIV in India.” *JAMA network open* 4 (12): e2140584, 2021.

Jyoti Mathad, Rada Savic, Paula Britto, Priya Jayachandran, Lubbe Wiesner, *et. al.* “Pharmacokinetics and Safety of 3 Months of Weekly Rifapentine and Isoniazid for Tuberculosis Prevention in Pregnant Women.” *Clinical Infectious Diseases* 74 (9): 1604-1613, 2022.

Jyoti Mathad, Artur Queiroz, Ramesh Bhosale, Mallika Alexander, Shilpa Naik, *et. al.* “Transcriptional Analysis for Tuberculosis in Pregnant Women from the PRACHITi study.” *Clinical Infectious Diseases* ciac437, 2022.

Anton Urfels, **Andrew McDonald**, Gerardo van Halsema, Paul Struik, Pankaj Kumar, *et. al.* “Social-ecological Analysis of Timely Rice Planting in Eastern India.” *Agronomy for Sustainable Development* 41: 14, 2021.

Panneerselvam Peramaiyan, **Andrew McDonald**, Virender Kumar, Peter Craufurd, Iftikar Wasim, *et. al.* “Narrowing Maize Yield Gaps in the Rainfed Plateau Region of Odisha.” *Experimental Agriculture* 58: e18, 2022.

James Berry, **Saurabh Mehta**, Priya Mukherjee, Hannah Ruebeck & Gauri Kartini Shastry. “Crowd-out in School-based Health Interventions: Evidence from India’s Midday Meals Program.” *Journal of Public Economics* 204: 104552, 2021.

Saurabh Mehta, Samantha Huey, Daniel McDonald, Rob Knight & **Julia L. Finkelstein**. “Nutritional Interventions and the Gut Microbiome in Children.” *Annual Reviews in Nutrition* 41: 479-510, 2021.

Saurabh Mehta, Samantha Huey, Padmini Ghugre, Ramesh Potdar, Sudha Venkatramanan, Jesse Krisher, Caleb Ruth, Harsha Chopra, Aparna Thorat, Varsha Thakker, Lynn Johnson, Laura Powis, Yadurshini Raveendrana, Jere Haas, **Julia L. Finkelstein** & Shobha Udiipi. “A Randomized Trial of Iron- and Zinc-biofortified Pearl Millet-based Complementary Feeding in Children aged 12 to 18 months Living in Urban Slums.” *Clinical Nutrition* 41 (4): 937-947, 2022.

Natasha Raheja. *A Gregarious Species*. Single-Channel Video Installation, 8-min on loop, 2021.

Natasha Raheja. “A Pakistani Hindu Demographic Survey, Western Rajasthan.” in *Handbook of Refugees in India*, S. Irudaya Rajan, ed. New Delhi: Routledge, 2022.

Natasha Raheja. “Virtual Belonging, Digital Diaspora, and Sindhi Hindu Identity in the Early 2000s.” *Journal of Sindhi Studies* 2 (1): 1-24, 2022.

Eric Tagliacozzo. *In Asian Waters: Oceanic Worlds from Yemen to Yokohama*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022.

Michael Tomlan. “Heritage Education: An Essential Element in Elementary Education.” in *Heritage Conservation in Post-Colonial India*, Manish Chalana & Ashima Krishna, eds. Routledge, New York, 2021.

Siddharth Sareen & **Steven Wolf**. “Accountability and Sustainability Transitions.” *Ecological Economics* 185: 107056, 2021.

Ritwick Ghosh & **Steven Wolf**. “Environmental Accounting and Performances of Hybrid Governance.” *Journal of Environmental Management* 284: 111995, 2021.

Mary Woods. “Afterword.” *Biome Diaries 3: Emergence*, 74-77, 2021.

Tata-Cornell Institute for Agriculture and Nutrition Scholars

Tata-Cornell Scholars include a multidisciplinary group of Cornell graduate students who are actively engaged in applied and field-based research aligning with TCI’s key research priorities. Research topics relate to food and nutrition security, agriculture development and food system transformation in India. Learn more at: tci.cornell.edu.

Whitman Barrett
PhD, Soil and Crop Sciences
Whitman Barrett focuses on the reuse of human excreta in agriculture, with the goal of improving smallholder farmers’ productivity and resilience to climate change.

Shivranjani Baruah
PhD, Plant Pathology and Plant-Microbe Biology
Shivranjani Baruah has research interests in exploring the intricacies of plant-pathogen interactions at the molecular level in order to inform decision making related to crop protection.

Apurva Borar
PhD, Applied Economics and Management
Apurva Borar conducts research at the intersection of development economics and gender studies, and is also interested in politics, governance, culture, and identity studies.

Kiera Crowley
PhD, Soil and Crop Sciences
Kiera Crowley is interested in innovation diffusion and the adoption of conservation agriculture technologies among farmers in India’s Indo-Gangetic Plain.

Natasha Jha
PhD, Applied Economics and Management
Natasha Jha studies the linkages between agriculture and nutrition and how these are likely to be impacted by climate shocks.

Ekta Joshi
PhD, Applied Economics and Management
Ekta Joshi examines how agriculture can be an effective instrument for economic development in developing countries.

Kavya Krishnan
PhD, Soil and Crop Sciences
Kavya Krishnan studies soil health, particularly its effects on food security.

Sumedha Minocha
PhD, Applied Economics and Management
Sumedha Minocha studies the complex ways in which food systems work in developing countries, particularly their impact on nutrition and health-related outcomes and the role of public policies in shaping these outcomes.

Amrutha Jose Pampackal
PhD, Development Sociology
Amrutha Jose Pampackal is interested in studying the sociology of access to food, particularly among marginalized communities in India.

Chanchal Pramanik
PhD, City and Regional Planning
Chanchal Pramanik has primary research interest in rural-urban dynamics and how they can benefit rural economies, with a focus on digital technologies.

Shree Saha
PhD, Applied Economics and Management
Shree Saha researches women’s empowerment, maternal and child nutrition, financial inclusion, and development.

Kasim Saiyyad
PhD, Applied Economics and Management
Kasim Saiyyad is interested in agriculture and nutrition economics, with a special focus on public welfare programs in low- and middle-income countries.

Vanisha Sharma
PhD, Applied Economics and Management
Vanisha Sharma has research interest in analyzing the effects of the internet and digitization in rural economies. Her field-based research involves exploiting increasing internet access in rural communities to analyze its effects on agriculture technology adoption, as well as maternal health and nutrition.

Anna David Thottappilly
PhD, Applied Economics and Management
Anna David Thottappilly looks into issues related to development and social mobility. She is interested in policy-oriented research that could aide in bridging the inequality gap.

Sonali Uppal
MPA, Public Administration
Sonali Uppal is interested in the intersection of development economics and agricultural livelihood, as well as the mechanisms for improving agricultural returns and generating secure and sustainable livelihood opportunities for the existing workforce and potential entrants.



Recently Graduated Students 2021-2022

Ali Abbas
PhD, Applied Economics and Management
Essays on Public Finance and Development

Manasicha Akepiyapornchai
PhD, Asian Literature, Religion and Culture
Voices of Self-Surrender: Religious Multilingualism in Medieval South India

Bindvi Arora
PhD, Food Science and Technology
Microstructure Modification of Milk Protein Extrudates by Reactive Supercritical Fluid Extrusion

Tarinee Awasthi
PhD, Asian Literature, Religion and Culture
The Possibilities and Impossibility of History: Writing Śrīvidyā in the Late Second Millennium

Sylvia Annette Blom
PhD, Applied Economics and Management
Three Essays on the Economics of Poverty, Nutrition, and Development

Jocelyn Boiteau
PhD, Nutrition
The State of Food Loss along Perishable Vegetable Supply Chains: A Study of Tomatoes in South India

Debak Das
PhD, Government
Delivering the Bomb: Nuclear Forces, Ambiguity, and the Non-Proliferation Order

Amy Fothergill
PhD, Nutritional Sciences
Biomarker Surveillance in Women of Reproductive Age for Anemia and Birth Defects Prevention

Mariangela Mihai Jordan
PhD, Anthropology
You Are Not My Brother: Mizo Nationalism at The Edge of The Indian Empire

Vidya Bharathi Rajkumar
PhD, Applied Economics and Management
Essays on the Effects of Migration & Remittances on Households in Rural India

Sadia Shirazi
PhD, History of Art, Archaeology, and Visual Studies
Fugitive Abstraction: Z̤arina, Mohamedi, and Lala Rukh

Nidhi Subramanyam
PhD, City and Regional Planning
Planning the Urban Futures of a Small City and its Rural Past: Governance and Water Infrastructures in Tiruppur, India

Kelsey Jane Utne
PhD History
Corpse Politics: Disposal and Commemoration of the Indian Interwar Dead

Rehan Dadi
MRP, City and Regional Planning
Regulation and Aesthetics of American Urban Signage

Nusaibah Khan
MS, Advanced Architectural Design
Fluid Commons: Productive Landscapes in Kashmir

Daniel Loebell
MA, Asian Studies
Nepal: The BIT-less Holdout Among India's Belt-and-Road Neighbors

Zahid Rafiq
In Small Boxes
MFA, English Language and Literature

Archana Sadangi
BS, Biological Sciences & Chemistry

Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellows 2022–2023

Aura Gonzalez
Degree: PhD, Government
Language: Hindi

Jessica Hughes
Degree: PhD, Natural Resources
Language: Nepali

Zak Leonard
Degree: MA, Historic Preservation Planning
Language: Urdu

Alexander Matika
Degree: PhD, Anthropology
Language: Persian

Vishal Nyayapathi
Degree: PhD, Anthropology
Language: Sinhala

Hannah Schwarz
Degree: MPS, Global Development
Language: Nepali



The South Asia Program welcomes your support

GIFTS from Cornell alumni and other friends are a key resource for SAP, allowing us to protect foundational strengths, while also expanding South Asian Studies at Cornell in innovative ways.

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About Us

The South Asia Program (SAP) is an interdisciplinary hub for Cornell students, faculty, staff, community members, and academic visitors, located in the Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies. SAP coordinates teaching, research, and campus activities concerning the area comprising the nations of the Indian subcontinent: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The South Asia Program maintains distinctive strengths and dedicated expertise in several key areas, especially South Asian humanities; social, scientific, and applied research on South Asia; and the languages and cultures of Nepal and Sri Lanka.

With the Department of Asian Studies, SAP is committed to teaching a number of modern and classical South Asian languages, including Bengali, Hindi, Nepali, Pali, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sinhala,

Tamil, Tibetan and Urdu. Additionally, Persian is taught in the Department of Near Eastern Studies.

Our special resources include a library collection of over 500,000 printed monographs and nearly 10,000 serial titles in hard copy; 48 core faculty and 16 associate faculty in 28 departments, annually teaching over 100 Area Studies courses and 60 language courses at levels from beginning to advanced; and extensive outreach materials including films, web-based curricula, and hands-on teaching aids.

SAP sponsors a weekly seminar series with presentations by local, national, and international scholars, and organizes or co-sponsors numerous conferences and workshops every year. SAP collaborates with student organizations to bring South Asian cultural and performance events to campus on a regular basis, enriching

Cornell and the surrounding communities. SAP also has a significant outreach program which makes training on South Asia available to educators from K-12 schools, community colleges, and schools of education.

Since 1983, Cornell has collaborated with Syracuse University as a National Resource Center for South Asia, one of only six nationally, sponsored by the US Department of Education. SAP facilitates summer intensive language opportunities for students from Cornell and other universities on the Cornell campus, at the South Asia Summer Language Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and at the American Association for Indian Studies language programs in India. The South Asia Program also nurtures the Office of Global Learning's study abroad opportunities in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.



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SOUTH ASIA PROGRAM

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