



The photograph shows a man holding a kettle dotted with droplets of fresh cow's milk, a testament to the hospitality of a Baloch pastoral community I encountered while they grazed their livestock in the agrarian landscapes of Sibi, Balochistan.

Bramsh Khan, PhD Candidate, Social Science Program

SOUTH ASIA CENTER

SUMMER 2024 NEWSLETTER

WORD FROM INCOMING DIRECTOR

Dear Readers,

As the new Director of the South Asia Center at Syracuse University, I am thrilled to welcome you to what we hope will be yet another rewarding year for our community in and beyond Syracuse. I want to thank you for contributing your time and labor toward creating and sustaining a vibrant center, which — since 1985 — has existed in consortium with Cornell's South Asia Program as a National Resource Center for South Asia and is currently one of only eight such South Asia NRCs in the country. I am honored to be part of this collective and look forward to working with all of you over the next few years to make our events and programming even more robust, inclusive, and collaborative.

I want to acknowledge the work of previous Directors of SAC over the years. Professors Susan Wadley, Ann Grodzins Gold, Tula Goenka, and Carol Babiracki provided incredible institutional service while Professor Prema Kurien's timely recent leadership helped SAC overcome the stresses of the pandemic and re-establish its vibrancy through thoughtfully curated in-person events. We were fortunate to have Emera Wilson as SAC's Associate Director for several years. Her institutional wisdom and accumulated knowledge were an invaluable source and helped the Center offer a cultural and intellectual home for our students and faculty. We are delighted that Matthew Baxter joined us in December 2022 to succeed Emera as our Program Manager. He brings with him years of experience working in India as a researcher and faculty member, and his deep familiarity with the region is an asset for the Center. Matt and I are excited to work with our board and the wider community, both at Syracuse University and across Upstate New York, to continue to offer critical programming that will serve our South Asia Center affiliated faculty and students and contribute to the overall mission of the University.

This is a critical time for South Asia and for the world at large. As the region grapples with multiple political, economic, and ecological crises, we hope the Center continues to offer an open and intellectually stimulating space to analyze critical events and movements that are shaping our world today.

Best wishes,
Mona Bhan



“... we hope the Center continues to offer an open and intellectually stimulating space to analyze critical events and movements that are shaping our world today.”

NEW FACES

Julia Jong Haines joins the Anthropology department as an Assistant Professor this year. Julia's courses engage students with the materials and landscapes of the past to broaden their understanding of the modern origins of power and inequality. They range from the archaeology of slavery and indenture, healing and disease, and gender and sexuality, and grapple with contemporary ethical issues around conducting research. She is teaching a course on Archaeological Connections in the Indian Ocean this fall.

Julia is coming to Syracuse from a Mellon Postdoctoral fellowship at the Society for Humanities and Anthropology department at Cornell (2022-2024). Previously she held a postdoctoral fellowship and teaching position at the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Comparative Archaeology (2020-2022) after earning her PhD in Anthropology from the University of Virginia in 2019.

Julia's research focuses on the archaeologies of labor migrations and colonialism in the Indian Ocean. Since 2012 she has been conducting community-involved archaeological research in Mauritius. Her current book project looks at the everyday lives of indentured laborers from China and India who lived and worked on a sugar cane plantation during the 19th-century and the legacies of colonialism on island landscapes more broadly. Her work in Mauritius includes consulting on archaeological and ecological heritage and conservation projects with local organizations and descendant groups.



FACULTY INTERVIEW: ARUN BRAHMBHATT (RELIGION)

Arun Brahmhatt (PhD, University of Toronto) started his position at Syracuse University as Assistant Professor of Religion in Fall 2023. Arun reflects on his first year at Syracuse in the following interview:

Where are you from?

This is always tricky for me to answer - I think of many places as "home." I was born in Texas and raised in Massachusetts. I spent nearly a decade in Toronto. I've lived for a year each in London, Ahmedabad, and central Ohio. Most recently, I was in northern New York. All of these places are where I'm from.

What did you do you/where did you work before coming to Syracuse University?

After my doctoral study at the University of Toronto, I worked at two liberal arts colleges before coming to Syracuse - a brief stint at Kenyon College in Ohio, and a longer one at St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York.

What made you decide to come to Syracuse?

Syracuse appealed to me both professionally and personally. Though I really enjoyed liberal arts teaching, I was drawn to Syracuse in large part because of the opportunity to work with some amazing faculty and students, and especially graduate students. Additionally, the Religion Department at Syracuse has a storied legacy of field-defining contributions. I am the third to hold a position in Hindu Studies in the department, and both of my predecessors - Ann Gold and H. Daniel Smith - have left very big shoes for me to fill. And of course, I was thrilled to join such a large cohort of faculty working on South Asia across so many disciplines. It's a thriving intellectual space.



On a more personal level, I am a city boy at heart. While I made the most of small-town and rural life, a part of me missed city life.

What is your favorite thing to do in Syracuse so far?

I really love browsing the Central New York Regional Market. Apart from the fresh produce, there are some things I always pick up: olives, fresh-cut flowers, mushrooms, and local honey. And then I stop by the Syracuse Antiques Exchange on my way home. Perfect Saturday morning.

Besides your office, do you have a favorite place to get work done? Or maybe a favorite spot on campus in general?

I tend to do most of my work in my office - it's on the 5th floor of the Hall of Languages and I love it up there. But to boost my productivity, if the weather cooperates, I take walking breaks around campus. One of my favorites is to the western edge of campus to see the hills nearby. If anyone would like to join me for a walk, let me know!

What has been the hardest part of adjusting to your new life at Syracuse? What has been the easiest?

The answer to both of these questions is the same: all of the people and resources that SU has to offer. From the folks at the South Asia Center to the Humanities Center to the Art Museum to the Library Special Collections Resource Center and more. They have all enriched my first year here and made my transition easy. But meeting so many new people within a short time frame was overwhelming!

What courses have you taught this year?

I taught an introductory course on Hinduism, a 200-level course called "Love, War, and Hindu Myth: Ramayana," and a 300-level course called "The Art of Devotion in South Asia." I've offered versions of these courses before, but I'm always experimenting with new content. The last one was almost totally new: I decided to explore three themes—poetry and song, performance, and visual culture—in five different South Asian religions. The Ramayana course is one of my favorites to teach. After spending all semester exploring how an ancient epic is retold in many different languages and mediums, I have my students produce their own creative retellings as a final project.



What is your area of research?

Broadly, I examine issues of language, time, and space in South Asian religious traditions. Currently, I'm working on a book project called *Debating Sanskrit: The Scholastic Imperative in Modern Hinduism*. I explore how religious communities engage with premodern Sanskrit knowledge systems in modern India (from the colonial period through the present day). The first part of the book is focused on how various intellectuals use Sanskrit to develop and transform two longstanding forms of debate: oral public disputations and written scriptural commentaries. The last part of the book attends to debates about the very use of Sanskrit, which is often called a "dead language" in an age when other languages - Hindi, Gujarati, and even English - are far more vibrant.

How would you describe your teaching style?

Students who take classes with me can expect a lot of storytelling, plenty of close readings of primary texts (be they written, visual, or performed), and a fair share of nontraditional assignments. For example, instead of a standard online discussion board, I often have students post visual and written content on Instagram (in a closed classroom community so that no one goes viral). The posts and the conversation are much more dynamic.

UPSTATE SOUTH ASIAS: INAUGURAL SYMPOSIUM

After months of co-organizing, "Upstate South Asias: Citizenship, Comparison, & Equity" was recognized as a Central New York Humanities Corridor working group in May 2023. Building on the earlier pre-pandemic momentum of the 2016-2019 "Affiliation Agreement for Shared Course Instruction in Hindi" between Syracuse University and the New York Six Liberal Arts Consortium [NY6], "Upstate South Asias" joins resources across SU and the NY6—to coordinate teaching, research, language, and the abroad—to build a more robust ecosystem for South Asia's study in Upstate New York addressing challenges to democratic institutions. Our working group's inaugural symposium was held at SU's Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs on October 7, 2023 and included 22 faculty and staff from across SU and the NY6. The symposium featured a morning of research presentations, a lunch discussion revolving around regional collaboration, and an afternoon of three breakout sessions focused on coordinating teaching, language learning, and local & abroad engagements.

Those attending were: Abhishek Amar (Hamilton College), Matt Baxter (Syracuse University), Tej Bhatia (Syracuse



University), Arun Brahmhatt (Syracuse University), Gisele El Khoury (St. Lawrence University), Usman Hamid (Hamilton College), Padma Kaimal (Colgate University), Eliza Kent (Skidmore College), Feisal Khan (Hobart and Williams Smith Colleges), Chaise LaDousa (Hamilton College), Sebastiano Lucci (Hobart and Williams Smith Colleges), Tillman Nechtman (Skidmore College), Ryan Overby (Skidmore College), Aswini Pai (St. Lawrence University), Ritika Popli (Colgate University), Kamala Ramadoss (Syracuse University), Chao Ren (Hamilton College), Bhanushri Sisodia (Syracuse University), Nick Tackes (Hamilton College), Susan Wadley (Syracuse University), Joanne Waghorne (Syracuse University), and Vikash Yadav (Hobart and William Smith Colleges). A special thanks to Vikash, Kamala, Sue, Padma, Chaise, and Aswini for presenting work (and to Sohini Chattopadhyay, Union College, for preparing a presentation prevented by COVID!), to Tillman and Eliza for serving as panel discussants, to George Carter for his above-and-beyond support as Event Coordinator, and to Kyler Deshpande (MPA/MAIR'25) for assistance as Student Project Associate for Asia-related programs at SU's Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs.



PRATAP BHANU MEHTA DELIVERS

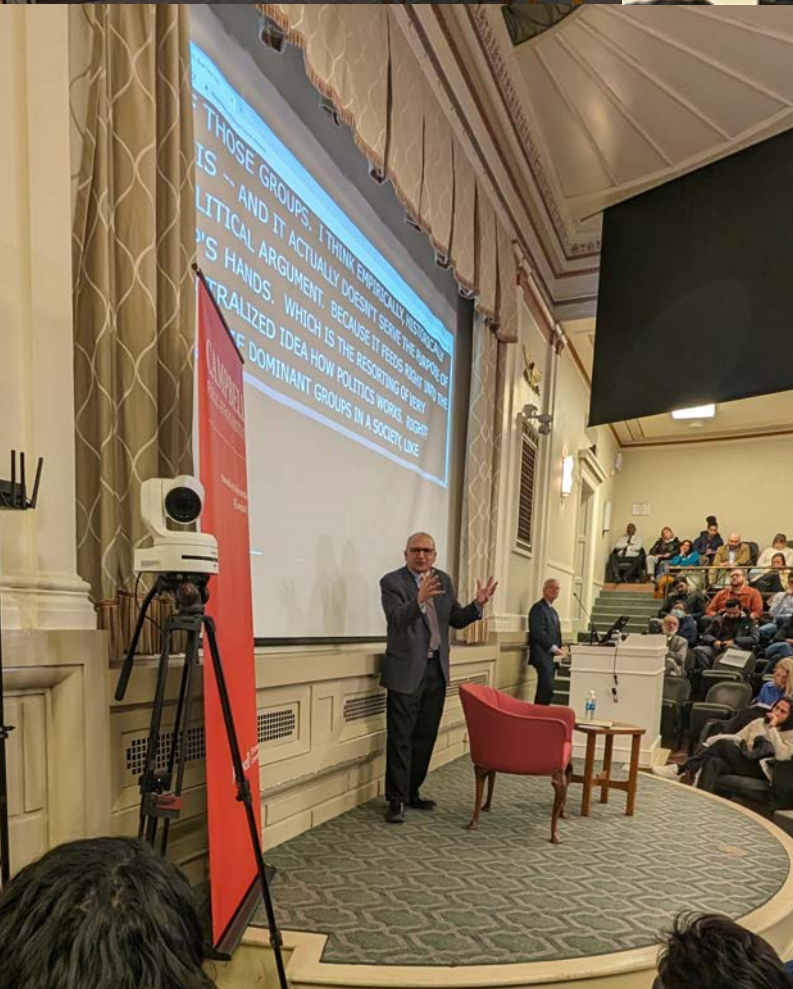
STATE OF DEMOCRACY LECTURE:

“DEMOCRACY, AUTHORITARIANISM, AND NATIONALISM: INDIA IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE”

The prestigious “State of Democracy Lecture Series” hosted by the Campbell Public Affairs Institute fosters a better understanding of significant contemporary issues and provides a valuable link between Syracuse University and the larger community here in New York. This year’s lecture “Democracy, Authoritarianism, & Nationalism: India in Contemporary Perspective” by Professor Pratap Bhanu Mehta (Princeton University) was co-sponsored by the South Asia Center. Delivered March 22, 2024 to an audience nearing the capacity of the Maxwell Auditorium, Mehta illuminated the importance of the then-upcoming Indian elections by placing them within various larger contexts: the history of South Asia’s political development, developments in democratic experiments globally, and 2024 as “the year of elections” in which half of the world’s population is at the polls.



Mehta delivers his State of Democracy lecture.



Mehta draws students after his lecture.



Mehta discusses Indian democracy with students before his lecture. Students pictured, from left to right: Pallavi Khare (Public Diplomacy & Global Communications), Akarsh Bhutani (MPA), Omer Keles (MPA).

STATE OF DEMOCRACY AND INDIA: GRANT REHEER'S LAST AS CAMPBELL INSTITUTE DIRECTOR

Professor Pratap Bhanu Mehta's "State of Democracy Lecture" was not only significant in addressing the challenges of the world's largest democratic experiment during a crucial election year globally; it was also significant for Syracuse University because it marked the last "State of Democracy" lecture introduced by Professor **Grant Reeher** (Political Science) as director of the Maxwell School's Campbell Public Affairs Institute. Reeher was director of the Campbell Institute from 2009 to 2024 and is also the creator, host, and producer of *The Campbell Conversations*, a weekly public affairs radio program airing on WRVO Public Media. Reeher below reflects on his 15 years serving as director, the changing political landscape over that time, and the ways in which the themes of Mehta's lecture resonated both with this changing political landscape as well as with the pressing demands of our political moment.

I believe in serendipity. When Brian Taylor, Glyn Morgan, and Margarita Estavez-Abe at the Moynihan Institute reached out to me in late 2022 about the possibility of bringing in Pratap Bhanu Mehta to speak at the Maxwell School in a joint effort between the Campbell Public Affairs Institute and Moynihan, I was happy to oblige, especially after I learned more about his writings, his standing as one of India's leading public intellectuals, and his own personal story as a profile in political courage.

We quickly decided that the State of Democracy Lecture Series was the best venue in which to feature Mehta, who would soon be a visiting professor at Princeton University. Matt Baxter, who manages the South Asia Center at Moynihan—and a former junior colleague of Mehta's—became Moynihan's lead for the event. During the next year, I would have the pleasure of getting to know Matt better—he was a genuine pleasure to work with, and we now chat regularly.

This would be my final State of Democracy lecture event to host as Campbell director, after 15 years in the position. I was hoping to "go out" with a good event.

Professor Mehta's lecture was fascinating. Titled "Democracy, Authoritarianism, and Nationalism: India in Comparative Perspective," it came to us when democracy, I think it is fair to say, has not enjoyed its best couple of decades. There have been concerns around the world about the backsliding and poor performance of democracies, as some promising starts have crashed and burned, younger democracies have been seriously challenged, and older more established democracies have displayed worrisome problems. Both authoritarianism and nationalism have emerged as potential villains and dangerous alternatives in this concerning chapter.

Mehta discussed a wide array of topics in India, which he placed in a broader comparative perspective: the role of violence and the political need to create perceived threats and feelings of insecurity; consternation over citizens apparently voting against their own economic interests; the burden of a political party's history of being able to provide "answers" to socioeconomic problems; the "criminalization" of politics and the incentives this creates to remain in office at all costs; the way deep mutual resentments prohibit finding universal solutions; and the use or non-use of religion as a national symbol.

As I sat listening—and furiously scribbling notes on both sides of my manilla folder—I thought of my own country's recent



Top: Grant Reeher joins audience applause.

Left: Grant Reeher delivers his last introduction for the "State of Democracy" lecture series as director of the Campbell Institute.

past. Some things mapped, others did not, but the exercise was thoroughly helpful. At times I felt better about the American situation, and at other times worse.

Mehta took audience questions from near and far, and not surprisingly, most dealt with the U.S., given the venue. He handled them all deftly.

When it was time to conclude the event, I said that I had learned more in 90 minutes about *American democracy* than I have in the past ten years. Many looked surprised, assuming I had accidentally misspoke. But several attendees approached me during the public reception and said they knew exactly what I meant.

Let me be clear about one thing, however. Do not mistake what I am writing as a not-so-thinly-veiled partisan message about the United States. I think that many of the existential concerns about American democracy—or rather the American republic—that have been expressed in the last eight years are overdrawn. The very word “democracy” has been weaponized on the left in a way that has obscured more than clarified. I believe our institutions are stronger and more resilient than they have been given credit for, and I believe that the recent historical record can be read to support that claim.

I believe that the biggest threat to fuller democracy in the United States is the concentration of huge sums of wealth among a very small minority. Neither party is really talking seriously about that, and both are more than willing to gather up as much of that wealth as they can to keep themselves in office.

Also recognize that the path democracy has followed in the United States—and in the world for that matter—has never been a smooth upward one. Like the attendant struggles for inclusion and civil rights, the march has been decidedly uneven, across often hostile terrain. Set-backs and low points are to be expected, and democracy will always be in need of its supporters.

But back to Professor Mehta. As I said earlier, as outgoing Campbell director, I was hoping that my final State of Democracy event would be a memorable one. Thanks to Pratap Bhanu Mehta and Matt Baxter, I couldn't have asked for a better way to go out.

“Oh Fragrant Jasmine,” Sanjana Sharma (Visual & Performing Arts, Illustration, MFA '26).
Pieces inspired by the Kannada Poet Da Ra Bendre.



SAP-SAC SOUTH ASIA CONSORTIUM CONTINUES TO BUILD CROSS-CAMPUS BRIDGES AROUND GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

The Cornell-Syracuse University South Asia National Resource Center Consortium, established in 1985, is one of eight Title VI federally funded National Resource Centers for South Asia, the only such consortium, and one of only eight such consortia across more than a hundred total National Resource Centers. Given both the productive history and institutional uniqueness of our consortium, Cornell's South Asia Program and Syracuse's South Asia Center is investing more consciously in the relationship among graduate students between our two campuses during this NRC grant cycle. Building on the success of our first consortium-wide graduate student symposium to further foster a sense of shared academic community across our campuses, hosted by the South Asia Center at Syracuse University in March 2023, SAP at Cornell hosted a second symposium on November 9, 2023 and SAC at Syracuse hosted a third on March 5, 2024. SAP's symposium concluded with socializing over bowling while SAC's symposium was followed by a multi-media presentation as well as both dance and music performances and a dance workshop by an undergraduate campus South Asia group. SAP also held a consortium-wide graduate student workshop on writing and translation at Cornell on April 12th featuring Professor Aruni Kashyap across our campuses that further illustrates our consortium's strength.

“SUSTAINABILITY & ITS CRITICS IN SOUTH ASIA: DEVELOPMENT, ECOLOGY, PRESERVATION, AND BEYOND,” CORNELL UNIVERSITY, NOVEMBER 9, 2023



Whitman Barrett (Cornell, School of Integrative Plant Science) presents alongside fellow panelists (from left to right): Nimisha Thakur (Syracuse, Anthropology), Shanel Khaliq (Syracuse, Sociology) and Ayesha Matthan (Cornell, History of Art).

Given climate change and its relationship to industrial development, “sustainability” persists as a term of concern in South Asia as elsewhere when thinking about the relationship among humans, their environment, and their ways of living together. Yet sustainability’s discourse turns on tropes of preservation (i.e. conservation of resources) and limitation (i.e. the reduction of consumption) which cuts against framings of human possibility that revolve around tropes of progress (i.e. overturning status quo shackles) and boundlessness (i.e. refusing restrictions). Moreover, sustainability may harbor inegalitarian logics that threaten human considerations of justice, disproportionately burdening some over others. Our second Cornell-Syracuse South Asia Consortium Symposium asked: what is the role of “sustainability” in South Asia today? what articulations of sustainability are most and/or least convincing? is sustainability captured by concerns with issues like development (market, state, infrastructure, etc.) and ecology (biological life, physical environments, relational interdependence, etc.) and, if not, what concerns gesture beyond?

Nimisha Thakur, Anthropology, Syracuse University: Place-Based Ethics amidst Climate Change across the Brahmaputra Floodplains

How can place-based ethics challenge monolithic state understandings of sustainability amidst the global crisis of climate change? This is a question that I engage in this presentation by focusing on the ways in which the materiality of floods and erosion is engaged by riverine communities to imagine a future across the Brahmaputra floodplains of Assam, India. Contrary to current processes of state formation that emphasize a stable, sustainable riverine future through state land consolidation projects, riverine communities engage ancestral agricultural and labor practices in thinking about strategies for the future. In this presentation, I dwell on the everyday ways in which sustainability has historically been practiced, how it is negotiated

amidst emergent state formations and how these place-based understandings challenge state-centered projects of sustainable development that overlook the interests of local communities.

Whitman Barrett, Soil and Crop Sciences, Cornell University: *Factors Facilitating and Hindering Smallholder Farmer Use of Human Feces Compost in Tamil Nadu*

Farmers around the world face limitations in accessing carbon-containing soil amendments such as manure because livestock production and crop production have become increasingly separated and governments focus on subsidizing inorganic fertilizers like urea. Simultaneously, many people lack access to improved sanitation, and much existing sanitation infrastructure contributes to degrading water quality by releasing elements like nitrogen and phosphorus into surface water. In this presentation, I discuss results from my qualitative research related to factors facilitating or hindering the use of composted human feces by smallholder farmers in Tamil Nadu and the ways that such reuse contributes to a circular bio-nutrient economy. The reuse of human excreta through ecological sanitation is discussed as a means of improving the long-term viability of agriculture while avoiding the negative environmental consequences of centralized wastewater treatment systems.

Shanel Khaliq, Sociology, Syracuse University: *Public Transport Infrastructure: Understanding Class, Gender and Environmental Inequality in Urban Pakistan*

Public transport aims to offer economic development, mobility, freedom, and environmental improvement. However, not everyone in cities has access to mobility and space and these promises of public transport are not shared equally. In my dissertation research, I examine how public transport infrastructure shapes class, gender and environmental inequality in urban Islamabad. I focus on various modes of public transport, including the state-owned BRT (running since 2015) and other privately-run forms of public transport (such as 12-seater wagons, 6-seater mini MPVs and ride hailing services) within the city to understand how the state reproduces technocratic, top-down understandings of urban development that center around the working-class male who is meant to contribute productively to the economy. The findings reveal the class-based and gendered assumptions embedded in the design of public transport infrastructure and how it impacts low-income residents and women particularly. They also show that while air-conditioned buses are seen as a respite by BRT users due to increasing heat stress, concrete structures are overall creating urban heat islands and consistently reducing the city's green cover.

Ayesha Matthan, History of Art, Cornell University: *Looking for Bombay: Photography, Space and Identity in the City, 1970s-1990s*

“Looking for Bombay” is a photographic study in print media of various publics of the city in the late 20th century, through the lens of a local municipal journal, illustrated magazines, a censored foreign-published book, advertisements in popular magazines, and civil rights groups publications. It shows how photojournalism provided insights into a range of dissenting and competing publics from political groups, regional communities, workers to homemakers over issues such as unemployment, higher wages, representation and visibility, and inflation. I argue that the photojournalistic page presentation and narrative discloses the complex, fragmented nature of diverse public spheres of a city mythologized to be cosmopolitan, until the riots of 1992-1993 and its eventual name change to Mumbai in 1996.



Akarsh Bhutani raises a point alongside Avital Datskovsky, Kyler Deshpande and Kanwaljit Singh.

Kshirajaa Ramesh asks a question while Tasfia Tasnim, Rohan Bhattacharjee, and Roderick Wijunamai listen.

Cornell and Syracuse students prepare to bowl.

“ARCHIVES, COLLECTIONS, AND DATA: HOW SOUTH ASIANISTS CONCEIVE THEIR RESEARCH,” SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY, MARCH 5, 2024

Given the massive amount of records kept by the East India Company and the British Raj, scholars have often emphasized the importance of “archives” when thinking about South Asia. Of course, the idea of “archives” extends beyond the records kept by colonial administrators in a pre-computerized past. But how far out does this idea extend? Can the term “archive” be applied to any kind of collection, if only such a collection were put to a certain kind of academic use? If so, what use? How does conceiving a collection of information as an archive differ from conceiving a collection of information as data, as has become all too common in academia and everyday life? More broadly, how might the disciplinary frames South Asianists use to consider their research effect the articles they write, the talks they give, and the jobs they get? Our third Cornell-Syracuse South Asia Consortium Symposium invited graduate students across both campuses to consider how the terms we use to frame our research and the information we gather effect our current and future careers as South Asianists. Such considerations are of importance when writing a dissertation, whether or not one’s field has a strong South Asia tradition, by allowing methodological engagements with colleagues within one’s discipline or across disciplines when interviewing and publishing.



Panelists address the audience. From left to right: Du Fei (Cornell, History), Sobia Paracha (Syracuse, Political Science), Chair Prema Kurien (Syracuse, Sociology), Neha Gupta (Cornell, Economics), and Allie Berger (Syracuse, Religion).

Du Fei, History, Cornell University: *Manuals as Gendered Archives in the Early Modern Persianate World*

In the absence of well-preserved official archives, the legal history of the Safavid and the Mughal Empires often relies on fragmentary collections of legal documents. A major portion of such documents is found in the manuscripts of a range of Persian genres of legal and scribal manuals. My paper argues that the evolution of these genres under the Safavids and the Mughals since the sixteenth century represented a new development in the formation of a masculine imperial bureaucratic identity. This project thus treats anthologies as embedding in themselves processes of legal and scribal knowledge production and subject-making. In doing so, this paper contributes to the study of archives more broadly by highlighting how the history of textual circulation can often reveal information otherwise inaccessible through the textual contents of our sources.

Sobia Paracha, Political Science, Syracuse University: *Media Discourse and Digital Archives in Pakistan*

My research explores the synergy between qualitative sensibilities and quantitative methodologies in political science, particularly within the South Asian context. It advocates for a blended approach where data transforms into a meaningful archive through the application of qualitative methods, while still acknowledging the importance of statistical analysis. Focusing on South Asia, the work aims to extract universal insights from regional particularities, employing machine learning to analyze digital archives of historical newspapers. This method reveals long-term trends pertaining to government fragility, territorial disputes, and nationalism. The study stresses the importance of understanding cultural nuances, demonstrated through the analysis of linguistically rich terms specific to Pakistani political discourse. These terms encapsulate complex political phenomena and illustrate the challenge of presenting culturally contextualized concepts to a global audience. The research embodies a commitment to integrating qualitative depth with quantitative breadth, aspiring to generate insights with both local resonance and global significance.

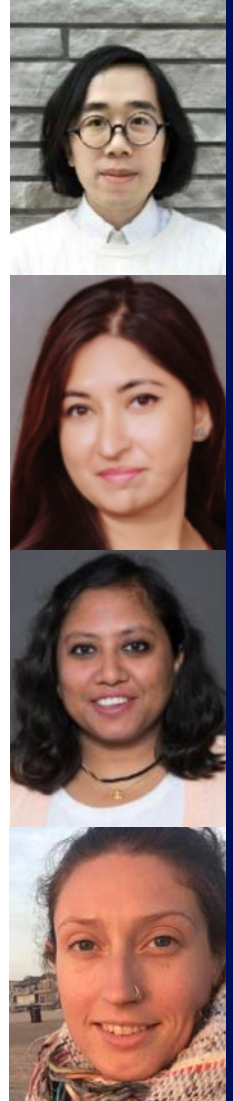
Neha Gupta, Economics, Cornell University: *Archives and Data in the Policymaker’s World*

The pertinence of data in the world has increasingly caught the attention of the societies and economists of the modern-day world of policy making. There are many widely distributed sources of socio-political-economic data known and available to

academicians, research scholars, and policymakers alike. Yet the need to address the world's crucial complex situations not only require critical philosophies but also creative thought. Hence, alternate data avenues are the creative solution needed. Urban spaces characterized by agglomerate economies, evolving social dynamics, engines of growth, centers of political and cultural importance, landmarks of critical philosophies, and embodiment of human capabilities is one prominent sphere where alternate data methods like archival data can help to address the rising challenges of urbanization and the need for equitable and prosperous urban economies, especially for developing countries like India. For instance, the policy of JNNURM (2005-2012), India's solution to urban challenges crafted using technological tools and statistical methods, aimed to provide a comprehensive and affordable housing solution to every income strata of city dwellers, including those in slums. Despite the benefits derived, sub-optimal outcomes of the policy were also a reflection of an economic design constrained by a greater underlying structural problem like land transparency. An increasing significance to integrate critical thinking with creative data methods such as archives would therefore expand access to ladders of social and economic prosperity.

Allie Berger, Religion, Syracuse University: *Researching Riyaz: Repertoire, Archive, and Embodied Meaning*

My dissertation project takes riyaz, or disciplined practice, in kathak dance as its subject as well as its methodological orientation. Ultimately, it was sustained reflection on my own riyaz that not only provided insights into my processes of meaning-making and transformation, but also allowed me to engage meaningfully with other dancers. Questions I asked in interviews were often asked back to me, resulting in shared musings on topics ranging from technical challenges to creativity to why we dance. These discussions, in turn, have affected how I do my daily riyaz. This presentation thinks alongside Diana Taylor's categories of archive and repertoire as well as Priya Srinivasan's concept of bodily archive to consider some of the impacts of embodied practice on scholarly work. I suggest it is important both as its own method of research and as an influence on other methods of research (such as conducting interviews and reading texts).



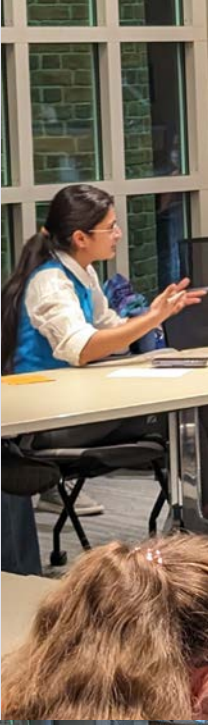
Devika Singh Shekhawat helps frame the discussion as Roderick Wijunamai takes notes.



Third Bi-Annual Cornell-Syracuse South Asia Consortium Symposium



Abdullah Jehanzeb poses a question alongside Chaithanya Nair, Haris Azeem Yar Khan, and Sadam Hussain .



ANSHUL ROY (ART PHOTOGRAPHY, SYRACUSE): RAGE AGAINST THE ARCHIVE: INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE THROUGH NEW MEDIA ART

“My artistic practice is inspired by postcolonial discourses, exploring issues like identity, historical memory, cultural representation and visual ethics, with a specific interest in probing how the Britishers employed photography in colonial India for ‘othering’ and how these ethnographic photos exist in our contemporary institutional archives. My series Rage Against the Archive consists of experimental browser-based videos that critically probe how the New York Public Library’s website catalogs, displays and sells dehumanizing photos from the 19th-century ethnographic book The People of India, questioning capitalism’s infusion with the archival process, and documents the ‘hacking’ methodology used to insert different texts in a symbolic act of Electronic Civil Disobedience. As a conceptual artist working with photography, I embrace this new reality of our digital era, where most images exist as computational objects on a screen. Hence, I use the internet both as a canvas and source material to “activate the archives” and recontextualize its information.”



Anshul Roy provides a multi-media presentation-performance.

Professors Boryana Rossa (College of Visual and Performing Arts) and Gregory Heisler (Newhouse School of Public Communications) join students and attentively listen to Anshul’s presentation.

DESI PERFORMANCE, UNDERGRADUATE PERFORMANCE GROUP, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY: PERFORMANCE IN THREE PARTS: INDIAN/PAKISTANI MUSIC MASHUP; SOLO DANCES INCLUDING KATHAR, BHARATANATYAM, HIP-HOP, AND BOLLYWOOD; GARBA DANCE WORKSHOP

Desi Performance is a student-run organization conceptualized and founded by President Sahana Anand, Treasurer Cruz Thapa, and Vice President Chinmayi Upendra Joshi in April 2023, and officially recognized by Syracuse University in Fall 2023. It was founded to both be an independent body that connects performance artists and enthusiasts to opportunities in the area and to give a platform for the traditional and varied Desi arts across South Asia. So far, Desi Performance has collaborated with the South Asian Student Association, Fayetteville High School, Hindu Student Association, HinduYUVA,



“Desi Performance” Co-Founders: Sahana Anand (Physics and Mathematics’26) demonstrates great agility as Cruz Thapa (Policy Studies’26, standing left) documents and Chinmayi Upendra Joshi (Computer Engineering, standing in front of flag) prepares.

BOOK LAUNCH

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION FACULTY’S FIRST BOOK: INDIAN YOUTH, MIGRATION, AND THE INTERNATIONALIZING UNIVERSITY

On February 6th, 2024, the South Asia Center hosted the book launch of *Indebted Mobilities: Indian Youth, Migration, and the Internationalizing University* (University of Chicago Press, 2024) authored by **Professor Susan Thomas** (School of Education). The themes of higher education, Asia-originating populations, and social justice resonated widely across campus and drew in standing-room only attendance. Thomas below reflects on some of the themes of her book and its contributions to the field.

This book launch event held at the South Asia Center gave me a wonderful opportunity to share more about the journey to and release of my new book, *Indebted Mobilities*. The book is a critical ethnography of the fraught encounters of a group of non-elite, middle-class, Indian migrant men who were studying at a public university set in the New York metropolitan area. These young people had arrived at a time when the university was increasingly seeking to “internationalize” its campus as a way to grapple with the impact of the ongoing withdrawal of state support it was facing. By addressing what is at stake and for whom in this trend to internationalize campuses, which the book frames as a crucial facet of the global commodification of higher education, I discussed with the audience the ways that the work attends to the related historical, political, material, and social forces that inform the migration of these young people, and the stories that come from them. Together, the chapters of *Indebted Mobilities* point to issues of surveillance, labor, and other modes of exclusion and how they come to bear on the socio-political location of these migrant youth. As I shared during my talk, at the heart of the book’s arguments are considerations of the logics of debt, Indian modern masculinities, US exceptionalism, and the politics of inclusion on campuses. *Indebted Mobilities* is a contribution to the study of South Asian transnationality, and more broadly to the fields of educational anthropology, migration studies, and critical university studies. It was such an honor that this launch led to a packed room full of students, faculty, and other university community members from across different disciplines and backgrounds. It allowed for an incredibly rich and substantive discussion following my presentation.



FACULTY CORNER:

MICRON AND CENTRAL NEW YORK

Professor **Ingrid Erickson** (School of Information Studies) has conducted research on the relationship between gender and STEM fields in Bangalore, for which she received a Fulbright-Nehru Academic and Professional Excellence Fellowship in 2019. She presented some of her work, “Untangling Culture from Culture: Exploring the Experiences of Women Tech Entrepreneurs in India,” at the South Asia Center on November 30th, 2023. Such work is critical to broader appreciations of technological innovation globally, given the long history linking the computer industry and labor originating in South Asia. With Micron—supported by the CHIPS Act—moving forward with its plan to build a series of massive semiconductor manufacturing facilities in nearby Clay, NY, the South Asia Center invited Erickson to draw upon her expertise and reflect on Micron setting up shop here in Central New York.

Micron, Micron, Micron. It is on everyone’s lips here in Syracuse, and yet there is still so much to make sense of. I am a professor in the School of Information Studies, which means that I am ostensibly someone who knows a thing or two about technology. This is true. I obtained my doctoral degree from the School of Engineering at Stanford University back in 2009, and while I am not a trained engineer, I am fairly well versed in the relationship between people and technology, specifically the role that emerging technologies play in reshaping the contours of knowledge work.

The first thing I settle on when considering Micron’s imminent arrival is that it is the latest in a long string of initiatives linking technology to economic renewal. Whereas the most visceral rhetoric around this development in local public media has been on the potential economic impact these factories will have on the surrounding communities, I wonder about the sociotechnical norms a predominantly high-skilled technical workforce will introduce and legitimize in the surrounding communities. We only need to look to Silicon Valley, Seattle, and Austin for some glimpse of the new services, new infrastructures, and new amenities this workforce might expect. What should we anticipate? And how, if at all, might we help to create our own version of a tech-inflected community that pushes against the tired tropes of technotopia incubated elsewhere? My time in Bangalore, India last year helped me see how endemic these tropes are, even thousands of miles and several oceans away from California. I think we should be prepared to actively curate how we evolve as a community, being mindful that economic gain is not a universal justification for every change.

My second consideration when musing on Micron is to see it as part of an Indian immigration success story. Sanjay Mehrotra, current CEO of Micron Technology, came from India to the United States at his parent’s urging to finish his undergraduate degree (he spent his first 2 years at BITS Pilani) in electrical engineering and computer science at University of California, Berkeley. Eight years after graduation, he co-founded the company SanDisk at the age of 30, and nearly 30 years after that he was tapped to assume the helm of Micron. Like so many of the Indians who are students in my classroom today, Mehrotra chose Syracuse as the site of his next big adventure. I, for one, am grateful to this South Asian CEO who sees Syracuse, as he has been quoted to say, as a place with access to immense talent.

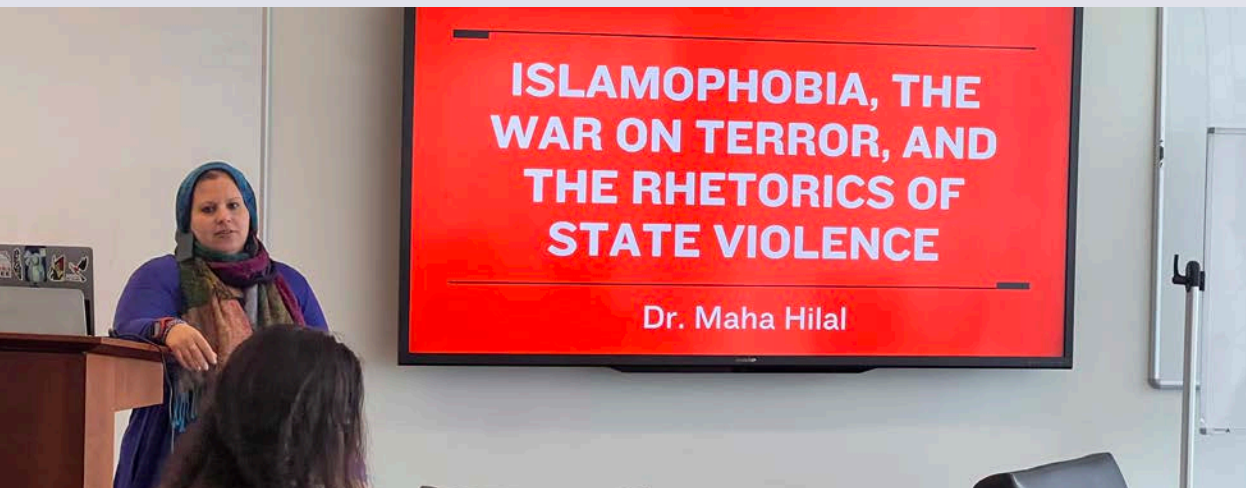
The story of Micron will continue to be an enigma for a while into the future, I predict. But hopefully looking at some of its cultural facets will help to add nuance while we wait.



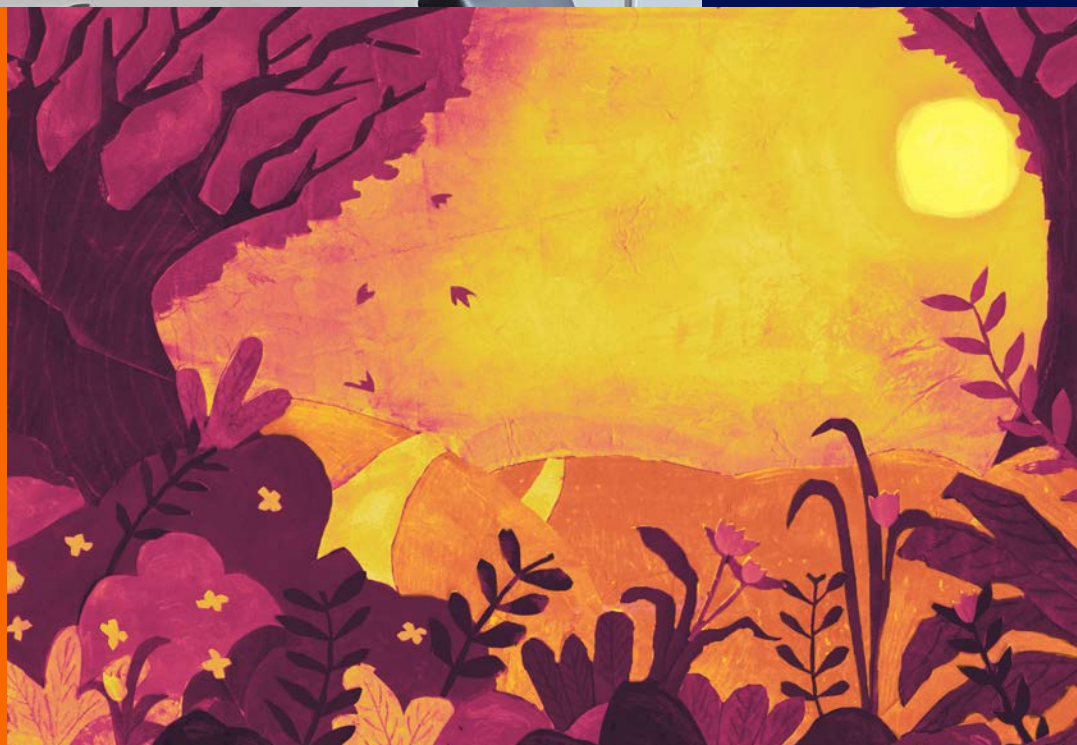
Erickson with entrepreneur Ayushi Rungta (Founder/CEO, OpenOffers), Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.

CRITICAL SOUTH ASIAN FEMINISTS HOST MUSLIM COUNTERPUBLICS LAB FOUNDER

On April 12th, the Critical South Asian Feminists [CSAF] working group of the CNY Humanities Corridor hosted Dr. Maha Hilal, the founding director of the Muslim Counterpublics Lab and author of *Innocent until Proven Muslim: Islamophobia, the War on Terror, and the Muslim Experience since 9/11* (2022). CSAF was founded in 2022 by a group of Upstate NY scholars out of a pressing need to rethink the intersections between state power and social inequalities in South Asian studies. In the 2022-23 academic year, the group focused on the history and context of how Kashmir is studied in South Asian and diaspora academia. During 2023-24, the group focused on journalism and media criticism in and about South Asia's marginalized communities, particularly those caught in various states' security apparatus during the "War on Terror." Hilal's talk at SU "Islamophobia, the War on Terror, and the Rhetoric of State Violence" furthered these CSAF goals by addressing how the "War on Terror" narrative has been shaped in the U.S. and how it has targeted minority communities here and abroad, including South Asians. In addition, the group has continued to prioritize building community among Upstate academics of all kinds, particularly while we all deal with the violence in Gaza and friction on campuses around the world—including our own.



"The Sunrise on the East," Sanjana Sharma (Visual & Performing Arts, Illustration, MFA '26). Pieces inspired by the Kannada Poet Da Ra Bendre.



WOMEN AT THE FOREFRONT: SU GRADUATE STUDENTS HOST WEBINAR IN BALOCHISTAN

On January 30th, 2024, **Bramsh Khan** (PhD Candidate, Social Sciences) organized a virtual conversation from the field with members of the Baloch community featuring Mohammad Ebad Athar (PhD Candidate, History) as discussant. Such a well-attended virtual conversation not only helped draw attention to injustices otherwise overshadowed by events in Ukraine and Palestine but also used post-pandemic technology to help pioneer a way for SU graduate students to use their time “in the field”: as an opportunity to create virtual forums to discuss events in real-time. Bramsh discusses the injustices that demanded her virtual forum as well as reflects on the possibilities and limits such forums could play in the future.

The virtual session I organized highlighted the urgent issues that prompted the creation of such a forum: the long march across Balochistan and Pakistan, led by Baloch activists, especially women, protesting the extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances of their community members in recent decades. Extrajudicial killings or enforced disappearances of Baloch are not new phenomena: the first documented cases date back to the early 1970s. According to the Baloch nation, these acts of enforced disappearance are state-sponsored and designed to suppress their demand for fundamental human rights, such as the right to education, freedom of speech, and the right to life. Predominantly Baloch men, often seen as the primary providers for their families, have been the principal victims. In response, Baloch women have organized rallies, sit-in protests, and marches. The most recent long march is a continuation of these previous protests.

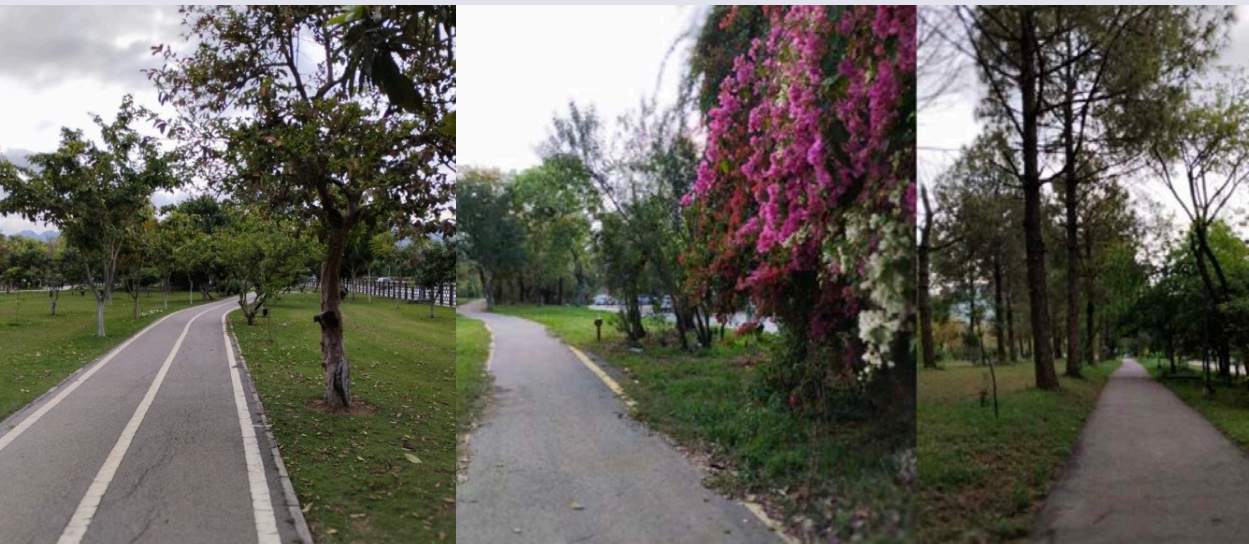
This virtual forum served as a vital link between the politically active Baloch indigenous population and the academic community, offering a rare opportunity for interactive dialogue between these two groups. The session featured two community members from Southern Balochistan, both of whom had firsthand experiences of the long march and remain active in regional politics. Additionally, these individuals have been profoundly impacted by the issues of enforced disappearances. They used the platform to engage with the audience, answer their confusions, and in return questioned the effectiveness of their own contributions to address these concerns on the global stage. This sparked a critical dialogue, potentially driving actionable changes within both political and academic spheres. The session concluded by drawing parallels with other areas facing similar challenges, such as Kashmir and Palestine, which underscored the global scope of such human rights issues and the need for collective responses.

In the future, virtual sessions like these are essential in drawing attention to tragic events that could otherwise seem like distant realities. For researchers and scholars in their field sites, these sessions help bridge the gap between distant worlds, providing individuals and participants directly affected by such human rights issues with a global stage where they can provide vital and more authentic perspectives.



NOTES FROM THE FIELD: SHANEL KHALIQ

My field site, Islamabad, is also my hometown. Throughout my entire fieldwork, I have felt that I was wavering between being an “outsider” and an “insider.” The first time I went back to Islamabad to study my field site was in May 2019, right after the first year of coursework for my PhD program in sociology. I was doing an independent study and, luckily, I was able to secure a travel grant from the South Asia Center to undertake data collection as part of it. My research interests were only beginning to evolve at this time but I knew I was interested in studying women’s mobility in Pakistan in some shape or form. The travel grant allowed me to study this at a broader scale, enabling me to conduct focus groups and interviews in Lahore and Karachi. The second time I went back to my field was in 2022, post-pandemic and after defending my dissertation proposal, so I was back for more focused engagement and to collect data for my dissertation research. I was based in the field for longer this time, studying how public transport shaped experiences with mobility in Islamabad. Once again, the South Asia Center’s travel research grant supported my travel costs to and across the city. I was back home after a hiatus of two years and a lot had changed within the city in both tangible and intangible ways. The tangible was closely related to my research; I saw many more flyovers and an expansive road network with more highways and concrete. The intangible took me more time to understand. Increasing privatization of space had led to the mushrooming of posh cafes, eateries, and malls. In an economically turbulent time with rising inflation, this meant more segregation and inequality. When doing academic research from the field, it is hard to capture exactly how a city is changing and how to witness that process because a researcher becomes one with it. As I write my dissertation now, I am eager to show how my data adds to the literature on urban sociology. What I really hope comes through is how the city of Islamabad continues to change and reshape movement.



Walking track in Sector F-8, Islamabad.

Walking tracks in Sectors E7. “Walking along them provided me with an opportunity to reflect on my interviews and observations earlier in the day.”

“What I really hope comes through is how the city of Islamabad continues to change and reshape movement.”

FLAS FELLOWS IN COMMUNITY COLLEGE CLASSROOMS

Three of the South Asia Center's Foreign Language & Area Studies Fellows shared their work at Onondaga Community College this spring, hosted by OCC Professor Gerardo T. Cummings. The talks provided opportunities for some of SAC's graduate students to share their research in a different setting and for OCC students to learn more not only about South Asia but also about different ways to think about "research" itself. Each talk was well crafted, drawing in student attention and inviting engaging discussion. The South Asia Center—as part of the Cornell-Syracuse South Asia Consortium's broader outreach initiatives—looks forward to strengthening the corridor between SU and OCC in the years ahead and thanks Kathi Colen Peck (Outreach Manager, Einaudi Center, Cornell University) and Professor Melissa Hicks (Onondaga Community College) for all their help.



Avital Datskovsky (Anthropology), *Reclaiming Narratives of the Forest: Forest-Dwellers, Tiger Conservation, and Tourism in Rajasthan, India*, March 25, 2024.



Mohammad Ebad Athar (History), "Suspicious" Muslims: *The Good Muslim/Bad Muslim Binary in American Popular Culture and South Asian Counternarratives*, April 1, 2024.



Allie Berger (Religion), *Engaging with Reflection and Relationships in Embodied Research*, April 24, 2024

"The Bear Dance," Sanjana Sharma (Visual & Performing Arts, Illustration, MFA '26). Pieces inspired by the Kannada Poet Da Ra Bendre.



FLAS FELLOW BRINGS INDIAN DANCE TO VIRGINIA WOMEN'S DIVERSITY FORUM

Allie Berger's dissertation project “Ascetic and Aesthetic Bodies: Discipline, Spontaneity, and Selfhood in Kathak’s Dance” in SU’s Religion Department critically approaches South Asian performance practices, religious embodiment, and the relationship between discipline and expression. Apart from the project’s textual rigor demanding linguistic proficiencies—and such language skills are reflected in her being selected to serve as resident director for the Critical Language Scholarship Urdu Program in Lucknow during Summer 2024—Berger, as a trained dancer, takes the art of performance seriously as a mode of community engagement. Below Berger discusses one such engagement opportunity in Virginia.

In December 2023, Sunithi Gnanadoss, a member of the Women’s Diversity Forum of Orange, VA invited me, along with my partner and accompanist Samuel Cushman, to present kathak dance and Hindustani drumming (tabla and pakhawaj) at the Orange Arts Center. The goal of the Women’s Diversity Forum is to bring a wide variety of topics and experiences to residents of the small, rural town of Orange. Since many of the audience members were unfamiliar with any form of Indian dance and music, our approach was to demonstrate some of the basic elements of a kathak performance while also integrating explanations of these elements. For example, Sam explained the roles of rhythmic and melodic accompaniment in a kathak recital, while I introduced the concept of taal, the rhythmic cycle, and encouraged the audience to clap along. As an extension of my dissertation research on kathak dance, supported by the South Asia Center-administered Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowship, this public event provided an opportunity to share some of what I’ve been learning with an audience that may not otherwise have had any exposure to South Asian performing arts but was very interested. Because my research focuses primarily on practice, it was particularly exciting for me to be able to infuse a performance event with discussion of the behind-the-scenes elements that go into preparing for and giving such a performance.



Allie, Summer 2024 resident director for the Critical Language Scholarship Urdu Program in Lucknow, during a July 2024 group trip to a Sufi dargah in Kakori. Pictured with SU student Chris Bevilacqua, who participated in CLS Urdu this summer.

FLAS FELLOWS RECITE HINDI LOVE POETRY

On Valentine's Day, February 14, 2024, from 12:30-3:30 in the Life Sciences building atrium, the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics hosted "Wor(l)ds of Love"—its annual Valentine's Day celebration of love poetry from around the world in a variety of different languages. There were many student and faculty performances—poetry, prose, music, dance—to promote love and peace, partly in celebration of the LLL Department's 50th anniversary. Second year Hindi FLAS fellows Brooklyn Montgomery (Geography) and Rashida Thomas (MPA), in addition to advanced Hindi FLAS Fellow Avital Datskovsky (Anthropology), recited Hindi poems to an atrium filled with about 30 faculty, students, and staff. Thanks to SU's Hindi instructor Bhanu Sisodia, who organized her students to recite at this event!



Avital recites Amrita Pritam's "I Will Meet You Again"

Bhanu introduces her students.

Brooklyn recites "You Are that Book"

है माँ...

by द्वारा कुसुम

हमारे हर मर्ज की दवा होती है माँ...
कभी डाँटती है हमें, तो कभी गले लगा लेती है माँ...
हमारी आँखों के आंसू, अपनी आँखों में समा लेती है माँ...
अपने होठों की हँसी, हम पर लुटा देती है माँ...
हमारी खुशियों में शामिल होकर, अपने गम भुला देती है माँ...
जब भी कभी ठोकर लगे, तो हमें तुरंत याद आती है माँ...
दुनिया की तपिश में, हमें आँचल की शीतल छाया देती है माँ...
खुद चाहे कितनी थकी हो, हमें देखकर अपनी थकान भूल जाती है माँ...
प्यार भरे हाथों से, हमेशा हमारी थकान मिटाती है माँ...
बात जब भी हो लजीज खाने की, तो हमें याद आती है माँ...
रिश्तों को खूबसूरती से निभाना सिखाती है माँ...
लब्जों में जिसे बर्बाद नहीं किया जा सके ऐसी होती है माँ...
भगवान भी जिसकी ममता के आगे झुक जाते हैं

Oh Mother...

By Dvaara Kusum. Translation by Rashida Thomas & Bhanu Sisodia.

Mother is the medicine for all our problems.
Sometimes she scolds us, and sometimes she hugs us, mother...
Mother absorbs the tears of our eyes in her eyes...
Mother, she lavishes the laughter of her lips on us...
By joining our happiness, Mother makes us forget our sorrows....
Whenever we stumble, we immediately remember mother...
In the heat of the world, mother gives us the cool shade of Anchal...
No matter how tired she is herself,
mother forgets her tiredness after seeing us...
Mother always relieves our tiredness with her loving hands...
Whenever it comes to delicious food, we remember Mother...
Mother teaches us to maintain relationships beautifully...
A mother like this cannot be expressed in words.
Even God bows before motherly love.

मैं तुम्हें फिर मिलूँगी

अमृता प्रीतम

मैं तुझे फिर मिलूँगी
कहाँ कैसे पता नहीं
शायद तेरे कल्पनाओं
की प्रेरणा बन
तेरे कैनवास पर उतरूँगी
या तेरे कैनवास पर
एक रहस्यमयी लकीर बन
खामोश तुझे देखती रहूँगी
मैं तुझे फिर मिलूँगी
कहाँ कैसे पता नहीं

"I Will Meet You Yet Again"

By Amrita Pritam . Translation by Avital Datskovsky & Bhanu Sisodia

I will meet you yet again
How and where? I don't know that.
Perhaps I could be a
figment of your imagination
Or maybe I will draw myself
As a mysterious line that shouldn't be
On your canvas
Quietly, I will stare at you
And I will meet you again.
How and where? I don't know that.
Perhaps I could be a

या सूरज की लौ बन कर
 तेरे रंगों में घुलती रहूँगी
 या रंगों की बाँहों में बैठ कर
 तेरे कैनवास पर बिछ जाऊँगी
 पता नहीं कहाँ किस तरह
 पर तुझे जरूर मिलूँगी
 या फिर एक चश्मा बनी
 जैसे झरने से पानी उड़ता है
 मैं पानी की बूँदें
 तेरे बदन पर मलूँगी
 और एक शीतल अहसास बन कर
 तेरे सीने से लगूँगी
 मैं और तो कुछ नहीं जानती
 पर इतना जानती हूँ
 कि वक्त जो भी करेगा
 यह जनम मेरे साथ चलेगा
 यह जिस्म खत्म होता है
 तो सब कुछ खत्म हो जाता है
 पर यादों के धागे
 कायनात के लम्हें की तरह होते हैं
 मैं उन लम्हों को चुनूँगी
 उन धागों को समेट लूँगी
 मैं तुझे फिर मिलूँगी
 कहाँ कैसे पता नहीं
 मैं तुझे फिर मिलूँगी!

figment of your imagination
 Or maybe I will draw myself
 As a mysterious line that shouldn't be
 On your canvas
 Quietly, I will stare at you
 And I will meet you again.
 Maybe I will become a spring
 And the water that sprouts from it
 I'll rub its droplets on your body
 I'll become the coolness from it
 That rests on your burning chest
 I don't know anything else
 But I know this much
 That no matter what time does
 This life will walk along with me.
 This body? It perishes.
 Everything does.
 But the threads of memory
 Are woven such
 That the universe resides in its every bead
 I will pick those tiny beads
 I will weave the threads
 And then.. I will meet you again.

तुम वो किताब हो

– एक अजनबी

एक प्यार का पन्ना लिखने बैठे थे आपके लिये
 लिख दी एक पूरी किताब ,क्योंकि
 आप वो पन्ना है
 जिसने हमें ज़िन्दगी की राह पर हर क़दम पर साथ दिया है
 आप वो पन्ना है
 जिसको एक बार कोई इंसान देख ले तो जैसे नशे में नाच उठता है
 आप वो पन्ना है
 जो हमारे हर सास में जैसे बस्ती है
 आप वो पन्ना है
 जो कोयल जैसे सबको अपनी आवाज़ से जगलेते हैं
 आप वो पन्ना है
 जो प्यार से नहीं महोब्वत से लिखा है
 आप वो पन्ना है
 जो जैसे शाहजहाँ और मुमताज़ की अमर दस्ता की हकदार है
 आप वो पन्ना है
 जिसके दिल से हमारा दिल जुड़ा है

You Are that Book

By A Stranger. Translation by Brooklyn Montgomery and Bhanu Sisodia

I sat down to write a page of love for you,
 Wrote a whole book for you, because
 you are that page
 which has supported us at every step on the path of life,
 you are that page
 which once a person sees it,
 he dances like an intoxicated person,
 you are that page
 which is in every breath of ours,
 you are that page
 which wakes up everyone with its voice like a cuckoo,
 you are that page
 which is written not with just love but with deep affection,
 you are that page
 which deserves the immortal story of Shah Jahan and Mumtaz,
 and you are that page
 with which our heart is connected



Foreign Language & Area Studies Fellows at the Annual Fellows Dinner, October 26, 2023. From left: Matt Baxter (SAC Program Manager), Brooklyn Montgomery (Geography & the Environment), Mohammad Ebad Athar (History), Avital Datskovsky (Anthropology), Allie Berger (Religion). Not pictured: Rashida Thomas (Public Administration & International Affairs).



HINDI-URDU CONVERSATION TABLE

The South Asia Center organizes a bi-weekly “Hindi-Urdu Conversation and Culture Table” each semester, which provides an informal setting for members of the SU campus and Syracuse community alike to come together, practice their language, meet others interested in South Asia, learn about different aspects of the region’s study, and become a part of the South Asia Center. This semester’s table was hosted by Foreign Language & Area Studies Fellow Avital Datskovsky (Anthropology), with two sessions respectively guest hosted by Asif Mehmood (SUNY College of Environmental Sciences & Forestry) and Sanam Rasool (Humphrey Fellow). In addition to students, the table was joined several times by members of the larger Syracuse community, such as Zeeshan James (founder of Pakistani Community of CNY). A big thanks to Avital for anchoring the table!



Simran Sumbre (Geography and the Environment) and Vatya Raina (Anthropology) show no mercy during a match of Hindi-only “Taboo” to the amusement of Falak Hadi (Political Science) and other fellow students.

NEW ON CAMPUS:

AN INTERVIEW WITH FIRST-YEAR GRADUATE STUDENTS VATYA RAINYA (ANTHROPOLOGY) AND SIMRAN SUMBRE (GEOGRAPHY & THE ENVIRONMENT)

Where are you from?

Simran: I am from the outskirts of Mumbai, India.

Vatya: I was born in New Delhi, India.

What did you do you/where did you work before coming to Syracuse University?

Simran: I was working as a Social Scientist at an action-research organization in India where I was responsible for developing a socio-hydrogeological understanding of groundwater use, access, and security across the country, predominantly in the Indian Himalayan Region.

Vatya: Before attending Syracuse University, I accepted a language fellowship opportunity to teach English in Spain, allowing me to put my intermediate Spanish skills to practical use.

What made you decide to come to Syracuse?

Simran: It was my advisor Prof. Farhana Sultana whose work on water I have been following since 2018 that led me to choose Syracuse.

Vatya: I decided to aim for Syracuse when I found out that Professor Mona Bhan had been teaching here.



Simran in Himachal Pradesh talking to women about water access struggles.

Vatya making an important intervention during a lecture.



What has surprised you the most after living here for almost a year?

Simran: That people here are just as warm as this city gets cold!

Vatya: Snow. I never experienced or fantasized about snow before coming here. My first presumption was to dislike snow on its arrival but, surprisingly, it made me happy and somehow nostalgic.

What is your favorite thing to do in Syracuse so far? What have you found to be the easiest and most difficult things to do in Syracuse?

Simran: I think my favorite thing has to be hiking to one of the many falls we have. The easiest thing to do in Syracuse is watching a beautiful sunset either behind Crouse college or at Thornden Park. The most difficult thing to do: I think it's a tough one between trying not to slip on black ice during winters and finding sunlight to keep up your mental health during winters.

Vatya: Though I was never a sunset or sunrise enthusiast, my favorite activity has become watching sunsets with friends who are passionate about it and encouraged me to join them. Furthermore, now I find joy in mundane adult responsibilities such as grocery shopping and to cook with and for friends. Enjoying such activities has become my favorite thing to do here. The easiest task has been finding pizza at various events on days when you happen to forget your lunch at home.

Besides your office, do you have a favorite place to get work done? Or maybe a favorite spot on campus in general?

Simran: I think I have gotten most of my term papers written in the GIA lab down in the basement of Maxwell. It is also where I have had a lot of fun with my friends. But besides a work spot, I also like the little space behind Crouse College to occasionally soak in the sun, get lunch with friends, work, and catch a sunset.

Vatya: On most sunny days, I like to carry my laptop/book and sit under a tree on the lawn in front of the Bird Library or behind the Setnor School of Music (Crouse College).

What has been the hardest part of adjusting to your new life at Syracuse?

Simran: I would have to say keeping up with the work-life balance and intentionally taking time out for leisure during the weekends instead of working.

Vatya: For me, the hardest or easiest part of adjusting anywhere new has to be the people. For me, my life at Syracuse was made easier by and with these people.

What is your favorite flavor and why?

Simran: I think it is garlic flavor for savory foods and lemon or anything citrus-y for sweet foods.

Vatya: Vanilla—it's versatile, not boring!

What is an interesting fact about yourself that many people might not know about you?

Simran: I am a trained Indian classical dancer and a swimmer.

Vatya: Despite being perceived as calm and shy at first, I am actually short-tempered—and I am not proud of it!

What has been your favorite class that you have taken so far, and why?

Simran: Feminism and Post-Colonial Studies by Prof. Chandra Talpade Mohanty has been my favorite class so far. That class helped me realize that the research I want to do (understanding groundwater issues of India through the lens of Dalit-Bahujan women) is not only valid, but also essential. It opened up my intellectual and emotional capabilities towards understanding so many different socio-political worlds like never before.

Vatya: Reflecting on my second semester, I found the experience in all my classes overall to be exceptionally engaging and exhilarating, to the point where I struggled to keep up with everything I wanted to read and accomplish (by choice and not obligation!). This semester, I often found myself telling people that all my classes are so captivating that I can't decide which one to prioritize or which readings to engage in first. I wanted to do everything all at once. However, I must emphasize that my Independent Study with Professor Heather Pezzarossi has been particularly encouraging and insightful. Her academic approach, though

unconventional in American academia, proved to be the most beneficial for me. She encouraged me to journal about my life over a glass of wine, an exercise that has been immensely helpful and profound. The “journal” remains a work in progress, but it has already made a significant impact.

What is one thing that you learned this year that you think everyone should know?

Simran: Home is not a single stationary place; it is what you build everywhere you go with the people around you. Syracuse can be your home too because you will have your friends with you.

Vatya: Honesty might not always be the best policy. Sometimes, diplomacy is regarded as quite a skill to have. Am I being too honest again?

What do you hope to do after you finish your current degree program?

Simran: I wish to continue working with grassroot organizations on groundwater issues, particularly with Dalit-Bahujan women. I might do it through academia or as a professional researcher.

Vatya: I have no 10 year or 5 year plan. I hope to finish the PhD to my complete satisfaction. That is perhaps the 5 year goal.

Do you have pieces of advice that have stuck with you that you want to share with your fellow (or maybe just incoming?) students?

Simran: Always ask for help, and ask questions to people you think would have answers. You might not get direct answers but there is something very powerful and transformative about collective thinking and discussions. When you meet faculty/your advisor/even other students for your work, going prepared with an agenda and a set of questions already framed is very helpful to make the best use of everyone’s time and energy.

Vatya: It is not a competition and yet it is never enough. If you are a graduate student and your department encourages you to engage in other activities apart from academia, they are fooling you, but do it anyway! A reminder to self.



Left: Simran soaking in the Syracuse sun while studying during winter.

Right: Vatya posing at a Syracuse grocery store with something “authentically” Kashmiri.

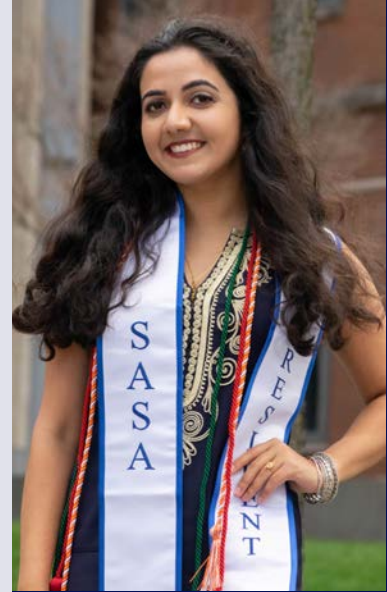
“Unseen Gold,” Sanjana Sharma
(Visual & Performing Arts,
Illustration, MFA ’26). Pieces
inspired by the Kannada Poet Da
Ra Bendre.



SOUTH ASIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION'S OUTGOING PRESIDENT REMARKS ON ORGANIZATION'S INCLUSIVITY

I have never seen an organization start a more transformative journey than during my time at Syracuse University's South Asian Student Association (SASA). During my freshman year, I instantly knew I wanted to be a part of creating a home on campus for all South Asian's that cannot go back to their homes for major holidays/celebrations. While a sophomore and junior, SASA's leadership and organization started to really grow in strength, planning actual large-scale events while opening our doors to people who were not of South Asian descent. In recent years, when needing funds to supplement those generously provided by the Student Association to conduct certain events, we were welcomed by other organizations on campus—such as Hendricks Chapel and the South Asia Center—who were always willing to help us coordinate vendors and caterers. Such cross-campus support helped us expand our programming by establishing new events—such as Mock Shaadi (Mock Wedding), which many other SASAs across the United States also host. As the first Muslim President of SASA, myself and others encouraged SASA to celebrate holidays besides the primary Hindu holidays in India, such as Eid/Ramadan, to represent the inclusivity of South Asia. I am also extremely proud to say that most of our events sell out, filling up entire event halls! SASA as a whole has done an amazing job at creating an accepting home for all interested in South Asia and I believe the organization will continue to thrive in the years ahead...

Malaika Nehal (Biology & Psychology '24)



HUMPHREY FELLOWS FROM PAKISTAN REFLECT ON YEAR AT S.U.

Since its inception in 1978, the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program has provided leading mid-career international professionals the opportunity to build connections around pressing global challenges at select host universities in the United States. Currently 13 universities host Humphrey Fellows across four themes: Human & Institutional Capacity, Rights & Freedoms, Sustainable Lands, and Thriving Communities. Syracuse University, with its Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, is one of four universities hosting Humphrey Fellows focused on “Human & Institutional Capacity.” This year, SU hosted two fellows from Pakistan, each of whom contributed to the programming of the South Asia Center. **Ghulam Jan Naseer** is the MIS/ICT director for the Balochistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority for the Government of Balochistan where he manages ICT services and staffing while overseeing the implementation of technology services. **Sanam Rasool** most recently served as the deputy commissioner-inland revenue for the Federal Board of Revenue where she conducted tax audits and investigated tax fraud and evasion. Naseer and Rasool reflect below on their productive time at Syracuse University—which they both describe as “transformative.”



Ghulam Jan Naseer

As a Humphrey Fellow, my experience was transformative, blending professional development with deep cultural immersion. In my capacity as the MIS/ICT Director for the Balochistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority and founder of the Electronic Procurement System (EPS), I pursued this fellowship with a focus on advancing ICT policy management, artificial intelligence, data protection, cybersecurity, and leadership. This endeavor aimed to enrich e-Governance within Balochistan and Pakistan, promoting socio-economic growth.

My academic journey at the Maxwell School encompassed a spectrum of courses, including leadership management, data-driven decision making, and advanced big data management, alongside a notable workshop on Generative Artificial Intelligence at the University of North Carolina. My participation extended beyond academia to seminars and workshops, enriching my professional network and broadening my perspectives on technology's role in development.

In addition to volunteering within the community, from the Food Bank of CNY to a local Syracuse church, I engaged in the City Open Data Challenge with IT solutions and highlighted the importance of civic engagement and transparency in governance. The Global Leadership Forum in Washington, DC was a cornerstone experience, fostering a global community of leaders committed to public service.

I return to my role in Balochistan invigorated with a renewed commitment to leveraging technology for social advancement. My journey as a Humphrey Fellow at Syracuse University has not only equipped me with invaluable tools and insights but also instilled a deep sense of responsibility towards contributing to my community and beyond in order to drive meaningful socio-economic transformation in Balochistan.



Sanam Rasool

My journey as a Humphrey Fellow at Syracuse University was truly transformative, which allowed me to gain invaluable insights, cultivate cross-cultural connections, and give back to the community through impactful service.

The academic experiences were incredibly enriching. In-depth classroom discussion and thought-provoking lectures by esteemed speakers like Vice Adm. Robert Murrett and Hon. Marc Garneau exposed me to diverse perspectives on public service and leadership. Interactive workshops, such as Interest-Based Problem Solving and Design Thinking in Public Administration, armed me with critical skills for future endeavors. As a panelist at the Whitman School of Management, I shared insights with students regarding various economic concepts as they apply to everyday life in Pakistan and shared views on business culture and ethics. I also had the chance to engage with students at SUNY Oswego for a speed networking event and proudly delivered a presentation on my own country—an experience that filled me with immense pride.

Some of the most profound learning transcended the classroom. Facilitating one of the South Asia Center's Hindi-Urdu Culture and Conversation Tables at the Moynihan Institute allowed me to share the vibrant tapestry of my culture while being immersed in a mosaic of other traditions. Site visits with the Onondaga County Executive's office and networking forums including the Global Leadership Forum in Washington, DC and the 2023 Annual ICMA Conference provided eye-opening behind-the-scenes glimpses into governance and leadership.

Amidst this academic and professional enrichment, I found immense fulfillment in serving the local community. Volunteering with the Bridge Ministry at Hendricks Chapel by serving meals reminded me of our shared humanity. Moreover, engaging with the Muslim Student Association fostered a sense of belonging and camaraderie.

This incredible time at Syracuse University wasn't just about broadening my knowledge—it was about personal growth, nurturing empathy, and developing a global mindset. The cross-cultural connections I made and the diverse experiences I had both instilled in me a deeper appreciation for our world's rich pluralism.

COMMUNITY DISPATCH: JIM ROONEY (MPA'87)



Jim Rooney (Political Science BA'85, MPA'87) is employed by the US Department of Defense at the Defense Contract Management Agency and currently lives in Central New York. He has deployed as a civilian to Afghanistan in a support role to US armed forces and assisted the developing needs of the Afghan Defense Force. Rooney began playing an active role in South Asia Center programming focused on and around Afghanistan during the 2023-2024 academic year, driving forward discussions with on-the-ground experience and articulating questions drawing from concerns that can only come from lived, everyday encounters. When Rooney asked to contribute to our newsletter, we welcomed the idea. The following are the opinions of Mr. Rooney and represent neither those of the South Asia Center nor the US government.

The importance of Islam in Afghanistan and the role it played in the 2021 Taliban takeover was not given the attention it required during the previous 20 years of conflict. The lack of accounting for the role of religion in war-time strategizing is discussed at length by Carter Malkasian in his recent book *The American War in Afghanistan* (2021): “The Taliban stood for Islam and resistance to foreign occupation, values deeply rooted in Afghan identity. The Taliban had an ability to inspire that the Western-installed government could never match. This capacity should not be discounted as a condition that drove the outcome of the war.” Surveys done throughout the conflict have verified the great motivation provided by the Taliban’s particular belief in Islam. In my opinion, certain cultural differences regarding church/state relations are an under-analyzed factor that affected the conflict.

Abdul Bari Barakzai, then chairman of the Helmand Provincial Council, mentioned in 2014: “Taliban fighters are better than Afghan army soldiers or police. The Taliban fight without much in the way of equipment, weapons, and ammunition. They fight well because they are inspired by mullahs and by jihad. Anyone working with the government is known as an infidel who deserves to die. The government has few mullahs to inspire the army and police in the same way.” This is an example of how we were reluctant to engage in internal Afghan matters out of respect for their religion; this was a miscalculation based on contrasting cultural values. All this time it was common knowledge that the Taliban trained their recruits in the extremist Islamic madrassas of Pakistan. Why didn’t the US coalition support and fund moderate or even conservative madrassas that would teach a more traditional non-violent interpretation of Islam as a counter to Taliban recruiting and training tactics? This could have yielded a generation of government soldiers and police who both had a deep reverence for their faith as well as a respect for others. But how many of us would suggest such a strategy? Combining elements of church and state is natural to the Afghans but forbidden or restricted by those in the West. This is not my own thought or suggestion—it was suggested to me by a very dear Imam friend I met while deployed at HQRS in Kabul. There are plenty of traditional thinkers in government agencies, but we needed to think like the Afghans, “outside of the box.”

I have participated in the recent series of discussions presented by the South Asia Center at the Maxwell School of Citizenship’s Moynihan Institute. This has given me the opportunity to interact with many experts on Central Asia as well as Afghanistan. I have a growing interest in the entire region and have made a personal visit to Kyrgyzstan recently. I keep in touch with several Kyrgyz and Uzbek friends to stay abreast of local issues. The interaction with academics and students at the Moynihan Institute has provided me with an opportunity to maintain a level of continuing education of the region that few others have. It is wonderful to find other people with a deep interest in this area of the world.

DEAF NEW AMERICAN ADVOCACY: HARVEST DINNER BENEFIT

On November 17th, 2023 a Harvest Dinner Benefit for Deaf New American Advocacy and Asha Laaya (“Farm of Hope”) was held in the Community Ballroom of Syracuse’s CNY Philanthropy Center and co-sponsored by the South Asia Center. Around 50 people were in attendance, from both the Syracuse community and the Syracuse University campus, including Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh, New York Senator Rachel May, Siby S. Nair (Deputy Director of Asian American Affairs, Office of Governor Kathy Hochul), Dr. Colin Allen (President of the World Federation of the Deaf (2011-2019) and current Honorary Chair), and Professor Michael A. Schwartz (College of Law and Director, Disability Rights Clinic, Syracuse University). During the benefit, **Monu Chhetri**, who founded Deaf New Americans Advocacy in 2022, discussed her journey from Nepal to Syracuse and the important work conducted by Deaf New American Advocacy in Central New York—work that the Harvest Dinner helped to support. Below, she briefly underscores the significance of her global journey and the journey of the DNAA locally.

I was born in Bhutan of Nepali descent and lived in a refugee camp for 19 years. During this time I learned how to farm and grew a deep sense of connection with the land and food. When I arrived in the United States in 2011, I not only had to navigate American culture as a refugee, but also as a Deaf individual. Within a year I was hosting groups in my home so Deaf people from various cultures had a safe place within the community. When I arrived in the US, I did not meet any other Deaf individuals for 6 months and wanted to ensure nobody else experienced that level of isolation. Since arriving in America, I have learned English and ASL. Now, being fluent in four languages, I am able to further empower the community of Deaf immigrants and New Americans. We have experienced many barriers within the US, including the healthcare system, local food systems, and accessibility. Experiencing these hardships led us to establishing the Deaf New American Advocacy Organization, the goal of which is to encourage independence of those within our community so they may confidently navigate American systems. Last year we started our farm Asha Laaya to offer an opportunity for people to have access to cultural foods from their home countries that are difficult to obtain locally. We now sell at local markets, donate to the community, and encourage people to come to our farm. The right to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food is a highly held value within our organization.



Monu Chhetri describes the important work of Asha Laaya.

Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh addresses the Harvest Dinner.

“We have experienced many barriers within the US... Experiencing these hardships led us to establishing the Deaf New American Advocacy Organization...”

INDIAN COMMUNITY RELIGIOUS & CULTURAL CENTER TURNS 40

The India Community Religious and Cultural Center (ICRCC) is a non-profit organization founded in 1984 to provide the Indian community in Central New York an opportunity to advance their religious, cultural and social heritage. From its humble beginnings, ICRCC has blossomed into a dynamic organization that hosts a wide range of events throughout the year. This year marks a significant milestone as we joyously celebrate our 40th anniversary! All these years, ICRCC has fostered a strong sense of community and friendship, becoming a cherished gathering place for celebrating the rich Indian culture in Syracuse. As a first-generation immigrant from India, I know how important that is. Looking ahead, our goals include reaching out to a broader section of the Indian community, particularly young adults, to ensure their active involvement and diverse perspectives. As we celebrate 40 years of ICRCC, we are grateful for the support of our community and eagerly anticipate future milestones and opportunities ahead.

Shridevi Karikehalli, President



Celebrating Holi, March 2024

PAKISTANI COMMUNITY OF CNY CELEBRATES LOCAL DIFFERENCES

“Pakistani Community of CNY” was founded by Zeeshan and Suniya James (front row, third and second in from left) in 2022 to gather together not only those with ties to Pakistan living in Central New York but to foster broader cross-community engagements through celebrations of culture and difference. Pictured here are participants in an innovative Ramadan / Easter / Purim / Holi / Pakistan Resolution Day celebration held in Syracuse on March 24th, 2024 that revolved around an Iftaar dinner (meal breaking daily fasts during the month of Ramadan in Islam, March 10-April 9 this year) and featured discussions of celebrations coinciding in late March 2024: Purim in Judaism (March 23-24), Holi in Hinduism (March 25), Easter in Christianity (March 31), and Pakistan Resolution Day (commemorating the adoption of the first Constitution of Pakistan on March 23, 1956). The event was attended by members of the Pakistani community, students and staff from Syracuse University, regional elected officials, and leaders from the local community.





Jordan Scott (Assistant Archivist and Volunteer Coordinator) with Saanika Dhillon (OHA Intern and M.A. Museum Studies student, Syracuse University)

ORAL HISTORIES OF INDIAN MIGRATION TO CNY: ONONDAGA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

In late December, the Onondaga Historical Association's (OHA) assistant archivist Jordan Scott began the Syracuse Indian Community Oral History Project. The project grew out of the need to collect the memories and thoughts of members of Syracuse's South Asian community, especially those who built the foundation of the community. Additionally, the project's purpose is to create a resource for the future generation of the Indian community and the public to use to remember and learn about the Indian community. Lastly, the project is an effort to improve the 150-year-old-plus museum's archives, so that the archives are more reflective of Onondaga County. The project was inspired by a conversation Jordan had with her friend regarding the latter's wish to record her father's life, both of whom are part of Syracuse's Indian community. Since that conversation, Jordan and SU intern Saanika Dhillon began conducting oral histories with members of the Indian community. They have found that there are currently multiple Indian communities within Syracuse that are based on aspects such as culture, religion, or hobbies. Overall, they have noticed the vibrancy and diversity within the greater Indian community. The project has recorded well over a dozen oral histories. The project ended on June 1, 2024 and the oral histories are now available at 321 Montgomery St, OHA's Museum and Research Center. OHA is hoping to make these oral histories public online in the future and to expand the project with the South Asia Center. Jordan would like to thank all the participants, Saanika, the South Asia Center, the Indian Community Religious and Cultural Center, and the Kairali Association for all of their efforts, "because of you this project was a success!"

SAC FLAS ALUM HEADS SOUTH INDIAN CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

*SU alum **Iti Maloney** (BA'15 (International Relations, Policy Studies, and South Asian Studies), MPA'19) is currently the Director of the Center for Environment and Humanity at the Kodaikanal International School in Tamil Nadu, India. As both an undergraduate and graduate student, Iti was an active member of the South Asia Center and was supported by its Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships to study Hindi and Tamil—both in the United States and in India. Below, Iti reflects on her current work, future possibilities, and the role Syracuse University and its South Asia Center played in her education.*

Throughout the past decade, I have found my second home in Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu. My journey has taken me across and beyond India but, somehow, the culmination of my life experiences have repeatedly drawn me back to Kodai. With my ability to speak the local language and my interest in environmental sustainability and conservation, I am grateful that my skills and passion can be put to meaningful use.

Kodaikanal is located in the southern Western Ghats mountain range, a threatened biodiversity hotspot. For the past four years, I have focused on this region while working at Kodaikanal International School (KIS) to establish and manage its new Center for Environment and Humanity (CEH). The Center serves as a collaborative platform for local residents, students, government agencies, and researchers to identify and implement practical solutions to the

human-environment challenges in our bioregion.

As an education institution, we champion place-based experiential learning. In an era dominated by screen time and online instruction, KIS CEH is leading the way in fostering face-to-face engagement between students, communities, and landscapes. By connecting people, places, and issues, we cultivate a sense of belonging and stewardship. For example, when individuals learn about the origins of their drinking water or participate in its conservation, they develop a personal connection to the value of natural resources—and the impact of this can be lifelong.

CEH collaborates with experts on projects in community waste management, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable agriculture. We are creating pathways for students worldwide to participate. The world needs conservation leaders, environmental engineers, artists, and policymakers who embrace sustainability as a way of life. Education through grassroots engagement is a pillar of hope. KIS CEH hosts university students from across the world to experience and study the interdisciplinary issues of environment and society at a local level.

I am grateful for the impact the Maxwell School has had on me, particularly the guiding principles of the Athenian Oath which are on display in the Maxwell Hall: “We will transmit this City not only, not less, but greater and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.” Furthermore, I am thankful to Syracuse University and the South Asia Center for supporting my education in South Asian studies and languages. Working at the grassroots level, my knowledge of Tamil has been instrumental. It has provided invaluable insights into the local community, enabled me to build trust, and, most importantly, allowed me to listen.



Iti (center) with colleagues at an annual day celebration at KIS CEH.



Iti (right) with Forest Department, Kodaikanal



Iti (center back) with National Institute of Technology, Bhopal student group, Kodaikanal

PUBLIC RELATIONS COURSE TEAMS UP WITH SAC TO PROMOTE SOUTH ASIA'S STUDY

During AY 2023-2024, the South Asia Center served as the “client” for two of Professor Dennis Kinsey’s (Newhouse) courses: PRL611-Public Relations Research in Fall 2023 and PRL615-Public Relations Campaign Planning & Execution in Spring 2024. Students from these courses formed groups that put together public relations proposals for promoting the study of South Asia at Syracuse University, engaging with the Central New York community, and enhancing the South Asia Center’s visibility on campus and in the region. Students who went on from PRL611 to PRL615 were enrolled in the MA in Public Diplomacy and Global Communications—SU’s innovative degree collaboration between Maxwell and Newhouse—and will be finishing their degree during the upcoming fall semester in Washington, D.C.



PRL611 - Public Relations Research. From left to right: Felisa Ojadi-Kedigui, Kalaya Sibley, James Roberts, Jiwoo Park, Adia Santos, Pallavi Khare, Matt Baxter, Syarifah Nur Aida, Ryan Fox, Youzhi Feng, Shuliang Zhang, Baneet Bains, Ziyong Chen, Professor Dennis Kinsey. (Ojadi-Kedigui, Sibley, Roberts, Park, Santos, Khare, Fox, and Feng continued on to PRL615)

Ryan Fox: “We started with one idea before pivoting completely and focusing on ways to market the South Asia Center to the student body at Syracuse University. Dr. Baxter served as a fantastic client for our class, giving valuable feedback while making it clear that SAC is an important asset to the SU community. The work done by SAC in bringing speakers and informational programming to Central New York is crucial to making our world a little more connected and a little more understanding.”

Felisa Priscila Ojadi-Kedigui: “SAC offers not only scholarly research support, regional learning opportunities, curricula development programs, and cultural appreciation initiatives, but it is also equipped with a language program that invites students to learn and explore.”

James Roberts: “Working with the South Asia Center was an excellent experience, and I implore professors and students alike to visit their website and explore the resources they have to offer.”

Youzhi Feng: “We conducted interviews with a few industry experts in order to obtain practical guidance on marketing strategies and utilized focus groups in the project. Participating in this project has provided me with some fascinating insights regarding South Asia.”

Jiwoo Park: “The thrill of translating our findings into actionable recommendations resonates with the passion we brought to the project.”

Pallavi Khare: “The South Asia Centre at Syracuse University is a nucleus of collaboration, inclusion, and innovation. Through my year-long research project, I experienced firsthand SAC’s dedication to fostering a vibrant community. From innovative events curation to welcoming spaces, it’s a hub where diverse perspectives thrive.”



“ART FOR SOCIAL CHANGE” EXHIBITION DRAWS MANHATTAN AUDIENCE

“Art for Social Change: Mithila Paintings from the Syracuse University Art Museum” was held at the Louise and Bernard Palitz Gallery of the Joseph I. Lubin House in Manhattan, NY on February 27th, 2024. It featured a catered reception, gallery tour by SU’s Professor Sue Wadley (Anthropology) and Dr. Melissa Yuen (Interim Chief Curator), and talk by Professor Wadley about the history of the SU Art Museum’s collection of Mithila paintings. Painting as practiced by Hindu women artists living in the region of Mithila, located in India’s northeastern state of Bihar near the Indian-Nepalese border, dates back centuries. The SU Art Museum holds the largest collection of Mithila paintings in the United States, which now numbers over 150 pieces. The exhibition showcased the wide range of approaches that Mithila painters have taken towards their artistic practices and traced a shift in subject matter executed between the late 1960s and 2020s. For these painters, their art supported social change, which can be understood in two ways. During the 20th century, their art bolstered their families’ financial futures. During the 21st century, their paintings are sometimes used to advocate for social justice in these increasingly less traditional communities.



LIBRARY BRIEF WITH WINN WASSON

As you return from whatever your summer plans were, be it rest, research, or continued learning, I wanted to highlight some South-Asia-related resources Syracuse University Libraries has available for you to explore and potentially integrate into your research, teaching, and learning.

The South Asia Open Archive (SAOA) is a resource that anyone researching or studying should know about because, if for no other reason, it is an open-access resource that is available regardless of any institutional access or subscription. SAOA has more than one million pages from over 44,000 digitized print items that range from the 18th-21st centuries, including serials, newspapers, artwork, and government documents—among other types of items. This online open-access archive includes materials in several South Asian languages, as well as items in European languages.

The Libraries has subscription access to a similar database called South Asia Commons, which also includes digitized materials related to South Asian history and culture. The Libraries additionally subscribes to Policy Commons, from the same company as South Asia Commons, which searches and provides access to content from think tanks, governments, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations. This includes materials published by think tanks and other non-profit organizations in South Asia (through the Policy Commons Global Think Tanks module) and publications by the governments of various South Asian cities (in its World Cities module). Materials are available in several South Asian languages, as well as in English and other European languages.

These, among others, are just some of the online resources available open-access or through the Libraries for research, teaching, and learning about South Asia at Syracuse University. If you have questions or have suggestions for new resources, please be in touch with your department's Subject Librarian.



Winn Wasson



“Rudra Veene,” Sanjana Sharma (Visual & Performing Arts, Illustration, MFA '26). Pieces inspired by the Kannada Poet Da Ra Bendre.

TEJ & SHOBHA BHATIA RETIRE AFTER DECADES AT S.U.

Tej and Shobha Bhatia joined Syracuse University in 1980; their retirement this year marks roughly 44 years of service. Tej (PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) retires as Professor of Linguistics in the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics and Director of South Asian Languages at Syracuse University. His work has focused on bilingualism and multiculturalism; sociolinguistics; forensic linguistics and security studies; social and psychological information extraction; accents, pain, and trauma; cross-cultural advertising; and the structure of English and South Asian languages (particularly Hindi-Urdu and Punjabi). Shobha (PhD, University of British Columbia) retires as Laura J. and L. Douglas Meredith Professor of Teaching Excellence in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Co-Director of the Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) initiative at Syracuse University. Her work has focused on the testing, development, design, and innovative use of sustainable natural and polymeric materials for the protection of water quality, with a particular focus on developing methods to reduce stream bank erosion and sustainable materials and methods to dewater dredged sediment. When hired, Shobha was the only female faculty member in the College of Engineering and Computer Science and the only full female professor until 2008; she subsequently developed a learning community designed for first-year women in STEM through WiSE. Tej's hire was a key part of Syracuse University's South Asia Center securing Title VI federal funding in consortium with Cornell University's South Asia Program in 1985.

In addition to departmental celebrations, a very well attended general retirement celebration was held in their honor at the Drumlins Country Club on Sunday, June 9th, organized by two of their children, Kanika Changela and Ankit Bhatia. Though now emeriti faculty, Tej and Shobha remain active in global education, consultancy, research, and creative works in their respective fields. They plan to stay in Syracuse for some time to come.



Tej and Shobha Bhatia with Dr. Monika Sharma, Director of Swami Vivekananda Cultural Center, Hanoi, Vietnam, among students learning yoga and Indian dance. March 1, 2024.

SOUTH ASIA CENTER ADMINISTERED FUNDING

FOREIGN LANGUAGE & AREA STUDIES FELLOWSHIPS

AY 2023-2024

Mohammad Ebad Athar, History | Hindi-Urdu/Dissertation Writing Award

Alexandra Berger, Religion | Hindi-Urdu/Dissertation Writing Award

Avital Datskovsky, Anthropology | Hindi

Brooklyn Montgomery, Geography & the Environment | Hindi

Rashida Thomas, Public Administration & International Affairs | Hindi

SUMMER 2024

Chaithanya Nair, Public Administration & International Affairs
Malayalam, South Asia Institute, University of Texas, Austin

AY 2024-2025

Mohammad Ebad Athar, History | Hindi-Urdu/Dissertation Writing Award

Alexandra Berger, Religion | Hindi-Urdu/Dissertation Writing Award

Nishkreenchan Chowdhury, Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics | Hindi

Chaithanya Nair, Public Administration & International Affairs | Hindi

Sophia Van Wormer, Public Administration & International Affairs | Hindi

30TH ANNUAL BHARATI MEMORIAL AWARD (2023)

Avital Datskovsky, Anthropology, "Controlling the Forest: Colonial Legacies and Conservation in Ranthambore National Park"

Avia Nahreen, Geography & the Environment, "Water Accessibility at Peri-Urban Sites: Role of Inequality in Manifesting Injustices"

Kazi Farzana Shoily, History, "Youth Participation and the Creation of Bangladesh in 1971: Beyond the Nationalist Narrative"

31ST ANNUAL BHARATI MEMORIAL AWARD (2024)

Brooklyn Montgomery, Geography & the Environment, "Water Access as a Mechanism of Power: The Lived Experiences of Structural Adjustment Projects in India from 1980-2020"

Kanwaljit Singh, Anthropology

SOUTH ASIA CENTER RESEARCH GRANT (2024)

Sobia Paracha, Political Science, "Entrenched or Abandoned? Nationalism and Political Contestation in Territorial Disputes"

Tripty Tamang Pakhrin, Film & Media Arts, "Tales from Tundikhel"

Kazi Farzana Shoily, History, "From East Pakistan to Bangladesh: Everyday Dissent in the 1950s and 1960s"

STUDENT UPDATES (2023-2024)

MOHAMMAD ATHAR, HISTORY

2024. "Terrorist or Hero? What the News Said about a Pakistani Man at the World Trade Center." *South Asia Program Lecture Series*. Cornell University.

2023. "The War on Terror and American Popular Culture." Guest Lecture for "News and the War on Terror," Syracuse University.

2023. Oral History Training Workshop with the Muslim American Community, Chicago, Illinois

2023-2025. Student Fellow, Lender Center for Social Justice.

POONAM ARGADE, SOCIAL SCIENCE

2023. Decolonial Feminist Thought Workshop (on the writings of Angela Davis). Participant, May.

2023. "Workshop on Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Methodologies in the Social Science and Humanities". Guest speaker, Mehrgarh Institute, Islamabad.

2024 Activist-Scholar Award (for editing archive of Mumbai's water rights organizers), Cultural and Political Ecology Group. *American Association of Geographers*.

2024. American Association of Geographers Conference. Presenter, April 16.

2024. Glenda Laws Student Paper Prize, Feminist Geographies Specialty Group. *American Association of Geographers*.

2024. Urban Waters Forum. Panelist. IIT Bombay, Mumbai, March 2.

2024. Pruitt Dissertation Fellowship, Society of Women Geographers.

ALLIE BERGER, RELIGION

2023. "Ahankara to Astitva: Improvisation and Selfhood in Kathak Dance." Presentation at the *Annual Conference on South Asia*, Madison, October.

2024. Summer Resident Director. *Critical Language Scholarship Urdu Program*, Lucknow.

AVITAL DATSKOVSKY, ANTHROPOLOGY

2023-2024. "Conservation and Multi-Species Relationships in Ranthambore National Park." *Roscoe Martin Grant for Dissertation and Thesis Research*.

2023-2024: Vina Sanyal Research Award. *American Institute of Indian Studies*.

2024-2025. Fulbright-Nehru Student Research Award.

2025-2026. American Institute of Indian Studies Junior Fellowship.

FALAK HADI, POLITICAL SCIENCE

2023-2024. "Status & Legitimacy in the International System: Postcolonial States Voting Behavior in International Organizations." *Roscoe Martin Grant for Dissertation and Thesis Research*.

2024. "Gender Inclusion and Rebel Strategy: Legitimacy Seeking Behavior in Rebel

Groups,” with Heidi Stallman. *International Politics*. 10.1057/s41311-024-00561-0.

2024. Meiklejohn Award

2024. Pre-Dissertation Summer Fellowship

BROOKLYN MONTGOMERY, GEOGRAPHY & THE ENVIRONMENT

2023-2024. David E. Sopher Award

2023-2024. “Water Access as a Mechanism of Power: The Lived Experiences of Structural Adjustment Projects in India from 1980-2020.” *Roscoe Martin Grant for Dissertation and Thesis Research*.

AVIA NAHREEN, GEOGRAPHY & THE ENVIRONMENT

2023-2024. “Water Accessibility at Peri-Urban Sites: Roles of Unequal Urbanization in Manifesting Injustices.” *Roscoe Martin Grant for Dissertation and Thesis Research*.

SOBIA PARACHA, POLITICAL SCIENCE

2023-2024. “Entrenched or Abandoned? Nationalism and Political Contestation in Territorial Disputes.” *Roscoe Martin Grant for Dissertation and Thesis Research*.

2024. “Entrenched or Abandoned? Nationalism and Political Contestation in Territorial Disputes.” Presentation at the *International Studies Association*, San Francisco, April.

2024. “Entrenched or Abandoned? Nationalism and Political Contestation in Territorial Disputes.” Presentation at the *Midwest Political Science Association*, Chicago, April.

2024. “Military and Democracy in Pakistan: How to Unpack the Elections of 2024”. Presentation at the *Association for Asian Studies*, Seattle, March.

JAY SHARMA, ANTHROPOLOGY

2023. “Frontiers of Capital: Exploring the Notion of Labor among Hos of West Singhbhum, Jharkhand.” *Journal of Tribal Intellectual Collective India*. Vol. 7, Special Issue (4): 72-92.

KAZI SHOILY, HISTORY

2023-2024. “Citizenship in Flux from East Pakistani to Becoming Bangladeshi (1947-1970).” *Roscoe Martin Grant for Dissertation and Thesis Research*.

2024-2025. Hotchkiss Ketcham Fellowship.

TAVEESHI SINGH, SOCIAL SCIENCE

2023. Honorable Mention, National Women’s Studies Association Graduate Scholarship Award. Dissertation: *Domestic Exertions: Soldier-servants, Military Elites and Securitized Labor in India*.

2023. National Endowment for the Humanities Faculty of Color Working Group (FOCWG) Fellow.

2023. “Jawans, Military Work, and the Moral Politics of Labor.” “Service - Servility - Servitude” Summer School Grant. Max Weber Forum for South Asian Studies and the Fluminense Federal University, Brazil, 2023.

2023. “Soldiers and Servants: Gendered Labor, Security, and the Military Household in India.” Nelson Mandela Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Jamia Milia Islamia University, New Delhi.

2024. “‘Couldn’t We Call It Something Else?’: The Practices and Politics of Categorizing Military Labor and Work.” Paper presented at *In Service of Security: The Gendered Politics and Everyday Experiences of Military Labor Across Asia*, National University of Singapore, Singapore.

2024. PhD awarded.

2024-2025. Faculty of Arts & Sciences Postdoctoral Fellowship, University of Toronto.

2025-. Assistant Professor, Women's and Gender Studies Department, Hamilton College.

NIMISHA THAKUR, ANTHROPOLOGY

2024. Winner of the Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition at Syracuse University.

2024-2025. Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship. Charlotte W. Newcombe Foundation.

2023. "Like the River, our Ancestors look after us in this time of Environmental Damage: Environmental Ethics and Climate Change in the Brahmaputra floodplains." Presentation at the *Climate Change and South Asia Symposium*, Center for South Asian Studies, University of Hawaii. May 11.

2023. "Sand Was Always Present in the River's Womb: Sand as an Indicator of Induced Precarity in the Brahmaputra Floodplains, India." Presentation at the *Association for Asian Studies Conference*, Boston. March

FACULTY UPDATES (2023-2024)

MATTHEW BAXTER, POLITICAL SCIENCE

2023-2024. "Upstate South Asias: Citizenship, Comparison, and Equity," with Aswini Pai, Chaise LaDousa, Nimanthi Rajasingham, Arsalan Khan, Tillman Nechtman, Vikash Yadav. *CNY Humanities Corridor Working Group Grant*.

2023. "From Non-Brahmin Self-Respect to Dravidian Self-Rule: Anti-Caste Internationalism, Anti-Colonial Nationalism, and the Complexity of Interwar Figures." Presentation at the South Asia Center speaker series, Syracuse University, October.

2024. Introduction to "'Masculinity Must Be Destroyed for Women's Liberation' from *Why Were Women Enslaved?*, Thanthai Periyar (India, 1928)." *Aesthetics and Politics in the Global South*. J. Daniel Elam (ed). New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021. Bloomsbury Philosophy Library Web.

2024. Introduction to "'Self-Purification vs Self-Respect: On the Roots of the Dalit Movement' from *The Flaming Feet*, D.R. Nagaraj (India, 1993)." *Aesthetics and Politics in the Global South*. J. Daniel Elam (ed). New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021. Bloomsbury Philosophy Library Web.

2024. "The Jew as Pariah or Aryan? The Hidden Tradition of Non-Brahmin Political Theory." *Tamil Forum*, University of Chicago, May 23-25.

MONA BHAN, ANTHROPOLOGY

2022-2024. "(De)Humanizing War: Artificial Intelligence Weapons and the Future of the Human." *Lender Faculty Fellowship*. The Lender Center for Social Justice, Syracuse University.

2023. "Humanitarian Hindutva and Multicultural Citizenship," with Purnima Bose. *Journal of Muslim Philanthropy and Civil Society*, 7(2): 96-117.

2023. "Shamlat and Land Dispossessions in Gurez." Presented at the *International Initiative for Promoting Political Economy*, September 8.

2023. "Weathering the Occupation: Meteorological Wars and Climate Futures in Kashmir," *English Language Notes*, 61(2): 39-58.

2023. "Dissident Editorship," with Deepti Misri. Presented at the *National Women's Studies Association*, October 27.

2023. "Climate Imaginaries of the Hindu Right," with Radhika Govindrajan. Presented at *The Next Monsoon: Climate Change and Contemporary Cultural Production in South Asia*, Cornell University, October 27-29.

2023-2024. "War Ecologies," with Azra Hromadzic, Conerly Casey, Kristin Doughty, and Saida Hodzic. *CNY Humanities Corridor Working Group Grant*.

2023-2024. "Critical South Asian Feminists," with Nausheen Husain and Navine Murshid. *CNY Humanities Corridor Working Group Grant*.

2024. "Beyond the Tea-Room Analysis." Participant, Colby College, July 26-29.

2024. "Disappearances in Kashmir." Participant, University of Warwick.

2024. "Greenwashing in the Occupations of Kashmir and Palestine," Earth Day Teach-In with Mazin Qumsiyeh. Co-sponsored by *Science for the People and Community Not Cages*, Winona, April 22.

2024. "Kashmiri Futures." Special journal issue launch participant by invitation, University of Colorado, March 7-10.

2024. "Ruinous Present, Renewable Futures." Presentation at the University of Santa Barbara, May 30.

2024. "The Barnes Center DEAI Symposium." Panelist, Syracuse University, January 10.

TEJ BHATIA, LINGUISTICS

2022. "Bilingual Code-Mixing and Code-Switching," *Research Questions in Language Education and Applied Linguistics*. Hassan Mohebbi & Christine Coombe (eds.) Cham: Springer Nature, 775-779.

2022. "Multilingualism in India, Southeast Asia, and China," *The Cambridge Handbook of Language Contact, Volume 2: Multilingualism in Population Structure*. Salikoko Mufwene and Anna Maria Escobar (eds.) New York: Cambridge University Press, 201-227.

2023. "Emotions, Language, and Advertising." *Handbook of Language and Emotion*, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 1707-24.

2023. "Linguistic and Mental Landscaping in India: Reach and Impact," in Rajesh Kumar and Om Prakash (eds). *Language Studies in India: Cognition, Structure, Variation*. Singapore: Springer Nature, 143-164.

2024. "English in South-East Asian Advertising," with Mie Hiramoto. *Oxford Handbook of Southeast Asian Englishes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 603-622.

2024. "Translanguaging (Code Mixing and Switching) in the Classroom: Opportunities and Challenges." Presented at CamTESOL, Institute of Technology of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, February 23-25.

ANN GRODZINS GOLD, RELIGION (EMERITA)

2023. "Wonders Never Cease: An Ethnographic Panorama." *Wonder in South Asia: Histories, Aesthetics, Ethics*. Tulasi Srinivas (ed). Albany: SUNY Press, 21-43.

2024. "Rajasthan Fieldwork Retrospective: Four Decades." Lecture at the South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University, accompanying Professor Bo Sax's summer class "Women, Environment, and Religion in India: the Ethnographies of Ann Gold," July 2.

PREMA KURIEN, SOCIOLOGY

2023. "The Racial Paradigm and Dalit Anti-Caste Mobilization in the U.S." *Social Problems* 70(3): 717-734. ***Honorable Mention for the 2024 Social Science Caucus Paper Award, *Association for Asian American Studies*.

2023. Sandra Barnes Anti-Racist Scholarship Award. Sociology of Religion Section, *American Sociological Association*.

2023-2024. Appleby Mosher Faculty Award, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University.

2024. "Why Don't South Asians in the U.S. Count As 'Asian'? Global and Local Factors Shaping Anti-South Asian Racism in the United States," with Bandana Purkayastha. *Sociological Inquiry* 94(2): 351-368.

SHANNON NOVAK, ANTHROPOLOGY

2023. "Archival Shapeshifting: On the Muddy Paths of Transcendence between Nations and Altered States," with Alanna Warner-Smith. Presentation at *Excavating Bodies in the Archives: Generating New Methods and Collaborations. National Science Foundation Research Team Seminar*, School for Advanced Research, Santa Fe, May 1-5.

2023. "Archival Shapeshifting: Wandering and Wondering with, and beyond, the Page." Presentation at the Annual Conference of the *American Anthropological Association*, Toronto, November 16.

KAMALA RAMADOSS, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY SCIENCE

2023. "Healthy Aging: Lessons from South Asian Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS)." Presentation delivered to South Asian immigrants and refugees, Los Arboles, November 28.

2023. "Using (South Asian) Cultural Capital to Prepare Your Teen for College and Adulthood and Assisting Them with Emotional Regulation." Presentation at Whitney High School, Los Angeles, November 27.

2023-2024. "Work-Family Issues in South Asian Immigrant Families: A Qualitative Study." *Faculty Creative Activities and Research Grant*, Syracuse University.

2024. "Yoga and Mindfulness for Greater Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion." Presentation at the *National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education*, Seattle, March 13-16.

ROMITA RAY, ART AND MUSIC HISTORIES

2023. *Taj of the Raj: The Victoria Memorial Hall, Kolkata*, an international conference, Yale University. Co-organizer: Tim Barringer (Yale University), September.

2023. "Tea and a 'Modern' Monument for the 'City on the Hugli'." Presentation at *Taj of the Raj: The Victoria Memorial Hall, Kolkata*. Yale University, September.

2023. "Empire of Tea." Interview with the BBC Radio 4, December

2023. "The Silent Roar." Presentation at *Tea in and after Empire*, year-long virtual monthly seminar on tea organized by Erica Rappaport (UC Santa Barbara) and Muey Saeteurn (UC Merced), December.

2024. "Tea, Plantations, and Wildlife." Wellesley College, February.

2024. "Animal Studies and British Art Graduate Student Symposium." Keynote lecture at Yale Center for British Art, Yale University, May.

2024. “Engaging Communities Award.” Museum Association of New York, for the Syracuse University Art Museum Spring 2023 exhibition “Take Me to the Palace of Love.”

2024. “Fishy Business: Tracking the Mahseer in Tea Country.” Presentation at the Landscape Studies workshop *Riverine: A Multispecies Approach to Decolonizing Landscapes* co-organized by Swati Chattopadhyay and Zeynep Kezer, Dumbarton Oaks, March 25-29.

2024. “Reckoning with Colonial Pasts: Art, Science, and Museum.” Chair at the *Annual Conference of the American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies*, Toronto, April.

2024. Reflections on Take Me to the Palace of Love. Virtual post-exhibition catalogue for *Take Me to the Palace of Love*, Syracuse University Art Museum (January 19-May 14, 2023).

FARHANA SULTANA, GEOGRAPHY & THE ENVIRONMENT

2023. “Interventions on Public Geographies,” with Reece Jones, Austin Kocher, Deondre Smiles, Kendra McSweeney, and Petra Molar. *Political Geography*, Vol 111, 103007.

2023. “Whose Growth in Whose Planetary Boundaries? Decolonizing Planetary Justice in Anthropocene.” *Geo: Geography and Environment*, 10, e00128.

2024. “How to Achieve Safe Water Access for All: Work with Local Communities,” with Tara McAllister, Suparana Katyaini, and Michael Blackstock. *Nature*, 627: 732-734.

SUSAN WADLEY, ANTHROPOLOGY (EMERITA)

2024. “Mithila Painters Respond to Covid-19.” *Gender in South Asia and Beyond: Essays in Honor of Patricia Jeffery*. Radhika Govinda, Hugo Gorringe, and Shruti Chaudhry (eds.) Zubban Books, Delhi: 278-300.



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South Asia Center Fall 2023 Events



Book Talk: *India's Bangladesh Problem: The Marginalization of Bengali Muslims in Neoliberal Times*

Navine Murshid (Colgate University)

Tuesday, September 12th

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Virtual

SAC Luncheon for Graduate Students & Faculty

by invitation only

Wednesday, September 13th

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

204 Maxwell Hall

Film: *Peacock Lament*

Saturday, September 23rd

7:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Shemin Auditorium, Shaffer Art Building

features a Q&A with dir. Sanjeewa Pushpakumara, Sri Lanka/Italy, 103, 2022 min., Sinhala with English subtitles

Book Talk: *Divorce and Democracy; A History of Personal Law in Post-Independence India*

Saumya Saxena (O.P. Jindal Global University)

Monday, September 25th

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

Virtual

SAC Undergraduate Meet & Greet

open to all undergraduates with interests in South Asia

Tuesday, September 26th

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

204 Maxwell Hall

Hindustan is a Dream: Urdu Poetry and the Political Theology of Intimacy

Anand Taneja (Vanderbilt University)

Thursday, September 28th

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

341 Eggers Hall

Upstate South Asias:

Citizenship, Comparison, & Equity

a CNY Humanities Corridor working group
co-sponsored by the NY Six Liberal Arts Consortium

by invitation only

Saturday, October 7th

Book Talk: *Merchants of Virtue: Hindus, Muslims, and Untouchables in Eighteenth Century India*

Divya Cherian (Princeton University)

Thursday, October 12th

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

341 Eggers Hall

From Non-Brahmin Self-Respect to Dravidian Self-Rule: Anti-Caste Internationalism, Anti-Colonial Nationalism, and the Complexity of Interwar Figures

Matthew Baxter (Syracuse University)

Tuesday, October 24th

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

341 Eggers Hall

The Curious Case of Tweeting an Aadhaar Number

Ranjit Singh (Data & Society Institute)

Friday, November 3rd

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

347 Hinds Hall (Katzner Room)

A Short History of India's Economy since 1947 and the Current Challenge

Kaushik Basu (Cornell University)

Monday, November 6th

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

220 Eggers Hall (Strasser Legacy Room)

Second Bi-Annual Cornell-Syracuse South Asia Consortium Symposium

open to faculty and graduate students

Thursday, November 9th

Cornell University

Untangling Culture from Culture: Exploring the Experiences of Women Tech Entrepreneurs in India

Ingrid Erickson (Syracuse University)

Thursday, November 30th

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

341 Eggers Hall

Hindi-Urdu Culture and Conversation Tables

9.6 | 9.20 | 10.4 | 10.18

11.1 | 11.15 | 11.29 | 12.13

2:00-12:45 PM • 341 Eggers Hall

South Asia Center Spring 2024 Events

Bharati Memorial Awardee Presentations

“Manufactured Terror: The Securitization of South Asian Identity in the U.S. and Persian Gulf”
Awardee Mohammad Ebad Athar (History, SU)

“Public Transport Infrastructure: Understanding Class, Gender and Environmental Inequality in Urban Pakistan”
Awardee Shanel Khaliq (Sociology, SU)

Tuesday, January 23rd
3:30 PM — 5:00 PM | 341 Eggers Hall

Women at the Forefront: March against Forced Disappearances in Contemporary Balochistan

Mohammad Ebad Athar (Syracuse University)
Bramsh Khan (Syracuse University)
with members of the Baloch community

Tuesday, January 30th
1:00 PM — 2:00 PM | Virtual Event

A Myanmar Democrat’s Reflections on the NLD Era in Parliament and Hopes for the Future (East Asia Program)

Aye Mya Mya Myo, MP Myanmar

Thursday, February 1st
12:00 PM — 1:30 PM | 341 Eggers Hall

Muslim South Asian American Women and Culinary Placemaking (Women & Gender Studies)

Farha Ternika (Le Moyne College)

Thursday, February 1st
4:30 PM — 6:00 PM | 319 Sims Hall

Indebted Mobilities: Indian Youth, Migration, and the Internationalizing University (Book Talk)

Susan Thomas (Syracuse University)

Tuesday, February 6th
3:30 PM — 5:00 PM | 341 Eggers Hall

Mock Mehndi [Henna] (South Asian Student Association)

Friday, February 9th
6:30 PM | Hall of Languages 500

“Education was Equally Important for All of Us”: Siblings and Family Cultures of Mobility, Gender and Higher Education in Middle-Class India (Sociology Departmental Colloquium)

Nazli Kibria (Boston University)

Friday, February 13th
3:30 PM — 5:00 PM | 060 Eggers Hall

Faith and Flood: Indigenous Responses to Ecological Catastrophe in Coastal Pakistan Adeem Suhail (Franklin and Marshall College)

Thursday, February 15th
3:30 PM — 5:00 PM | 341 Eggers Hall

Reception: Art for Social Change

Gallery talk with Melissa Yuen (Syracuse University Art Museum)
and presentation by Susan Wadley (Syracuse University)

Tuesday, February 27th
6:00 PM — 8:00 PM | Palitz Art Gallery, Lubin House (New York City)

The East Indian: A Novel (Book Talk)
(Global Premodern Studies)
Brinda Charry '05 Ph.D.

Friday, March 1st
3:00 PM — 5:00 PM | Strasser Commons, 2nd Floor, Eggers Hall

The Rule of Law and the Modernization of Afghanistan

Sayed Hassan Akhlaq (George Washington University)
Discussant: Sharif Hozoori (Cornell University)

Friday, March 1st
11:00 AM — 12:30 PM | 341 Eggers Hall

Third Bi-Annual Cornell-Syracuse South Asia Consortium Symposium open to faculty and graduate students

Tuesday, March 5th
Syracuse University

State of Democracy Lecture (Campbell Institute)

Pratap Bhanu Mehta (Princeton University)

Friday, March 22nd
4:00 PM — 5:30 PM | Maxwell Auditorium

Caste Sensorium of Campuses: Embodied Experiences Searching for Words

Carmel Christy (Delhi University)

Tuesday, March 26th
3:30 PM — 5:00 PM | 341 Eggers Hall

Creeping Crises in South Asia: Perspectives on Health & Environmental Communication

Iccha Basnyat (George Mason University)

Muhammad Ittefaq (James Madison University)
Friday, April 5th
12:00 PM — 1:30 PM | S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications

Transcending Unspeakable Violence: A Transnational South Asian Feminist Movement (Women & Gender Studies)

Kavita Panjabi (Jadavpur University)

Thursday, April 11th
12:30 PM - 2:00 PM | 319 Sims Hall

Cornell-Syracuse Consortium Workshop: Writing and Translation

Aruni Kashyap (University of Georgia)
open to graduate students

Friday, April 12th
Cornell University

Narrative Ambiguity and Its Consequences: The Case of Muslim Divorce in Indian Courts

Yuksel Sezgin (Syracuse University)

Tuesday, April 16th
3:30 PM — 5:00 PM | 341 Eggers Hall

Hindi-Urdu Culture and Conversation Tables

1.31 | 2.14 | 2.28 | 3.20 | 4.3 | 4.17
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The South Asia Center Newsletter is the official bulletin for the South Asia Center at Syracuse University, housed by the Moynihan Institution of Global Affairs at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

SOUTH ASIA CENTER

Funded by a federal Title VI National Resource Center grant from the Department of Education in consortium with Cornell University's South Asia Program since 1985, the South Asia Center at Syracuse University serves as a liaison between Syracuse University's faculty and students with research interests in South Asia, regional educators across K-12 grades through undergraduate and graduate schools, local community organizations, interested individuals, and the wider public in the Central New York area. Our resources and faculty interests cover South Asia, broadly defined as Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Nepal, and the Maldives. The South Asia Center's outreach initiatives include workshops, seminars, lectures, film screenings, cultural programs, and other public events.

For more information about Syracuse University's South Asia Center, its programming, and how to get involved, contact Dr. Matthew H. Baxter, <mhbaxter@syr.edu>, and check out our website: <https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/research/moynihan-institute-of-global-affairs/regional-centers/south-asia-center>