India is going through a profound cultural, societal, and economic transformation. It is only natural that UC Berkeley, one of the world’s pre-eminent public universities, would be at the forefront of grappling with understanding these changes, and promoting vigorous intellectual partnerships with institutions in India.

Robert Birgeneau, Chancellor, University of California, Berkeley

The Social Impact of UCB Scholarship

The University of California, Berkeley, one of the world’s top public universities, was recently ranked as the second greatest university in the world by the Times Higher Education Supplement. It counts among its faculty numerous Nobel laureates, Pulitzer Prize winners, MacArthur Fellows, Guggenheim Fellows, Presidential Young Investigators, and members of the National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering, and American Academy of Arts and Sciences. UC Berkeley has been a premier site for the study of South Asia for the past century, with its commitment to South Asia Studies dating back to the University’s first Sanskrit course in 1897. Today, Berkeley is a vital center of South Asia Studies and South Asia faculty at Berkeley remain undisputed leaders in their fields, continually redefining the scope and relevance of the field while maintaining the rigorous standards of traditional South Asia studies.

One of Cal’s great strengths is teaching and research on India. We have over 40 faculty who specialize in various aspects of India—from art history to Sanskrit and from engineering to energy. We also recognize the enormous talent in India and believe very strongly in building collaborative and mutually reciprocal relationships with India-based scholars, research centers, corporate sponsors as well as both non-governmental and governmental institutions. Such collaborations, we believe, not only enhance the level of scholarship on South Asia but also have a direct impact on the well being of people a well as influence policy making at the highest levels of government.

On April 13, 2008 CSAS, along with the India Community Center in Milpitas, hosted a program to highlight the achievements of such UCB faculty led collaborations.

The title of the event was “Investing in India’s Future,” and the program included updates on UC Berkeley’s South Asian programs and the university’s latest educational, governmental, medical and environmental initiatives in India.

The proceedings were opened by College of Engineering Dean Shankar Sastry. An internationally recognized expert on embedded and autonomous software, Dean S. Shankar Sastry has an exceptional background in technology research, spearheading projects to improve the nation’s cyber security and network infrastructure, as well as delving into robotics and hybrid and embedded systems.

Since becoming dean on July 1, 2007, Professor Sastry has set out to change the curriculum at the university, both to make engineering more attractive to students and to make engineering education more attuned to the demands of the working world. A major thrust of that effort has been mixing courses from the oft-derided “soft sciences” like sociology and economics, as well as law and design, into engineering students’ academic curriculum, in the hope that such a move could, ideally, help bridge the rift that exists between producers and consumers of technology.

Berkeley Team Uses WiFi to Bring Eye Care to Villages in South India

Lead Faculty:
Eric Brewer, Berkeley/CITRIS.

Collaboration:
Arunvind Eye Hospital

Collaboration:
Arunvind Eye Hospital

By modifying simple and readily available wi-fi technologies, a Berkeley team of computer scientists led by Eric Brewer, has linked tiny local eye clinics in the southern India state of Tamil Nadu to bigger clinics, like the Aravind Eye Hospital at Theni. Until the clinics opened, local people would walk as far as 12 miles to get eye care. Now many can walk to the local eye center and get their eye care needs met in an hour or two. The clinics are run by ophthalmic technicians, usually local women without extensive education, trained in eye care by Aravind.

Patients get a rudimentary exam from the technician and then have a brief consultation on a Web camera with a doctor at the distant hospital. Patients can buy glasses and medications at the vision centers. And if the doctor believes that an in-person examination or a medical procedure is warranted—most often cataract surgery—the patient is given an appointment at the hospital.

In the past three and half years, the project has grown to include thirteen clinics linking up to three different hospitals. The clinics provide videoconferences with eye doctors for about 5,000 rural patients a month. Since 2006, more than 80,000 people have received treatment and of those over 14,000 have gone from being functionally blind to having effective vision.

The Aravind Eye Hospital project is part of a larger initiative Brewer leads called Technology and Infrastructure for Emerging Regions (TIER), a collaborative project between UC Berkeley and Intel underwritten by the National Science Foundation and sponsored by CITRIS, the Center for Information Technology Research in the Interest of Society. The emphasis is on tailoring technology to meet pressing community needs in practical ways.

( cont’d p 3)
Dear friends,

Welcome to the new academic year of 2008-2009. I’d like first of all to thank you for the overwhelmingly positive feedback we have received for the new design and content of our newsletter. Thanks especially to Puneeta Kala for her determination to make this change, and her creative flair.

Spring began with a bang with our annual conference, with keynote speaker Sugata Bose and an author meets critic panel with Sheldon Pollock. This year, we also had a pre-conference organized by two immensely talented graduate students – Renu Desai and Romi Sanyal – on urbanism in contemporary South Asia. The keynote speaker at the preconference was Amitav Kumar. We were privileged to have with us as a Townsend fellow this spring, noted historian Sunil Kumar, who delivered three highly acclaimed lectures on Islam and the idea of a Muslim Community in North India in the 13th century. Other notable speakers include sociologist Meenakshi Thapan, philosopher John Taber from the University of New Mexico, historian Stewart Gordon and novelist and translator Musharraf Farooqi. We also held the fourth Annual Tamil conference, a conference on local government in South and Southeast Asia and a conference on technology Development in Nepal.

Continuing our relationships with the South Asian community beyond the university, we worked with SACHI to bring the inimitable William Dalrymple to campus, and with the India Community Center on various events, most notably “Investing in India’s Future” in which Shankar Sastry, Dean of the College of Engineering, as well as faculty members Isha Ray, Ananya Roy and Pradeep Chhibber spoke to a packed hall about research and teaching about India at UC Berkeley. The program was conducted in partnership with Calparents. A sample of projects in which our faculty is engaged can be found on the pages of this issue of Khabar. We continue our partnership with FDRI as we look forward to the 2nd conference on Indian Democracy. This year’s theme is Justice and the Law, and fittingly, our keynote speaker is Justice B.N. Srikrishna, who headed the investigation into the Bombay Riots of 1992-93.

We have also been proud to assist in the creation of two initiatives that involve students directly. The first, the Tata International Social Entrepreneurial Program (TISES), created in collaboration with the Blum Center for Developing Economies, enabled five students to travel to India this past summer to work on social development projects. The second, with IIT-Kharagpur, enabled eleven students from IIT-Kharagpur to spend a summer here working in research teams and in Berkeley research labs on issues of energy and health. The strong positive feedback from both projects indicates that they are destined to flourish and grow.

Our students and faculty continue their award winning ways, winning research grants and teaching awards, writing books and creating new opportunities for students. For our part, we were pleased to be able to award Qayum travel grants to students to enable them to travel to South Asia for research and to reward excellence in scholarship in the field of Sikh Studies by awarding the 2007-08 Amrit Kaur Ahluwalia Memorial Outstanding Paper prize to Shrutu Devgan of Rutgers University.

This year, we said good-bye to staff members Max Jacobs, Veena Hampapur and Kishan Barot. We wish them well in their travels and graduate school careers. We welcome talented musician and UCB graduate Sudev Sheth, as our finance and program assistant.

As always, we look forward to seeing you at our events and here at the Center. Our new website, now in construction, will be up shortly, and will carry news of our forthcoming events.

As we enter a new school year, the Center is excited to launch several new activities and initiatives. We have developed partnerships with wonderful community organizations such as FDRI and SACHI—both featured in this issue—as well as the America India Foundation. These collaborations allow us to continue with our work of developing high quality conferences and programs for the campus and the larger Bay Area community. We thank you for helping us grow and look forward to seeing you at our events! Our new CSAS website will be launched in September so please do tune in then for more information.

Sanchita Saxena, Vice Chair
Global Poverty & Practice

Lead Faculty: Ananya Roy

In 2007, UC Berkeley launched a new undergraduate curriculum in Global Poverty and Practice. A unique endeavor, this curriculum trains students in the study and analysis of global poverty and allows them the opportunity to participate in forms of praxis that engage global poverty in imaginative and practical ways. The signature element of the minor is that all students have to complete a global practice experience by working with a poverty-focused organization. The Global Poverty and Practice curriculum hopes to train a generation of global citizens who are committed to the cause of tackling poverty and inequality - in the United States and all around the world.

An initiative of the Blum Center for Developing Economies, the Global Poverty and Practice minor has already met with great success. More than 75 students have declared the minor in the first year and have completed global practice experiences in countries ranging from India to Rwanda. The flagship course, Global Poverty: Challenges and Hopes for the New Millennium, taught by Professor Ananya Roy, attracted over 500 students in its first offering. For this course, earlier this year, Professor Roy was awarded the Golden Apple Award for excellence in teaching, the only teaching award conferred on Cal faculty by undergraduate students.

Several CSAS affiliated faculty are actively involved in the new minor. Dean S. Shankar Sastry serves as the Faculty Director of the Blum Center for Developing Economies; Professor Ananya Roy serves as Education Director of the Blum Center; Professor Raka Ray serves as the Education Committee that steers the minor.

UCB Scholarship, cont’d

The “Serving Society” tagline may figure prominently in the engineering school’s motto, but it may as well be used to describe the motto of UCB as a whole, particularly with those students and faculty involved in South Asia related projects. This spirit is exemplified by various projects described below where UC Berkeley is doing collaborative work in India. By challenging students to solve society’s greatest problems and by educating them to not only build services but also to build themselves into the fabric of society, Berkeley today leads the world in cutting edge research on technology that cuts down on carbon emissions, the building of zero-energy homes, pre-symptomatic diagnosis of diseases; Professor Nezar AlSayyad and Ubbelohde (Architecture) and graduate students from a variety of disciplines, professions, and technologists involved in South Asia related projects.

The Future of Indian Cities

Lead faculty: Professors Nezar AlSayyad and Susan Ubbelohde (Architecture)

Collaboration: State government of Haryana and Nanoworks Developers

This project brings together faculty and graduate students from a variety of disciplines, professions, and technical fields to imagine alternative futures for Indian cities. A pilot program is the NanoCity Super Studio, an architecture and planning studio sponsored by Sabeer Bhatia and led by Professors AlSayyad and Ubbelohde (Architecture). This studio involves UC Berkeley faculty and students in the planning of a new city and thus new model of urbanization, in northern India.

NanoCity Studio. In 2007, Sabeer Bhatia, best known as the co-founder of Hotmail Inc., approached UC Berkeley faculty and students with his ideas for a new city in Northern India: NanoCity. A public-private partnership between the state government of Haryana and Bhatia’s company, Nanoworks Developers, NanoCity is an ambitious project that seeks to create a model of sustainable urbanism in India. It is conceived as a counter to the most pressing problems faced by Indian cities: the lack of infrastructure; growing polarization between the spaces and jobs occupied by different social groups; high levels of pollution; the rapid depletion of water; and the displacement of the poor.

By challenging students to solve society’s greatest problems and by educating them to not only build services but also to build themselves into the fabric of society, Berkeley today leads the world in cutting edge research on technology that cuts down on carbon emissions, the building of zero-energy homes, pre-symptomatic diagnosis of diseases; Professor Nezar AlSayyad and Ubbelohde (Architecture) and graduate students from a variety of disciplines, professions, and technologists involved in South Asia related projects.
**The Indian Middle Class**

**Lead Faculty:** Raka Ray.
**Collaboration:** Institute of Economic Growth, University of Delhi.

The size and social role of the Indian middle classes have been issues of great public concern since 1990 when policies of economic liberalization were officially instituted. It has been argued that the substantial and growing presence of the middle classes would be the motor powering greater production and consumption in the Indian economy. At the same time, these classes would steer the Indian nation towards better governance by demanding greater public accountability and by exercising more vigorously the rights of citizenship (Varma 1998). Fifteen years of liberalization later, these claims and assumptions remain unexamined.

Dr. Amita Baviskar and Professor Raka Ray applied for and received a grant from Ford Foundation for a project on the Indian middle class with three components. The first was a workshop, held in March 2007 from which an edited volume on the Indian middle class is being produced. The second component is a dissertation workshop, based on the Berkeley/SSRC model, which took place between March 27-29 this year. The third is a workshop which will be held in January 2009 where scholars and civil society activists discuss the relevance and impact of middle class activism in India today.

The focus on the dissertation workshop stems from the realization that there is a dearth of rigorous research mentoring at the PhD levels in India. This intensive two-day workshop brought together 111 students from around India – not just the elite universities – who were developing dissertation proposals or were in early phases of research or dissertation writing, with four faulty members: Amita Baviskar (Institute for Economic Growth, University of Delhi), Satish Deshpande (Department of Sociology, University of Delhi), Carol Upadhyya (National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore) and Raka Ray (University of California, Berkeley). The workshop invited applications from young scholars working on major transformations in Indian politics, economy and society including new middle class formation.

Faculty and students spent two days in the beautiful grounds of Sanskriti Kendra outside Delhi, working through dissertation proposals collectively, refining methodology and clarifying key questions. Topics ranged from OBC Politics in India in the Post–Mandal Era to questions of Development, displacement in contemporary Orissa and from the new property rights regimes emerging in India today to the ICT industry and the creation of new exclusions. Individual projects were worked on during the day, while informal conversations about methodological and ethnographic fieldwork were held in the evenings.

**New Surgical Ethics: Organs Watch, Family Planning, and Cataract Camps**

**Lead faculty:** Professors Lawrence Cohen and Nancy Schepet-Hughes, Department of Anthropology
**Collaborations:** MOHAN Foundation, Chennai; DGHS, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (GOI); Open Society Institute

The fast-paced growth of India’s medical sector and the rise of medical tourism to India has raised new challenges for policy and human rights debate. Much attention followed the latest “kidney scam” in Gurgaon, near Delhi. The chief physician was charged not only with illegally trafficking in organs but also with conducting operations without formal surgical training. While much evidence of malpractice was found, some persons allegedly forced to donate a kidney were found to have both kidneys intact. Making sense of conflicting economic, clinical, political, and media interests that complicate the widespread giving as well as selling of human organs in India and dozens of other countries (including the United States) has been the task of Organs Watch. The organization, run by these Berkeley professors, works with lawyers, journalists, governments, activist groups, and the World Health Organization in providing both scholarly research and public accounting of how the great profitability of transplant medicine has in many situations created disastrous outcomes for organ donors and recipients alike.

Cohen’s research on transplantation led him to explore the long history of surgery in India, from the classic work of Sushruta to the rise of surgical solutions to “problems of the masses” for the elite planners of the modern state. Modern India developed unique forms of mass surgeries—the assembly-line camps for both sterilizations and cataract surgeries—offering accessible mass treatment but often at significant risk of complications. Rethinking surgical politics and policy, for Cohen, benefits from such broad historical study.
Prizewinner Shruti Devgan

MPhil from Jawaharlal Nehru University, Ram College, New Delhi and an MA and an BA in Sociology from Lady Shri Ram College, New Delhi. For her dissertation, she research interests lie in South Asian and diaspora studies. Her Ms. Devgan is a doctoral candidate in Sikh immigrants. Through her paper, Ms. Devgan explores the issue of religious identity and assimilation among Second Generation Sikhs. "In this paper, I wanted to understand that these projects will continue when they return and in the process grow faculty bonds," Richards, along with Geoff Owen, dean of the College's Biological Division, laid the groundwork for the collaboration during a trip to India last November.

Paper on Religious Identity and Assimilation in Post 9/11 America Wins Outstanding Paper Prize

C

SAS is pleased to announce that the 2007-08 Amrit Kaur Ahluwalia Memorial Outstanding Paper Prize has been awarded to Shruti Devgan for her paper, "Donning Religion: Religious Symbols among Second Generation Sikhs." In this paper, Ms. Devgan explores the issue of religious identity and assimilation among Sikh immigrants. Through an examination of religious symbols and dress, she sheds light on the significance of adopting a conspicuous religious identity in the US, especially in the post 9/11 years.

The inaugural group of 11 exchange students arrived on campus on May 26 for an eight-week summer research session. Most of them did not have time to get over their jet lag before rushing to join their mentors in labs across campus. "I'm so excited, I already worked two days in the lab," said Varada Vilas Bal, a bubbly fourth-year physics student working in the field of photovoltaics — a technology that converts light into electricity. This is her first trip to the United States, yet three days into her experience she had already made up her mind to return to Berkeley for her Ph.D. The same effusive enthusiasm comes through from all students. "I'm looking forward to the exchange of ideas and discussions with some of the best minds in the world," said fellow student Sunam Bikash Mondal. The initiative hopes to build on the experience of this first round of students to develop major lasting collaborations within the next two years. During the next phase, students from Berkeley will travel to India, with faculty following in their footsteps with collaborations of their own.

IIT Kharagpur, the largest and oldest of India's seven Indian Institutes of Technology, was chosen for this collaboration because of its high-tech profile (the Indian government named it as the lead national organization in biotechnology), its rich academic environment, top-notch students, and its institutional knowledge base in areas such as energy, medical science, and plant genetics. Kharagpur's students, Dean Richards said, "are known in the U.S. for being universally brilliant," due to the institute's exceptionally competitive admission policy: only one in 100 students who apply are admitted.

Like Berkeley, Richards noted, IIT Kharagpur is a world-class public university. "As a premier public institution, Berkeley has a natural affinity with IIT Kharagpur," said Raka Ray, director of the Center for Emerging and Neglected Diseases, which aims to address large-scale public health issues, focusing in particular on fighting drug-resistant diseases such as TB and malaria, rampant in many parts of the world. "There's a great urgency to it, as we have no defense against these diseases at the moment," said Dean Owen, pointing to the fact that 100,000 people in India alone have fallen prey to the extremely drug-resistant form of tuberculosis, XDR TB. "These diseases affect the whole world as the ease of travel makes everyone vulnerable," he added. "We need to develop and grow relationships with institutions in other countries. The collaboration with IIT Kharagpur is a perfect marriage."

Another key to the success of this project is its strong support from IIT Kharagpur alumni at Berkeley. One of them, Shail Kumar, senior director of external relations in the College of Letters and Science's College Relations Office, has worked intensely with Richards and Owen on launching this program.

Finally, Berkeley has a long history of collaborating with India and developing related programs. Some 70 India-related courses are taught here every semester, and a large number of faculty members have projects in India. "With India's rising reputation right now, lots of universities are jumping on the bandwagon," said Raka Ray, director of the Center for South Asia Studies at Berkeley. "But here we have a longstanding collaboration with India that started many decades ago."

And what better way to promote true collaborations," she added, "than to have here the best and brightest minds working together to make the world a little more disease free and a little less dependent on fossil fuels?"

Monica Friedlander, Communications Manager, College of Letters and Science
A s Jamal Khan looked out of the window of his train compartment, travelling from Jamnagar airport to Mithapur, he saw some tribal women in their colourful attire walking in the distance, balancing huge pots of water on their head. "It was so incredibly hot and the women were carrying this heavy weight on their heads," he recalls. "It was something that I'd seen only in National Geographic, but now I was experiencing it first hand". It was a moment of epiphany for the senior from Berkeley, one that has profoundly changed his attitude and way of thinking. "I realised how critical water, which we take for granted, is to these people."

Mr Khan is one of five students who have travelled a little over 14,000 km from the University of California, Berkeley, to spend eight weeks in India working with Tata companies on various social development projects as part of the Tata International Social Entrepreneurship Scheme (TISES).

TISES, launched in January 2008, aims to give international students an opportunity to work on community initiative projects undertaken by different Tata companies, and thereby promote international understanding. The Tata Group has signed an agreement with the University of California, Berkeley and the University of Cambridge for three years.

Shernavaz Colah, a consultant at Tata Services, who has been coordinating this programme, says: "We hope TISES will make the internships as interactive as possible."

We used different techniques to make the course easy for us to teach it, but we tried to include a lot of information in our sessions. We used different techniques to make the programme as interactive as possible."

The five students, the others being Liza Cirolia, Shu Shang, Annemieke Wilcox and Pedro Rosado, were selected by UC, Berkeley after an intensive process. They were then taken through a pre-induction orientation programme, which included briefings about the projects that they would be working on as well as some background on the culture and languages of India.

Ms Cirolia, currently pursuing a graduate degree with a major in development studies and social welfare, and Ms Shang, who will be completing her graduation in molecular and cellular biology and environmental studies, travelled to Jamshedpur to work with Tata Steel's Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health Project (RISHTA). Their objectives were to set up a school sex education curriculum to impart education and awareness about sexual health issues to adult adolescents in the 14-16 age group, develop staff training modules, and ensure the project's sustainability.

Ms Cirolia and Ms Shang often had to drive long distances to reach the schools for their sessions. "We found that there were many misconceptions about sexual and reproductive health, and this had more to do with local traditions than any lack of knowledge," says Ms Cirolia.

Addis Ms Shang, "It was a very sensitive topic and one which is generally taboo in most rural areas. So it was not easy for us to teach it, but we tried to include a lot of information in our sessions. We used different techniques to make the programme as interactive as possible."

The two interns are hoping that the work that they did will help strengthen the youth resource centres that will eventually take on the role of community resource centres, where the community itself will play a major role in bringing about social change.

Further north, at the Tata Chemicals' fertiliser plant at Babara, Mr Rosado, who recently graduated from UC, Berkeley and Ms Wilcox, a student of peace and conflict studies and economics, worked with a team from the Tata Chemicals' Society for Rural Development (TCSR D) to develop a sustainable livelihood model through agriculture-based interventions. Meeting the farmers and villagers from around the plant, they looked at various ways in which agricultural outputs and incomes could be increased - better utilisation of resources, cooperation among farmers, crop diversification, etc. - while also exploring alternative means of livelihoods for village communities. Based on their research, they recommended the need to further strengthen the already established self-help groups and micro-credit societies. They suggested a three-tiered approach to facilitate and promote cooperation among farmers, at the individual, village and community level.

At Mithapur, where Tata Chemicals operates India's largest inorganic soda ash plant, Mr Khan, a senior at Berkeley who is majoring in economics and political science, was moved by his eight-week interaction with the people from the Tupni and Poshitira villages of Okhman dal taluka.

Mr Khan was assigned the task of dealing with a 'water code' for rural areas in the Jamnagar district that have implemented the integrated watershed management project initiated by Tata Chemicals. "I started by quantifying the amount of water used, as opposed to the water available to farmers, finding out the shortfall and trying to find a way to decrease this," he explains. The plan was to initiate a total package of water use and understand the economy of water harvesting, water management and optimum agriculture production. This would finally lead to the creation of a rural water code that is generated by the community itself. "My experience at Mithapur has been a life-changing one," says Mr Khan. "The generosity, kindness and large-heartedness of the villagers, despite their problems, has had a profound effect on me. The community togetherness we saw in these villages is something we see little of in the US. It was also good to be able to put a face to a community that is facing socio-economic problems in a way that cannot be compared with any knowledge gained from a classroom lecture or a textbook. I would definitely recommend this experience to others."

Eight weeks after completing their internships, the five students gathered...
Major: Economics and Political Science; Minor: Global Poverty

Entrepreneur Scheme would identify and address issues of equity expressed the hope that the conference Ray, of the Energy and Resources Group, same occasion UC Berkeley Professor Isha He also lauded the efforts of CAN-USA of overall socio-economic development.

that it would provide an opportunity for the United States who expressed hope Ambassador of the Republic of Nepal to Excellency Dr. Suresh Chandra Chalise, of Nepal currently faces this area could be used the-art knowledge in (CAN-USA), deliberated on how state-of-the-art knowledge in this area could be used to solve the problems Nepal currently faces in the areas such as rural village connectivity, remote health care (tele-medicine), emergency communication infrastructure, e-governance and productivity enhancement in both manufacturing and service industries.

The conference was opened by His General and Nepal in particular. At the conference, Professor Shiva Gautam (Harvard Medical School), Sonesh Surana (UC Berkeley), Rabin Prat (UC Berkeley), Mahabar Pun (Social activist and Ramon Magaysay laureate), Bhalwani Sapkota (Agito Networking) and Jim Forster (Cisco) discussed rural village connectivity and e-library projects. Professor Rifat Latifi (University of Arizona), Amod Pokhrel (UC Berkeley), Arun Kunwar (SUNY, Upstate Medical University) and Professor Heather Hudson (University of San Francisco) shared their experiences and knowledge on tele-medicine applicable to Nepal. Suresh Ojha (Phase Matrix), Michel M. Geddes (City of San Francisco, Emergency Management Department), Woody Baker-Cohn (Chair Disaster Operations, Bay Area Red Cross) talked about emergency communication infrastructure. Ajaya Gulati (VMware) and Biswo Poudel (UC Berkeley) shared ideas on e-governance and e-education and Professor David Zilberman (UC Berkeley) and Bobby Du (UC Berkeley) shared their knowledge and experience on information technology and productivity enhancement. We hope that this symposium will provide momentum for further events at UC Berkeley on the unfolding conflict in Nepal.

CAN-USA is an American organization dedicated to the professional development of its members and technologies progress of Nepal. It is a non-profit organization with members throughout the United States. For further information please visit www.can-usa.org

Amod Pokhrel, Graduate Student contributed to this article.
Prachi Deshpande, an assistant professor in the Department of History at the University of California, Berkeley, was awarded a senior fellowship to carry out her project, “Itinerant Geographies: Maratha Migration, Homeland and Expansion, 1750–1900.” Professor Deshpande’s fellowship is being funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Michele Friedner, a graduate student in the Department of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out her project, “Focus on Which Family?: Deaf Identity and Social Movements in India.”

Daniel Malinowski Stuart, a graduate student in the Group in Buddhist Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out his project, “Text, Path, and Practice: Meditation Theory and Community Imperatives in Indian Buddhism.”

Banking and Financial Institutions, and Law and Poverty. He is also working on two research papers while there. The first is on the effects of financial deregulation on firm access to credit, the size and sectoral distributions of credit reliant firms, and the entry and exit patterns within affected industries. The second paper is a paper on the concept and implementation of “social and economic” rights, comparing the constitutional structure and role of the courts in India and South Africa.

Michael Slouber (Graduate Student, South & Southeast Asian Studies) has advanced to PhD candidacy and will be in Nepal for the 08/09 year studying Nepali on a FLAS fellowship. At the annual workshop of Hamburg’s Centre for Tantric Studies, to take place in Kathmandu in September, he will make a presentation about earliest sources for the Bhuta and Garuda Tantras. His dissertation will analyse the theme of Garuda medicine in Sanskrit literature and in modern South and Southeast Asia.”
Adithya Sambamurthy, a 28-year-old student pursuing master’s degrees at the University of California, Berkeley’s Graduate School of Journalism as well as in International and Area studies, has won this year’s Dorothea Lange Fellowship for his project “Main Street, California—A Photographic Journey Along Route 99.” The $4,000 UC Berkeley fellowship is in memory of photojournalist Dorothea Lange, probably best known for her stark yet humanizing photos taken for the federal Farm Security Administration and documenting the lives of migrant workers who fled the Dust Bowl for jobs in California’s fertile farmlands. Lange worked with her husband, Paul Taylor, who was a UC Berkeley professor and labor economist.

Adithya started photographing along Route 99 last spring, initially hoping to find images that speak of its almost iconic past. Taking exits along the road, he photographed livestock auctions, church services, drive-in movie theatres and honky-tonks featuring the Bakersfield Sound—remnants of an older California, one seemingly far removed from the metropolitan hubs on the coast. But he also found a surprising amount of diversity in these mostly agricultural communities. Today’s global “Dust Bowl migrants” are Sikhs from Northwest India, Hmong from Southeast Asia, and migrant workers from Mexico and Central America, who are often seen as distinct from the older Latino communities already established along the road.

Sixty years after Lange documented life along “California’s Main Street,” Adithya Sambamurthy’s photographic safari along Highway 99 offers a contemporary take on it—as well as on the communities that live along the road.

More information about the fellowship, a slide show of Sambamurthy’s winning photos and a listing of previous Lange winners is online at the Dorothea Lange Fellowship Web site. The fellowship was first awarded in 1982.

New Publications by UCB Faculty

The Contested Commons: Conversations between Economists & Anthropologists
Edited by: Pranab Bardhan and Isha Ray

The Contested Commons explores the theme of common environmental resources from the dual perspectives of economics and anthropology, with a focus on developing countries. The essays in this collection include contributed readings written by senior scholars in the fields of Economics, Anthropology, and Sociology. The volume:

- Looks at the challenges of interdisciplinary work in the social sciences, illustrating the variation in approaches/methodology;
- Focuses on economic security, ecological sustainability, identity formation, and participatory decision-making, particularly in the developing world.

About the Authors:
Pranab Bardhan is Professor of Economics at the University of California at Berkeley.
Isha Ray is Assistant Professor in the Energy and Resources Group at the University of California at Berkeley.

The Oxford India Hinduism Reader
Edited by: Vasudha Dalmia and Heinrich von Stietencron

The essays in this collection seek to set up the genealogy of modern Hinduism. They trace key moments in the formation of Hindu traditions, in their relations as well as in the major shifts in their configurations. The endeavour is not only to dismantle colonial and nationalist constructions, but also to seek viable models to reconstruct past traditions.

Vasudha Dalmia in a comprehensive introduction locates these essays as part of an engagement in understanding the processes moulding modern Hinduism.

About the Authors:
Vasudha Dalmia is professor of Hindu and Modern South Asian Studies at the University of California, Berkeley
Heinrich von Stietencron is Professor Emeritus of Indology and Comparative History of Religion at the University of Tuebingen.

The 23rd Annual South Asia Conference

The 23rd South Asia Annual Conference at UC Berkeley was held on February 15 and 16, 2008. More than a hundred scholars attended the conference. The topics covered in the panels ranged from India and her relations with the West to the politics of emerging middle classes and from musical practices and performative traditions of South Asia to the role of information and communications technologies in development. In the “Author Meets Critics Panel,” Sheldon Pollock of Columbia University discussed his latest book, “The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India” with Robert P. Goldman, Professor of Sanskrit, UC Berkeley and Pritvi Datta C. Shobhi, Assistant Professor of Humanities, San Francisco State.

The Rajendranath Das keynote address titled Different Universalisms, Vernacular Cosmopolitanisms: The Global Imagination of the Colonized was given by Sugata Bose, Director, South Asia Initiative and Gardner Professor of Oceanic History and Affairs, at Harvard University.
India is unique in history in having a sustained democracy in a poor country with a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural society. Today, its economic strength is also widely recognized and celebrated. While India’s power as an emerging economy is being celebrated and analyzed, equal weight must be given to its democratic institutions, without which India’s economic, social, and human potential will remain unfulfilled. Thus the role democratic processes play in the sustenance and diffusion of this economic strength into the wider reaches of Indian society is a central question that must be engaged as we look toward the future. In order to create an environment in which such crucial questions can be discussed and alternative solutions offered by policy makers, thought leaders, NGO activists, and scholars, the Center for South Asia Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, together with the Foundation for Democratic Rights in India, has instituted a high-level annual seminar series hosted on the Berkeley campus.

The first in a series of annual seminars on Indian democracy was held at Berkeley on May 24-25, 2007 and attended by a host of Indian dignitaries, including Union ministers, Mani Shankar Aiyar and Jaipal Reddy, former Chief Minister of MP Digvijay Singh, Kerala finance minister Thomas Isaac, Infosys CEO Kris Gopalakrishnan, well-known media personalities Chandan Mitra and Kalpna Sharma. He is also involved in promoting justice and just practices. How does civil society work with the democratic system when the police and army function to uphold the law? What recourse is available when these instruments of the state themselves break the law? Civil society, like citizens groups and even the private sector, are often involved in promoting justice and just practices. How does civil society work with the democratic system when the police and army function to uphold the law? What recourse is available when these instruments of the state themselves break the law?

The primary objective of these seminars is to provide direction and reflection on key issues that may challenge the democratic institutions of India in the 21st century. The aim is to generate alternative solutions that can be discussed and implemented as needed.

Tentative Agenda

**Friday, September 26**
- 8:30 am: Registration
- 9:30 am: Panel I: Framing the Issues
- 11:00 am: Panel II: Instruments of Law
- 1:00 pm: Presentation of FDRI/Lokniti data on judiciary
- 2:30 pm: Panel III: Instruments of Law - The Police and Army

**Saturday, September 27**
- 10 am: Panel IV: Human Rights
- 1:30 pm: Panel V: Case Study of Chhattisgarh
- 3:15 pm: Panel VI: Alternative Institutions of Dispute Settlement
- 5 pm: Where do we go from here?

Confirmed Participants

- Mani Shankar Aiyar (Union Minister of Panchayati Raj; Rajiva Agnes (Director, Majlis); Rajiv Dhavan (Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India); Marc Galanter (University of Wisconsin, Madison); Colin Gonsalves (Lawyer, Executive Director, Human Rights Law Network); Erik Jensen (Stanford Law School); Madhu Kishwar (Founder, Manushi for Women); Sunil Kumar (Editor, Daily Chhatisgarh); Manoj Mate (Fellow in Comparative Law, Berkeley Law School); N. R. Madhava Menon (Founder Director, National Law School, Bangalore); Pratap Bhanu Mehta (Director, Center for Policy Research); Vikram Raghavan (World Bank, TBC); Visha Ranjan (DGP of Chhattisgarh); Anasuya Sengupta (Graduate Student, Oxford University); B.N. Srikrishna (retd. Supreme Court); Nandini Seshan; Sunil Verma (University of Delhi); Siddharth Varadarajan (Journalist, The Hindu); Arvind Verma (University of Indiana).

FDRI/Berkeley Seminar Series on Indian Democracy Justice & The Law

September 26-27, 2008

Lipman Room, Barrows Hall

University of California, Berkeley
The Last Mughal, revolves around the tragic figure of Bahadur Shah Zafar and tells the story of the events that led to that great watershed in Anglo-Indian relations: the Uprising of 1857. More than that, the book describes a brilliant expansionist policy, bred bigotry and apartheid. The message of the story, however, about the fragility of multiculturalism and the dangers of cultural imperialism, belongs as much to the present day as to India 150 years ago. Dalrymple finds resonating parallels with current events, where the United States finds itself the sole superpower after the collapse of the Soviet Union and is convinced that its gospel—democracy—will lead the nighted peoples of the Middle East out of their darkness.

Dalrymple concluded his talk with a moving reading of the late Ahmed Ali’s elegant translation of the famous verses that were supposedly written by Zafar shortly after his imprisonment, and as Mughal Delhi lay in ruins around him:

Delhi was once a paradise,
Where Love held sway and reigned;
But its charm lies ravished now
And only ruins remain.

No tears were shed when threadless they
Were laid in common graves;
No prayers were real for the noble dead,
Unmarked remain their graves

But things cannot remain, O Zafar,
Thus, for who can tell?
Through God’s great mercy and the
Prophet
All may yet be well.

William Dalrymple is truly a powerful storyteller and his great love for Delhi and his fascination with its Mughal past reverberated throughout the book lecture. We urge you to read this book if you haven’t already.
What was it like working with these people who were the subject of your research?
Overall, I’d say it was a totally humbling experience. So much of my understanding of urban change in Delhi comes from just hearing wise old slum dwellers “tell it like it is.” It definitely gave me an appreciation for the importance of doing long-term field research, because earning the confidence of people living in such insecurity is not a quick process. That’s the irony: that the people who know the most about how policy changes are affecting the everyday lives of the poor are the least consulted. Of course, that’s because most people doing the “consultation” want the slums to disappear...

What are the actual rights of slum dwellers in Delhi?
Well, the answer is changing as we speak because they are being increasingly criminalized. Until just this past year, the poor were formally entitled to 25% of residential land in the city of Delhi. This was planning law. It was never implemented properly, but it at least gave the poor a right to the city. In reality this population lives on less than 2% of the city’s land, so they’ve been deprived of a historical entitlement. But, like most neoliberal logic today, the fact that they’ve been denied access to a resource is treated as an inherent “inefficiency” in the system, so the solution is to abandon the whole entitlement. So, now this population is being kicked off this measly 2% of land so that the land can be sold for fancy, “world class” developments. This is the story of so much of urban development in India today. Public land acquired in the past for “public use” is now being auctioned or sold to build shopping malls, gated communities, and highways. You see who the “public” is today!

What do these slum dwellers think about the central government’s “world class” project?
Surprisingly, I’ve found, many of them find the idea of the “world class” city desirable. They have a sort of nationalistic pride that Delhi, India’s capital, has a Metro system and is hosting the upcoming Commonwealth Games. But, they also see that making Delhi “world class” means they will likely be displaced. This is the contradiction at the core of urbanization in India today. Why do people celebrate the making of a city that requires their own degradation? With rising inequality and forced displacement, why aren’t there stronger organized movements, or more unorganized crime for that matter? This is really the core of my research. Why do people, put crudely, “buy into” a project based on their own destruction?

How are they compensated when their slums are demolished?
The short answer is that they’re not compensated very well. The longer answer is that the best case scenario for a family that can prove it has lived in the city since before 1998 is to receive a 12 square meter empty piece of land about 30 kilometers outside the city, totally cut-off from employment, education, etc. And, this is only on a 5-year license, so the government can kick them off again if it wants. And, less than a third of those displaced are given even this much.

Has this experience changed your attitude towards research?
I suppose I’ve found that the most rewarding research for me has a certain grounded-ness to it. I learned the importance of allowing research ideas and claims to emerge from my research experience, rather than simply “testing” pre-conceived hypotheses or theories. Being open to the field itself opens doors into greater richness than I could have expected. I guess, then, to keep theory tied to practice and to welcome the tangential.
**CSAS Events 2008**

- **city of California, San Diego**
- **Veronique Salze-Lozac’h, Regional Director, Economic Reform and Development Programs, The Asia Foundation**
- **Neil Mc Culloch, Director, Economic Programs, The Asia Foundation**
- **Dr. Humayun J. Khan**, The Asia Foundation
- **April 2**
  - **The Last Mughal: The fall of a Dynasty, Delhi 1857**
  - **William Dalrymple**, Writer & Historian
- **April 13**
  - **Investing in India’s Future**
  - **Shankar Sastry, Dean, College of Engineering, UC Berkeley**
  - **BV Jagadeesh, ICC Board, CEO 3Leaf Systems**
  - **Raka Ray, Chair, Center for South Asia Studies**
  - **Ananya Roy, City & Regional Planning**
  - **Pradeep Chhibber, Political Science**
- **April 14**
  - **Musical Strategies in the Context of Ritual Healing Performances: Trance Music in Uttaranchal-Himalayas**
  - **Franck Bernède, Cellist / Ethnomusicologist**
  - **Chinese Culture University, Taipei, Taiwan**
- **April 16**
  - **Secular and Religious Nationalism in India and Sri Lanka**
  - **Timothy Samuel Shah, Adjunct Senior Fellow, Religion and Foreign Policy, Council on Foreign Relations**
- **April 19**
  - **2008 Amrit Kaur Ahluwalia Memorial Lecture on Sikhsim**
  - **Sikh & Muslim Understandings of Baba Farid**
  - **Christopher Shaklee, Professor of Modern Languages of South Asia, School of Oriental and African Studies; Member, Centre of South Asian Studies, University of London**
  - **Farid Bani Shabab Keertan (Sikh Classical Devotional Music Performance)**
  - **Inderjit N. Kaur, Research Associate, Music Department, UC Santa Cruz; Founding Director, Sikh Music Heritage Institute, Santa Cruz, California**
- **April 25-27**
  - **Rivers: The Fourth Annual Tamil Conference**
- **May 7**
  - **Screening of Char Diwari (Within Four Walls)**
  - **Rinki Bhattacharya, Noted Indian Author, Filmmaker and Activist & Panel discussion: Domestic Violence and Women’s Inheritance Rights**
  - **Rinki Bhattacharya**
  - **Raka Ray, Chair, Center for South Asia Studies**
  - **Atashi Chakrabarty, Narika Executive Director**
  - **Annie Fukushima, PhD Student**
- **May 20**
  - **A Hero’s Demons: The Adventures of Amir Hamza and the Islamic Storytelling Tradition**
  - **Mushharraf Farooqi, Author, novelist, and translator.**

---

**Notes from the Field**

Shalini Ayyagari is a PhD student in Music with a focus in Ethnomusicology. Her research focuses on the Manganiyar, a community of hereditary caste musicians, and the intersections of musical patronage, small-scale development, and cultural tourism within their community. Every year since the summer of 2003, she has been returning to western Rajasthan to live and learn as well as conduct fieldwork among the Manganiyar musicians. She has been recently awarded the Marilyn Yarbrough Dissertation/Teaching Fellowship at Kenyon College, where she will be teaching in the Music Department and writing her dissertation. This summer she traveled back to western Rajasthan and began work on a documentary film about the Manganiyar musician community. This is an excerpt from an interview about her experiences in India.

**How did you get interested in the Manganiyar community and their art?**

During Summer 2003, I was awarded a FLAS Fellowship to study Hindi language in Jaipur, Rajasthan through AIFS. During that summer, I traveled to Jodhpur to meet the renowned Rajasthan folklorist, Komal Kothari. I only spent a few hours with him, but that meeting changed my academic career. He encouraged me to travel to western Rajasthan and meet musicians from the Manganiyar community. I braved the summer heat and traveled to Jaisalmer, a small town near the India-Pakistan border in the heart of the Thar Desert. There, I met a lok kalakar (folk musician) and traveled with him to his village. I was immediately drawn to the desert landscape and the music of the Manganiyar hereditary musician community. After completing my language program, I stayed on in Jaisalmer, visiting various villages inhabited by the Manganiyar, taking in the desert landscape, and learning about regional musical practices of western Rajasthan. It was then that I knew that this is where I wanted to focus my research, energy, and dedication.

**What was it like working with these musicians?**

During my twenty months of fieldwork, I conducted a plethora of interviews and recording sessions with Manganiyar musicians, participated in music lessons, and spent long periods of time with musicians and their families in their rural villages. None of this would have been possible without the amazingly kind and generous hospitality of everyone I met in the Manganiyar community. Not only did they welcome me into their homes, but also they openly shared their musical knowledge with me.

**How have their lives changed?**

Customarily, the Manganiyar, a community considered to have been extremely low caste and lacking voice and class mobility, have provided family genealogies and ceremonial music to their hereditary patrons for remuneration for at least the past three centuries. They have been affiliated not only with individual patron families, but entire family lineages over many generations through social and economic co-dependence. I became aware of increasing and encroaching local development projects (mainly related to ecology, empowerment, and education) in Rajasthan and the broad affects of these projects on specifically the Manganiyar community. I found that a few key and influential musicians in the Manganiyar community have founded their own non-governmental organizations (NGOs), mainly aimed at preservation of musical traditions, musical education within the Manganiyar community, and empowerment and uplift of the community as a whole. My research focuses on these new institutions and NGOs and examines the ways in which the Manganiyar community and their music are changing as a result.

**Have your fieldwork experiences changed your attitude towards research?**

Working with this community has enabled me to grapple with contemporary issues of globalization, cultural tourism, ecology, and subaltern positionality. Also, importantly, it has taught me about human relations and what it means to conduct ethnographic research with living people—grappling with relationships, giving something back to the Manganiyar community, and learning to then translate the experiences that I have had conducting fieldwork into my doctoral dissertation as well as sharing these experiences within the academic community.

**These Manganiyar musicians will be touring the US this fall. They will perform at UC Berkeley on October 10, 2008.**
Noor-i-Hind
Light of India: A Conflagration of Indian Matchbox Art by Warren Dotz
Berkeley & Toronto: Ten Speed Press, 2007, 40 pp. $16.95 (paper with ornamental slipcase).

It is not every day, or even every yuga, that a South Asianist has the opportunity to review a book by his or her dermatologist. But when the good doctor in question is also a gifted amateur historian of popular visual culture, an area in which his knowledge is rather more than skin deep, and the topic is the colorful and iconic illustrations and logos on the ubiquitous matchboxes produced for the Indian market it seems like a perfect match.

Dr. Dotz has already produced a number of delightfully illustrated collections of the vibrant packaging on Chinese-made fireworks as well as several charming pictorial collections of popular international advertising characters.

In keeping with its theme, the current small volume comes encased in a handsome and profusely illustrated slipcase, made to look itself like an oversized (8.5 X 5.5 in.) matchbook complete with an abrasive striking strip along its bottom edge. The case hints at the pleasures within, illustrated as it is on its front with a blow-up of a matchbook motif (of which more below) and a lower border of a sampling of the types of illustrations cataloged in the book. The back contains one large reproduction of an appropriately iconic image from a box of Deepak brand matches in which a beautifully dressed and ornamented Indian woman is shown in the act of lighting a hanging brass lamp with a match she has just struck on a prominently displayed box, presumably of the same brand of matches. The covers of the book itself are covered with a colorful potpourri of matchbox image types.

Charming as the volume is, however, it is no mere random assortment of eye-candy. Dotz has made an interesting effort to classify the themes and subjects employed by the prolific foreign and domestic manufacturers of matches for the huge Indian market, grouping them under no fewer than twenty-seven separate categories including religious images, nationalistic icons, several categories of animals, charming (and sometimes provocative) ladies, architectural, occupational, industrial trial and other representations and even an odd category that he calls iWonder and Whimsey.1 Some of the images included under these headings can be quibbled with, but the organization enables us to get clearer sense of the sources and types of images that resonate in the popular culture of India as disseminated in connection with a product that transcends all distinctions of social and economic class to be found in the kitchens and or pockets of virtually every Indian woman.

But this is not entirely a picture book. Dotz is something of an amateur historian as well as a connoisseur of popular and commercial art. In a brief but informative introduction, he provides an informal history of the match brand and points out how, following the development of the safety match in Sweden in 1855 various manufacturers leaped in to exploit the vast Indian market for this inexpensive technology. Most interesting is the fact that, as result of shortfalls in domestic production capacity to feed the burgeoning market, a very substantial portion of the demand was filled in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by foreign producers, notably in Sweden and Japan as well as by Japanese immigrants to Calcutta. This situation prevailed until after the First World War when domestic production began to boom mainly in Tamil Nadu with the development of the cottage industries started up by the so-called Match Kings of the South.

What is particularly striking is the way in which the foreign manufacturers employed artists who culled the Indian popular and poster art corpora for distinctively Indian images that they believed would enhance the attractiveness of their product. This tradition was, of course, similarly followed by the domestic producers.

Foreign artists were often especially inclined to the literary or highbrow graphic tradition of the subcontinent. One particularly striking image (Dotz is fond of punning on the match theme) branded both by F. Steiner & Co. of Manchester and Kerr. Tarruck & Co. of Calcutta, derived it seems from the Tanjore school of courtly painting, depicts a tome Krishna as a child sucking his toe and enthroned on a mighty oSeshanaga as he is waited upon by two women (one holding a peacock) and flustrated by two winged devas who fly through the starry sky above him. A box made in Sweden is branded KOMmaro Jami and shows the saucy image of the famous literary courtesan in a dancing pose. Yet another Swedish brand, IShantanu and Gangai depicts the titular Mahabharata characters in a scene copied directly (and one presumes unapologetically) from the painting on that theme by the famous, nineteenth century neoclassical artist Raja Ravi Varma whose iconic paintings have heavily influenced modern calendar and poster art representations of religious and mythological figures. The Austrian brand ISolot depicts such figures as Dattatreya (with his signature dogs), Radhakrishna and the Ravi Varma rendition of the sage Vishvamitra of rejection of the insect Oshakumari.

Some of the European box covers betray the familiar sort of orientalist exoticism that is characteristic of the age. Thus there are the inevitable snake charmers and turbaned oriental potentates as well as the not unexpected images that titillate by eroticizing the mother. Along with the various courtesans and fairly demure nautch girls there is a striking and untitiled image of a turbaned young woman clad in a kind of ghuti but quite frankly bare-breasted who sits on a pedestal, her legs crossed beneath her as she boldly returns the gaze of the onlooker. Her left arm is provocatively akimbo while her right, supporting her head, leans on a platter or small table with an elephant motif.

Japanese boxes have, as Dotz notes, a distinctive appearance and are in many instances reminiscent of Japanese block prints. They too generally depict Hindu deities such as Kali, Shiva, and Krishna. Some that most resemble East Asian images depict Buddhist figures while one shows an equestrian image of the Nitam of Hyderabad.

The feminine in all its traditional representations comes to form an important design motif in the boxes produced by the emerging and finally dominant South Indian match industry. But, in keeping with cultural values associating the female agent with norms of submissive piety, powerful divinity and the emerging nationalist fusion of the two trends in the exaltation of the figure of Mother India, there is a sharp move away from the erotized duneses and courtesans who adorn the European boxes. Several general types emerge. One is the woman as devotee. Well-dressed young women are represented in silhouette or profile standing or kneeling to light or offer worship to a lamp or to venerate the ultimate light in performing surya puja. Goddesses of course figure prominently. There are a few interesting examples of renditions of Kali, Lakshmi and Meenakshi. There are a large, detailed and rather captivating image of Durga as Mahishasuramardini is surrounded with images of gold Swedish coins suggesting its European provenance.

---


3 Meet Mr. Product: The Art of the Advertising Character. Chronicle Books LLC, 2003. He has also, under a fairly transparent nom de plume, co-authored a number of rather amusing send-ups of popular advertising images of women of the 1950s, 1960s, etc.
The collocation of the divine and the commercial can sometimes yield unintentionally amusing results. Thus a bust of a bloodthirsty mother goddess, identified as Tara Mai, her tongue lolling, holds a bloodstained scimitar above her head. Above her name are prominently inscribed the words ‘Damp Proof’. Similarly, a benign-looking forest goddess, Van Devi stands in a sylvan setting holding a staff with a star at its tip. Close behind her are a tiger and an elephant, the latter holding a lotus in its trunk. Beneath her feet is boldly inscribed in black: ‘IMPREGNATED’. In both cases one must understand that the adjectives, no matter both referring to waterproofing, are to be taken as alluding to the matches, not the divinities.

Yet another popular representation of the feminine is in the form of more individuated portrait-type art. In these we have larger face images of smiling or pensive women gazing coyly at the viewer. These sometimes include actual portraits of recognizable celebrities such as the film star Meena Kumari and Indira Rahman, Miss India of 1952. Occasionally a historical woman is represented in the standard equestrian portrait of the proto-nationalist icon Laxmi Bai, the Rani of Jhansi. Some are simply odd as in the standard equestrian portrait of the Rani of Jhansi. A few are a tiger and an elephant, the latter marked with the charkha, the spinning wheel emblematic of the swadeshi movement. The image is unidentified but bears a resemblance to representations of Subhas Chandra Bose. The latter’s untitled cover included, for some reason in Dotz’s ‘In Wonder and Whimsy’ section, shows a halved portrait of Swami Vivekananda, while under the heading ‘Warriors and Weapons’ we see a stylized likeness of Shivaji. As one might expect in a medium so closely aligned with the calendar art, representations of gods and goddesses abound.

For some reason Dotz identifies this composite creature with the Kamadhenu or wish-fulfilling cow of the Indian mythological tradition. The feminine figures prominently in the panoply of nationalist representations that appear on many matchboxes. Most noteworthy here are the variations on the theme of Mother India called variously by that English name, Bharat Mata, Hind Mata, and Swaraj Lakshmi. Particularly striking here, among the familiar mappings of the feminine body across the outline of the Indian subcontinent is a full-page representation of a colossal Mother India, a spear in her left hand, standing in a red cloud of cosmic dust, who stoops over a comparatively diminutive globe to plant a gigantic lotus in the center of the red subcontinent.

Masculine images also feature prominently in the pictorial nationalist imaginary. Several boxes featuring flag-draped portraits of Gandhi are shown while one depicts a kneeling male figure in a Congress top and quasi-military uniform offering reverence to a huge tricolor marked with the charkha, the spinning wheel emblematic of the swadeshi movement. The image is unidentified but bears a resemblance to representations of Subhas Chandra Bose. The latter’s untitled cover included, for some reason in Dotz’s ‘In Wonder and Whimsy’ section, shows a halved portrait of Swami Vivekananda, while under the heading ‘Warriors and Weapons’ we see a stylized likeness of Shivaji. As one might expect in a medium so closely aligned with the calendar art, representations of gods and goddesses abound.

Aside from the goddesses mentioned above one finds many images of figures such as Gajalakshmi, dSvita Nataraja, Krishna and of course the ubiquitous Hanuman and Ganesha, the latter two unhappily included in the section titled ‘Mythical Creatures’. Even the Buddha finds himself on a box or two. Notable by absence is any representation of Rama or Sita who figure so prominently in the closely iconography of poster art.

Several sections of the collection feature images of animals, wild and domestic, among the latter the lion, tiger and elephant are most common while deer, swans and peacocks are also not uncommon. Among the latter pride of place is, naturally, given to the cow although horses are also well represented. Animal fight are also a popular theme. One of these, reproduced in a full-page format both as the front cover of the slipcase and as the frontpiece of the section entitled ‘Forest Fantasies and Fights’, depicts a life or death tug of war between a crocodile and an elephant in which the former, holding the latter’s trunk in its mighty jaws tries to drag him into a river.

Dotz identifies the image as an illustration of Kipling’s well-known ‘Just So’ story, ‘The Elephants Child’. He may well be right. The similarity to this book also strongly suggests the famous igJagannath- shal epistle from the Bhagavata Purana. Then again, the Vaishnavya allegory may, through a folk tale type of transmission, well be the inspiration for Kipling’s story. The image thus must us think about the question of literary and commercial influences in traditional and modern India.

One of the zoological sections of the book is entitled ‘Sacred Creatures’. Here we see the expected cow, the naga, and a few representations of Sivas vahana, the bull Nandi. Also included are several images of bullock carts and one (iKisan brand) of a farmer ploughing with a pair of oxen. The insacricality of these oxen is a matter of some debate, but one does not wish to quibble too much.

For the rest there are numerous striking and charming images of fruits, vegetables, famous buildings (Taj Mahal, Chamainar, Qutub Minar etc.), trains, planes, automobiles, commercial products and miscellaneous other images in the popular cultural domain. Despite a few questionable or omitted identifications that can be expected from a nonspecialist, Dr. Dotz has put together a remarkably entertaining and informative collection of these intriguing images drawn from the colorful world of Indian matchbox covers. One would also have liked to have a note on the collection from which these images are drawn.

Nonetheless, aside from providing a sparkling feast for the eyes this witty and colorful little book provides us with ample fuel to fire our imagination in reflecting on the pervasive role of religious and nationalist iconography in even the humblest and most quotidian media of the popular and commercial culture of India. The good doctor can thankfully be gratulated for having offered to both the lay and specialist audiences this matchless collection.

R.P. Goldman, Professor of Sanskrit, Dep’t of South & Southeast Asian Studies
A LETTER TO KOLKATA

In Spring 2008, first year UCB students of Bangla participated in a project in which all of them were required to exchange letters with the students of Shikshamitra, a non-profit run school in Kolkata. It was a fun project UCB Bangla students eagerly shared information about their families, pets, food, languages, and everything Bangla with their friends in Kolkata. Below is the letter written by Kimberly Wiesbrock.

2/23/2008
Dear Chaitali,
My name is Kimberly. I live in California. I study Russian and Bangla. To me, it is great fun to learn languages. When I do not have any class, I love to sing and go to the market. I am twenty-two years old. One of my sisters lives in Los Angeles. We love to eat food very much. Sometimes, I cannot wake early enough for breakfast, but I eat a lot everyday. I cannot make good food, but I want to learn how.

I liked reading your letter. Many thanks! Tell me more!

Love,
Kimberly

Editor: Puneeta Kala
Designer: Ann Higgins / Hot Damn! Graphics