



## Immigration & Immigrant Communities— *Fresh Encounters*



Photo: Sports Illustrated

L.A. rapper Snoop Dogg chats in the dugout with Dominican-born baseball star José Bautista before throwing the ceremonial first pitch to Bautista in a game last Summer in Toronto. Bautista's controversial "bat flip" in the playoffs later that year sparked a conversation about the impact of Latin players on the game (see page 8).

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## International Agenda

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SCHOOLCRAFT COLLEGE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE

## International Institute

Schoolcraft College

18600 Haggerty Road

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<http://www.schoolcraft.edu/department-areas/international-institute>

The mission of the Schoolcraft College International Institute is to coordinate cross-cultural learning opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and the community. The Institute strives to enhance the international content of coursework, programs, and other College activities so participants better appreciate both the diversities and commonalities among world cultures, and better understand the global forces shaping people's lives.

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# R U READY 4 THE WORLD?

*In today's world, you can get a lot further if you're knowledgeable about other peoples, countries, and cultures. We asked a few successful people to write brief summaries of how international awareness has figured into their careers. Here's what they sent us...*

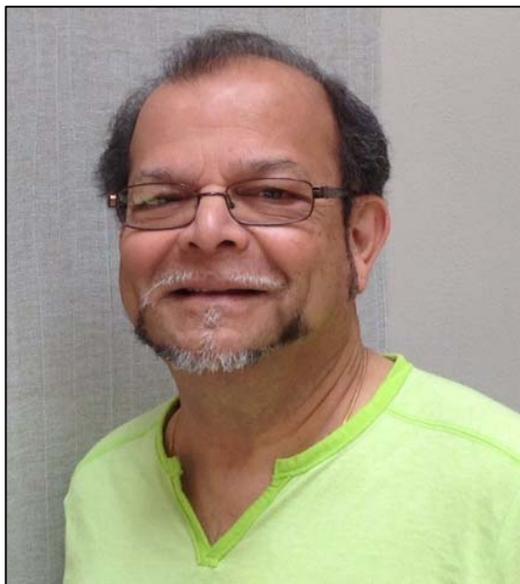


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— Andy Schueneman, Executive Vice President and General Manager, Weber Shandwick-Detroit

Since 2002, I have traveled as a volunteer six times to Guizhou, a poor but very picturesque province in southwestern China having many minority groups. There, in the capital city, I work with Chinese teachers of English for a month at a time. To prepare I read books about their culture so I can better understand what to expect, and when there I ask and answer lots of questions so we can all learn about each others' lives. We find differences, yes, but as teachers we share many of the same challenges. This also gave me an understanding of problems in language and culture faced by my Chinese students back at Troy High School. Being friendly and interested in others is an international language and cultural bridge. Gaining knowledge about people's everyday lives helps us understand the world with an open mind and show respect to all we meet.

— Linda Tuomaala, retired math teacher (Troy HS) and math internship supervisor (Oakland Univ.)



I came to the U.S. as an international student and got my experience working for GE. I started my global consulting company in 1992 with the vision that the diverse cultures and intellectual strengths of an international community could be harnessed to leverage the best in people. With this 'mantra', I used my company to focus on process improvement for global manufacturing. But some of the most important aspects of international business are understanding the culture, listening with an open mind, and being patient to nurture development. One needs to learn and respect the nuances of different cultures, including customs, work practices, festivals, and food habits. For example, in some cultures nodding the head does not mean a commitment, but merely that the person has heard what you have said. The more one can get integrated with the culture, the better the success rate for doing business and achieving goals.

— Jay Hazra, President and Founder, HI Business Consultants, Bloomfield Hills, MI •

## Support the Campus Programming Fund

We are pleased to announce a new Campus Programming Fund available through the Schoolcraft College Foundation (SCF) in support of the Multicultural Fair and similar programs.

Programs that have been SCF-funded perennially, with robust participation and long records of success and growth, should be able to “strike out on their own” and seek support independently. Accordingly, faculty members created this fund at the close of 2015 to ensure support for global or intercultural campus initiatives. The money is reserved for programs that are Schoolcraft-based, faculty-driven, and globally-focused. Examples might include, but are not limited to, Earth Day, the Multicultural Fair, and Pageturners Book Club.

Faculty, staff, and members of the community may stipulate that their Foundation donations be earmarked in this way. Specifically, if you wish to contribute to this fund during the SCF’s Annual Campaign, just designate “Campus Programming” on the form or online: <https://scf.schoolcraft.edu/acampaign>. We hope you’ll consider supporting these worthy campus initiatives.

## Focus Theme Chosen for 2017

At the May 5 meeting of the International Institute, we selected our new focus theme for calendar year 2017: “Environmental Challenges in a Changing World”. The theme encompasses issues of sustainability, pollution, resource depletion, global energy, and climate change. Thanks to Geography Prof. Diane O’Connell for making the initial suggestions that led to this choice!

Ideas and volunteers for writing or speaking on aspects of this theme are welcome. Put on your thinking caps and make a suggestion!

## Take Our Survey!



After looking through these pages, kindly complete a brief online survey about *International Agenda*. The survey collects feedback about this issue, and the results will help us to further improve the magazine.

The survey can be accessed at this URL:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HLWY59Y>

## SCII Meeting Schedule

International Institute meetings are open to all who want to learn or to help out. New folks are always welcome. Meetings are on Fridays at 12-2 pm in the Liberal Arts Building. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

- September 16, 2016 in LA-200
- October 21, 2016 in LA-130
- November 18, 2016 in LA-200
- January 27, 2017 Room TBD
- February 17, 2017 Room TBD
- April 7, 2017 Room TBD
- May 5, 2017 Room TBD.

## GlobalEYEzers Schedule

GlobalEYEzers, a group affiliated with SCII, meets each semester over lunch to discuss current events relevant to international/ intercultural issues. Faculty and staff, as well as students and members of the community, are invited to participate. Meetings are on Fridays at 12-2 pm in the Liberal Arts Building.

Meetings for the previous school year were as follows:

- Oct. 2, 2015: discussion, “The Millennial Generation and Social Media”
- Nov. 13, 2015: Tiffany Hayden (Duplication Design Center) made a presentation and led discussion about “The Human Refugee Crisis”
- Mar. 18, 2016: Prof. Colleen Pilgrim (Psychology) facilitated “Economic Inequality: A Political and Psychological Discussion”.

The meetings for this school year are scheduled as follows:

- October 14, 2016 12-2 pm in LA-200
- February 10, 2017 12-2 pm Room TBD.

For more information, contact English Prof. Anna Maheshwari at [amaheshw@schoolcraft.edu](mailto:amaheshw@schoolcraft.edu) or 734-462-7188.

# Students!



## Enter the Fall 2016 International Agenda Writing and Artwork Contest

First Prize: \$250 Scholarship  
Second Prize: \$150 Scholarship

...in each of the two categories, writing and artwork.

### Winners from Winter 2016

- First Place, Artwork: Joseph Boldiszar (see p. 7)
- First Place, Writing: Ramal Lodhi (see pp. 22-23)
- Second Place, Artwork: Ilze Kleinsmith (see p. 33)
- Second Place, Writing: Bryan Palmer (see pp. 34-35).

All funds are provided by the Schoolcraft College Foundation.

**Submission Deadline: November 14, 2016**

### Guidelines:

1. Students (or their faculty mentors) may enter essays, research papers, persuasive writing, creative writing, poetry, or 2D or 3D artwork suitable for publication in *International Agenda*.
2. Works may deal with any topic of international or cross-cultural interest.
3. Submit a digital version of the writing or artwork as an e-mail attachment to the address below.
4. Submissions will be judged by a panel of faculty and staff volunteers based on content, originality, and aesthetics.
5. Entrants will be asked to sign a form affirming that the work is their own and permitting it to be used in the magazine.

For copies of the entry form and the complete set of rules, go to [www.schoolcraft.edu/departments/international-institute](http://www.schoolcraft.edu/departments/international-institute) or else contact:

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## Campus News & Kudos

At the SCII meeting on Jan. 22, International Coordinator **Laura LeShok** made a report on Schoolcraft's current international student population. She said that in Winter 2016 there were 151 visa-holding students on campus, 113 of those with the stringent F1 visas. Their average age was about 23 or 24, and a total of 37 countries were represented, led by India (13 students), Albania (10), and Canada (8). The number of international students here has grown modestly over the last several years, and Laura foresees continued growth, partly because Schoolcraft has a more welcoming and student-centered atmosphere than some of our nearby peer schools. More recently, Dean of Education Programs and Learning Support **Deborah Daiek** updated us that the College is still intending eventually to enroll a contingent of Chinese students from our partner institutions, Ningbo Polytechnic and Wuxi Institute of Commerce, but the first priority is to develop an international student center on our campus.

Over 3,000 visitors attended Schoolcraft's 15<sup>th</sup> annual **Multicultural Fair**, held in the VisTaTech Center on Mar. 24. The fair featured 25 display tables of ethnic dress, artifacts, language, traditional medicine, and other aspects of cultures from around the world, created and staffed by students, instructors, family, and friends; cultural performances by nine visiting troupes, from Yemeni dancers to reggae by Jonathan Motley; ethnic food samples; South Asian henna painting and eyebrow threading; the Arab American National Museum's mobile exhibit on "Little Syria NY: 1880-1940"; student poster displays on "Unflattening the World Through Film"; and more. Kudos to the Fair organizing committee: **Josselyn Moore** (Anthropology/Sociology), **Laura Leshok** (International Coordinator), **Helen Dítouras** (English), and **Todd Stowell** (Student Activities Office).

**Yovana Veerasamy** (French and Political Science), who is completing a doctoral program in higher education with the Univ. of Toledo, made a presentation on "The Internationalization Process: Landmarks in Internationalization Efforts at Schoolcraft College, an Initial Case Study" at the annual conference of Community Colleges for International Development (CCID), held Feb. 20-22 in Orlando, FL. Yovana also participated in the MIIIE workshop "Global Competition, Co-operation, and Conflict", held Aug. 8-12 at Kalamazoo Valley Community College (Kalamazoo, MI). Each Summer, MIIIE provides workshop participants with support, mentoring, and access to electronic and other resources in order to begin developing an instructional module for infusion in their courses. For information on future workshops, visit <http://www.miiie.org/>.

**Anita Süess Kaushik** (Foreign Languages) led a May 16-27 Discover Europe educational tour of selected sites in Berlin, Prague, Kraków, Auschwitz, Budapest, and Vienna. This was the ninth overseas study tour that Dr. Süess has led, with logistics handled by Explorica. She reports that "it was another fabulous trip!" and included 12 travelers, a mixture of different ages. •

## New from Our Neighboring Schools

**Eastern Michigan University** inaugurated a new Jewish Studies Center on March 20, directed by English professor Martin Shichtman. It is located on the fourth floor of the Pray-Harrold building, adjacent to a newly established Jewish Studies Library. EMU launched a successful Jewish Studies program six years ago, and since then has also been partnering with the Holocaust Memorial Center (Farmington Hills, MI) to offer Summer seminars on teaching about the Holocaust. EMU and other schools of education are responding to MI House Bill 4493, enacted in 2015, which requires public schools to offer instruction about the Holocaust and genocide.

**Washtenaw Community College** is offering its first Chinese (Mandarin) credit courses this Fall. Using funds from a federal Title VII (Civil Rights Act) grant that was procured for this purpose, the school hired Gao Yin to create and teach the courses. Ms. Yin, a native of Tianjin, China, has years of experience teaching Chinese and, with a master's degree in Japanese, she will also advise WCC about establishing a curriculum in that language.

The **University of Michigan-Dearborn** began to offer a Middle East Studies Certificate this year. The 12-credit-hour program, designed to give students a broad perspective on Middle Eastern history and culture, is open to undergraduate and post-baccalaureate students and takes advantage of previously-existing courses. Courses within the program focus heavily on Middle Eastern history, but also allow students to examine the region's political, philosophical, economic, linguistic, and cultural influences.

The **University of Michigan** Museum of Art appointed Laura De Becker to the newly-created position of Curator of African Art last year. In April, the museum in Ann Arbor was named by Best College Reviews as the country's top art museum at a public university.

Books recently published by faculty members at the **University of Michigan** include:

- Prof. of History Ronald Grigor Suny, *"They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else": A History of the Armenian Genocide* (Princeton Univ. Press, 2015)
- Prof. of Sociology Fatma Müge Göçek, ed., *Women of the Middle East* (Routledge, 2015)
- Prof. of Afroamerican and African Studies Heather Ann Thompson, *Blood in the Water: The Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 and Its Legacy* (Pantheon, 2016). •



"Impossible Hope", depicting the February 2016 earthquake in Taiwan, was created by Schoolcraft graphic design major and Livonia resident Joseph Boldizar as a Winter 2016 project in Computer Graphics Technology 226 (Digital Imaging 2—Photoshop), taught by Prof. Mike Mehall.

## Placing a Personal Seal

Sarolina Shen Chang

That personal seal, as a signature  
 Placed unto a certain application form  
 For these tall buildings  
 A simple motion of the wrist  
 Had thus destined a disaster years later  
 Perhaps a little hesitation  
 Perhaps a little uncomfortable on the conscience  
 But all washed away as years gone by  
 But all covered up by a sparing mentality  
 Only when the tall buildings collapsed  
 And the barrels that replacing the steel  
 Exposed to the focal point  
 Of the whole world  
 Does that hand once placing the seal  
 Start to tremble a little because of the guilt  
 Does the conscience once devoid  
 Start to surface

## Earthquake

Sarolina Shen Chang

Must have known  
 My deepest sleep  
 Does not have a specific pattern  
 Just like my gradual awakening  
 Does not have any ethnic national border  
 All the languages in the world  
 All the seismic graphics  
 Cannot diagnose  
 My earnest longing  
 To return to  
 The very beginning  
 Of the Earth

Born and raised in the harbor city of Keelung, Taiwan, Sarolina Shen Chang has worked at Schoolcraft's Radcliff Library since 2001. She has been writing and publishing Chinese-language poems, short stories, and essays for more than 40 years, some of them under the pen-name Si Li. In 1998, she began writing poetry in English, some of which has appeared in two chapbooks from March Street Press.

Both of the poems here, "Placing a Personal Seal" and "Earthquake", were originally written in Chinese. Sarolina published them in that form in Taiwan, respectively in *Li Poetry* (June 2016) and *Liberty Times* (Nov. 21, 2002). She has kindly translated the poems into English for *International Agenda*.

# Fresh Encounters: Immigration and Immigrant Communities

During the baseball playoffs last October, José Bautista, the colorful Dominican-born player for the Toronto Blue Jays, hit a dramatic home run that he followed with an exuberant “bat flip” (more like a bat hurl) down the first-base line. Soon, his behavior was being called out by a number of players, fans, and sports writers as “disrespectful”, “mocking”, “showboating”, “contrary to baseball tradition”, “a disgrace to the game”. Some went even further and said that Latin players have made baseball look so different that you can’t recognize the game anymore. After the season ended, the veteran right-fielder responded with an online article in which he wrote, in part:

It’s true. I’m different. I come from a different baseball culture. But so what? Why does that have to be a bad thing? ... To us, baseball isn’t a country club game. It’s our national pastime, and it comes packed with emotion. ... Baseball is a metaphor for America. It’s a giant melting pot made up of people from all over the world and all walks of life. How can you expect everybody to be exactly the same? Act exactly the same? More importantly, why would you *want* them to? (Bautista 2015).

The Bautista bat-flip crystallizes the cultural aspect of the “immigration wars” raging not only in the U.S. but worldwide. Shouldn’t the newcomers thoroughly assimilate into their new countries and become “exactly the same” as everyone else? Otherwise, say those who advocate this view, immigration has the character of a foreign invasion, watering down and ultimately dissolving away the culture we’ve known all our lives. These feelings can be accentuated if our economic position seems threatened; the fear of losing our class status gets expressed as a fear of losing our national culture, as traditionally conceived.

Others, opposed to the very notion of thorough assimilation, are excited instead by the fresh encounters, the juxtaposition of diverse cultures that is happening because of mass migration. Salman Rushdie, the British-Indian author, has written that in his novels he “celebrates hybridity, impurity, intermingling, the transformation that comes of new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures, ideas, politics, movies, songs” (Rushdie 1991, p. 394).

These questions of assimilation, acculturation, the “clash of cultures”, the forces compelling large-scale migration, as well as the communities this migration is creating, whether makeshift or vibrant— these are some of the issues that our International Institute is taking up in 2016 in its year-long focus on “Immigration and Immigrant Communities”. And it’s right on time! The record-shattering global rates of migration, the urgent refugee crises unfolding across the planet, and the debates surrounding the U.S. presidential campaign have placed these issues on center stage more than ever before.

## Root Causes of Migration

A reader wrote to us as follows about our last issue:

I read International Agenda with great interest. The entire publication was very informative and I thank you sincerely. In the articles on immigrants and migrations the plight of the refugees is described in painful detail. The acclimation of immigrants in foreign lands is no doubt very difficult. The crisis is overwhelming. How about writing about the root causes and what remedies can be implemented? In other words, how can some despotic governments change so their people don’t have to flee and suffer in the process?

There’s certainly a lot to unite with in that sentiment! We all want to see a world without the oppression, conflict, and crises that are crushing people’s lives and dreams. And yes, despotic governments, war, and crisis are important factors in mass migration, especially right now in the world (more on that further below). It’s true that if despotic governments were changed, then people wouldn’t have to suffer and flee.

But as a matter of fact, despotic governments, war, and crisis are not the primary factors or the root causes of modern migration.

One way to see this clearly is through an analogy. The *internal migration* of people within our own country has accelerated dramatically over the past few generations. That isn’t mainly due to despotic state governments and warfare among them, but because people see economic opportunities that are better elsewhere than in the place where they are living, and because the continual modernization of the economy and technology make the fluid movement of people, capital, information, and other resources more possible and also more necessary.

For example, when agriculture in the American South was mechanized after World War 2, it meant that the labor of millions of sharecroppers in cultivating the soil by hand was no longer needed. Metaphorically, they were “pushed off” the land, because they could no longer earn a living there. But at the same time, the urban manufacturing base that had begun to rapidly expand during the war (especially in northern areas such as Michigan) required a greatly expanded labor pool. Metaphorically, people were “pulled toward” the factories, where wages were high. These were the push/pull economic forces that underlay the Great Migration northward of African American, Mexican, Appalachian, and other poor people during and after WW2. In the early 1980s, something of the reverse happened: there was a recession that hit the manufacturing sector of the economy especially hard, and lots of Michiganders moved south to Texas where job openings were more plentiful. Some of those families moved back to Michigan years later.



Olya Morvan, *New York Times* Apr. 24, 2016

The vast majority of international migration is motivated by economic factors. These men from Ghana and other countries are laborers for the Qatar construction firm Gulf Contracting. Instead of their usual dinner of home-cooked South Indian fare, in this April 2016 photo they're eating buckets of chicken from KFC to celebrate their soccer team's victory in a semifinal match of the Worker's Cup. The annual tournament, in which all players are required to be common laborers, brings together 24 different Qatari corporate teams. Gulf Contracting and other local firms have been criticized for subjecting the immigrants to 10-hour workdays and scandalous living conditions. "Even a slum is better than this" said one of the soccer players.

More and more, this dynamic has been operating on a global scale, with cross-national movements of people— well-off or poor, skilled or unskilled, highly or poorly educated, as needed— between countries and between whole world regions. For instance, the same type of push/pull forces mentioned above in connection with the Great Migration later brought a surge of Yemeni and other Middle Eastern workers to the automotive plants here starting in the 1970s. To take another example: the dramatic rise in the numbers of Japanese professionals settling in Michigan is not mainly due to despotic governments, war, or crisis. It is mainly due to the fact that the auto industry has become globally interdependent.

The World Bank estimates that international migration for the year 2010 totaled 215.8 million people (about 3.2% of the world population); of these, the overwhelming majority (199.5 million, more than 92.4%) were *economic migrants* who left their home countries primarily because they were seeking to improve their standard of living or quality of life (World Bank 2011). Some, but by no means all, of these economic migrants come from impoverished areas. They migrate looking for work, hoping to earn enough money to survive and perhaps send a portion (called *remittances*) home to other family members. In general, the national economies benefit greatly from the immigrant presence. On pages 14-18 of this issue, Ronald Kaddu and Chrispas Nyombi document how Uganda's expulsion of most South Asian residents in 1972 turned the country from a prosperous into an impoverished land.

Gaping disparities between rich and poor regions of the world help drive economic migration. In his talk at Schoolcraft College a few years ago Yong Zhao, Associate Dean for Global Education at the Univ. of Oregon, painted a stark image of this chasm of opportunity, and he quipped: "In the U.S., some people's garages have more tools in them than entire villages in China" (Zhao 2012). Currently, the countries that have the world's largest proportion of immigrants are the United Arab Emirates (84%) and nearby Qatar (74%). Their huge pools of

African, Asian, and other migrant laborers are critical to their crash efforts to become world leaders in finance, energy, and culture. *The Bamboo Stalk*, a recent novel involving migrant labor in the Gulf, is reviewed by Colleen Pilgrim on p. 21.

Because capital investment is based on competition— increasingly global and high-stakes— the economic development that it engenders tends to be very dynamic but also uneven and unplanned. This creates both surpluses and shortages of labor on a continuous basis: the need for some kinds of employees can rapidly evaporate in certain areas, even as the need for other kinds of employees can rapidly materialize in certain other areas. These are the root causes, the major forces, underlying the mass migration of people in contemporary times.

### **We are Insulated from the Conflicts**

Since 92% of international migration is economic in motive, it means that the other 8% of migrants are refugees escaping political conflicts, persecution, wars, or natural disasters. Due to those factors about 1.8 million new refugees were displaced from their home countries in 2015 and did not return, according to UN estimates (Office of the UNHCR 2016). They fled strife in places like Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, South Sudan, Eritrea, Libya, Nigeria, Honduras, El Salvador, Myanmar, and Bangladesh.

We in the West are insulated from most of this strife, and are thus largely ignorant of it— that is part of the motivation for our Focus educational effort this year.

First, we rarely see the victims themselves. True, there are the attention-grabbing headlines about incoming waves of refugees. And there are the "populists" who whip up anti-immigrant sentiments to further their own national ambitions, such as the recent Brexit vote (Witte 2016). But in fact, only about 5% of the recent refugees have come to western nations;

*continued on next page*



Mauricio Lima, *New York Times* Sep. 3, 2015

At left, a refugee family from Syria with their daughter, as hundreds of people wait to take a train to Germany at Keleti train station in central Budapest, Hungary.

Below: "IF YOU COME TO HUNGARY, DON'T TAKE THE JOBS OF HUNGARIANS!" reads one of the giant roadside billboards put up by the Hungarian government. Grassroots activists are defacing every billboard they can reach.



Agence France-Presse via BBC News, Jun. 14, 2015

## Fresh Encounters *continued from page 9*

the vast majority instead end up in nearby countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico, Malaysia, and Indonesia. As of June 30, only about 565 Syrian refugees from the current crisis have been settled in Michigan, which is more than in any other U.S. state (Jordan 2016).

Second, Western media grossly underreport on the conflicts that give rise to these waves of victims. For example, how many of us have even heard of the Rohingya people, the persecuted Muslim minority in Myanmar and Bangladesh, of whom thousands have been herded into detention camps there, and thousands more have tried to escape the region in leaky boats? In Myanmar, cabinet minister Aung San Suu Kyi, who has received the Nobel Peace Prize and the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, insists that her government will not even utter the word "Rohingya"!

And how many of us have heard of the Naxalite struggle, an armed liberation movement that has been raging in the Indian state of West Bengal since 1967? In Jhumpa Lahiri's novel *The Lowland* (2013), Gauri, a woman whose husband is killed by the paramilitary police in Kolkata in that conflict, flees to Rhode Island. She assumes a new identity there, and eventually becomes a philosophy professor in southern California. Because newspapers in the U.S. completely ignore events in the region, she assumes that the warfare in West Bengal has died out—but many years later, she is stunned when a visitor from there tells her that the movement is still going strong!

Thus, in the West we might feel far removed from all of this. But—to take an even wider view—here is a final point to think about. When the reader mentioned earlier asked, "How can some despotic governments change so their people don't have to flee

and suffer in the process?", she seemed to assume that this problem is rooted in the have-not countries, such as those from which refugees are currently fleeing. But let's remember that wars and refugees can just as easily be manufactured on Western soil. World War 2, for example, produced millions of European refugees, many of them taken in by Egypt and other Third World countries (Tharoor 2016). Further, it is the "great nations" that preside over a world economic order characterized by gaping chasms between have and have-not regions (so obvious in places like Myanmar and West Bengal), and those are what give rise to the violent conflicts that create refugees in the first place.

### Immigrants as "Barbarians"

The earth is very large, and we live around the sea in a small part or portion of it between Phasis and the Pillars of Hercules, like ants or frogs around a swamp; many other peoples live in many such parts of it.

— Plato (*Phaedo*, p. 93)

The role of language in the acculturation of immigrants is at the center of Philippe Faucon's "Fatima", which won prizes as the best French film of 2015. The title character, a divorced Moroccan immigrant in Lyon, works 16-hour days as a domestic

servant to put her two daughters through school. But many of the French treat her like a barbarian because she cannot speak their language. Her own 15-year-old, Souad, calls her a “donkey” for the same reason, believing that as long as her mom doesn’t speak French, she’ll spend her whole life “cleaning other people’s shit.”

In this connection, the etymology of the word “barbarian” is very interesting. To the ancient Greeks, everyone else’s language sounded as if they were uttering “bar-bar”, a donkey-like barking, just as we might imitate some nonsense that we’ve heard with the phrase “blah-blah” or “mumbo-jumbo”. Thus, βάρβαρος (*barbaros*) was a snide code-word for the inability of other Mediterranean peoples to converse in Greek. But of course, the word also captures the ignorance of most ancient Greeks about the richly diverse peoples and languages surrounding them. This was realized by certain thinkers such as Plato, who rejected the simple dichotomy of “Greek or barbarian” for exactly that reason.

After all, why should Greek be privileged above any other language? Precisely because it was a language of privilege: the Greek city-states imposed their naval power and colonial domination over much of the Mediterranean region. “A language is a dialect with an army and navy”, to use a famous saying popularized by Yiddish linguist Max Weinrich. Similarly, the late scholar Benedict Anderson spoke of *languages-of-power* that are more prestigious than other tongues and that foster national consciousness (Anderson 1991, pp. 43-45). In the world today French, and especially English, are languages-of-power; Arabic, and especially the Berber languages, are not.

In his article on pp. 30-31, Linguapax Institute head Agustí Colomines of Barcelona, Spain, pinpoints exactly why Souad and other immigrants prefer to forget about their native languages:

Many indigenous peoples, associating their disadvantaged social position with their culture, have come to believe that their languages are not worth retaining, since they do not have any prestige at all. They abandon their languages and cultures in order to overcome discrimination, to secure a livelihood, and enhance social mobility, or to reach to the global marketplace.

If this trend continues to accelerate with globalization and mass migrations of people, the linguistic future of our planet could amount to the extinction of most human languages, and the triumph of a small number of languages-of-power. Another foreseeable outcome is the partial mixture or mash-up of languages, a phenomenon called *polylinguaging* (discussed in this space in our last issue).



United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration

Above, World War 2 refugee women from Poland, Greece, and Yugoslavia wash their clothes at El Shatt refugee camp in Egypt in 1945.

A third possibility, advocated by the Linguapax Institute, is for myriad diverse languages to continue to thrive and coexist. In addition to its many other activities in defense of languages, Linguapax is currently working on a project aimed at showcasing the rich linguistic and cultural diversity that immigrants bring to cities such as Barcelona when they refuse to abandon their languages and cultures. Mass migration is now rapidly creating many surprising language juxtapositions, and not just in Barcelona. In the Canadian province of Manitoba, Tagalog recently overtook German as the second most widely spoken language; in Sweden, Arabic has just overtaken Finnish in second place.

### A “Polyglot Boarding House”

“Every language we learn, we become one more person.” And everyone who’s ever learned a new language knows that this is true. In 2009, Prof. Sam Hays of our English Department and International Institute popularized the motto, which had originated with Yazan Badran, a Syrian blogger and media researcher now based in Brussels, Belgium.

Jhumpa Lahiri, the Bengali-American author mentioned on the previous page, became so clear on this concept that she learned a third language, Italian, deliberately in order to gain a new view of the world. Then she moved to Rome, stopped using any language except her new one, and wrote a memoir about the experience— in Italian! (Lahiri 2015).

*continued on next page*

## Fresh Encounters *continued from page 11*

Speaking a second language can change how you see the world. And by extension, when second languages become widely spoken in a community, they can change how that community sees the world. When a country becomes multilingual, the country changes. To some that's a great thing and to others it's deplorable—just as with Bautista's bat-flip.

A century ago, horrified by surging immigration levels and the phenomenon of “hyphenated Americans”, former U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt thundered:

There can be no divided allegiance here. Any man who says he is an American, but something else also, isn't

an American at all. We have room for but one language here, and that is the English language, for we intend to see that the crucible turns our people out as Americans, of American nationality, and not as dwellers in a polyglot boarding house. ... We must have but one flag. We must also have but one language. That must be the language of the Declaration of Independence, of Washington's Farewell address, of Lincoln's Gettysburg speech and second inaugural.

There is still something in America that wants to grind up all of our diverse languages and peoples and cultures, hurl them into one big melting pot, and reduce them to a homogeneous mass. But is that the kind of future that we want?

## Communities Once Reviled are Now Treasured

It's interesting that a number of immigrant groups once branded as “foreign scourges” are today highly valued for hard work, high achievements, and rich cultural heritage.

A new Australian play, “Yasukichi Murakami: Through a Distant Lens”, shines a light on the official White Australia policy, in place until the early 1960s, which severely limited Asian immigration to the country. The main character is the nonfictional Yasukichi Murakami, a Japanese photographer who was interned in Victoria, Australia, immediately after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i, in 1941. The playwright, Mayu Kanamori, told National Public Radio last April that the country has a “collective national amnesia” about its Japanese population. She herself had never heard of the White Australia policy until after she settled in the country in 1981.

However, the Australian government now embraces Japanese and other Asian immigrant groups and officially champions multiculturalism. This stance meets its needs as the nation positions itself to play a dominant economic role in Asia, as reflected in the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement of 2009 and the government's Oct. 2012 policy paper, *Australia in the Asian Century*, which expressed the vision that “Australia is located in the right place at the right time—in the Asian region in the Asian century.”

A similar evolution has occurred in the U.S. and Canada. The Chinese workers who were brought in to build the transcontinental railroads, and much else out West, were reviled as “coolies”. They were paid far less than their white counterparts, and they risked their lives—an average of about one dead Chinese worker per mile of track laid. When the last spikes were driven and they looked for other work, they were kept out of most trades, were prevented from settling into permanent communities, and were routinely taunted with the accusation that they ate rats. California's Anti-Coolie Act of 1862 and the federal Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 slammed the door against further Chinese immigrants. In fact, until the immigration reforms of 1966, the U.S. maintained very severe quotas on all Asians: for example, only 105 Chinese were allowed to enter every year.



At left, Ramsay Cook (1931-2016), at age 8 in the prairie provinces of Canada, with a Japanese-Canadian friend who taught him how to fish. Three years later his friend, and more than 125,000 other ethnic Japanese in Canada and the U.S., were interned as ‘national security threats’ during World

War 2. Cook went on to write a master's thesis critical of the internment, and he wondered for his whole life what had become of his friend. As a leading Canadian historian, he championed the idea that Canadian national identity is multiethnic, multilingual, and multiracial.

Photo: Eleanor Cook via *Toronto Globe and Mail*, Jul. 22, 2016.

During World War 2, the U.S. and Canada rounded up Japanese inhabitants, a move now officially acknowledged as a grave injustice (Reeves 2016). “Allegiance”, a musical that debuted on Broadway last Fall, centers on a Japanese-American farming family in California interned in a camp in Wyoming during the war; it stars the famous actor George Takei, who went through a similar experience in his own childhood.

But today, people of Asian heritage in North America are portrayed as a “model minority”. (Of course, even the high-achieving among them still confront racism, as evidenced by the infamous 1982 murder of Chinese-American Vincent Chin in Detroit, and the personal story shared by Korean-American Jon Oaks on p. 24 of this issue.) Asian communities are commonly seen by local chambers of commerce as an important part of what makes for “cool cities” such as New York, Toronto, Vancouver, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

## How You Can Participate

Faculty, students, and other readers can participate in this Focus project in a variety of ways.

Instructors can integrate relevant topics directly into their coursework by developing classroom presentations, course readings and assignments, student projects, etc. Use the concepts and resources contained in this and the previous issue of the magazine as a jumping-off point. With a little creativity, instructors in many disciplines can participate fully.

Focus Series Coordinator Helen Ditouras has played the lead role in organizing a free educational speaker/film series on the Schoolcraft College campus for students, staff, and the general public. Here is a roundup of the Fall presentations:

- Sep. 26: Anna Verhoye and Jim Verhoye, “Social Justice and Criminal Justice: An Exploration of the Relationship Between Immigration, Human Dignity, Poverty, Mental Health, and Education”
- Oct. 4: Rosalie Warren Yezbick, “Forget Me Not: Immigrant Communities from the Mid-Century Hungarian Diaspora at the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1956 Revolution”
- Oct. 10: V. Mitch McEwen, “Digital Immigrants”
- Nov. 2: Dan Yezbick, “Dancing with Cheez-Its at the All-American Taiwanese Buffet”, kicking off the Pageturners November reading and discussion of Eddie Huang’s new memoir, *Double Cup Love: On the Trail of Family, Food, and Broken Hearts in China*
- Nov. 8: Daniela Natcheva, “Bulgarian Immigration in North America”.

(Watch for more complete information on the SCII website and on campus bulletin boards.) These speakers, films, and exhibits have always been very popular and stimulating; last Winter semester, the events drew upwards of 80 people each. The entire faculty is urged to recommend this series to students as an excellent way to gather insight and information. Some instructors might want to bring an entire class to a given event in the Focus Series; contact Helen at 734-462-7263 or by e-mail at [hditoura@schoolcraft.edu](mailto:hditoura@schoolcraft.edu). Others might want to fold these into extra-credit opportunities for selected students.

In addition, the Calendar on pp. 47-48 includes several relevant off-campus events: an exhibit about Iraqi and Syrian refugees (Jun. 4 – Oct. 23, 2016), events marking the Mexican Day of the Dead (Oct. 26-29), an International Festival (Nov. 18-20), a Russian Festival (Sep. 17-18), and cultural celebrations from our South Asian community (Sep. 17, Sep. 30, Oct. 9).

As in the past, the campus GlobalEYEzers group invites instructors, staff, students, and community members to participate in lunchtime discussions about current events and issues in a global context, with ethnic food provided. See page 4 for more information.

Finally, to supplement these events and the articles in this magazine, you can extend your learning using materials from the Bradner and Radcliff Libraries on our campus:

- The library staff can help you locate a wide variety of resources, including fiction and nonfiction books and films. Just acquired is a 2014 DVD by Arifa Javed, “Essential Arrival: Michigan’s Indian Immigrants in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (Bradner Call No. F 575 .E2 E87).
- Bradner Librarian Wayne Pricer has compiled a webliography (a set of links to choice websites). Access it by going to this page:

<http://www.schoolcraft.edu/a-z-index/learning-support-services/library/resources/webliography/>

, then click on folders such as “Immigration”, “Globalization”, and “North American Studies”.

Let us know how you and your colleagues bring some global and multicultural perspective into your coursework this year!

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# Asians in Uganda: A Sobering Lesson of Politics and Economics

by Ronald Kaddu and Chrispas Nyombi

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In November 2012, a group of Asians marked 40 years since their arrival in Britain, having been expelled from Uganda by Idi Amin in 1972. In fact, the expulsion of Asians from Uganda is one of the keynote events that marred the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>1</sup> Before their expulsion, they had helped the country cement itself as one of the leading education providers in Africa.<sup>2</sup> Many of the migrants demonstrated entrepreneurial brilliance that benefited the Ugandan economy, pushing the country to become one of the richest on the continent. However, friction between Asians and native Ugandans was omnipresent throughout this period due to the superior economic and social status of the Asians, culminating in their expulsion. Today, while the British marvel at the entrepreneurial zeal of the Ugandan Asian community, Uganda remains one of the most impoverished countries.<sup>3</sup> However, Uganda has managed to turn this tide of prejudice by recognizing that such attitudes are self-defeating given our interdependence as nations.

Migration research is a 20<sup>th</sup>-Century innovation that has, in a relatively short period of time, developed impressively via a variety of disciplines. Through the development of demography as an academic technique, we have been able to study populations in a variety of pioneering ways. The United Nations defines migrants variably, referring at times to the acquisition of

significant social ties to a country in which the person was not born, and at others to the absence of an external compelling factor which gave rise to the migration event.<sup>4</sup> For many migrants, the transition from refugee to citizen is the most challenging one. Although a thorough examination of citizenship, its chronology, theory and associated literature is beyond the objective of this article, it is essential to acknowledge one crucial aspect of contemporary citizenship discourse:

Citizenship, as we know it, has been called in to question by globalisation, the process of European integration and the increasing internal differentiation of political communities. These have challenged the institutional setting of the nation-state within which modern citizenship emerged, making the conventional idea of citizenship as membership in an undifferentiated statal community unsuited to contemporary developments.<sup>5</sup>

This 'post-national' thinking has generated some novel concepts of citizenship, including 'multi-level citizenship' and 'hybrid citizenship'.<sup>6</sup> Nowhere can these modern-day approaches be seen more clearly than in the European Union (EU); "by establishing a transnational citizenship in this way the EU has arguably made an essential first step towards transnational democracy."<sup>7</sup> The UN is also championing a new international standard regarding the treatment of migrant workers through its Domestic Workers Convention of 2011 (No. 189). Elsewhere, there have been calls for the European Court of Human Rights to ignore territorial sovereignty and to take a robust stance against countries, particularly the UK, in which asylum seekers are said to be detained disproportionately.<sup>8</sup>



Students of Indian heritage at the Aga Khan Secondary School in Kampala, Uganda, in 1970, two years before the expulsion of most Asians from the country.

Photo: agakhanschoolkampala.blogspot.com

Several studies have looked at rights pertaining to migrants and problems associated with the policy of enforced destitution for those seeking permission to remain or who have been denied refugee status. However, few studies have tracked those migrants who arrived into destitution or became destitute during their time

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in Britain. Fewer still have attempted to understand the range of experiences within the context of their citizenship-based rights.<sup>9</sup> Thus, a study of Ugandan Asians in the UK represents a significant contribution to research literature on our understanding of the challenges these migrants faced both in the UK and Uganda, and the economic role they played in both countries.

#### Asians in Uganda

In the decades preceding Ugandan independence in 1962, Indians controlled most of the trade in cotton and coffee as well as wholesale and retail. Their prosperity bred conflict with the African traders demanding an equal share in the trade. African traders formed a traders' movement through which they sought to advance their cause.<sup>10</sup> The government responded by passing the Cooperative Societies Ordinance, a move bitterly contested by the various Indian Associations in Kampala and Jinja, who declared it as premature and opposed government assistance to it. In the civil service, Indians drafted a petition to safeguard their privileges, and Africans joined their trader counterparts by demanding parity with Asians.

In 1949, many African veterans of World War 2 plowed their gratuities into petty trade. They formed associations to bolster their demands. Additionally, they exploited their newly-found political consciousness and slapped trade boycotts against Indian businesses and those Africans who frequented them.<sup>11</sup> To carry their demands further, Africans formed the Uganda National Movement (UNM) and announced a second boycott in 1959.<sup>12</sup> They demanded that Asians surrender all trade into the hands of Africans and that Africans should shun Asian shops. The boycott spread to all parts of Buganda, Jinja, and Mbale. The government attempted in vain to suppress the boycott by arresting some of the leaders. In 1960, most Asians had abandoned trade in rural areas of Buganda and moved to western and eastern provinces. At independence on October 9, 1962, the British handed the country to leaders with strong ethnic royalties. Thus, anti-Asian xenophobia would continue during the regimes of Milton Obote (1962-71) and Idi Amin (1971-79), ultimately leading to the expulsion in 1972.

In the independence constitution of 1962, there was an important provision stating that non-Ugandans had two years to

decide whether to become citizens of Uganda or take up the status of British protected persons, entitling them to British passports. Although many Asians chose the latter, they continued with businesses in Uganda. In 1969, Britain reformed its Patriot's Act and required Commonwealth passport holders to attain a visa before entering Britain. This requirement was necessary for Britain to enter the European Economic Commission (EEC) and consequently, only EEC members were allowed to travel to Britain without a visa. This move prompted a discussion in Uganda over the future of the Asians. President Obote took the view that if Britain was putting in place rules barring Commonwealth members from taking up opportunities in Britain, then Uganda should also regulate entry. Throughout Obote's regime, resentment towards Asians intensified and further alienated them.<sup>13</sup>

In 1968, Obote publicly voiced his resentment toward the Asians at a government committee on "Africanisation in Commerce and Industry". He proposed the removal of Asians from their commercial stronghold and handing Uganda back to the natives.<sup>14</sup> A system of work permits and trade licenses was introduced in 1969 restricting Asians from attaining professional positions. The situation worsened when the Immigration Act of 1970 was passed, requiring non-Ugandans to have entry permits if they wished to remain in Uganda. Despite the repressive policies of Obote's government, the Asians continued their dominance of the Ugandan commercial sector, with economic wealth largely concentrated in their hands.<sup>15</sup>

Native Ugandan entrepreneurs could not match their Asian counterparts for a number of reasons. First, the colonial government had confined Africans to growing and ginning cotton, whereas the Asians— they were mostly Gujaratis, considered the greatest merchants of India— were free to venture into any industry. Even when the Uganda Cotton Society opted to remove the Indian middleman and market its own cotton in 1932, the colonialists overruled. Second, the tariffs system historically favored the Asian traders rather than native Ugandans, who were mostly laborers not merchants. Third, native Ugandans could not obtain financial credit because Bank of Baroda, Bank of India, and Standard Bank of South Africa were reluctant to lend to Africans. Many Africans were also denied wholesale trade licenses for lack of stone or concrete buildings.

Trains had a first-class section for Europeans and separate coaches for Asians, and others for Africans. Outside the Grand Imperial Hotel in Kampala, until 1952, there was a sign stating "Africans and dogs not allowed". Although this form of apartheid was not supported by law, in practice it created a largely segregated society. Thus, official and unofficial policies helped to maintain the class structure.

#### The Expulsion of the Asian Community

Idi Amin's assumption of power in January 1971 was greeted with optimism among the Asians, who hoped that he would reverse Obote's policies. Indeed, Amin offered residence permits and import licenses, relaxed rules of trade to benefit the Asian traders, and encouraged them to invest in the country. The influence of Asians in the economy was far-reaching; they constituted 1% of the population but received one-fifth of the national income.<sup>16</sup> Asians owned many large businesses and the

*continued on next page*

## Asians in Uganda *continued from page 15*

economy mainly depended on them. They lived in gated mansions with access to elite healthcare and schooling services. In truth, this seemed to benefit the whole economy, including the lives of native Ugandans. Education standards were at their highest ever, and Makerere University was regarded as the best in East Africa.

However, their total dominance of the Ugandan economy and their superior social status generated arrogance among some of the Asians, spurring gross inequalities in the way they treated native Ugandans.<sup>17</sup> It is widely documented that the Asians were notorious for mistreating native Ugandans who worked for them and often referring to grown men as 'boy'. Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, a British Ugandan Asian and one of Britain's most distinguished columnists, admits that "many Ugandan Asians were racist and never saw black Ugandans as equals"<sup>18</sup>. This fed resentment toward the Asians. They were often labeled as *dukawallas*, an occupational term used as an anti-Indian slur and stereotype, bringing to mind an image of inveterate cheating and conniving.

During Amin's time, the idea of expelling Asians first surfaced in August 1971, when the price of coffee dropped significantly and the Ugandan economy suffered severely. In order to find a scapegoat for the economic woes and make up for

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***It is widely documented that the Asians were notorious for mistreating native Ugandans who worked for them and often referring to grown men as 'boy'.***

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the budget deficit, Idi Amin saw the confiscation of Asian properties and their expulsion as a short-term solution that would earn him popularity.<sup>19</sup> This was followed by Amin's Indian Conference on December 7-8, 1971, where he set out numerous charges against them.<sup>20</sup> He accused Indians of "economic crimes", exploitation of Africans, and occupying too prominent a position in the Ugandan economy. In addition, the secular nature and exclusivity of the Asian community was criticized. Intermarriage with Africans was virtually non-existent, and this fact had further compounded the resentment and hostility. Amin drummed up support for his plan by saying that he wanted to "make the ordinary Ugandan master of his own destiny, and above all to see that he enjoys the wealth of his country. Our deliberate policy is to transfer the economic control of Uganda into the hands of Ugandans, for the first time in our country's history."<sup>21</sup>

On August 4, 1972, Amin denounced the Asians as "bloodsuckers" and gave them 90 days to leave the country. He warned that any Ugandan Asians remaining after November 8 risked being imprisoned. However, in an attempt to retain some of the nation's intellectual base, a second decree was issued dictating that all Asian doctors, teachers, and lawyers should not leave the country.

The expelled Asians lived in fear until the last minutes of their lives in Uganda, as observed by one of those who were

fleeing: "On the way to the airport the coach was stopped by troops seven times and we were all held at gun point"<sup>22</sup>. Rather unsurprisingly, many native Ugandans lined the streets in jubilation, chanting 'go home Bangladeshi!'.

Following the expulsion, the Indian government cut off diplomatic ties with Uganda. The British government responded by stating that "the president's decision to expel non-citizen Asians was a blatant act of racial discrimination" and that "these people had nothing in common except the fact that they were of Asian ethnic origin."<sup>23</sup>

The Asian properties were put under the management of the Properties Custodian Board. A Properties and Businesses (Acquisition) Decree was issued by the Amin government in 1973 allowing Asian properties to be expropriated by the government and sold. Roughly 5,700 companies, farms, agricultural estates, and ranches were handed out, along with assets such as homes and cars.<sup>24</sup> The majority of the assets were given to ordinary individuals; the rest went to government bodies and others to semi-state-owned organizations and charities. The Uganda Development Corporation took control over most of the largest Asian-owned companies.

The expulsion resulted in a shortage of skilled workers and trade connections necessary to drive industries. Instead, the government turned to ordinary people to run the industries. Nyombi and Kibandama argue that "people [moving] away from

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***On August 4, 1972, Amin denounced the Asians as "bloodsuckers" and gave them 90 days to leave the country.***

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jobs they were skilled or educated in and running businesses left by the Asians... [was] a recipe for disaster"<sup>25</sup>. Ugandans who were given businesses sold off stock quickly but did not know how to restock.

With Uganda's reputation tarnished, investments soon dried up. Between 1972 and 1975, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) dropped by 5% yet the money supply rose by 92%, leading to hyperinflation.<sup>26</sup> The manufacturing sector collapsed, with profits from the sector falling from 740 million shillings in 1972 to 254 million in 1979. As a result, unemployment soared and crime increased drastically.<sup>27</sup> In the end, the "moment of glory of the Amin regime turned into a tragedy" as the Ugandan economy went from free-fall to near collapse.<sup>28</sup>

### Ugandan Asians in Britain

In September 1972, British Prime Minister Edward Heath's cabinet was briefed on the crisis by Attorney-General Peter Rawlinson. He made it clear that Britain was required to accept the expelled Ugandans, stating: "Under international law a State had a duty to other States to accept within its territory those of its nationals who were expelled from their country of residence and were not admitted to any other country". Although the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1968 imposed controls on immigration, having been relied on in 1968 to deny Kenyan



Photo: David Hurn/Magnum

Ugandan Asian refugees land at Heathrow Airport in London in 1972.

refugees a right to settle in Britain<sup>29</sup>, Rawlinson urged the British government to overlook the Act, citing “an obligation to receive such individuals if they were expelled with no prospect of any alternative refuge.”<sup>30</sup> The UK also encouraged other countries, mainly India, to take the Ugandan refugees, contacting “more than 50 foreign and Commonwealth Governments.”<sup>31</sup> Official documents show that in an attempt to prevent too many expelled Asians coming to Britain, the government was prepared to pay other countries willing to accept the Ugandans.<sup>32</sup>

Most of the fleeing Ugandan Asians did migrate to the UK, since they were citizens of Britain and its colonies; however, many others became stateless.<sup>33</sup> Over half had British passports and were re-housed in the UK by the Ugandan Resettlement Board led by Sir Charles Cunningham. The majority of Ugandan Asians who ended up in the UK settled in Leicester, Middlesex, and the Wembley district of London.

Britain in the 1970s was not as racially tolerant as today. There was anti-immigration sentiment when it was announced that an estimated 30,000 non-white immigrants were en route. In Leicester, a council (municipal governing body) controlled by the Labour Party placed a full-page ad in the *Ugandan Argus* newspaper (Kampala) discouraging Asians from moving to the city. It concluded with the emphatic words, “IN YOUR OWN INTERESTS AND THOSE OF YOUR FAMILY YOU SHOULD ACCEPT THE ADVICE OF THE UGANDA RESETTLEMENT BOARD AND NOT COME TO LEICESTER.”<sup>34</sup> The National Front (NF), a far-right political party, seized on this opportunity to gain support by publicly criticizing Prime Minister Edward Heath’s decision to grant asylum to exiled Ugandans. The NF also held pickets at Manchester and Heathrow airports to ensure that the arriving Asians were made to feel unwelcome. In fact, the expulsion of Ugandan Asians worked in the favor of the NF, enabling them to grow in numbers and eventually even challenge the 1979 general elections.

However, Britain in the 1970s was not uniformly racist and unwelcoming. Barracks in Greenham Common, Tywyn in North Wales, and Yeovil were temporarily used to re-house the new arrivals and hundreds of volunteers supported the cause. Despite that, fears of racial tension and competition for housing and jobs were rife. Even in the ruling Conservative Party, a far-right MP Roland Bell expressed his disapproval by stating, “they were either born in India or have retained close connection with India. They have no connection with Britain either by blood or residence.”<sup>35</sup> However, Bell’s comments were mostly untrue: some of the Asians were born in Uganda, but others were brought by the British to work in Uganda and had UK passports. This gave Britain a legal and moral responsibility to intervene.

After the Asians’ mass arrival, cities such as Leicester changed significantly. Today, Leicester city has been transformed from a deprived midland town into a commercial heartland. It is estimated that the Ugandan

Asians have created over 30,000 jobs in the city and in its most affluent suburb, Oadby, where the majority of residents are Ugandan Asians.<sup>36</sup> Today, British Asians with South Asian roots, including Ugandan Asians, constitute 2.5% of the UK population but account for 10% of its national output.<sup>37</sup> It is in the commercial sector that the biggest contributions have been made by Ugandan Asians, most notably by Manubhai Madhvani (1930–2011), who had lost properties in the 1972 expulsion but re-established himself as one of the richest in the world. Thus, what lies behind this unwavering success seems to be sheer hard work and know-how.<sup>38</sup>

#### Ugandan Asians During the Museveni Era

On assuming power in 1986, current President Yoweri Museveni invited the Indian community back to Uganda and assured them that his government would restore the properties seized from them in 1972.<sup>39</sup> During his visits to India in 1992, 2008, and 2011, he held talks with officials in the Indian government and the various Indian investors over investment opportunities in Uganda. Accordingly, over 30,000 Indians and people of Indian origin have settled in Uganda, about 10% of whom had lived in Uganda until 1972.<sup>40</sup> The vast majority settled in the capital city, Kampala, but their presence is also seen in Uganda’s other major towns.

Indians and people of Indian origin resident in Uganda today fall in two categories: the commercial bourgeoisie, concentrated in agro-processing, manufacture, real estate, and services, and the petit bourgeoisie dealing mainly in wholesale and retail trade. Some of the dominant commercial bourgeoisie include the Madhvani Group founded in 1912; the Mehta Group established in the 1920s; Mukwano Industries established in the early 1980s; Roofings Ltd. started in 1994; Uganda Baati Ltd., a member of the Safal Group of companies founded in 1964; the Ruperalia Group chaired by Sudhir Ruperalia; and Bidco Oil Refineries, which started operating in Uganda in 2003. As was the case before 1972, the presence of Indians is now felt in all sectors of the economy.

*continued on next page*

## Asians in Uganda *continued from page 17*

More than 40 years since the Asian community was expelled from Uganda, they are slowly returning to a country many of them call home, and once again Uganda is back on the ladder of economic progress. Britain, meanwhile, has benefited immeasurably from the entrepreneurial brilliance of the Ugandan Asians who have been a success in all aspects of British life stretching from media to politics. On that background, Uganda's loss was Britain's gain.

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## Book Review

# No Comfort: An Indian Merchant in Africa

by Yovana P. Veerasamy (SC Depts. of  
Political Science and French)

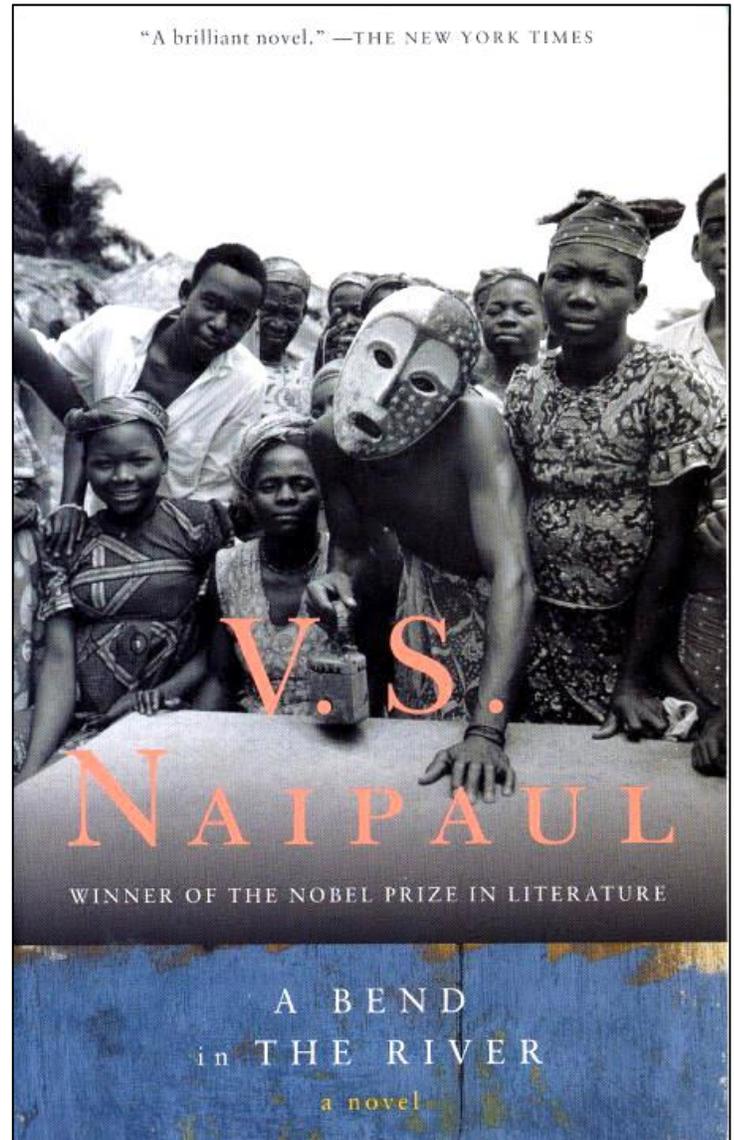
V. S. Naipaul,  
*A Bend in the River*  
New York: Vintage, 1979

Set in postcolonial Africa, this story is narrated by Salim, a young man from a family of Muslim Indian traders on the east coast of the continent. Salim accepts the challenge of migrating to a town deep in the interior of a newly independent country further west in order to take over the failing business of an Indian family friend, Nazruddin. An even bigger motivation underlying the move is his determination to break free from his family and their plans to marry him off to Nazruddin's daughter, whom Salim describes as being more educated than himself. *A Bend in the River* opens with Salim's blunt declaration that success comes only to those who stand up for themselves. It is one of the most famous lines ever written by Naipaul, who would later be awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature (2001):

The world is what it is: men who are nothing,  
who allow themselves to become nothing,  
have no place in it.

For anyone interested in Africa and its diaspora, this novel is a must-read. It speaks to many themes: the end of European colonial rule; conflicts among African tribes; the historical presence of Persians and Arabs on the continent; and the Arab and Indian roles in *métissage*, especially along the coastal regions. (The French term *métis*, like the Spanish *mestizo*, pertains to the intermixture of bloodlines and cultures.)

A Trinidadian native, raised in a Hindu family and educated in England, Naipaul had already visited Africa and had traveled to several countries there by the time he wrote *A Bend in the River* in 1979. He reminds the reader that the Indian state of Gujarat had sent traders to Africa since well before Europeans first arrived on the continent. But only during and after European colonial rule in certain regions did Indians come to feel no longer comfortable on these lands where they had been settled for generations. By 1979, Indians had been persecuted in Uganda and other countries, and Arabs had retreated from what was for a long time their sphere of commerce. However, the author names specific countries only sparingly in this novel, more often referring to the East Coast, the West Coast, and the interior.



When Salim arrives in the town at the bend in the river, it is a decrepit place, almost totally abandoned after the departure of the British colonialists. The Greek traders keep to themselves, and so do the Belgians. Luckily for Salim, he finds refuge among the two Indian families in that part of the interior. Poignantly, Nazruddin is described as an Indian who acts like whites. Naipaul is often criticized as being too Eurocentric in his depiction of other cultures, and he himself has been characterized as 'acting like whites'. In any case, I think Naipaul's description of Nazruddin might help us understand the author's mindset.

Although taken aback by the rudimentary ghost town, Salim manages to sell the products he has purchased from Nazruddin's stock. He makes a living providing basic goods

*continued on next page*

*A Bend in the River* continued from page 19

needed by the villagers: pencils, razors, pots, pans, plates. When troubles break out in East Africa, his family protects their longtime house servant, Metty, by sending him to join Salim in his shop. Metty (the name echoes *métis*) is of mixed Indian and African progeny, giving him a unique and slender appearance that works in his favor in the ghost town where women are busy looking out for him.

One of Salim's main buyers, a merchant named Zabeth, is an African woman whose personal life gives Naipaul the chance to delve into tribal customs. Here in the interior, everybody belongs to one or another tribe. Zabeth's son had once belonged to his father's tribe, but when his father no longer wanted him he had joined his mother Zabeth's tribe. This young man, Ferdinand, is the man who will later save Salim from possible death, exemplifying a facet of race relations too often overlooked in discussions of Indian persecution in Africa. The one-on-one relationships that transcend politics or any other divisiveness among fellow human beings are too often diminished in the quest to accentuate human differences based on racial and religious constructs.

This complexity of human interaction and intermixture of cultures comes to the fore more and more as the story unfolds. For example, Salim helps Ferdinand to get educated at a local school run by Father Huismans, a Belgian priest who is considered a "lover of Africa". But Father Huismans is mysteriously murdered, and his precious collection of tribal masks is denounced as offensive to African culture. An American visitor pillages the collection and brings it back to America.

The uncertainties that follow the end of European rule include the persecution of Indians in Africa, causing Salim to flee to London for a period. He returns to a land that is no longer even recognizable. The radical and dictatorial President (called the Big Man) has expropriated many enterprises, Salim's shop among them. Salim has an affair with the young wife of Raymond, one of the many western (in this case French) advisors upon whom the Big Man relies. The affair gives Naipaul another opportunity to characterize the intricacies of human relations in such a neocolonial society.

Salim is betrayed by his own servant, Metty, who tells the authorities about a stash of ivory that Salim had hidden on his property. That is enough to land Salim in one of the authoritarian regime's jails. Ferdinand, now a local commissioner, gets Salim released and advises him to leave the country for good:

We're all going to hell, and every man knows this in his bones. We're being killed. Nothing has any meaning. That is why everyone is so frantic. Everyone wants to make his money and run away. But where? That is what is driving people mad. They feel they're losing the place they can run back to.

For those of us who come from Africa and understand its history and the complex nature of events that unfold in the groupings of humans there, it is hard to separate fiction from fact in this novel. (I am originally from Mauritius, an island nation off the southeast coast of the continent.) Naipaul aptly describes the lack of resources and the failure to meet basic needs that Salim encounters when he first moves to the interior, not long after the country's formal decolonization. For some readers this state of affairs will be almost unimaginable, but its depiction in *A Bend in the River* demonstrates the author's familiarity with this part of the world at the time.

Although neocolonial in its outlook, the book successfully takes the reader into a reality that is complex, transient, and at times still true. The gamut of "races" and nationalities in the interior of Africa and the way they interact is brought to life. Their mindset and actions, although fictional, bear striking resemblance to modern or historical fact. In addition, in *Metty* the novel depicts a character and a phenomenon that is too often underrepresented in discussions of Africa. Such people of mixed ethnicity are quite common along the coast, and Naipaul describes them in the interior as well—in the form of Ferdinand, whose parents are of different African tribes. Thus, in his own way, the author questions not only colonialism and anti-colonialism but also tribalism, a plague that has not left Africa unscathed. On the other hand, some of his vivid descriptions of certain communities are offensive; in particular, his reductive portrayals of Arabs and of African servants are certainly not politically correct by American standards in 2016.

The criticisms that plagued Naipaul for decades, from western critics as well as from the new post-colonial generation of African writers, were especially important against the backdrop of real-world political chaos that followed decolonization in Africa. Naipaul was writing of times that were variously challenging or nostalgic for many who experienced them. This was a confusing and transitory period when new nations, facing an uncertain future in the wake of colonialism, had to shape a national identity for themselves. Some African leaders sought to base national identity on native tradition or other past cultural experiences. Further, the path toward economic stability lacked any reliable or proven recipes or benchmarks; the capitalist and socialist roads vied with one another for followers. In some cases these were indeed "frantic" times for everyone, to use the phrase uttered in the novel by mid-level official Ferdinand.

*A Bend in the River* is an attempt to bring all these lived realities to life through its characters. The examples of events and the perspectives on them reflect the idiosyncratic views of the author alone. Nevertheless, his work has stood the test of time due to its rich, detailed portrayal of how people acted and interacted during this formative period in Africa. •

## Book Review

# Caught Between Two Worlds

by Colleen Pilgrim (SC Psychology Dept.)

Saud Alsanousi,  
*The Bamboo Stalk*  
 Bloomsbury USA, 2015  
 Translated from Arabic by  
 Jonathan Wright

Kuwaiti journalist and novelist Saud Alsanousi, born in 1981, has published extensively in Arabic, but *The Bamboo Stalk*, winner of the 2013 International Prize for Arabic Fiction, is his first book to be published in English. The novel is a journey of self-discovery from childhood through early adulthood by a man named José, born in Kuwait to a Filipino mother and a Kuwaiti father.

The story slowly unravels what had led to José's birth: a secret affair between his Filipino mother Josephine—a migrant house servant for a wealthy Kuwaiti family—and the family's only son, Rashid. The reader discovers that soon after José's birth, Rashid had sent Josephine and the boy home to her impoverished family in the Philippines, promising that he would support the child financially and ultimately return him to Kuwait as an adolescent.

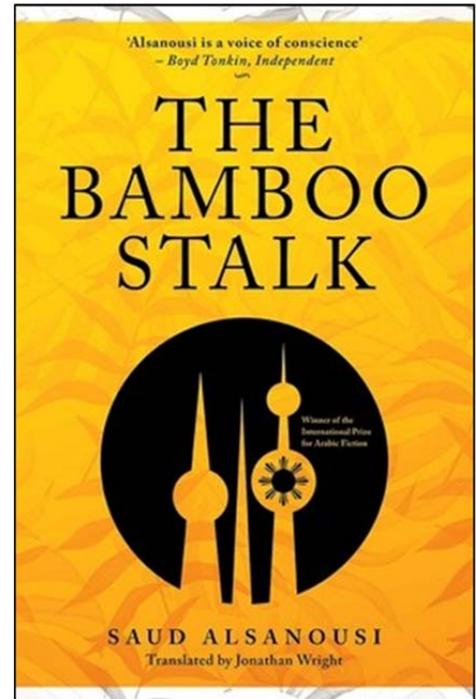
The writer focuses on José and his struggle for identity and acceptance in the divergent worlds of his mother and his father. When he returns to Kuwait City as a teenager, his family there is reluctant to accept him, even lodging him in the servants' quarters. The title of the novel symbolizes his challenge in growing a new life in Kuwait, a country from which he has no

memories or past. A major theme is summarized by José when he asks, "Could I really be uprooted from the Philippines and have a new life in Kuwait? Could I really be replanted and thrive, like a bamboo stalk?"

Even his name presents a dilemma: in the Philippines he is José, whereas his family in Kuwait calls him Isa (the Arabic cognate for "Jesus"). More deeply, he is caught between two wholly different worlds. Somehow José/Isa must negotiate between his past life in the poor and Christian *barrios* of the Philippines and his would-be life in the privileged and Muslim world of upper-class Kuwait—the "paradise" that his mother had described to him since his childhood.

The story itself is engaging and does a nice job of presenting the struggle one faces when trying to gain acceptance in a culture that is unfamiliar and often unaccepting of one's presence. It is clear that the author wishes the reader to

*continued on page 29*



## Migrant Domestic Workers in Kuwait

*Excerpts from Attiya Ahmad's article, "Migrant Workers in Kuwait: The Role of State Institutions", Middle East Institute (<http://www.mei.edu>), Feb. 2, 2010.*

The treatment of migrant domestic workers is one of the defining stories told about the Arab Gulf states. Every year hundreds of news media and human rights reports detailing migrant domestic workers' experiences of exploitation and abuse circulate globally. The narratives of these accounts are remarkably consistent. They often begin with the story of an impoverished woman from the global South, who, in order to improve the situation of her family, migrates to the oil-rich Gulf states in search of work and a more prosperous future. Confined to the household, she works long, arduous hours, and is subjected to the dictates and whims of her employers, who may withhold her salary, force her to work under unconscionable conditions, or abuse her physically and sexually.

The oil boom of the mid-1970s marks the beginning of domestic workers' large-scale migration to Kuwait. Flush

with petrodollars, Kuwaitis increasingly began hiring women to cook and clean, as well as care for their children and the elderly. Having domestic workers became an expected, often taken for granted part of Kuwaitis' everyday lives and their understanding of themselves as modern, affluent subjects. Fewer Kuwaiti women, however, were willing or found it necessary to undertake paid domestic work.

Demand for domestic workers was met through the recruitment of women from the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia, and more recently, East Africa. Wave after wave of these women migrated to the Gulf due to the worsening economic situation of their home countries, a situation that had developed because of their countries' spiraling trade deficits and foreign debts brought about by oil price hikes. From the mid-1970s to the late 2000s, Kuwait's migrant domestic worker population grew from 12,000 to 500,000, and the percentage of Kuwaiti households employing domestic workers increased from 13% to 90%.

# America from a Foreign Perspective: Pakistan to the United States

by Ramal Lodhi

*Ramal Lodhi of Canton, MI, is a Schoolcraft College student planning to major in mechanical engineering. He wrote this paper as a project in Anthro 112 (Introduction to Anthropology) with Prof. Josselyn Moore during the Fall 2015 semester. We have added the subheadings.*

Transitioning from a Third World country to the First World is a challenging yet enriching experience. My mother was born in Islamabad, Pakistan, in 1976, and emigrated to the United States in 1995 for a higher quality of life. However, America was not the utopia she initially believed it to be. When she first began to live here, she faced low-paying jobs, isolation, and disorientation with the American culture. She experienced culture shock as she was exposed to an entirely different cultural environment.

What happens when a woman from a Third World country experiences life in the First World? I started my research with a personal interview with my mother.

## Language is the Key

The first question I asked my mother was what her biggest challenge was upon coming to America. She emigrated to Detroit alone, and thus did not have any friends or family members to inform her about the city's social norms. Therefore, she stated, adapting to the American culture was her most difficult challenge, particularly when it came to learning the English language and forming relationships with others. One month after arriving in Detroit, my mother felt isolated; she did not have any family members or friends to speak with, spoke little English, and due to that reason was not qualified for many well-paying jobs.

To improve her situation, she took advantage of higher education. She enrolled in an ESL and accounting class at her local college, Wayne County Community College. After one year of learning how to write and speak in English, she was able to converse with others and earn a comfortable living as an accounting clerk. She also met my father and married him a few years later.

Ultimately, I have learned that as a result of not being able to speak English right after moving to a primarily English-speaking country, my mother experienced "culture shock" as she felt isolated and could not speak and form relationships with the people around her. Culture shock refers to the feelings of disorientation with a new culture.

## Privacy and Intimacy

My second question pertained to what my mother was unfamiliar with about the American culture before moving. She answered that she was not aware of the etiquette differences between both countries. Describing her own experience, she told me that Americans are generally open and

friendly when you first meet them, but this only means that they are pleased to meet you and there is no guarantee that it will lead to friendship. She believes that Americans value privacy and individuality.

For example, most Americans will not visit a good friend without calling them first and asking for permission. In my personal experience as an American-born citizen, before visiting a friend's house, I always make sure that I call them first and ask for permission. If I do not, then they would get offended since it would be an invasion of their privacy.

On the other hand, in Pakistan, when people meet others for the first time and enjoy the company of one another, they generally follow up with regular visits or phone calls. For example, my mother mentioned that she would call her best friend daily to ask about her well-being, regardless of the time or occasion. She stated that if you do not keep in touch with your friends and family members constantly, then they might get offended and assume that you do not care for them.

Therefore, contrary to the American culture, Pakistanis are more close-knit, open, and do not value their privacy as much.

## Modesty and Attire

The third question I asked my mother was what surprised her the most about the American culture. She answered that the fashion differences between Pakistan and the U.S. were unexpected. In Pakistan, she stated that it was a social norm to wear a *shalwaar qameez* in public, which is a traditional outfit consisting of a body shirt and loose pants, and is commonly worn by both women and men in South Asia. However, when she arrived in Detroit she noticed that the majority of Americans wore just a t-shirt, jeans, and tennis shoes.

She was also shocked by how many Americans exposed their bodies in public, especially during the Summer. In Pakistan, covering your body with clothes is a social norm, regardless of the weather or season, because it is viewed as a sign of public decency. She furthermore stated that even on days with extremely dry weather, both men and women are expected to be covered from shoulder to toe. I then asked how common heat strokes are in Pakistan due to excessive heat. To my surprise, she answered that they're uncommon because the clothes are very loose-fitting, light, and not as restricting as one would expect. After this question, I learned that Pakistanis are more sensitive than Americans when it comes to public decency. Pakistanis cover themselves more to indicate that they are dressed modestly.

Ethnocentrism is the belief that one's own culture is better and more normal than others. My mother's view on Summer clothing attire in America can be viewed as ethnocentric due to her belief that people uncovering themselves in public is unusual. The U.S. and Pakistan have different accepted social norms: for example, many Americans leave their arms and legs uncovered during the Summer while Pakistanis cover them regardless of the weather. However, despite their differ-



Photo: girlshijab.com

An example of a woman's *shalwa qameez* with *hijab*.

ences, both groups share the belief that one should protect one's body from excessive heat when in extremely dry weather.

How do my mother's experiences living in America relate to cultural relativism? I asked my mother what she found offensive about the American culture. She reminded me that, as a Muslim woman, it was obligatory for her to wear a *hijab*. A *hijab* is a head scarf primarily worn by Muslim women to cover their body and show modesty in how they dress. As she was obtaining her driver's license at the Secretary of State, an employee who was taking her picture asked her to take off her *hijab* due to it blocking her hair. The employee then explained that this was required by law in order to identify an individual clearly. My mother told me that she was offended by such a law since it went against her religious beliefs. Ultimately, this law went against cultural relativism, which is the notion that all cultures have different cultural beliefs and values, and thus should be treated as such. This law can be viewed as ethnocentric, mainly due to it not taking into consideration the fact that different cultures have different social norms or religious obligations.

#### Experience Breeds Acceptance

According to estimates from the American Community Survey (ACS) in 2013, of the total U.S. population of 316.1 million, only 41.3 million are immigrants, or 13%. At an even

smaller rate, only 3.4 million South Asian immigrants are in the U.S. population, or 1%. On the other hand, White Americans are the most prevalent race in the U.S., constituting approximately 78% of the total population.

Why are many Pakistanis and other South Asian groups discriminated against in the United States? Or to question in a broader view, what causes ethnocentrism? The statistics indicate that, in the United States, Whites make up the majority of the population while South Asians are a minority. Generally, humans become more accepting of other cultures once they experience them directly. Otherwise, they are forced to believe in stereotypes.

For example, if ISIS, an extremist Islamic militant organization, commits a terrorist attack, then Muslims as a whole will often be accused. These accusations are more common in countries with small Muslim populations, such as the United States, because the majority do not have many interactions with the minority. And when both groups have very little experience with one another, then each group is left to believe in stereotypes, even if they are merely false assumptions.

Before my mother moved to the United States, she believed it to be a utopia where the American Dream was easy to come by. However, throughout her experiences, she learned that such a belief was far from true. Initially, she faced isolation, joblessness, and the inability to fit in with a new culture. However, after taking advantage of the opportunities that the U.S. provides and spending time learning about its culture, she was able to improve her life.

Ultimately, I have learned that although transitioning from a Third World country to the First World is a challenging process, people who do so can undergo an enriching experience by taking advantage of the plethora of resources, such as ESL courses and higher education. My mother often tells me that America is what you make of it, so you have to work hard and take advantage of every opportunity in order to succeed.

*Editor's note: Readers might also find interesting the thoughtful memoir of a Pakistani who was raised in the U.S. from age 10: Ali Eteraz's Children of Dust: A Portrait of a Muslim as a Young Man (Harper, 2009).*

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# A Midwestern Asian-American's Story

Jonathan Oaks, a young mathematics professor at Macomb Community College in Michigan, gave an eye-opening autobiographical presentation at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of the Midwest Institute for International and Intercultural Education (MIIE), held here at Schoolcraft College last April. His talk, "A Midwestern Asian-American's Story", left the sad impression that in the U.S., immigrants are still subjected to derision and discrimination.

But Jon's story is also ultimately a heart-warming one, because it shows that with a bit of help, the well-meaning and hard-working people who arrive here from other countries often thrive despite the adverse conditions they face. Yes— there are people in the Midwest who take a stand and view immigrants like any other human beings, worthy of dignity and support! Today, Dr. Oaks is an outstanding and highly respected educational professional. In fact, he serves as Midwest Regional Vice President on the National Board of his professional organization, the American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges (AMATYC). He has also participated in two of the MIIE Summer Workshops.

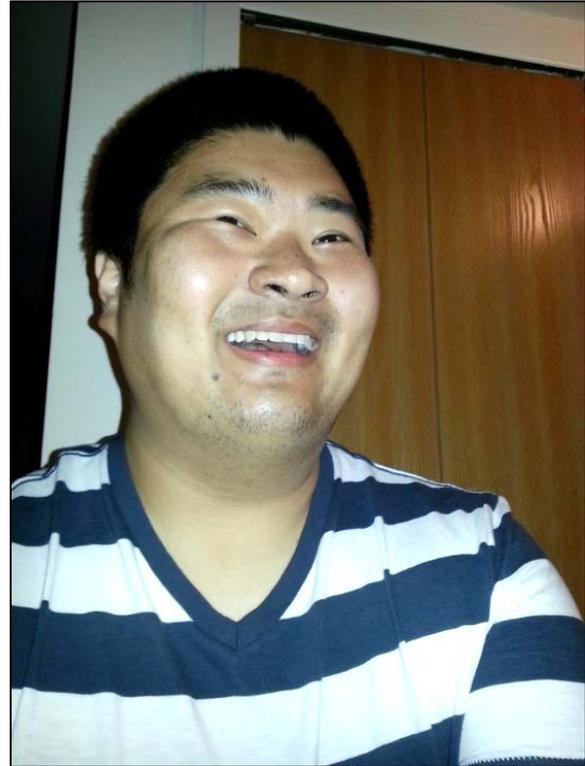
Jon began his talk by pointing out that Asian-Americans have a very different history in the Midwestern U.S. than on either coast, where they've generally settled into large Asian-American communities. Historically in the Midwest, they've tended to be more isolated.

Jon was adopted as an infant from Seoul, South Korea. His birth father had walked out, and his mother, who couldn't afford to care alone for him, took him anonymously to an orphanage there. His name was given to him by his adoptive parents in Michigan. Since he's thoroughly Americanized, Jon sees himself as "colonized". Of course, his complete Americanization didn't prevent bullies from seeing superficial differences to pick on.

Jon's new parents were devout Baptists who lived in a mobile-home community in rural Genesee Township. His father was a lifelong General Motors factory worker. Jon was the only Asian kid in the neighborhood. He was bullied there and at church, and was kept out of the Boy Scouts. He had no brothers or sisters, which compounded his isolation. He said he developed as a very shy and introverted young boy.

Asian-American stereotypes are insidious. A widespread misconception in the U.S. today is that Asians are "born geniuses" when it comes to math, computing, and other technical subjects. As Jon noted, this is rooted in the fact that until the 1960s, the U.S. maintained severe immigration quotas on Asians, and the authorities disproportionately favored admitting those who were proficient in technical fields. That is the source of the stereotype that Asians are natural tech geeks.

To try to escape the bullying, when Jon was 4 years old his family moved to inner-city Flint. Things were very segregated there, and Jon had to try to be part of the "white" community. He struggled in school, partly because his English skills were weak, especially pronunciation and spelling. Mathematics appealed to him because it doesn't hinge on language so much. In addition,



he saw the movie "Stand and Deliver", the inspiring true story of Chicano high school students in East L.A. becoming calculus wizzes. (Today, Jon is an advocate for equality and human rights in mathematics education, down to the classroom level.)

So Jon gravitated more and more to mathematics, and by 10<sup>th</sup> grade he was already taking calculus! Still, the high school staff were, as he put it, "less than friendly" to him from time to time. And at one point, a school police officer called him "a big fat Asian pumpkin", which was enough to get the cop transferred to another school. In 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades Jon spent a good deal of his school day on busses: he took most of his classes at two other Flint high schools that had more specialized classes and were much more diverse, with lots of African-American students.

When he attended Ferris State Univ., in western Michigan, Jon used it as an opportunity to meet new people and to try to start a new life in a more diverse environment. After graduating, he moved back to Southeastern Michigan to work on a master's degree, and eventually a doctorate, at Oakland Univ. As a graduate student living in a poor urban neighborhood, he was specifically targeted as an Asian and his home was burglarized twice. When he applied for a Summer retail job in a nearby wealthier area, he was treated as if he were an ogre. The same happened at two different churches. "I've moved on," Jon said, "but those types of situations stick with you."

As an adjunct math instructor, Jon taught part-time at several schools simultaneously for a couple of years. In 2011 he landed his full-time teaching position at Macomb, and the next year he completed his Ph.D. in applied mathematics. •

the world so as to attract immigrants, internationals, and foreign trade and investment to the region.

### Racism and Xenophobia

Dawud Walid of CAIR explained why he believes that fears that there are terrorists among the Syrian refugees are unfounded. He criticized the fact that the U.S. has admitted only “a paltry number” of refugees in the current crisis, a crisis that he said resulted from U.S. invasions in the Middle East.

Martin Luther King, Jr., taught that racism, poverty, and militarism are the three great problems remaining in the U.S., Walid recalled, and this still rings true today. People of color are being denied basic social services, and this extends to the immigrants. Throughout U.S. history, the immigration issue has been racialized; as he summed it up, “racism and xenophobia are two sides of the same coin”. In the last year, there’s been a large increase in the number of hate crimes in Michigan, he reported.

### A Helping Hand to Refugees

Diane Baird (LSSM) described how Lutheran Social Services assists the process of resettling refugees in our state. The federal government views refugees, especially young refugees, as an important factor in bolstering the future U.S. tax base. Accordingly, LSSM is one of several nonprofit agencies that receive federal funding from the State Department’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration to provide services to the refugees. For each refugee or immigrant who enters the U.S., on average there are 2.6 jobs created as a result, she noted.

However, Baird added, the number of refugees resettled in the U.S. has plummeted in recent years, from a federally-

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# MLK Day Community Forum on Immigration

Last January 18, on Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, a Community Forum on immigration and civil rights was held at the main Farmington Community Library on 12 Mile Road, not far from Schoolcraft College. We thank our Student Activities director, Todd Stowell, for publicizing this on campus. The event was organized by the Multicultural and Multiracial Council of Farmington and Farmington Hills.

About 100 people turned out for this 90-minute forum that addressed pressing social issues, especially the politics and logistics of absorbing an influx of people from other countries. Michigan’s immigrant population is growing at an annual rate of 10.2%, almost twice the U.S. average of 5.8% (both figures are for 2010-14). Between 1990 and 2014, the immigrant community swelled from less than 4% to 6.5% of our state population. Recently, the City of Detroit established a Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA), with Ms. Fayrouz Saad as its first Director.

At the Farmington forum, the panel of three speakers included:

- Dawud Walid, an imam who is Executive Director of the Michigan Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)
- Diane Baird, Program Director of Lutheran Social Services of Michigan (LSSM)
- Raquel Garcia Andersen, Director of Partnerships and Community Outreach for the non-profit corporation Global Detroit, which works to strengthen Detroit’s connections to



A Muslim woman wears a *niqāb* as she walks past a McDonald’s restaurant in Hamtramck, Michigan.

Salwan Georges/Washington Post, Nov. 21, 2015

## Community Forum *continued from page 25*

imposed ceiling of 207,000 in 1980 to a ceiling of only 80,000 in 2015. The largest numbers of refugees come to the U.S. from Burma, Bhutan, and Iraq. But less than 1% of all global refugees end up being formally resettled in the U.S. *or in any other country*. Instead, most refugees spend years in a camp or urban setting waiting for the situation in their home country to improve.

Almost half of all refugees resettled annually in Michigan are in the Detroit area (Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb Counties), Baird noted. In LSSM's experience for fiscal year 2015, they were approximately 74% Iraqi, 7% Syrian, and 19% from other countries.

One of the services provided by LSSM is to locate foster families and mentors to help refugee children become independent. These youths have fled war, violence, or persecution in such countries as Eritrea, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Honduras, Guatemala, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and they became separated from their families. Frequently, they have experienced many years without adequate care. They arrive with often unrealistically grand expectations of American life, and while they are highly motivated to become independent, they still require a great deal of guidance and support. Foster care of such refugee children, who are usually not adoptable, requires specialized training. All of this helps explain why Lutheran Social Services is one of only 20 refugee foster-care agencies in the entire U.S.

LSSM administers several different programs for refugee minors:

- The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors program serves children mostly 14-18 years old with long-term, all-around foster care (several years).
- The Transitional Foster Care program serves children mostly 4-13 years old for short terms (less than 45 days) while case managers work to reunify the child with his or her family.
- In Supervised Independent Living, in exchange for monthly rent a family agrees to provide a room and mentoring to a settled refugee in the final transitional period before independent living. These homes do not need to be licensed as foster homes, and the hosts are not legally responsible for the youth.
- Volunteer mentoring and paid tutoring opportunities are also available separately. The volunteers are trained by LSSM, and they commit to meeting with youths a minimum of four hours each month for 9-12 consecutive months.

Interestingly, Baird noted that in the social environment that greets refugee children in the public schools, some of the most welcoming fellow students have been those belonging to certain cliques, notably soccer team members and marijuana smokers.

Beyond refugee minor programs, many other volunteer and service-learning opportunities are offered by LSSM, which is based in Lansing but operates throughout the Lower Peninsula. For example, there are refugee welcoming teams; family holiday activities for refugees; donations of used, purchased, or handmade household items such as quilts, clothing, dishes, and furniture; and monetary or in-kind contributions.

## Confused or Outright Swindled

Raquel Garcia Andersen (Global Detroit) has had considerable direct experience with immigrants in Michigan as a result of her work with a variety of immigrant advocacy groups and her 15 years as an administrator and Spanish language instructor at Wayne County Community College District. She said that there are currently about 616,000 documented and undocumented immigrants living in Michigan. At any given time, there are about 30,000 international students in the state, and 52% of all doctoral degrees here are awarded to immigrants. As of 2010, about 40% of Fortune 500 companies were started by immigrants.

Ms. Garcia Andersen shared that immigrants are often confused by conditions they face upon arrival in the U.S., or are outright swindled. For example, there are cases in which a house is sold to more than one immigrant family at the same time. Currently, she works with many Bengali immigrants in Hamtramck and with Afro-Caribbeans in the Brightmoor district. She helps them through tricky procedures such as purchasing a home, setting up a bank account, or gaining citizenship. Typically, a new immigrant has only about a two-mile radius within which they're able and comfortable in exploring resources.

The climate for immigrants in the U.S. has become much less welcoming in recent years, she said. It's important to speak out against that and to be vocal. She strives to listen well to her immigrant clients and to accept their culture and personalities. It is backwards to try to reshape them into images of ourselves under the banner of "integration" and "assimilation".

Global Detroit accepts untrained volunteers to assist immigrants in the process of applying for U.S. citizenship, supervised by lawyers. It's a great service-learning experience!

## Cross-Winds among the Public

Predictably, most of those who came to this forum were very supportive of calls to be helpful and generous toward immigrants and respectful of their rights. However, as if to hint at the cross-winds that are blowing "out there" more broadly, one man was circulating a leaflet that opposed the whole message and spirit of the event.

The four-page leaflet was anonymous— it bore no individual or organizational identifier. It claimed that the U.S. refugee vetting process is insufficient to screen out terrorists; that Islamophobia is a word that was made up to criminalize any speech critical of Islam and to protect any criticism of Israel; that refugee resettlement programs are a tax-funded "cash cow" to benefit organizations such as Lutheran Social Services; and that immigration policies are simply "bringing the poor to America" and are responsible for "the influx of low-skilled labor"!

We know that such unfounded sentiments are prevalent well beyond the man who was passing out this flyer. But that just confirms that as educators, we have a lot more work to do to clarify issues regarding immigration among our students and the general public.

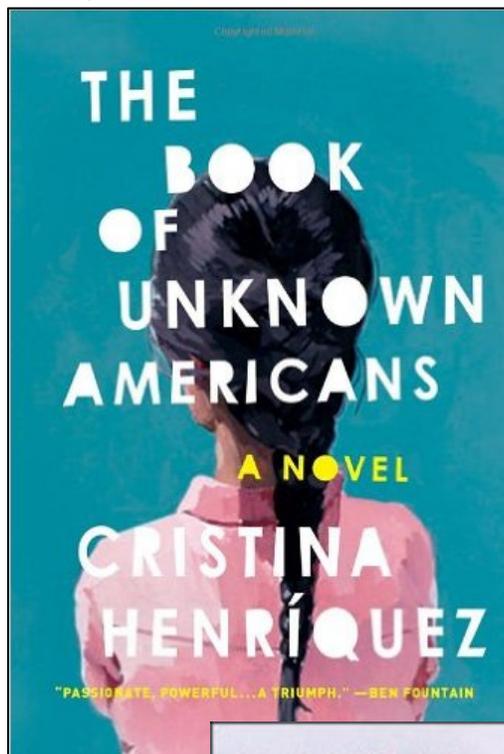
## Book Review

# Local Community Reading Programs Feature Novels of the Immigrant Experience

by Suzanne M. Stichler (SC Spanish Dept. and ESL Program)

Cristina Henríquez,  
*The Book of Unknown Americans*  
New York: Vintage Books, 2014

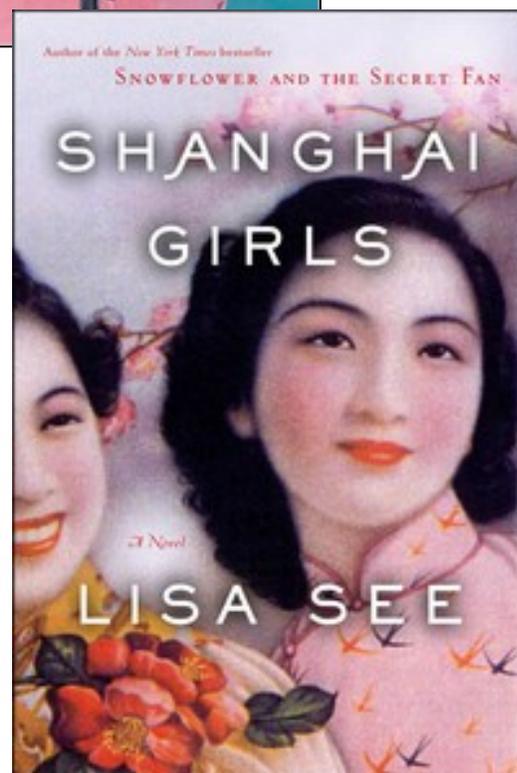
Lisa See,  
*Shanghai Girls*  
New York: Random House, 2009



I recently read two novels— back-to-back, by lucky coincidence— that feature main characters who are recent immigrants to the U.S. Both books have been the focus of community-wide reading programs in Southeastern Michigan this year. Although their story lines are very different, and the settings are separated in time by almost 100 years, the similarities between their experiences resonated with me long after the reading was done. I recommend them both.

*The Book of Unknown Americans*, by Cristina Henríquez, is set in the present in a small town in Delaware. The main characters are the Riveras, Arturo and Alma, and their daughter, Maribel. Maribel suffered a serious injury back in Mexico, and the Riveras have come to the U.S. under visas that will allow Arturo to work at a mushroom farm while Maribel studies at a school that is experienced with her type of disability. The Redwood Apartments, where the Rivera family lives, is home to immigrants from throughout Latin America. Each chapter in the book is told through the eyes of one of the residents of the apartment building. This book was the 2016 selection for the “Ann Arbor/ Ypsilanti Reads” program, and its author spoke at Washtenaw Community College on Feb. 23.

*Shanghai Girls*, by Lisa See, begins in 1937 in Shanghai, China, an exciting, cosmopolitan city. Sisters Pearl and May Chin are living the good life until they learn that their father has lost everything. He has sold his daughters to his business associate, Old Man Louie, as brides for his two American sons. When the Japanese invade Shanghai, the women run for their lives. Eventually, they make their way to the U.S. and their husbands, who are shocked to find them still alive. The women become workers for Old Man Louie in his businesses at China City, a tourist attraction in Los Angeles. This book was the 2016 selection for the “Everyone’s Reading” program in Oakland, Wayne, and Macomb counties, and its author spoke at Oakland Community College (Orchard Ridge) on Apr. 11, the Detroit Institute of Arts on Apr. 12, and Temple Beth El (Bloomfield Twp.) also on Apr. 12.



**One theme that is common to both novels is the fear of the authorities.** The Rivera family is very proud that they, unlike many others, entered the U.S. legally, after a long wait for approval. When Arturo loses his job through no obvious fault of his own, he has 30 days to find another or his legal status (and that of his family) will be revoked. He is unable to do so, and if the authorities find out, he and his family will be just like those others, “the ones they talk about”. This fear extends to the local police as well. To their neighbor, Rafa Toro, a line cook and U.S. citizen originally from Panama, simply driving can be dangerous if you are of the wrong color. “They see a brown face through the windshield and boom! Sirens!”

*continued on next page*

## Immigrant Experience *continued from page 27*

Pearl and May Chin travel to the U.S. by ship and are detained for almost four months at Angel Island, in San Francisco Bay. Day after day they are separately interrogated about themselves and the family of their husbands. What the women don't know is that only May's husband is actually the son of Old Man Louie. Pearl's husband, Sam, along with three of his "brothers" are actually "paper" sons. As the author explains on her official website:

The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 barred the immigration of all Chinese, except for diplomats, ministers, students, merchants, and those who were the sons and daughters of Chinese-American citizens. (If you're an American citizen and you have a child in another country, then that child is also an American citizen.) But Chinese weren't allowed to become naturalized citizens until 1943, so how could they possibly enter the country as American citizens before that? During the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, all birth records for California were destroyed. Suddenly those Chinese, who were already here, could state that they'd been born here— because there was no documentation to prove them wrong (or right)— and thus claim citizenship by having been born on American soil. So when a Chinese man— whether an actual U.S. citizen or one claiming false citizenship— went back to China, he could report that his wife had given birth to a son in the village. He would receive a certificate stating that he had an American-citizen son, which he could then sell to a total stranger— but often a nephew or friend of the family— and then bring him to America as a citizen.

Obviously, a lot of secrecy surrounded paper sons. One mistake could cause not just one person to be deported but a whole family, friends, and business associates to be deported too. The fear of being caught has never gone away. ... Even now families don't tell the second, third, or even fourth generations about the origins of their citizenship status.

**Both novels reflect the characters' deep longing for home.** Panamanian Rafa Toro longs for:

all those streets and places I loved. The way it smelled of car exhaust and sweet fruit. The thickness of the heat. The sound of dogs barking in alleyways. That's the Panama I want to hold on to. Because a place can do many things against you, and if it's your home or if it was your home at one time, you still love it. That's how it works.

Mexican Alma Rivera says:

I pulled out my *comal* and thought, Maybe I'll make something. Something to remind me of home. But I didn't have any of the ingredients I needed, so I just stood there, staring at the flat cast-iron pan, feeling homesickness charge at me like a roaring wave, filling my nostrils and my ears, threatening to knock me down.

Chinese Old Man Louie says, "Everyone— including me— has the desire to return to China. If not to live then to die, if not

to die then to have his bones buried there."

**The main characters comment on the inability of many Americans to differentiate among immigrant groups.** As another Redwood Apartments neighbor, Nelia Zafon, puts it,

I went to auditions when I heard about them. I remember there was an open call for *Man of La Mancha* at a small theater in Greenwich Village. I tried out for the role of the housekeeper. When I got there, a man was lining up all the girls. I remember I asked him whether it was okay that I wasn't Spanish. Because of course it was a Spanish play. He said, "What are you?" I told him, "Puertorriqueña," and he said, "What's the difference?"

When 16-year-old Panamanian Mayor Toro has a run-in with a young American in the neighborhood, the following exchange occurs:

"Where are you going?"

"Home."

"Back to Mexico?"

"I'm not from Mexico."

"My dad says all you people are from Mexico."

For the Louie family in Los Angeles, being confused with other immigrant groups could be more than annoying. During the Second World War, being mistaken for Japanese could be dangerous. When one of the Louie "sons" goes shopping for basic necessities for his enlistment in the U.S. Army, other shoppers attack him. Imported products labeled "made in Japan" are provided new labels reading "made in China". Pearl says, "Oddly, our customers don't seem to notice the difference .... It's foreign, simple as that."

**In both novels, the immigrants work very hard to get ahead.** For example, Arturo Rivera works at a mushroom farm. His job is to "harvest" mushrooms from the dirt inside boxes in a warehouse for 10 hours a day. There are daily quotas, and the entire shift is done standing in the dark, as mushrooms don't need light to grow. Back home Arturo owned a construction business, but the mushroom farm was the only company that was willing to sponsor the family's visas. As he can't afford a car, he takes three different buses to work.

Panamanian Rafa Toro is very proud that he is able to provide for his family of four, and can live in a reasonably safe area and pay all their bills, including helping his older son with his college expenses. He does all this as a line cook at a local diner, having progressed in 15 years from busboy to dishwasher to cook. He rises early to feed the breakfast crowd, six days a week. Loss of his job is always a concern. His younger son, Mayor, said:

We never went back to Panama, not even for a visit. It would have taken us forever to save enough money for plane tickets. Besides, my dad never wanted to take time off from his job. He probably could've asked for a few days of vacation time, but even after years of being there, making omelets and flipping pancakes, he knew— we all knew— that he was on the low end of the food chain. He could be replaced in a heartbeat. He didn't want to risk it.

Life is not much easier in Chinatown in the 1930s. Pearl describes her initial job:

I stay in the apartment to scrub on a washboard sheets, stained underwear, Joy's diapers, and the sweaty clothes of the uncles, as well as those of the bachelors who stay with us periodically. I empty the spittoon and put out extra containers for the shells of the watermelon seeds my in-laws nibble. I wash the floors and the windows.

When China City eventually opens, we learn that Pearl, as well as all the Louie family members, "paper" or not, will work in one or more of Old Man Louie's tiny "Golden" businesses. Pearl's day begins with covering the breakfast shift at the Golden Dragon café. Then she works cleaning at the Golden Lantern, where curios and gifts are sold. She returns to the café for the lunch shift, and spends the afternoon cleaning at the Golden Pagoda, which sells higher-priced imported goods, or at the Golden Lotus, which sells silk flowers. Finally, she returns to the café until closing time at 10:00.

While both novels reflect the immigrant experience, their story lines are quite different. *Unknown Americans* deals with the budding romance between teenagers Maribel Rivera and Mayor Toro and the tragic consequences of that romance. As such, it would probably be of interest to young adults as well as adults. *Shanghai Girls* deals with American history, relationships between sisters, and the ties of family, in whatever form that family takes. •

### *The Bamboo Stalk* continued from page 21

extrapolate to other times, places, and cultures in which an individual might struggle with identity issues and how one fits into society.

Unfortunately, the writing is at times choppy, simplistic, and lacking visual excitement. Since I do not speak Arabic, it was not possible for me to determine whether this was true of the original manuscript or a result of translation into English.

Although the theme is timeless in its focus on identity and acceptance, the book also provides a captivating look into Kuwait's society and its people. Mr. Alsanousi draws upon his own experiences to reveal the specific intricacies of the norms and societal structure in the Gulf. The story becomes a window through which to glimpse issues surrounding the exploitation of migrant labor in Kuwait and other Gulf countries (see sidebar). And the reader is forced, just like José/Isa, to reach past stereotypes or sweeping generalizations. One must come to terms with the reality that all cultures are complex and offer both positive and negative attributes and experiences.

The message from *The Bamboo Stalk* is one of creating your own sense of self and identity by drawing upon what you deem as important and of value for your life. Our past and experiences are driving forces within us, but in finding happiness we are not bound to only one culture or set of ideas. While the prose of the novel is problematic at times, I would recommend the book as the story itself engages the reader. Mr. Alsanousi offers the opportunity to explore specific characteristics of Filipino and Kuwaiti society, while underscoring human universality and the longing for acceptance and happiness.

## Immigrant Stories

In addition to the works mentioned elsewhere in this and our previous issue, we note some other examples of acclaimed novels (and three short-story collections) dealing with migrants and refugees.

### Asian Indians in Africa:

- V. S. Naipaul, *Half a Life* (2001)

### Asian Indians in Europe:

- Neel Mukherjee, *A Life Apart* (2016)
- Sunjeev Sahota, *The Year of the Runaways* (2016)
- Hari Kunzru, *The Impressionist* (2002)
- V. S. Naipaul, *Magic Seeds* (2004)
- V. S. Naipaul, *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987)
- V. S. Naipaul, *The Mimic Men* (1967)

### Bangladeshis and Jamaicans in the UK:

- Zadie Smith, *White Teeth* (2000)

### Sudanese in the UK:

- Tayeb Salih, *Season of Migration to the North* (1966)

### British in the Middle East:

- Nadine Gordimer, *The Pickup* (2001)

### Canadians in Japan:

- Lynne Kutsukake, *The Translation of Love* (2016)

### Chinese in New York City:

- Jean Kwok, *Mambo in Chinatown* (2014)
- Jean Kwok, *Girl in Translation* (2010)

### Vietnamese in Los Angeles:

- Viet Thanh Nguyen, *The Sympathizer* (2016)

### Vietnamese in Louisiana:

- Robert Olen Butler, *A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain: Stories* (2001)

### Asian Indians in the US:

- Nina McConigley, *Cowboys and East Indians: Stories* (2015)
- Kiran Desai, *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006)
- Jhumpa Lahiri, *The Namesake* (2003)
- Jhumpa Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies: Stories* (1999)

### Ethiopians in Washington, DC:

- Dinaw Mengestu, *All Our Names* (2015)
- Dinaw Mengestu, *Children of the Revolution* (2009)
- Dinaw Mengestu, *How to Read the Air* (2009)
- Dinaw Mengestu, *The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears* (2007).

# The Defense of Languages, the Defense of Human Heritage

by Agustí Colomines i Companys



*Prof. Agustí Colomines teaches in the Dept. of Contemporary History at the Univ. of Barcelona, Spain. He is Director of the UNESCO Center of Catalonia and President of the Linguapax Institute. Linguapax (<http://www.linguapax.org/>), a non-governmental organization affiliated with UNESCO and located in Barcelona, is working to preserve and promote global linguistic diversity as an integral part of the goal of world peace and intercultural understanding. This paper is reprinted, with permission, from the proceedings of the Second Linguapax Asia International Symposium on Language in Society and the Classroom: Preserving Heritage and Supporting Diversity (Tokyo, June 2005).*

Concern for the disappearance of languages has grown enormously among specialists in the last decade. Even though language death has been a usual phenomenon throughout history, the current language heritage is probably reaching a critical point due to the dimension and the rapidity of language homogenization processes worldwide. This paper will outline some recommendations that could be useful to counterbalance this tendency.

## What is Happening to the Languages of the World?

Language diversity is essential to the human heritage. Each and every language embodies the unique cultural wisdom of a people. In the words of the late Stephen Wurm:

Each language reflects a unique world-view and culture complex, mirroring the manner in which a speech community has resolved its problems in dealing with the world, and has formulated its thinking, its system of philosophy and understanding of the world around it. In this, each language is the means of expression of the intangible cultural heritage of people, and it remains a reflection of this culture for some time even after the culture which underlies it decays and crumbles, often under the impact of an intrusive, powerful, usually metropolitan, different culture. However, with the death and disappearance of such a language, an irreplaceable unit in our knowledge and understanding of human thought and world-view is lost forever (Wurm, ed., p. 13).

The loss of any language is thus a loss not only for a specific language community, but for all humanity. Although around 6,000 languages still exist, many are under threat. There is an imperative need for language preservation, new policy initiatives and new materials to enhance the vitality of these languages. The cooperative efforts of language communities, language professionals, NGOs, and governments will be indispensable in countering this threat.

As is known, a language is *endangered* when it is on the path towards extinction. A language is in danger when its speakers cease to use it, use it in an increasingly reduced number of speech domains, and cease to pass it on from one generation to the next. That is, there are no new speakers, either adults or children.

Some linguists estimate that half of today's oral languages might have disappeared or at least not be learned by children in 100 years' time (e.g., see Wurm, ed.). Others go even further and estimate that about 90% of the languages might be replaced by dominant languages by the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and that we might only have some 10% of today's oral languages (Krauss) or even 5%, some 300 languages, left as vital, non-threatened languages in the year 2100.

The prognosis of language loss is so negative that we have to devote all our efforts to create a worldwide ecolinguistic movement so that attention for language diversity parallels the current concern for biological diversity. As Prof. David Crystal said during the World Congress on Language Diversity, Sustainability and Peace that the Linguapax Institute organized in Barcelona in May 2004:

The paxlinguistic movement, if we might call it that, is an infant, by comparison with other ecological movements, some of which have been with us for over a century. For example, the National Audubon Society in the U.S. was founded in 1866: we have been birdwatching for nearly 150 years. For world heritage sites, we have the highly successful UNESCO program, begun in 1972. Greenpeace, the year before, 1971. The World Wildlife Fund, 1961. The World Conservation Union, 1948. It took over 30 years before this Union was able to establish a World Conservation Strategy (1980), which led to the principles laid down in the 1991 document *Caring for the Earth*. With those parallels, linguists should expect to have something ready for the world in about 2022 (Crystal, p. 3).

We in Linguapax think that something should be ready much earlier than in 2022 and hope to achieve it with the help of Linguapax Asia, and other Linguapax branches that are being envisaged in different parts of the world, such as Cameroon or Mexico.

### Why Do Languages Become Endangered?

In some cases, language endangerment may be the result of external forces such as military, economic, religious, cultural, or educational subjugation. But perhaps more often, language loss may be caused by internal forces, such as a community's negative attitude towards its own language.

What should be emphasized is the fact that internal pressures often have their source in external ones, and both bring to an end the transmission of language from one generation to the next (and the cultural traditions that go with them). Many indigenous peoples, associating their disadvantaged social position with their culture, have come to believe that their languages are not worth retaining, since they do not have any prestige at all. They abandon their languages and cultures in order to overcome discrimination, to secure a livelihood, and enhance social mobility, or to reach to the global marketplace.

### Some Ideas for Sustaining Language Diversity

There are thus, according to us, four essential areas for sustaining endangered languages:

#### 1. Supporting and developing educational policy

In the educational sector of UNESCO, a number of specialists have been for decades engaged in implementing increasingly popular mother-tongue education programs. However, the most common educational model for teaching linguistic minority children in schools around the world still uses locally or nationally dominant languages as the medium of instruction. Teaching exclusively in these languages supports their spread, often at the expense of endangered languages. A great deal of research shows that acquiring bilingual or multilingual capability need in no way diminish competence in the official language, but the contrary.

#### 2. Sustainable development in literacy and local documentation skills (if requested by the community)

Training local language workers to develop orthographies [a set of conventions for writing a given language], and to read, write and analyze their own languages, and produce pedagogical materials to be used both in formal and informal education. One of the effective strategies here is the establishment of local research centers, where speakers of endangered languages will be trained to study and document their own language materials. Literacy may be useful to the teaching and learning of such languages. Literacy can also be an asset for upgrading the prestige of non-dominant languages, and a need if they are to be used on the Internet. On another level, providing language teachers with training in basic linguistics, language teaching methods and techniques, curriculum development, and teaching materials development may also be useful.

#### 3. Supporting and developing language policies

Language policies should embrace all the languages spoken in each country and all the domains where languages are used, with a special emphasis on the education systems. Any language policy must support linguistic diversity, and pay special attention to endangered languages. More policy makers, social scientists, and speakers of endangered languages themselves should be actively involved in the formulation of the language policies of every country. Advanced language policies should also take a holistic approach and consider, when appropriate, collaboration and coordination of language policies among states (since language communities are commonly spread among different countries) and also the current trends towards integration of countries in regional blocs, such as EU, NAFTA, ASEAN, MERCOSUR, and others.

#### 4. Improving living conditions and respect for the human rights of speaker communities

Language activists can help governments identify overlooked populations. For example, poverty-alleviation programs often do not consider minority communities, especially if they are illiterate. Linguists and educators can be vital mediators by supporting the communities in formulating claims about their linguistic and other human rights, such as the fundamental right for each community to live in their territory or ancestral land and the right to maintain their lifestyle. Materials such as those on health care, community development or language education produced for these marginalized communities require both specialist input and autochthonous [indigenous] input so that concepts and content are conveyed in a culturally meaningful way.

### Conclusion

Although language diversity is at a crisis point, it is also true that language communities all over the world are reacting against language homogenization and that we can be moderately optimistic in relation to the preservation of linguistic diversity worldwide. If states, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, language activists, and other people interested in maintaining cultural diversity pool resources together, it will be possible to counterbalance the current trends towards language loss. Languages, in our view, should be promoted not only because they are repositories of knowledge or a privileged way to understand the environment but also because respecting and dignifying languages means creating conditions for self-esteem, understanding, and peace. •

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Student activists from DeWitt High School flank one of the new French *Bienvenue* signs gracing a shop window in Lansing, Michigan.

## A New *Bienvenue* from the Streets of Lansing

by Jason W. LaFay

*IA subscriber Jason LaFay teaches English and Sociology, and is Advisor to the International Club, at DeWitt High School in DeWitt Township, just north of Lansing, MI. In 2008, he and Jeff Croley, Theater Director at the school, founded the DeWitt Creativity Group with the aim of changing American high school culture by promoting student creativity and entrepreneurialism.*

The DeWitt and Michigan Creativity Groups, the International Club at DeWitt High School (DHS), and the DHS French Club are working to create a French speaking community in Lansing. Last November, DHS teachers Jason LaFay and Katie Noyes collaborated with businesses in Old Town, Lansing, to place and feature “Bienvenue” (Welcome) signs in their front windows. Additionally, the signs are helping other efforts to promote the French language in the area and create a welcoming environment for visitors and new residents.

We targeted Old Town for this project because of its reputation for openness and innovation. Austin Ashley of the Old Town Commercial Association visited Katie’s French I class in October and made an informative and eye-opening presentation; several of the students commented about the interesting festivals and other events going on throughout

the year in Old Town. In addition, the collaboration complements efforts by other area residents such as Gaelle Cassin-Ross, who opened Aux Petits Soins, a French cultural center on the east side of Lansing.

Katie Noyes and I are both teachers at DHS who are interested in working to promote the French language. A key objective of DeWitt Public Schools District is to engage with community members to broaden appreciation and respect for different cultures in the Mid-Michigan area. Given Katie’s subject matter, French, we thought creating these signs would be a great way to provide students and others with a unique cultural/educational experience. The 8 x 12-inch red and white signs were professionally made by Douglas Sign Company in Lansing and were provided free of charge to participating businesses, which included the Grace Boutique, Lamb’s Gate Antiques, Mother and Earth Baby Boutique, Polka Dots Bead-a-full Boutique, Absolute Gallery, and The Creole Coffee Co.

DHS students in French II were then offered extra credit to visit several of the businesses, taking selfies to record their interactions as part of a scavenger hunt activity to learn more about Old Town landmarks and other applicable features. The students also created social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Vine, Snapchat, etc.) to promote the signs and businesses as well as the French language. •



“Angolan Woman”, a drawing in Conte crayon, was created by Schoolcraft graphic design major Ilze Kleinsmith of Northville, MI. It was a project in Art and Design 205 (Life Drawing 2), taught by Prof. Sarah Olson in Winter 2016.

## Painter of Water

I once met a painter in Borno  
 who said things I couldn't hear  
 because I didn't speak the language of water;  
 who said he painted his filigrees and bamboo works  
 with two hearts and a soul in light of King Goje, circa 1439;  
 who sent daughters of widows to science school;  
 Who said he painted his Fulani women  
 with beaks and wings because their languages: Fulfulde,  
 Kanuri, Kananci, Guduranci were not in words,  
 but in water and in song;  
 Who said not even bombs and their mournful tidings—  
 The forceful gospel of fire and such rust  
 Could unmake water, could unmake song.

This is the title poem from a chapbook by Nigerian poet Gbenga Adesina, *Painter of Water* (Akashic Books, 2016). His poems in that work focus on the ongoing inter-religious violence in northern Nigeria.

# Today Your Child... Tomorrow a Sex Slave

by Bryan Palmer

*Bryan Palmer of Westland, MI, is a Schoolcraft College student who plans to major in Advanced Manufacturing Technology.*



Photo: Force 4 Compassion, f-4-c.org

Every year, over 50,000 women and children are brought to the United States to work as slaves.

This statistic is just for the United States alone...now think globally? What is that number in your head, now triple it!! Even then it won't be a correct estimate. This is the threat facing our world:

They forced me to sleep with as many as 50 customers a day. I had to give [the pimp] all my money. If I did not [earn a set amount] they punished me by removing my clothes and beating me with a stick until I fainted, electrocuting me, cutting me.

— Kolab, sex trafficking survivor from Cambodia

Kolab's unthinkable story is echoed by K, a girl from Germany; by Alma, in the Philippines; by Concy, a girl from war-torn Uganda; and by millions of others (Equality Now, "Trafficking Survivor Stories"). Yes, I said millions. Human sex trafficking knows no borders; it does not discriminate by age, ethnicity, or race. All that sex traffickers care about is the profit their trade turns. This human rights violation does not stop in Third World countries. It does not merely knock, it beats down the doors of powerful western nations and cities alike: Paris, London, Ottawa, Moscow, Sydney, and Washington, DC.

The most common misconception about sex trafficking victims is that these are prostitutes or drug addicts doing this of their own free will. But that is not true— that is what we want to believe because it's easier, it makes us feel safer. These women and children are kidnapped, tricked, blackmailed, or drugged. It could happen to your daughter or sister, not because they want to but because they were afraid, threatened, or ashamed.

It is the lucrative profit and the overwhelming demand that make human sex trafficking a global phenomenon and threat. An astounding 3,287 humans are sex-trafficked every day, on average; that's 136 every hour. The average victim is sold for less than \$100.00. Sex traffickers make \$32 billion a year, second only to drug traffickers, but sex trafficking is expected to become the number one illegal activity in the next five years (Force 4 Compassion). A 2003 study in the Netherlands found that, on average, a single sex slave earned her pimp at least \$250,000 a year (Skinner)— and that was over 12 years ago. Airports are often used by human traffickers to hold "slave auctions", where women and children are sold into prostitution (BBC News).

Approximately 30,000 victims of sex trafficking die each year from abuse, disease, torture, and neglect (UPI). Their stories cannot be heard, because they cannot speak anymore...no one

helped them. But by becoming aware, maybe you can stop the next one from dying.

You only learn these heart-wrenching stories after one of the victims escapes, or you hear fragments of someone's theories when the victim's bones are unearthed years later. In the house, basement, or garage right next to you, there could be another human being held against their will, used for sex, forced labor, or to cultivate their organs. You could talk to their captors and never know...

## The Fastest-Growing Criminal Enterprise in the World

According to Michelle Bachelet, former Director of UN Women and former President of Chile:

An estimated 80% of all trafficked persons are used and abused as sexual slaves. This human rights violation is driven by demand for sexual services and the profit that is generated. The commodification of human beings as sexual objects, poverty, gender inequality and subordinate positions of women and girls provide fertile ground for human trafficking (quoted in Equality Now, "Sex Trafficking Factsheet").

Equality Now, an international non-governmental organization that uses the law to protect and promote the human rights of women and girls, observes (Equality Now, "Sex Trafficking Factsheet"):

Trafficking women and children for sexual exploitation is the fastest growing criminal enterprise in the world. This, despite the fact international law and the laws of 134 countries criminalize sex trafficking.

- At least 20.9 million adults and children are bought and sold worldwide into commercial sexual servitude, forced labor and bonded labor.
- About 2 million children are exploited every year in the global commercial sex trade.
- Almost 6 in 10 identified trafficking survivors were trafficked for sexual exploitation.
- Women and girls make up 98% of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Victims trafficked into prostitution and pornography are usually caught up in the most exploitative forms of commercial sex operations. Sex trafficking operations can be found in highly-visible venues such as street prostitution, as well as more underground systems such as closed brothels that operate out of residential homes.

Sex trafficking also takes place in a variety of public and private locations such as massage parlors, spas, strip clubs, and other fronts for prostitution. Victims may start off dancing or stripping in clubs and then be coerced later into situations of prostitution and pornography. These businesses you might see as harmless entertainment, the ones you might frequent for bachelor's parties, or an occasional lunch—these are the biggest violators you are helping to grow. You see the girls smiling and you think they want to be there, and some do, but many are there by force, ripped from their families, sold by relatives, sent far from home to work in a job they don't want to be at.

If this essay hasn't gripped you yet, hasn't touched a corner of your heart, maybe these startling statistics will. There are more human slaves in the world today than ever before in history. Think about what I just said; we are beyond the number of African American slaves, or Jews during the Holocaust. And guess where the top listed destination countries for trafficked victims are? Belgium, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Thailand, Turkey, and the United States (Skinner). Places that we visit on vacation, where we spend our money—beaches where our children play even while another child is being victimized. Think of the truck stops you drive by every day near the highway—within that parking lot, a victim is being transported, traded, or forced into the sex trade!

### Children are the Most Vulnerable

If you think your children are safe, read the statistics below and look where they are being targeted. No one is immune; it could happen anywhere in the world. So many parents and families don't think that it can happen to their children or they believe that these children and women are from broken homes, homeless, runaways, or drug users. But that is not reality—again, that is a fairy tale they have told themselves because they don't want to face the truth, they don't want to think of their child in that environment. But there are 13 million children around the world who are victims of human trafficking.

Sex traffickers often recruit children because not only are children more unsuspecting and vulnerable than adults, but there is also a high market demand for young victims. Traffickers target victims on the telephone, on the Internet, through friends, at the mall, and in after-school programs, all places where we expect others to protect our children. They tell the children they are pretty, special, let me buy you something. Young boys a few years older than your daughter will approach and she will feel giddy, adored, and wanted... but he works for someone else who pays him to recruit young girls. Young girls are in demand, they are virgins and carry a premium price. There are older girls who, to buy their own freedom, must help entrap other girls, tricking them into what they believe are modeling shoots.

Family members will often sell children and other family members into slavery; the younger the victim, the more money the trafficker receives. For example, a 10-year-old named Gita was sold into a brothel by her aunt. The now 22-year-old recalls that when she refused to work, the older girls held her down and stuck a piece of cloth in her mouth so no one would hear her scream as she was raped by a customer. She would later contract HIV (Skinner).

Across the globe, traffickers buy and sell children, exploiting them for sex and forced labor, and moving them across international borders. Child victims are trafficked into the United States from Africa, Asia, Central and South America, and Eastern Europe. In the U.S., children are subjected to human trafficking in many different sectors. Examples include prostitution on the streets or in a private residence, club, hotel, spa, or massage parlor; online commercial sexual exploitation; exotic dancing/stripping; agricultural, factory, or meatpacking work; construction; domestic labor in a home; restaurant/bar work; illegal drug trade; door-to-door sales, street peddling, or begging; or hair, nail, and beauty salons.

Ten thousand children as young as six are in brothels in Sri Lanka. Hundreds of kids that same age are brought into the United Kingdom every year (BBC News). Sex traffickers often use brutal violence to "condition" these child victims, including subjecting them to starvation, rape, gang rape, physical abuse, beating, confinement, threats of violence toward the victim and victim's family, forced drug use, and shame. Nearly half of all trafficked victims are children (Skinner).

Here is the sad philosophy that drives these criminals: *You can only sell a drug once, but you can sell a human body over and over again!* How do you combat that twisted mentality? Education is great, laws help, but what we really need is vigilance, people who actually care about their fellow human beings again. We have become so wrapped up in our self-important, materialistic life that we have become numb to crime, found it acceptable as if there is nothing we can do about it. It is just a part of life! Until it happens to someone you love—only then do you think it's important.

Think about that person who lives across the street, the "wife" you don't see outside very often, the kid who is supposedly home-schooled, the weekend parties that no one in the neighborhood is invited to—these should be warning signs to you. Pick up the phone, call someone with your suspicions—maybe you're wrong but wouldn't you rather be wrong than do nothing and find out later you could have saved someone's life?

Imagine the cries you cannot hear, the silenced victims. We can all make a difference in this horrific crime. The question should not be what can you do, but what won't you do to save just one person from this life? •

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## Teaching English and Learning Customs in Anhui Province, China

text and photos by Uta M. Stelson

*Originally from Germany, Dr. Uta Stelson is a lawyer, consultant, and educator in Portland, OR. Last Fall she embarked on a new adventure when she was hired to teach English at a high school in Hefei, China. Formerly known as Luchow, Hefei, with a population of 7.8 million, is the capital and largest city of Anhui Province. This program is part of a partnership in which Green River College, a community college in Auburn, WA, sends instructors to teach English to students at the school who plan to come to the U.S. and study at Green River or elsewhere. Dr. Stelson wrote the report below after her first few weeks in China last Fall, and e-mailed it to some family and friends. She kindly gave us permission to publish the account; we have added the subheadings.*

I've been in China for nearly three weeks, and I've settled into a routine, albeit a very simple one. With an apartment that is equipped with only the bare necessities (a bed including mattress, pillow, comforter, and bed linens), a small table, a wardrobe and a nightstand in the bedroom, a futon, a sofa table, a refrigerator(!) and a very low dresser in the living room, a two-burner stove and a sink plus a few cabinets in the kitchen (and also four rice bowls, four Chinese soup spoons, one SMALL sharp knife, a few glasses, a soup pot, a small frying pan, and a LARGE tea kettle), plus a shower, a sink, commode, and a small washing machine, I'm managing to live what I consider quite well!

Hefei No. 6 High School, where I teach English as a Second Language, is a 15-minute walk from my apartment. There's a shopping center with a grocery store right next door to the school. On the way to school, I have found two hole-in-the-wall

food vendors, one selling steamed buns and marbled tea eggs and the other selling something akin to the Indian *naan* bread which can be had (for no extra charge) with a spice-paste topping (slightly spicy). I get my dinner from these places on the days when I teach until 6:30 p.m. The prices, in U.S. terms, are more than reasonable, with a steamed bun costing just 1 yuan, and a marbled tea egg or a *naan*-like bread just 1.50 yuan (equivalent to 16 or 24 cents U.S., respectively).

### The Students are a Bit of a Handful

I really like my teaching schedule. While school for the students and the Chinese full-time staff starts at 7:20 a.m. and goes until 6:35 p.m. with a three-hour lunch break from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., I teach only afternoon classes, so nothing earlier than 2:30 p.m. I only teach three classes, with 25, 28, and 33 students respectively, and a total of 13 40-minute lessons. Of these classes, one class is a senior high and the other two are junior high level.

The students in the senior high class are a bit of a handful. I've already confiscated two cell phones (cell phones are strictly forbidden in schools), three CDs, and a Rubik's Cube from this class. If I confiscate items during class, I make the students pick them up in the teacher's lounge, and if their homeroom teacher is there, s/he will read them the riot act about being disrespectful to their foreign teachers .... and not let them have their items back for several days.

The students are in this international program because they plan on not taking the Chinese college entrance exam, the *Gaokao* (which determines not only at which Chinese university a high-school graduate can study, but also what subject s/he may study), as they want to attend college in the U.S., and their parents can afford the tuition for an American college. Hefei No. 6 has an agreement with Green River College in Washington, and about half of my students will go there. The remaining students hope to be accepted at other colleges in America.



Entrance to the international department at Hefei No. 6 High School.

We have two American teachers here, me and a teacher from Green River, who will make recommendations on which students Green River College should accept (I don't envy him that position!). There are also two Chinese teachers who specifically prepare students for the TOEFL (Test Of English as a Foreign Language). One of those teachers is full-time, the other seems to be either part-time, or part-time in the international department.

When it came time to divide up who teaches what, the full-time Chinese teacher declared rather categorically, "I will teach grammar and vocabulary." That left the other American teacher and me to figure out what was left and how to divide that up among the two of us. We decided that DJ, the other American teacher, would teach Reading and Writing, and I would teach Speaking and Listening.

At first, DJ and I tried to both teach out of the textbooks that his program in Washington had selected, but after just one day, it was apparent to me this would not work, so I offered to just create my own lesson plans for the Speaking and Listening parts. DJ is dealing with four different levels of students (according to his textbooks), and has never taught a multi-level classroom, so he still seeks input from me on how to individualize his teaching to each student, which I have always done in adult education. All is good in the area of collegial cooperation!

For my lessons, I play a lot of games. The current game of (my) choice is Bingo with word lists focusing on phonics. Some students like it and some don't, but some are getting a bit cheeky. I use stickers as rewards for the person who first completes his/her bingo board, and today I had a student who complained that he already had the sticker I randomly drew for him. He also already had the substitute sticker. After the second substitution, I told him to go away (to the snickers of the rest of his classmates!). Yesterday, I had a student offer me to turn in his homework early and to prove that the other American teacher had given him 100% on his homework in exchange for a sticker because he had never earned one playing Bingo in my class. Too funny!

### Vacation Plans

My friend and colleague Terri came by for a visit over the weekend. She lives and teaches in a smaller city of about 700,000 people located some 40 minutes away by high-speed train. It was a bit of a challenge for her to get all the logistics worked out, but in the end all went well.

We had a great weekend exploring some shopping opportunities in the larger city of Hefei, where I live. I was able to satisfy Terri's craving for "real" bread from one of two little go-to food stalls, and she took 10 loaves home and placed an order for me to bring fresh bread along on our upcoming trip.

All of China has a week of vacation coming up on October 1-7 for the Mid-Autumn Festival holiday. Terri, her daughter, and I will use the time to travel to Tibet and hopefully be able to squeeze in some time to visit the imperial tomb in Xi'an with the terracotta army guarding the emperor's tomb. Either way, it's something I really look forward to! Everybody is warning me

about altitude sickness, but I think I will be okay as I have been to nearly the same altitude several times in the Alps, although I'm still keeping my fingers crossed. According to the travel itinerary, though, our car for the private tour we booked is supposed to be equipped with oxygen, so I think we'll be fine.

### The Cacophony of the Street

My interview for this job was really interesting, and quite different from interviews I've had for jobs in the U.S. The two main concerns were: (a) do I really have a doctorate as I have stated in my CV?, and (b) will I be able to handle the culture shock? The interview didn't take very long as my answers were "yes" and "yes", with the additional explanation that I have already demonstrated being able to live in a foreign country by moving to the U.S. from Germany 28 years ago.

There is a bit of a cultural adjustment, though, and the biggest part (for me) is the traffic. Living on the Oregon coast, we're used to the traffic on Hwy. 101 during the Summer, but that's mostly a two-lane highway ... and it doesn't start until after the tourists have all had their sleep-in. Now imagine the 101 traffic at noon and multiply it about 10-fold spread out over four lanes AND the sidewalk! That comes close to what it's like here.

About a third of the vehicles are small motor bikes or scooters, with a few bicycles thrown in for good measure. The scooters are the worst from a pedestrian's safety point-of-view, as most of them are electric and thus almost noiseless (unless they honk at you!), and they drive in the road (even the wrong way on a one-way road), or on the sidewalk, whichever gets them fastest from point A to point B. Everybody honks all the time, and the cacophony is what usually wakes me up in the morning. In fact, one of the major traffic rules here seems to be, "He who honketh the loudest and longest shall have the right-of-way." The "go" signal on the traffic lights seems to be more of an advisory notice to "proceed at your own risk", as both cars and scooters will still be driving around the corner or clearing out of an intersection even after the signal has turned.

Both scooters and cars also see the sidewalks as legitimate parking places, making a pedestrian's trip full of little detours. When I teach the last class of the day on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, the entrance to the school is almost completely blocked by scooters of parents who pick up their child from school. I have to literally step into the street to get around them so I can go home. This, however, is not as dangerous as it sounds as there's also a double row of cars parked illegally that blocks off the moving traffic. If the city were to ever have a cash crisis, all they would need to do is to enforce a few basic traffic laws and the money would start rolling in!

Another source of noise around here is the fireworks, which the Chinese seem to set off for any imaginable occasion: birth or death in the family, marriage, etc. Living on the 26<sup>th</sup> floor of a high-rise, this is mostly not too much of a distraction as long as they are set off on the ground. But last Sunday morning, a neighbor on a floor not too far away decided to set them off at 5:30 a.m.! So much for sleeping-in on my day off!

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Some of the students of the senior high class at Hefei No. 6 High School, in a classroom decorated for a Christmas party.

## Anhui Province

*continued from page 37*

### The Rice Pot and Soup Pot are Centrally Located

The other adjustment for me (aside from not having my car), not necessarily in a bad way, was the availability of some of my favorite Asian foods already prepared, but not being able to find the ingredients to make them myself. It took me years to find all the ingredients for my favorite Asian foods in Oregon (they're all available in Portland, one must simply know where to go) and here, everything is available ready-made, and often already cooked at a deli counter or food stall.

This week, I “discovered” the school cafeteria. There is one area for the students to be served their food from windows, similar to the cafeterias in U.S. schools. For teachers and staff, though, there is an area off to the side where dishes are set out buffet style in chafing dishes. Teachers and staff also have a cordoned-off seating area, although I have seen some students sneak in under the ropes.

The meal is relatively cheap at 8.50 yuan (\$1.40), and quite different from what is served in U.S. cafeterias. Dishes such as stewed eggplant and tofu prepared three different ways plus sautéed cabbage all in the same meal wouldn't stand a chance in America! At the end of each food line, there is a giant container of white rice and a pot of chicken soup, either plain or egg-drop soup (not thickened with cornstarch!). In the student seating area, the pot of rice and the soup pot are centrally located and not part of the food line. I don't know if this is a way to accommodate students who have forgotten their lunch money, but it certainly is a face-saving way for such a student to still get some hot food and not be hungry for the rest of the school day. It sure beats having to plead with one of the lunch ladies to get a PBJ sandwich on white bread!

One thing I have noticed about the food here is the absence of the thickened gravies and the overly sweet sauces that are

typical of “Chinese” dishes served in the States. I've also not seen much deep-fried food, especially not covered in a sweet and sour sauce: no sweet and sour chicken, orange chicken, or General Tso's chicken. Most dishes are also not very spicy, but that might be specific to the cuisine of this particular region of eastern China.

### Big-City Manners

For the most part, people here are extremely helpful, or at least they are trying to be. The problem sometimes is the fact that my Chinese consists of the words “Hello” (Nee How), “Thank you” (She She), and the number 6 (Leeou), because that's the number of the school where I teach.

Right now is the time just before the Mid-Autumn Festival, which is a big deal here—in fact, so big that the whole country takes a week-long vacation. The traditional food for this festival is moon cakes, and my local grocery store had a display of what I assumed were moon cakes. As soon as a store employee saw my interest, she tried to load me up with one of every variety! I'm assuming that these are quite sweet, and my taste tolerance for sweet food is not very high, so I had to stop her after three varieties.

The cutest encounter, though, was with a cleaning woman at this store. One day, she had to run back to get something weighed and priced for me (probably not in her job description), but she was very gracious about it. She recognized me a few days later in the store and tried to strike up a conversation with me, which failed miserably on my end, but she happily chatted away anyway! The butcher will chop up anything for me without me having to ask for it, which is very convenient, as I have only a small kitchen knife. The lady at the deli counter today remembered how many potstickers I bought the last time I was there. My go-to fast food vendors have me figured out and converse with the one or two words of English they know and a lot of gesturing. In fact, anyone who knows even the smallest

amount of English seems more than happy to help me out in the language department, and for prices, there's always a calculator handy where they can show me how much I owe them.

In some ways, though, the Chinese come across as quite rude, at least in a western understanding of things. Waiting in line and waiting for their turn seem to be foreign to their way of life. A friend of Terri's explained this to her by pointing out that throughout history, the Chinese have had to deal with shortages of all sorts, so their way of thinking is "every man (or woman) for him(her)self." I usually ignore it when someone cuts me off in line, but every so often a Chinese person will obviously reprimand another for having cut me off, which I only notice by this person suddenly moving behind me in line for no other reason than that someone else talked to them and pointed at me.

### The Mid-Autumn Festival

So, about the Autumnal Lunar Festival, a.k.a. Mid-Autumn Festival: The festival falls on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 8<sup>th</sup> month of the lunar calendar— this year, September 27. At this time of the lunar year, the moon is at its biggest and brightest. Due to the usually pleasant weather then, this is also a major travel event, and many Chinese journey long distances to spend the holiday itself and the ensuing national holiday (Oct. 1-7) with family.

The festival dates back to the Zhou Dynasty (1046 – 256 BCE), when it was celebrated as a combination of harvest festival and thanksgiving festival, thanking the moon for bringing about the seasonal changes and the bounty of the harvest. At this early time, the day was a commemoration held by the ruling class through sacrifices to the moon; it was not yet celebrated as a national festival or holiday. During the Sui (581-618 CE) and Tang (618-907 CE) dynasties, the lower class had begun to prosper and started to adopt the moon sacrifice as a tradition no longer just limited to the ruling class. During the time of the Northern Tsang Dynasty (960-1127 CE), the date of the festival was set as the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 8<sup>th</sup> lunar month, this being the date of the full moon closest to the autumnal equinox. By the end of the Northern Tsang Dynasty, the festival had become a folk festival.

Several legends are associated with this day. One is about Chang E and Hou Yi. Once upon a time, there had been 10 suns in the sky, and the people could not stand the heat produced by all those suns. The hero Hou Yi succeeded in shooting down



Top to bottom: Moon cakes sliced to show the filling; whole; and wrapped for purchase.

nine of the suns, and making life bearable for the people in China. Eventually, Hou Yi married Chang E, a beautiful and kind-hearted woman. One day, Hou Yi went to visit an old friend, and on the way, encountered Wangmu, the queen of heaven, who offered him an elixir that would turn him into a god and cause him to ascend to heaven immediately. Hou Yi did not

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## Anhui Province

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drink the elixir, but instead gave it to his wife Chang E for safekeeping. However, an enemy of Hou Yi, Peng Meng, had seen him give the elixir to Chang E. One day, while Hou Yi was out hunting, Peng Meng went to see Chang E to demand the elixir from her. Knowing that she could not win against Peng Meng, Chang E drank the elixir and immediately flew out the window and into the sky. However, Chang E was so much in love with her husband that she could not stand to be too far from him, so her travel to the heavens only took her as far as the moon, the closest celestial body to the earth. When Hou Yi returned from his hunt and saw the empty bottle of elixir on the table and Chang E missing, he went outside and shouted her name to the heavens in agony. To his amazement, he saw a figure that looked just like his wife appear in the moon. He then created an altar to Chang E and sacrificed food that she had liked to the moon, which now showed her image.

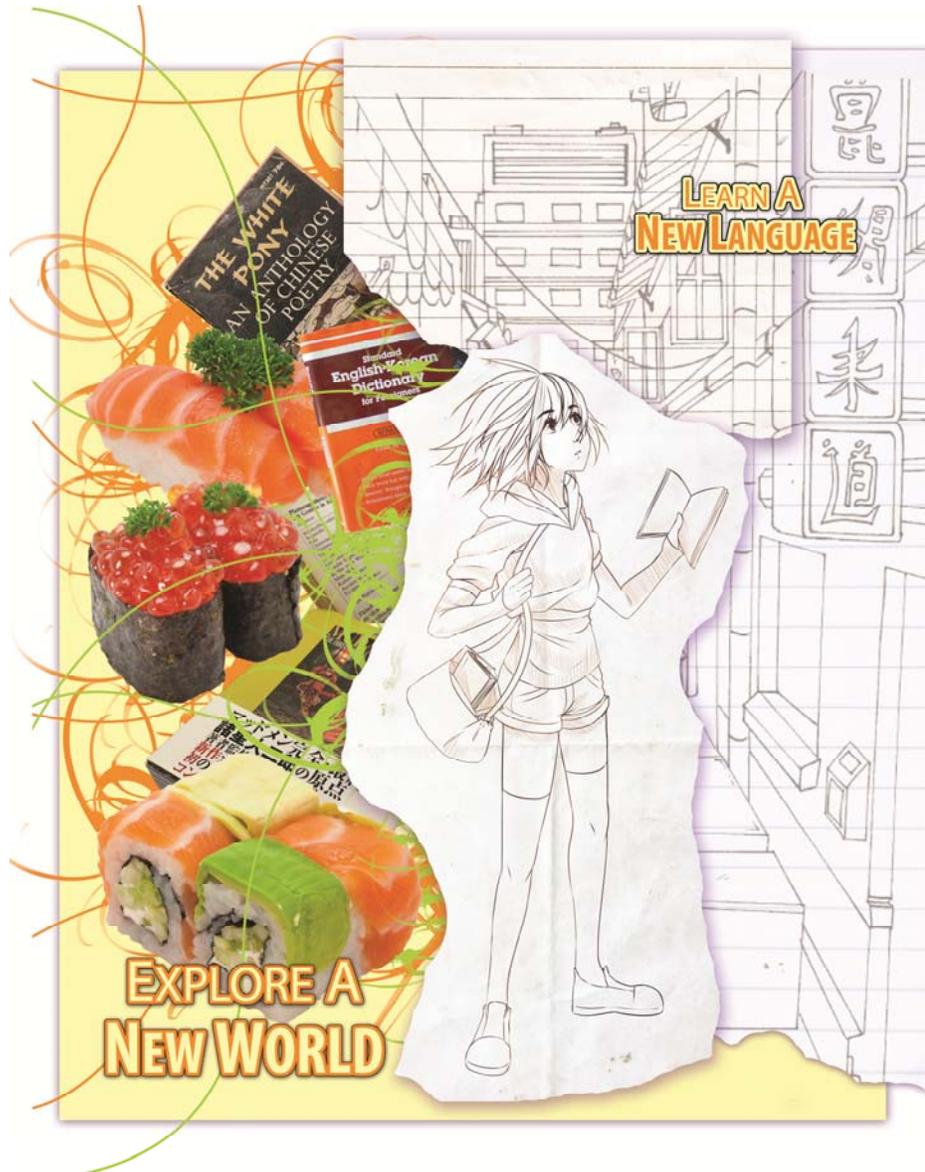
Another story tells of Zhu Yuanzhang, who led an uprising against the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368 CE) and founded the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 CE). Late in the Yuan, the people could no longer bear the cruel rule of the emperor and wanted to revolt. However, due to tight governmental controls, they lacked

the means to organize an uprising, until councilor Lui Bowen devised the scheme to hide notes with the message “rise up on the night of the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 8<sup>th</sup> month” in moon cakes, and had the cakes sent to different resistance forces. The uprising was successful and, upon taking the throne, emperor Zhu Yuanzhang awarded his subjects with moon cakes at the following mid-autumn festival. Eating moon cakes during the festival has been a tradition ever since.

The individual moon cakes, sweet pastries with a variety of fillings, are about the size and shape of a hockey puck. They can be set out as a sacrifice to the moon, or sliced and eaten alongside tea. They are also given to family or friends, either in person or else shipped in elaborate gift boxes.

The filling on the left (see photos on previous page) is quite sweet and reminds me of bean-paste fillings that I’ve tasted in other pastries. The filling in the middle is something fruit-flavored, but, unlike most American fruity pastries, is not overly sweet. The filling on the right is a nut filling that is not very sweet, but quite flavorful. It’s definitely my favorite. In all three varieties the pastry component is only slightly sweet, but very ‘short’ and crumbly. •

“Learn a New Language; Explore a New World” is by Schoolcraft graphic design major Jordan Newton of Redford, MI. She created the piece in Fall 2015 while enrolled in Computer Graphics Technology 123 (Illustration with Illustrator), taught by Prof. Colleen Case.



MIIE Conference Report

# Guidance Amid a World in Turmoil

Based on reports from SC Profs. Sumita Chaudhery, Helen Ditouras, Sam Hays, and Randy Schwartz

On Friday-Saturday, April 15-16, 2016, Schoolcraft College successfully hosted the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of the Midwest Institute for International and Intercultural Education (MIIE), parent organization of our International Institute (SCII).

In a world that seems more interknitted but also more fractured than ever, this conference was “right on time”. Participants engaged in a rich, as well as enjoyable, exchange of ideas and experiences about how to understand the forces that are shaping global events and, in tune with that, how to make instruction and programming more relevant, internationally grounded, and culturally sensitive.

Hosting this conference was a major honor and opportunity for Schoolcraft. The MIIE is a consortium of approximately 125 two-year and community colleges. About 120 participants from 40 schools across the Midwest and beyond were present at this gathering. Being selected as site both in 2006 and 2016 reflects the successful work of our own Institute, which has been a member of MIIE for over 20 years. The efforts of the people at MIIE headquarters in Kalamazoo, notably Theo Sypris and John Payne, combined with those from the International Institute here on campus to successfully pull off this conference. Key local organizers included Profs. Helen Ditouras (English), Kimberly Lark (History), and Anna Maheshwari (English).

Schoolcraft College President Conway Jeffress helped launch the conference at the VisTaTech Center with a welcoming address that underlined the importance of international education. One of the concurrent sessions that immediately followed Dr. Jeffress’s remarks was devoted to Schoolcraft’s own international programming and global education. At that session, presenters Helen Ditouras and Kimberly Lark reviewed the various initiatives spearheaded by our International Institute, including the Global Endorsement curriculum program, our annual Focus presentation series, the Multicultural Fair, and our magazine and website.

Friday’s luncheon featured delicious Indian food and an Indian dance performance, after which our own Helen Ditouras was surprised with the 2016 MIIE Leadership and Service Award, recognizing her years of contributions to SCII and to the MIIE Board.

Below, we summarize the conference keynote address and many of the concurrent sessions. Schoolcraft instructors were fairly well represented at the meeting, with 16 participants including eight presenters: Helen Ditouras (Eng-



Photo: John Kerezy, Cuyahoga CC

Profs. Mark Huston (Schoolcraft College, left) and Brad Roth (Wayne State University)

lish), Kimberly Lark (History), Deborah Burke (Psychology), Ann Emanuelsen (Language Fellows), Yovana Veerasamy (Political Science), Diane O’Connell (Geography), Steven Berg (English and History), and Randy Schwartz (Mathematics).

## Coping with Migrants and Refugees

**Brad Roth**, Prof. of Political Science and Law at Wayne State University (Detroit), delivered a Saturday luncheon keynote address that was very thought-provoking, “Syrian Immigration and the Rule of Law”. He began by condemning the demagoguery about immigration in the 2015-16 U.S. presidential campaigns. Especially in times of emergency, crisis, or panic, he warned, how a democratic country deals with gaps in the rule of law says a lot about the nature and durability of its democracy. In his *Second Treatise on Government*, John Locke drew an important distinction between “mere order” (which can include royal or bureaucratic fiat, or other forms of arbitrary rule) and the rule of law.

Roth showed that the incursions against U.S. civil liberties that we see in today’s “war on terror” have antecedents going all the way back to the beginning of the republic. The now-rebuked U.S. Alien and Sedition Acts (1798) were motivated by the fear of fallout from the French Revolution. One of their most insidious aspects was simply to link the concepts “alien” and “sedition”. The fact that they were enacted so soon after passage of the Bill of Rights suggests how fragile our civil liberties really are. During World War 1, Roth went on, Congress passed and the Supreme Court upheld two laws disproportionately enforced against immigrants: the Espionage Act and the Sedition Act. In WW2, the Internment Order of 1942 rounded up 110,000 people, including 70,000 U.S. citizens. Again, this was upheld by the Supreme Court in *Korematsu v. U.S.* (1944).

*continued on next page*

## MIIE Conference *continued from page 41*

There's a long American tradition, Roth pointed out, for the President to be given more latitude in executing foreign than domestic policy. But especially in recent times, when it's been impossible to draw a sharp line of distinction between the foreign and domestic spheres, this means that a certain degree of arbitrariness has begun to infect domestic affairs as well. The right of *habeas corpus*, Roth argued, is the foundation of civil rights because it's the only difference between an arrest and a kidnapping by government officials. In the face of anti-federal riots in Maryland and other border states early in the Civil War, Pres. Lincoln suspended *habeas corpus*, allowing the indefinite detention of "disloyal persons" without trial. Today, whether aliens seized outside the U.S. are entitled to *habeas corpus* or to any other Constitutional rights is a similar gray area. For example, the U.S. government argues that "enemy combatants" can be held at Guantanamo detention center until hostilities are over. Since 9/11, many of the legal battles involving Presidents Bush and Obama, Defense Sec. Donald Rumsfeld, and Dep. Asst. U.S. Atty. Gen. John Yoo have centered on exactly these issues.

"Educating Refugees" was a joint presentation by **Deborah Burke** (Psychology, Schoolcraft College) and **Krishna Stilianos** (Psychology and Child Dvlpt., Oakland Community College, MI). In the midst of the current refugee crisis, the two have assembled insights regarding the problem of providing schooling and other social services, especially for the children involved; these insights can be integrated into existing courses. After defining the term "refugee", they had a rapt audience while describing the kinds of extremely dangerous situations that refugees encounter in fleeing from their homelands. They used a BBC online simulation to dramatize the choices and decisions that need to be made while fleeing Syria. As a result of the war, 320,000 lives have been lost, approximately 12,000 of whom were children. Since many children and youths become separated from their families in the process of fleeing, they often have to rely on nefarious human traffickers to reach Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt, Greece, or other areas.

There are 12 million displaced Syrians, among whom 7.5 million are children, and 40% of those children are under age 12. In general, these children were not enrolled in school for the entire 2014-15 academic year. Major reasons for this disruption include a collapsed infrastructure in their home country, the time needed for their arduous journey out, and the children being engaged in working to support their families, or even sold for child labor or living on the streets. Their lives always in danger, under continued stress, the refugee children suffer from anxiety disorder, depression, and fear; about 45% show signs of PTSD. Of course, such factors are major obstacles to learning, but the children are being helped by various communities, governments, and NGOs, notably Save the Children and the International Rescue Committee. Turkey has instituted accelerated Turkish language programs that will help Syrian children to be mainstreamed into public education there. The speakers emphasized that what is even more important about this schooling than the curricular content is the renewed structure that it brings to the children's lives: having a schedule and

routine, forming friendships with other children, having structured time to play outdoors, and having an opportunity to use the imagination.

The presentation "A Midwestern Asian-American's Story" by Jonathan Oaks (Macomb Community College) is summarized separately on page 24.

### Regional Studies and Study Abroad

In "Sustainability in Modern China", **Yovana Veerasamy**, who teaches Political Science and French at Schoolcraft College, described an instructional module that she developed in conjunction with an MIIE Summer Workshop and then piloted last Fall for her course Survey in American Government. China's race to modernize and to compete in the global economy, she said, has had some adverse consequences, including unsafe workplaces, pollution, a huge consumption of resources and other strains on the environment, a surge in rural-to-urban migration, galloping urbanization, and an undermining of the extended-family structure and other aspects of the traditional social fabric. Both Daoism and Confucianism had preached living in harmony with nature, but current government policy is to make economic development paramount. There are signs that Chinese citizens are growing impatient with waiting for the government to intervene where action is needed. Some are taking up issues of sustainability on their own: activists for green neighborhoods, watchdog groups for river-water quality, etc.

Throughout the semester, on a weekly basis, Veerasamy finds standard topics in the course within which new material on China can be relevantly infused into lectures and discussions. In addition, students are assigned to prepare individual or group reports and presentations on various questions: Does China have "interest groups"? Is socialism or capitalism to blame for environmental disasters in China and other countries? Should environmental sustainability be an issue considered by the World Trade Organization? How do U.S. and Chinese military power compare?

**Katherine Rowell**, Prof. of Sociology and Anthropology at Sinclair Community College (Dayton, OH), described how she infuses lessons from Mongolia into her coursework in her talk, "Peace and Conflict in Mongolia". The pastoral economy (one of the few remaining in the world) and other aspects of Mongolian culture are threatened in many ways. The country is landlocked between two major powers, Russia and China, that have often been adversaries. There was a period of pro-Soviet communist rule during 1921-90, which helps explain the high literacy rate of 98.6%. Today, mining pollution is making streams undrinkable, and half of the population lives in the capital city.

Rowell completed a tour of Mongolia organized by the Northeast Asia Peace Conference in conjunction with a UN delegation. The trip, which included three weeks of intensive teacher training and many field trips, focused on learning about former political violence under communism and today's resulting issues of historical amnesia and retributive justice. Soviet domination repressed many aspects of Mongolian culture, including religion, language, and

historical memory; in particular, Stalin's regime moved harshly against Buddhist institutions in 1936-39. Allegedly some 5% of the country's population was executed; only since the late 1990s have mass graves begun to be discovered (the issue is made more sensitive by the fact that Mongolia is allied today with Russia). Rowell has her students debate whether the bloodshed rose to the level of genocide or was some lesser form of political violence; the PBS-TV video "Genocide: Worse than War" is a helpful tool.

In the session "Development of Curriculum Modules for the Africa-Asia Project of MSU-MIIE", four speakers discussed their work on a joint effort of the MIIE and Michigan State Univ. The three-year partnership, funded by the U.S. Dept. of Education Title VI program, supports a total of 14 faculty members from the MIIE consortium in developing modules related to Africa and Asia that will be infused into existing courses in six broad academic areas: arts-humanities, allied health, business studies, natural sciences, social sciences, and technologies.

- **Melva Black** (Communication, Volunteer State Community College, Gallatin, TN) discussed her interest in modern media influence on African culture. She plans to explore such topics as self-perception, gender roles, and the utilization of communication theories. Students using her modules will learn about cultural norms, modern media's focus on audience interaction, media influence on women's voice, and other cultural shifts.
- **Helen Ditouras** (English, Schoolcraft College) said she plans to create modules on Indonesian identity through film, including the rise of Islam in post-1998 cinema, themes of gender identity, rapid industrialization, internationalization, and the increase in entertainment culture. She hopes to research relevant social and political factors such as market forces, Dutch colonial and Chinese influences, Japan's role in WW2, and the overthrow of Pres. Sukarno in 1965.
- **D. Rose Elder** (Ethnomusicology and Rural Sociology, Ohio State University Agricultural Technical Institute, Wooster, OH), whose specialties include traditional Amish, African, and African-American music, plans modules pertaining to the value of respecting the traditional. She referred to an African proverb, "When an elder dies, a library burns." Her goal is to clarify, Who are the traditional and indigenous people? What are the consequences of losing the traditions and the ancient wisdom?
- **Papa N'jai** (Geography and Cultural Anthropology and International Coordinator, Muskegon Community College), who is originally from Sierra Leone, spoke about the increasing agricultural food production in sub-Saharan Africa. He plans to examine the complex forces shaping African agriculture, to analyze the causes of Africa's food crisis, and to explain the history of the Green Revolution. His modules will also offer practical solutions for food production after examining a key question: If the Green Revolution succeeded in Asia, why can it not work in Africa?

Political Science Prof. **Dedric Todd Lee** (Jefferson College, Hillsboro, MO) presented "Pirates, Al-Shabab, Drones and AMISOM: A Teaching Unit on the United States and Somalia Since Blackhawk Down". In his Current Political Issues course he has infused a three-week module about Somalia that includes lectures, videos, Internet research, discussion, a research paper, and tests and quizzes. To provide background understanding, the lectures compare Somalia with its neighbors in such aspects as religion, economics, life expectancy, and per-capita income. The students watch videos and use journal articles and other required readings to learn about current problems such as sea piracy and local warlords. In small groups they use Internet sites to learn about piracy problems and counter-measures in other countries. Each student also researches and writes a paper exploring an aspect of the Islamist militant group al-Shabab.

**Mohsen Khani**, an Iranian-born Prof. of Geography at Sinclair Community College (Dayton, OH), spoke on "Iran-USA Relations". In recent decades, he said, Iran's population has become younger (median age 28.3), more urban (73%), and more educated (87% literacy). In courses such as Geography of the Middle East, Khani shows why the recent nuclear agreement between the two nations is a step forward, while also showing that it represents a narrow window of opportunity because radicals on both sides oppose it. Most Americans, he said, don't understand the long history of U.S. foul play in Iran, including the CIA's Operation Ajax, which led to the 1953 coup that toppled the elected Pres. Mosaddegh and gave the Pahlavi Shah absolute power (see especially Stephen Kinzer's book, *All the Shah's Men*); CIA training of SAVAK, the Shah's hated secret police; U.S.-led sanctions against Iran following the 1979 revolution that overthrew the Shah; U.S. support of Iraq in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War; the Iran-Contra Affair in 1985-6; and Pres. Bush's refusal to conclude a nuclear pact with Iran in 2003. At the same time, Khani was critical of theocracy in Iran, which gives one Supreme Leader the major state power as well as a religious aura. He was also critical of Iran's support for Hamas and Hezbollah.

**Anna Verhoye** is an activist for peace and social justice, as well as a Communications Instructor at Dakota County Technical College (Rosemount, MN). She is founder/director of the Learning Through Serving Consortium, in which students at more than eight colleges and universities in Minnesota, Missouri, and Pennsylvania get involved in service-learning projects. She is also founder/chair of La Paz International, a group that takes college students and community members to justice-challenged countries such as Guatemala, Haiti, Tanzania, Thailand, and India, to learn first-hand about critical issues of poverty, environmental and economic justice, genocide, and war crimes. In her presentation, "Global Journeys: International Peace and Justice Education", Verhoye shared that she'd led students in volunteer projects for eight years before deciding that her efforts were counterproductive. She characterized her former approach as the charitable giving of a narcissistic do-gooder: go to a poor area, dump money and other stuff on people there, and return to your own community feeling self-satisfied. As an antidote, she encouraged the audience to

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## MIIE Conference *continued from page 43*

check out “To Hell with Good Intentions”, Ivan Illich’s speech to student volunteers in Cuernavaca, Mexico, in 1968 ([http://www.swaraj.org/illich\\_hell.htm](http://www.swaraj.org/illich_hell.htm)). Nowadays, she and her students focus on building relationships of trust with those they are serving and learning from. They pay to be taught valuable skills by Guatemalans, such as cooking authentic local dishes, building roofs, and constructing buildings.

**Richard Barnes**, Head of the Global Engagement Centre at Robert Gordon Univ. (Aberdeen, Scotland), described the “Pathways to Scotland” study-abroad program that he created. It offers rich educational opportunities to students at 2- and 4-year colleges through articulation agreements. For example, Lorraine County Community College (Elyria, OH) offers study abroad opportunities there, and in turn Lorraine as well as the Univ. of Cincinnati are welcoming students matriculating from Scotland. A two-week Summer Program offers transferable course credits in Aberdeen, especially for students in business and the social sciences. Students’ tuition and accommodations in Scotland are subsidized, and they can even work up to 20 hours per week. A minimum of 10 students each Summer from a given school is required for participation. Among the many other opportunities are a Study Abroad Masters and an MBA online partnership for business students.

### Global Perspectives in the Humanities

In “Contemporary Artists as Stewardship Emissaries”, **Jjenna Hupp Andrews**, who teaches Art History and Studio Art at Delta College (University Center, MI), described an instructional module that she developed in conjunction with an MIIE Summer Workshop. The module explores examples of artist-activists for an upper-level course in contemporary art. Her course had already included discussion and scouting of graffiti and other street art, both professional and non-professional, but beyond this, she explained, there are more and more opportunities today for artists to become activists. Examples include the well-known Robert Mapplethorpe in the U.S. and Ai Weiwei in China; the Mexican-American James Luna in California; and the Undocumented Migration Project (<http://undocumentedmigrationproject.com>) based at the Univ. of Michigan. As part of the module, which is infused throughout her course, each student creates an artwork inspired by or in the style of one of the artist-activists that they’ve studied.

“Unflattening the World Through Film and Collaboration” was an especially well-attended presentation made jointly by **Steven L. Berg** (English and History Depts., Schoolcraft College) and three of his students. They described a project in which students, individually or in groups, present their own research on selected countries, films, or other topics. Much of the work has involved collaboration: within a single class, between classes (such as film and history courses), and between schools (Schoolcraft and Miami Univ. of Ohio). They use GoogleDocs to help exchange information, a skill applicable for teamwork in the “real world”. For example, one of Berg’s students worked with peers in a class taught by then-Miami U. English pro-



Prof. Rosalie Warren Yezbick (American Public University System, left) and Helen Ditouras (Schoolcraft College)

fessor Aaron Kashtan to research the book *Unflattening* (Harvard Univ. Press, 2015), Nick Sousanis’s Ph.D. thesis disguised as a comic book, which argues that privileging words over images is partly responsible for a history of narrow, rigid, “flattened” thinking in the Western world. Another student created a poster display for Schoolcraft’s annual Multicultural Fair, in which he delved into Denmark’s film industry through such movies as “9 meter”, “The Danish Girl”, and “Festen”.

“New Points of View: Global Perspective, Critical Thinking, and Composition”, presented by English Prof. **Lauren Smith** (Delta College, University Center, MI), described an instructional module that she developed in conjunction with an MIIE Summer Workshop. Because of her desire to internationalize her composition course on research writing, she uses the Global Learning Rubric to inform and guide her thinking, especially to expand her students’ global awareness. She aims to encourage cultivated critical thinking in her students via their attempt to gather and assess relevant information, use abstract ideas, and come to conclusions/solutions regarding numerous global issues. She also uses the World Values Survey— a common assessment tool used by sociologists and economists— to assist her students in making concrete comparative analyses between varying cultures. Examples of her students’ research topics include alternative medicine in the U.S. vs. Thailand; fatherlessness in the U.S. compared to paternity leave in Sweden; and literacy skills in the U.S. vs. Mexico. Smith found that students who took this globalized version of the course earned, on average, half a grade-point higher than those in the traditional course.

**Rosalie Warren Yezbick**, who lives in the St. Louis area and teaches English in the online-only American Public

University System, described how she revamped her Literary Theory course to include global competency. Her presentation was entitled, “Gooooo! Kicking the Global Habit of Gender-Based Poverty and Exploitation by Increasing Girls’ Access to and Participation in Sports”. In addition to a variety of readings, she has her students watch the 2015 documentary “India’s Daughter” to encourage discussion of feminism and challenge her students’ perceptions of gender equity in the U.S. and abroad. The objective of her course is to analyze the role of soccer and other sports for girls. She uses current research about girls in India and other countries engaged in sports and how their participation challenges traditional models of femininity, helps develop a strong work ethic, and assists in improving physical, mental, and social health. In certain countries there are wonderful soccer programs that provide young girls with skills and knowledge beyond soccer, including health, education, employment, social inclusion, peace, security, political development, sexual reproduction, and violence prevention.

#### Multiculturalism in Math and Science

“Exploring Environmental Stewardship in Peru”, describing an instructional module developed in conjunction with an MIIIE Summer Workshop, was presented by **Gary L. Hauck**, Dean of Instruction and Student Dvlpt., and a Humanities Instructor, at Montcalm Community College (Sidney, MI). Resource management is a crucial issue in Peru, which has the fourth-largest rainforest area of all nations, and where there’s a high deforestation rate due to legal and illegal logging, mining, and other operations, including legal squatting. The three-week module, piloted last Fall, is augmented with information and insights that Hauck gathered during a recent family trip to Peru. He has led or participated in field trips to 50 nations, and has taught courses at colleges in several different countries.

Among other activities, the students each write a 4- to 6-page paper comparing Peru to one other Latin American country on the issue of environmental stewardship. The module periodizes the issue as Precolonial, Colonial, and Postcolonial. The indigenous religions of the region, which were animist and polytheistic, saw a close interface between nature and spirit. Such beliefs helped sustain a lifestyle based on terrace farming of the Andean slopes. The Urubamba River, a tributary of the Amazon, was considered sacred as a giver of life, while the heights of the Andes were revered as untouched by the evil and corruption that the gods had washed away in primeval times. But when the Spanish conquistadors arrived, they were assisted by many of the tribes that resented Incan imperial rule. Over the decades of European subjugation, the Indian people blended indigenous beliefs with Catholicism, a synthesis known as *syncretism*. In modern times, Peruvians have tended to ignore any connection between spiritual beliefs and the management of natural resources, a view that supports the prevailing system of intense extraction and rapaciousness. For example, streams in Peru are becoming polluted with the mercury used by small-scale miners and prospectors in their extraction of gold from ore. One countervailing trend is the emergence of an outlook known as *ecospirituality*.

“Infusing Sustainability and Stewardship in the Mathematics Curriculum” was a presentation by Prof. **Jonathan Oaks** (Macomb Community College, MI) describing an instructional module that he developed in conjunction with an MIIIE Summer Workshop, and piloted in Winter 2016. In conjunction with his campus library’s annual focus on a country or other theme, Oaks had his introductory statistics students, who are primarily ESL learners, create poster projects related to sustainability in Canada. In class, they learned about various methods for gathering data and calculating statistics, and also principles of critical thinking and Polya’s four-step problem-solving process. After Oaks showed the students positive and negative examples of earlier projects, they brainstormed ideas and each selected a topic. Each project was submitted in phases: first a proposal, then a rough draft with a list of facts and images, and finally the completed poster for library display. The class had a panel discussion sharing what was learned, and each student wrote a reflection paper about what s/he had learned overall about sustainability and statistics in Canada.

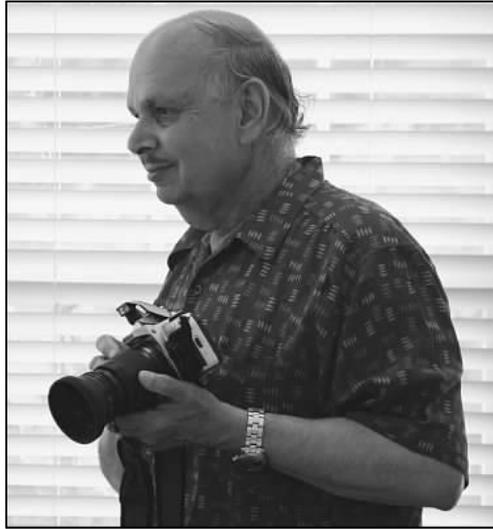
In “A Solid Problem for Calculus from Sharaf al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī”, Mathematics Prof. **Randy Schwartz** (Schoolcraft College) argued that math classes can be enriched by incorporating some of the historical advances made outside of Europe. Medieval Islam was actually an engine for discovery in math and science; its doctrine of *al-tawhīd*, or unity within multiplicity, encouraged scholars to study every facet of the universe as a way to better know God. Further, certain mathematical techniques were developed specifically for calculation of Qur’ānic inheritance, prayer times and directions, religious holidays, etc. Schwartz has created several written, self-paced modules about this for various math courses; the students begin them in class and then complete them at home. He presented an example that he’s recast as a story problem: a hospital worker wants to cut a six-meter wooden pole into two pieces, from which to drape one square and one rectangular section of curtain, both having the same height. The task is to determine how to do so in order to maximize the volume that’s curtained off. In the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, al-Ṭūsī figured it out by finding a local maximum of a cubic polynomial via solving a quadratic equation derived from it. The example illustrates how Islamic mathematicians absorbed ancient Greek knowledge and then pushed it into wholly new directions.

**Aquair Muhammad**, a Physics adjunct instructor at Kalamazoo Valley Community College in Michigan, presented “Properties of Water: Ritual and Physical”. For a beginning physics course, he has created a module that uses water and its properties to broach questions of culture and worldview. He and his students learn about water-related rituals involved in Ayurveda Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, and Ifa spirituality— such as pouring, cleansing, purifying, and floating— as a source for physics problems related to volumes, weights, flow rates, buoyancy, etc. The module counts as 5% of a student’s grade and takes three forms. Once each week in class, the students watch a video showing a ritual or traditional use of water, and then discuss it for 10 minutes in order to create their own story problem. Outside of class, they work on one additional such story problem per week, and they complete four related online “labs” during the semester. •

## In Memoriam: Virinder Chaudhery

(Oct. 1, 1940 – Jan. 24, 2016)

Early this year we lost Dr. Virinder Kumar Chaudhery of Northville, MI, an artist and photographer who taught Humanities for many years at Schoolcraft College. He was the husband of full-time English Prof. Sumita Chaudhery and, like her, a great friend of our International Institute. Prof. Josselyn Moore, SCII Co-Chair, remembered him as “a quiet, thoughtful man, with an enormous talent, and an even greater heart.” A memorial was held at the Hindu Temple of Canton, MI, on Feb. 5.



Vini was raised in the state of Punjab, India, in a place and time where large communities of Muslims, Hindus, Christians, and Sikhs lived side by side in peace and mutual respect—and that left an indelible stamp on his outlook. He studied Art at Delhi Polytechnic and, after coming to the U.S., earned a Ph.D. in Administration of Art at the Univ. of Michigan. He worked as a teacher and ESL/bilingual counselor for many years at multicultural Hamtramck High School, and he also taught part-time at Schoolcraft, Wayne County Community College, and Oakland University.

As a photographer and artist working in several media, Dr. Chaudhery created a variety of works on Indian themes and nature, and exhibited them at several galleries in Michigan and in Washington, DC. He was already an accomplished painter when he returned to India around 1970 to learn to play the *tabla*. He enjoyed creating fusions of Punjabi with Bengali and other regional music and dance. In the 1970s, he and Sumita helped found an organization that taught Indian arts to local children for some 20 years. The couple had two daughters of their own, and three grandchildren.

Along with Sumita, Vini contributed to SCII meetings and helped to promote and distribute our magazine. In October 2004, as part of our Focus Middle East speaker series, he gave a campus talk on “The Rise of Sufi Thought in the Muslim World”. An exhibit of his, “A South Asian Sojourn”, graced the atrium at Bradner Library in March-April 2009 in conjunction with the Focus South Asia project. On display were his photographs of temples and other sites in India, including the Taj Mahal, as well as his paintings in oil, acrylic, and watercolor on various themes and interpretations pertaining to Buddha’s life and Indian mythology. •

## In Memoriam: Suzanne Kaplan

(Apr. 27, 1937 – Feb. 13, 2016)

A sudden illness took away our friend Suzanne Beth Kaplan of West Bloomfield, MI. She an Emeritus Professor at Schoolcraft College, where she had taught English full-time from 1964 to 2002. A memorial was held at The Dorfman Chapel in Farmington Hills on Feb. 28.



A colleague, Emeritus Professor John Nathan, marveled that Sue “had an amazing intellectual curiosity.” She was conversant in all kinds of writing, poetry, drama, and film, and was a great lover and collector of paintings, sculptures, and crafts, dozens of which were displayed in her home. Friends also recalled that she was never afraid to speak her mind or express her opinion—she had the courage of her convictions.

Suzanne grew up in a Jewish family in the city of Detroit, and she earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in English at Wayne State University. In her long career she inspired countless students. During 1975-94 she directed, with her department colleague Gordon Wilson, the innovative program Independent Human Studies (later renamed Academic Options), in which adult learners earned credits by doing honors-quality research not tied to any established course. During 1981-89 she served on the Michigan Council for the Humanities in various capacities, including Chair. With her former husband Lewis she had two daughters and a grandson.

Throughout her life Sue was a gifted teacher and learner. In retirement, she led groups that met regularly to discuss films, books, and world issues; gave lectures for various organizations; wrote and published book and film reviews and, in *Discover* magazine, science articles; docented at Cranbrook House; and recorded audio tapes for the blind. She was also an incurable traveler. On a large world map in her basement she inserted push-pins wherever she’d visited: all over North America and Europe, plus Turkey, Finland, the Baltic republics, Russia, Japan, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, Australia, South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Argentina, Chile, Peru—the list goes on!

Given her interest in the world, and her world of interests, it was natural that Sue took a liking to *International Agenda* and generously helped to distribute and contribute toward it. We used several of her photos and captions from Finland, Estonia, Russia, Vietnam, and Cambodia in our W’13, W’15, and F’15 issues. We are honored and humbled to know that her book review “Cultural Vitality in a Nation of Immigrants”, in our W’16 issue, was her last big writing project, one that she selflessly started and finished during her illness despite knowing how little time she had left. •

## It's a Multicultural World— Right in Our Backyard!

**Jun. 4 – Oct. 23, 2016:** “What We Carried: Fragments from the Cradle of Civilization”, an exhibit by photographer and author Jim Lommasson documenting what Iraqi and Syrian refugees took with them to America. Arab-American National Museum, 13624 Michigan Avenue, Dearborn. For more information, call 313-582-2266 or visit the website <http://www.arabamericanmuseum.org/>.

**Sep. 17, 2016:** Festival of India, organized by miindia.com. Southfield Pavilion, 26000 Evergreen Road. For info, see <http://www.miindia.com/>.

**Sep. 17-18, 2016:** Fourth annual Ann Arbor Russian Festival, featuring authentic culture, food, entertainment, and shopping. St. Vladimir Orthodox Church, 9900 Jackson Road, Dexter. For more information, visit the website <http://russianfestival.stvladimirami.org/> or contact Nathan at [nathanlongan@gmail.com](mailto:nathanlongan@gmail.com) or 734-678-8042.

**Sep. 23 – Oct. 16, 2016:** South African playwright Athol Fugard’s “Sizwe Bansi is Dead”, exposing the cruel and arbitrary rule of apartheid. Matrix Theatre Company, 2730 Bagley Street, Detroit. For info and tickets, call 313-967-0599 or see <http://www.matrixtheatre.org>.



**Sep. 29, 2016:** Jamaican musician Ziggy Marley in concert. Sound Board/ Olympia Entertainment. 8 pm. Motor City Casino Hotel, 2901 Grand River Avenue, Detroit. For information and tickets, call Ticketmaster at 800-745-3000 or see [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).

**Sep. 30, 2016:** Navratri Garba celebration with live music and catered dinner. Schoolcraft’s version of the Hindu festival that traditionally marks the beginning of autumn and celebrates the goddess Durga. A fundraiser for the Schoolcraft Student Food Pantry. Sponsored by the Student Activities Office and the Asian Student Cultural Association. 7 pm – 12 midnight. VisTaTech Center, Schoolcraft College, 18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia. For advance tickets (\$15), e-mail [sao@schoolcraft.edu](mailto:sao@schoolcraft.edu) or call 734-462-4422.

**Oct. 5, 2016:** Filmmakers Sophia Kruz and Meena Singh host a test-screening of their upcoming 90-min. documentary “Little Stones”, which explores the role of art in the global empowerment of women and girls. The screening will be followed by an audience Q&A. This event is free and non-ticketed, but registration is requested by Sep. 28 at <http://cew.umich.edu/events/test-screening-little-stones>. 6:30-9 pm. Michigan Theater, 603 East Liberty Street, Ann Arbor.

**Oct. 9, 2016:** Bollywood Symphonic Music concert. 6:30 pm. Seaholm High School Auditorium, 2436 West Lincoln Street, Birmingham, MI. For info and tickets, call Rajesh Sharma at 248-404-5165 or see <http://www.miindia.com/>.



**Oct. 13-15, 2016:** “Layla and Majnun”. The lyrical choreography of the Mark Morris Dance Group, the soulful voices of Azerbaijan’s Alim Qasimov and Fargana Qasimova, the vibrant musicality of the Silk Road Ensemble, and the striking visual palette of British painter Howard Hodgkin combine in this world-premiere performance of an ancient Persian love poem. Power Center, Univ. of Michigan, 121 Fletcher Street, Ann Arbor. For information and tickets, call 734-764-2538 or see <http://www.ums.org/>.

**Oct. 15, 2016 – Jan. 29, 2017:** Exhibit, “Japanese Prints of Kabuki Theater”. Univ. of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 South State Street, Ann Arbor. For info, call 734-764-0395 or see <http://www.umma.umich.edu/>.

**Oct. 22, 2016 – Jan. 22, 2017:** Exhibit, “Traces: Reconstructing the History of a Chokwe Mask”. Focuses on one artwork from UMMA’s African holdings: a Chokwe mask that was collected in 1905 near the Angolan city of Dundo. Univ. of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 South State Street, Ann Arbor. For info, call 734-764-0395 or see <http://www.umma.umich.edu/>.

**Oct. 26-29, 2016:** “Testimonios de Una Guerra/Testimonials of War”, an exhibit on loan from the Mexican Consulate of Detroit, displaying photos of the 1910-20 Mexican Revolu-

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## Multicultural Calendar *continued from page 47*

tion. Accompanied by several other events, including a talk on the late imperial site of Inca-Caranqui in northern Ecuador; and talks, a film, and hands-on activities related to Day of the Dead/Dia de los Muertos. Albert L. Lorenzo Cultural Center, Macomb Community College Center Campus, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Twp., MI. For info, see <http://www.lorenzoculturalcenter.com/>.

**Oct. 29, 2016:** “Shanghai Nights”, performed by Shanghai Acrobats of the People’s Republic of China. 7 pm. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Twp., MI. For information and tickets, call 586-286-2141 or visit the Macomb Center website at <http://www.macombcenter.com/our-season/Events.html>.

**Nov. 4, 2016:** Iraqi singing legend Kadim “Caesar” Al Sahir in concert. 8 pm. Masonic Temple Theatre, 500 Temple Avenue, Detroit. For info and tickets, contact the box office at 313-638-2724 or <http://themasonic.com/>, or Ticketmaster at 800-745-3000 or [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).

**Nov. 6 and 13, 2016:** Seventh annual Romanian Film Series. 3:30 – 7:30 pm each day. Free admission. Helmut Stern Auditorium, Univ. of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 South State Street, Ann Arbor. For info, call 734-764-0395 or see <http://www.umma.umich.edu/>.

**Nov. 9, 2016:** The Lizt Alfonso company presents “Dance Cuba!”, combining elements of flamenco, ballet, and contemporary dance with Spanish and Afro-Cuban rhythms. 8 pm. Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts, 350 Madison Street, Detroit. For info and tickets, call 313-887-8500 or see <http://www.musichall.org/>.

**Nov. 16, 2016:** Jake Shimabukuro in concert. A virtuoso ukulele player who combines Hawaiian tradition with modern rock, jazz, blues, funk, bluegrass, classical, swing, and flamenco. 7:30 pm. Hill Auditorium, Univ. of Michigan, 825 North University Avenue, Ann Arbor. For info and tickets, call 734-764-2538 or see <http://www.ums.org/>.

**Nov. 18-20, 2016:** International Festival, featuring authentic food, music and dance performances, crafts and goods, and children’s activities. Sponsored by the City of Southfield and the International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit. Southfield Pavilion, 26000 Evergreen Road. For info, see <http://iimd.org/events/> or e-mail Nada Dalgamouni at [nada@iimd.org](mailto:nada@iimd.org).

**Nov. 18-20, 2016:** 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Ann Arbor Polish Film Festival. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty Street, Ann Arbor. For info, see <http://www.annarborpolonia.org/filmfestival/>.



## Global Fridays

Global Fridays is a monthly series showcasing the finest in world music, dance, film, and performance art. Programs are at 8 pm in the Lower Level Auditorium of the Arab-American National Museum (13624 Michigan Avenue, Dearborn). Supported by Ford Foundation, DTE Energy, Comerica Bank, and others. For info and tickets, visit the webpage <http://www.arabamericanmuseum.org/gf-fall-2016>.

**September 16, 2016:**

**Dafnis Prieto’s Si O Si Quartet (Cuban jazz)**

**October 7, 2016:**

**Noura: A staged reading by Heather Raffo**

**October 28, 2016:**

**Raman Kalyan & Deepak Ram (Indian classical)**

**December 9, 2016:**

**Karim Nagi: Detour Guide (Multimedia storytelling).**

## The Ark

International music is featured in the following selection of offerings at The Ark, an intimate 400-seat club located at 316 S. Main Street, Ann Arbor. For info and tickets, call 734-761-1800 or see <http://www.theark.org/>.

**September 15, 2016:**

**Altan (Irish traditional)**

**September 19, 2016:**

**Diego Figueiredo (jazz, bossa nova, and classical guitar)**

**December 2, 2016:**

**Enter the Haggis (Canadian-Scots band)**

**December 17, 2016:**

**Blackthorn (a musical ramble across Ireland).**