

## *Global Education*



Dr. Mitra's students take a photo with local men in India. Courtesy of Fannezha Ford.

Studying abroad has its roots in the tradition of the Grand Tour, when wealthy youth would complete their education with a trip around Europe, absorbing the great works of Western civilization. This past summer, Wake Forest students took part in a more contemporary variation on this tradition in the Middle East and South Asia, studying in Morocco, India, and Indonesia.

Students in Morocco participated in a homestay with family in the city of Fes. They had the option of studying either French or Arabic

in addition to a religion course taught by Dr. Darlene May (Arabic) on Islam in Morocco.

Dr. Ananda Mitra (Communications) headed a six-week program in India, teaching a class that dealt with the issues of cultural sustainability and globalization. Participants travelled to cities throughout India, such as Delhi and Calcutta. Senior Communications major Fannezha Ford called it was the "most wonderful experience of my life".

Dr. Mitra will return to India again this coming summer. In addition, the program will offer

two new summer options. Dr. Nelly van Doorn-Harder (Religion) will take students to Indonesia for a one-month study of Islam, as well as the numerous other religions that make-up and influence the culture of the country. Dr. Michaelle Browers (Political Science) will take a group of students to Cairo, Egypt for six weeks to study Arabic and the politics of identity in this recently transformed state.

Information about these programs and applications can be found online at <http://studyabroad.wfu.edu>.

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### *Faculty Focus: Jarrod Whitaker*



Dr. Jarrod Whitaker, Department of Religion

This March saw the release of a new book by the Religion Department's Dr. Jarrod Whitaker, entitled *Strong Arms and Drinking Strength: Masculinity, Violence, and the Body in Ancient India*. The book is an ex-

amination of how masculinity was constructed in the Rgveda, the oldest Sanskrit text in India. According to Dr. Whitaker, the Vedic priests used hymns and rituals in order to enforce norms of masculine behavior in their society, particularly through the preparation and consumption of a sacred beverage called *soma*.

According to Dr. Whitaker, body theory played an important part of his study of the construction of masculinity. In *Strong Arms and Drinking*

*Strength*, he discusses how institutions shape people's conception of their bodies. "It is about the body, not just as a feeling body, but how our social bodies are presented symbolically", he said. Dr. Whitaker's book has been published by Oxford University Press.

"THE GREAT THING  
 ABOUT THIS  
 PROGRAM IS THAT IT  
 IS ESTABLISHED, AND  
 I LOOK FORWARD TO  
 CONTRIBUTING TO  
 ITS ONGOING  
 DEVELOPMENT" -  
 CHANCHAL DADLANI

### *Faculty Focus: Chanchal Dadlani*



Dr. Chanchal Dadlani, Art Department  
Middle East and South Asia

Studies is pleased to welcome a new faculty member this year: Chanchal Dadlani, in the Art Department. She received her doctorate in the History of Art and Architecture from Harvard University, and was also a Mellon Fellow at Columbia University before coming to Wake Forest. Dr. Dadlani teaches courses in Islamic and

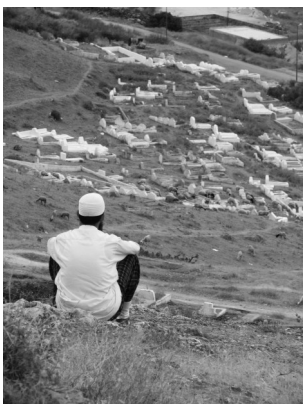
South Asian art and architecture; her broad interests include Mughal art and architecture, cross-cultural exchanges between India and Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and contemporary South Asian art. Dr. Dadlani says she looks forward to making connections and collaborating with the faculty here.

### *Student Achievement: Richter Scholars*

This summer, several students travelled to the Middle East for research after having been awarded Richter Scholarships by the university. The recipients were Stephanie Yep, Charles Klug, Jawad Wahabzada, Jon Bougher, Carrie Stokes, Rachel Handell, and Kendall Hack. Yep re-

searched homosexuality and Islamic law in Morocco and Klug studied Arab-Israeli relations in Israel and Palestine. Wahabzada and Bougher collaborated on a documentary, *Unseen Children*, which is expected for release in 2012. The two have also been featured on CNN. Stokes,

Handell, and Hack conducted research on the development of service opportunities in Ladakh, India.



A man interviewed by Stephanie Yep while in Morocco. Courtesy of Stephanie Yep.

***Minorities in Islam/Muslims as Minorities:  
An Upcoming International Conference at WFU & Call For Papers***

The presence of religious, ethnic, and other minorities in Muslim-majority contexts challenges conceptions of citizenship, community, and the state premised on Islamic identity. At the same time, nearly one-third of the world's Muslims live as minorities in 149 countries, facing diverse, complex challenges as they attempt to maintain their Islamic identity while negotiating their socio-political context. A body of scholarship on Muslim minorities is growing in parallel with analyses of the ways that contemporary Islamic thought seeks to account for the incorporation of non-Muslims in Muslim majority communities and politics. Despite their intertwined subjects, these two areas of research tend to be treated separately: while the spread of Muslims across the globe has diversified their experiences, as Peter Mandaville argues, diasporic communities, transnational social movements, and modern information and communication technologies contribute to a wider Muslim public sphere. Islamic thinkers who attempt to address "Muslim concerns" must realize that while one part of their community is grappling with diverse minorities in their midst, another is dealing with their own experiences as minorities.

Next fall, the Middle East and South Asia Studies Program will hold an international Conference on the campus of Wake Forest University on October 19-20, entitled "Minorities in Islam/Muslims as Minorities." The aim of the conference is bring together scholars working on two questions often treated separately. The first day's program will feature scholars working on questions generated by attempts in Muslim-majority contexts to grapple with minorities in their midst; the second day's program will highlight research on the experiences of Muslim minorities throughout the world. Synthesis and dialogue will be facilitated by asking presenters from one day to serve as respondents on the other day and keynote speakers whose research explicitly addresses the intersections between the two areas of research. We plan to publish the best papers from the conference. Conference co-coordinators, Michaelle Browers and Nelly van Doorn-Harder invite paper proposals on the following topics:

- philosophical, historical, contextual, and critical assessments of Islamic thought and practices that broach the challenges raised by minorities in Islamic contexts;
- analyses of the ways that minorities have contributed to the development and transformation of Islamic concepts of identity, citizenship, community, and/or the state;
- Islamic conceptions of, and approaches to, religious and ethnic minorities and other groups marginalized by gender or sexuality;
- strategies for negotiating difference at the level of state or society in Muslim-majority contexts;
- case studies of Muslims living in non-Muslim contexts or minority Islamic trends or sects within Islamic contexts;
- studies of the politics of communalism and the marginalization/radicalization or integration/ assimilation of Muslims as minorities;
- studies of transnational organizations and institutions and/or the use of new communication technologies to connect Muslims throughout the world; and
- assessment of the ways that Muslim conceptions of faith, citizenship, and community have been negotiated in Muslim-minority contexts.

Scholars interested in participating are asked to send abstracts of under 500 words to both Michaelle Browers ([browerm@wfu.edu](mailto:browerm@wfu.edu)) and Nelly Van Doorn-Harder ([vandoopa@wfu.edu](mailto:vandoopa@wfu.edu)) no later than December 20, 2011.

# MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA STUDIES

*The Middle East and South Asia studies program organizes events, provides study abroad opportunities and offers an undergraduate minor, all aimed at providing students with an opportunity to engage in a multidisciplinary study of the history, politics, literature, peoples, and cultures of the Middle East and South Asia.*

## *Faculty Achievements and Announcements*

- ◆ Neil DeVotta (Political Science) published “Sri Lanka: From Turmoil to Dynasty” in the April 2011 issue of *Journal of Democracy*, and participated in two panels at the 40th annual Conference on South Asia at Madison, Wisconsin.
- ◆ Michaelle Browers (Political Science) published an article, entitled “Official Islam and the Limits of Communicative Action: The Paradox of the Aman Message” in *Third World Quarterly* 32:5 (2011), 943-958. She also presented her research at the Association for Political Theory and the Center for Academic Shi’i Studies this fall.
- ◆ Sandya Hewamanne (Anthropology) received a National Humanities Center residential fellowship to write a book on garment factory workers in Sri Lanka. She presented a paper on militarization and Sri Lankan women at a workshop at Harvard University this April. Only nine scholars were invited to this workshop on gender and militarization.
- ◆ Ananda Mitra (Communication) will be leading the study abroad trip to India in the summer of 2012 as he has done for the past two summers. He also supervised Carrie Stokes (senior), Rachel Handel (senior), and Kendall Hack (Fellow in the Office of the Provost) on a program in Ladakh where the students and the fellow conducted research to develop service opportunities in the mountain deserts of Ladakh, India. The project was supported by the Richter Scholarship and the Institute of Public Engagement.
- ◆ M. Raisur Rahman (History) published a peer-reviewed article entitled “Gandhi’s Trials and Errors: Experiments in Life and Politics” in the July 2011 issue of *History and Sociology of South Asia*.
- ◆ Penelope Sinanoglou (History) published a chapter entitled “The Peel Commission and Partition, 1936-1938” in a volume edited by Rory Miller and entitled *Britain, Palestine and Empire: The Mandate Years*, published by Ashgate.

For additional information about faculty, events, course offerings, study abroad opportunities, minor requirements, etc., of the Middle East and South Asia Studies Program, please visit our [website at: www.wfu.edu/politics/MESAminor](http://www.wfu.edu/politics/MESAminor)