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Newsletter of the Schoolcraft College International Institute (SCII)

International Agenda

THE PROMISE OF ASIA



A Saturday afternoon in the public square in the center of Chóngqing, which lies in the Sichuan region of western China. Photo by Emeritus English Prof. Gordon Wilson, Spring 2006.

*What kind of world will
these youngsters inherit?*

The Focus East Asia project begins at Schoolcraft College this January. Our coverage starts on page 4.

International Agenda

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International Institute (SCII)

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International Institute (SCII)

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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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Kudos

Wayne Glass (Director of Grants), **Cheryl Hawkins** (Assoc. Dean for Liberal Arts), and **Josselyn Moore** (SCII Faculty Chair) teamed up recently to write a grant request to the U.S. Dept. of Education for funding to support the International Institute and other international activities on campus. The request, submitted in November, was made under the Federal Higher Education Act's provisions for Title VI funding, which is devoted to programs in international education. As SCII has expanded considerably over the past five years and met with success in many of its initiatives, the need for increased funding to promote its sustainability, further growth, and possible restructuring has become clear. A decision on the request is expected in March.

Linda Gutierrez (Sociology) has been appointed the new Focus Series Coordinator for SCII. She succeeds **Sam Hays** (English) in this position, which involves organizing the series of talks, films, and other programs integral to our year-long Focus projects on selected cultural regions of the world. We are grateful to Sam for the two years of devoted and fruitful work that he gave as Series Coordinator. In addition to being an adjunct instructor at Schoolcraft, Linda works at Spring Arbor University as the Program Coordinator for the Masters in Family Studies. She brings a wealth of experience in organizing programs for groups such as the Rainbow Connection, the Pontiac Rescue Mission, and the Pontiac Police Department.

Josselyn Moore's work-study student this school year with the International Institute has been **Matt Flynn**. Matt, who graduated from Livonia Churchill High School in 2007, is a graphic arts major. He plans to transfer to Columbia College (Chicago) for his last two years of undergraduate study.

In conjunction with last year's Focus Europe project, Schoolcraft instructor **Alec Thomson** (Political Science and History) arranged a screening of "Animal Farm" (1954) in room LA-200. The animated adaptation of George Orwell's popular book provides a satirical look at the failure of the Soviet revolution. The date of the screening, Sep. 19, was chosen to coincide with Constitution Day.

Chef **Dan Hugelier** (Culinary Arts) participated in a study trip "Central Mexico, A Culinary Adventure" on Sep. 22-29. The group was led by **Rick Bayless** of Chicago, a well-known writer, restaurateur, and expert on authentic Mexican food who was formerly a graduate student in anthropology at the University of Michigan. The tour, which included not only cooking instruction but also visits to markets, kitchens, and special food events in Mexico City, Puebla, Tlaxcala, and other towns, was worth 36 hours of continuing education credit through the American Culinary Federation. The trip was organized by Worlds of Flavor, an educational travel program sponsored by the Culinary Institute of America and the Viking Range Corporation.

Nahush Joshi, who graduated from Schoolcraft last year and is now majoring in mechanical engineering at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, led in forming the **Asian Student**

Association at Schoolcraft College this past Fall. Within just a few weeks of its formation, the group organized a successful Hindu festival—the Navratri and Bhangra celebration—with over 200 advance ticket sales. The event, held in Lower Waterman from 7pm to midnight on Oct. 19, featured traditional dances and dramatic re-enactments, with appropriate costume, music, and food. The next ASA celebration is planned for Chinese New Year in February.

A. T. Ariyaratne, president of Sarvodaya Shramadana, a self-governance movement in Sri Lanka, spoke about that movement on Oct. 20 at Schoolcraft College and was presented with a certificate of tribute from Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm. Sarvodaya, founded by Dr. Ariyaratne in 1958 when he was still a schoolteacher, provides comprehensive development and conflict resolution programs to villages, and was the largest indigenous organization working on post-*tsunami* relief in the country. Dr. Ariyaratne was a nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005.

Steve Berg (History and English) was appointed this month to a two-year term on the Board of Trustees of the Great Lakes Buddhist Vihara. Located in Southfield, the Vihara serves as temple for the small number of Buddhists in our area—who are primarily from Sri Lanka—and also disseminates Buddhist teachings throughout the region. A monk from this vihara is speaking at Schoolcraft this month (see schedule on page 5).

The **Native American Cultural Club** has organized two interesting public events this year, co-sponsored with SCII. “Henry Rowe Schoolcraft: the Myth, the Man...and the Woman Behind Him” was a Nov. 27 panel discussion about Jane Johnston Schoolcraft (1800-1841) — a talented Ojibwe writer and the wife of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft— accompanied by a performance of one of her drum songs by Dr. **Margaret Noori**, who teaches Native American language and literature at the Univ. of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University. Also included were posters made by students in English 251, as well as traditional handicraft activities and food. The second NACC event is the upcoming presentation by Odawa writer **Warren Petoskey** on Feb. 8 (see calendar on pages 14-15). Faculty sponsors for the club are **Mark Harris** (English) and **Karen Schaumann-Beltrán** (Sociology).

Gerard Mellnick (Business) led in bringing a speaker to the VisTaTech Center last Nov. 1 to make a presentation about strategic business planning in the global environment. The talk, given by **Sylvia B. Vogt**, was entitled “Who’s Afraid of Globalization? Strategic Planning for Business Success”. Vogt, originally from Germany, is VP for Corporate Affairs in the Americas for Robert Bosch LLC, a privately owned corporation developing automotive and diversified technologies, with operations worldwide.

In conjunction with Working with Students for a Better Tomorrow: Mission to Ghana, Dr. **Velonda Thompson** (Computer Information Systems) took a group of local teenagers to that African country last year. They spent time learning about organic farming at the Ahyiresu Naturalist Centre near the village of Aburi, and she had the opportunity to meet with Nutrition and Food Science faculty at the University of Ghana,

just outside the capital city of Accra. Dr. Thompson has done research and writing in the area of health promotion and disease prevention based on the use of yams and other nutritious foods, and she has taught about organic farming and soil testing. The UG faculty invited her to return as a visiting professor from August 2008 to June 2009. She is assembling an interdisciplinary proposal for her visit, one that will benefit both Michigan and Ghanaian students. Chef **Shawn Loving** (Culinary Arts) is coordinating with the project and attempting to arrange for one or two SC culinary arts students to accompany Dr. Thompson for part of her stay in Ghana.

Anita Süess Kaushik (German, French, and Italian) is planning a 13-day group study trip to Europe for May 21 – June 3. The educational tour is open to all students as well as family members and friends. Anita, who is originally from Switzerland, together with a colleague at Macomb Community College, will lead the tour through Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, and France; the travel planning is being done by EF Tours. The trip is a personal undertaking for now; in the future it could be reprised as an actual course.

Robert Frost, newly appointed Assistant Professor of Community College Leadership at Oregon State University (Corvallis, OR), had an article “Global Studies in the Community College Curriculum” in the Schoolcraft-based journal *The Community College Enterprise* 13:2 (Fall 2007), pp. 67-73. The article offers a rationale for global studies, clarifies its relationship with the widely-contested phenomenon of globalization, and makes recommendations regarding global studies programs at community colleges. Dr. Frost was formerly a faculty member at Parkland College (Champaign, IL).

John Hudzik, VP for Global Engagement and Strategic Projects at Michigan State University, has led in establishing **MSU in Dubai**, a new non-profit higher-education institution in the United Arab Emirates. Initially, the school will offer undergraduate and post-graduate degree programs for students and professionals from the region, beginning on a phased basis over the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 academic years. All degrees will be equivalent to those offered by MSU in the United States, and programs will be offered in the same variety of formats including traditional classroom instruction, on-line classes, seminars, symposia, internships, and study abroad. For more info, see <http://www.dubai.msu.edu>.

The **Technology in Education Global Program** is a new curriculum from the School of Education and Human Services at the University of Michigan-Flint. The Global Program leads to a master’s degree emphasizing meaningful use of technology for teaching topics of global importance. The 15-month curriculum includes two 3-week summer residencies in Geneva, Switzerland, with all other coursework offered online. The program is appropriate for anyone interested in the potential of educational technology at a global level. Participants learn to design innovative technology-mediated experiences for learners, and they work with partners drawn from non-governmental organizations and other international institutions. The first cohort began in May 2007, and applications will be accepted through mid-November 2008 for a second cohort to begin in May 2009. For more info, see <http://globalprogram.umflint.edu>. •

Focus East Asia 2008

Schoolcraft Looks Eastward

Throughout 2008, the attention of students, instructors, and staff at Schoolcraft College will be directed eastward as the International Institute unfurls the “Focus East Asia” project. In world affairs the prominence of this region, which includes the countries China, Tibet, Taiwan, Japan, and North and South Korea, has expanded dramatically in recent years. In addition, the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing is the occasion of a major campaign by China to present its best face and to take center-stage as a world power both culturally and economically.

The fact that several individuals among Schoolcraft’s faculty and staff have visited or worked in China has also made East Asia a natural choice as our focus. This is the fifth year that our institute has organized a campus-wide, year-long examination of a selected cultural region. Our first four foci were the Middle East, Latin America, Africa, and Europe.

Instructors and their classes can participate in Focus East Asia in a variety of ways. Notably, Focus Series Coordinators Sam Hays (outgoing) and Linda Gutierrez (incoming) have organized a very ambitious program of campus speakers and films this year about diverse aspects of the region. You, your colleagues, students, friends, family, and members of the community are all cordially invited to attend. Contact Linda (248-910-7999, lgutierr@schoolcraft.edu) to arrange to bring your whole class to such a presentation. You can assign students to write up their reactions to these events, for regular or extra credit. Speakers this Winter include a Buddhist monk, the Japanese Consul-General, and presenters on Asian education, religion, art, and the samurai tradition; see the next page for further information. Schedules containing more details are available in dropboxes around campus, and are also being sent to faculty mailboxes and inboxes.

Instructors themselves can also directly integrate topics relevant to East Asia into their coursework. Be creative in developing ideas and materials for classroom presentations, course readings and assignments, student projects for regular or extra

credit, etc. Two examples that we’ve already heard about:

- As a way to teach how to analyze historical evidence, Steve Berg (History and English) is using the PBS documentary “1421: The Year China Discovered America?” in history classes. This program presents and critiques the controversial claim by Gavin Menzies that a huge imperial armada of Ming-dynasty wooden treasure-ships reached the New World more than 70 years before Columbus. Prof. Berg is also using Chinese history as a theme in sections of English 101 and 102, with each student developing a teaching/learning module designed to aid an instructor in infusing Chinese history into their coursework in a selected discipline. In his English 101 class this Winter, his primary “textbook” is the Univ. of Michigan website China Mirror (<http://www.chinamirror.org>)
- Sarah Olson (Art and Design) plans to incorporate into her art classes this year various themes and techniques that she gathered on her Fulbright GPA study trip to China in Summer 2005. She also will co-present “A Visual Look at China” (see schedule on next page), and later this year will organize a campus exhibit of China-inspired artwork that she created during her Fall 2007 sabbatical.

Items in this newsletter should also help stimulate your thinking.

In addition, the GlobalEYEzers group invites staff and students to join discussions about current events in a global context. Contact Sandy Roney-Hays (srh.online@comcast.net) for further information.

Let us know how you bring some global perspective into your coursework this year! •

Schedule for Focus East Asia Events

Winter 2008	
Wed., Jan. 23 9:30-11:00 am LA-200	Talk, "Buddhist Teachings, Practices , and Meditations" Bhante Sankichcha, Great Lakes Buddhist Vihara, Southfield, MI
Tues., Jan. 29 10:00-11:30 am MC-200	Film, "The Story of the Weeping Camel" (2004) This enchanting documentary follows the adventures of a family of nomadic herders in Mongolia's Gobi region. When a mother camel unexpectedly rejects her newborn calf after a difficult birth, all hope lies with the family's two young boys, who must travel across the desert to find a healing musician.
Thur., Feb. 7 11:30 am-1:00 pm LA-200	Talk, "The Japan-U.S. Relationship" Tamotsu Shinotsuka, Consul-General of Japan in Detroit
Wed., Feb. 13 1:00-2:30 pm MC-200	Talk, "The New Bedford Samurai: 19 th -Century High-Seas Adventures and the Ecological Damage They Spread" Anca Vlasopolos, WSU Dept. of English
Wed., Feb. 20 2:00-3:30 pm MC-200	Talk, "A Visual Look at China" Colleen Case, SC Dept. of Computer Graphics Technology, and Sarah Olson, SC Dept. of Art and Design
Mon., Feb. 25 11:30 am-1:00 pm MC-200	Film, "China from the Inside: Women of the Country" (2006) China's women are argued over at their weddings and have one of the highest suicide rates in the world. Now many are beginning to fight for their rights and their futures. This documentary explores some of China's many contradictions and provides a rare insider's view of its institutions and people.
Wed., Mar. 12 12:00-1:00 pm VT-210	Seminar, "China 2007— An Eye-Opener! Get Ready!" Intended especially for students to learn what they need to know about emerging countries like China. Participants will be able to hear American and Chinese students' opinions about education and the world, gathered by Deborah Daiek and Donna Clack (SC Learning Support Services).
Wed., Mar. 12 3:00-4:20 pm VT-210	Seminar, "China 2007— It's Not Kansas!" Intended especially for instructors to learn about the educational structure, philosophy, and professional development methods used by Chinese educators. Similarities and differences in the Chinese and American systems will be explored, based on information gathered by Deborah Daiek and Donna Clack (SC Learning Support Services) on a recent trip to China.
Mon., Mar. 17 6:30-8:30 pm VT-550	Cultural celebration, Nauryz with Roksonaki The three musicians of Roksonaki, a cutting-edge musical group from Kazakhstan in Central Asia, bring an evening of lecture, demonstrations, and performances to celebrate Nauryz, the Kazakh New Year. Since 1991, Roksonaki have pioneered the fusion of traditional Kazakh music with contemporary rock and jazz. They are touring the U.S. with their producer/ translator and with UM-trained anthropologist Helen Faller.
Thur., Mar. 27 6:00-8:45 pm VT-550	Film, "Farewell My Concubine" (1993) This passionate, exquisitely shot film based on Lilian Lee's novel about two Peking Opera performers and the woman who eventually comes between them, follows the men's lives from their harsh Academy training as boys, to the tumultuous political events of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.
Mon., Mar. 31 1:00-2:30 pm MC-200	Talk, "The Way of the Brush and the Sword: Neo-Confucianism In the Way of the Samurai" Steven Patterson, Marygrove College Dept. of Philosophy
Thur., Apr. 17 10:00-11:30 am LA-200	Talk, "Inside Asian Images: What the Contents of Statues Tell Us About Chinese Religion" James Robson, UM Dept. of Asian Languages and Cultures

A display at a *kimono* festival in Osaka, Japan in Autumn 2006. Photo by Sandy Dilley, an International Business major at Schoolcraft and at EMU, whose article "My Study Abroad Experience in Japan" appeared in our January 2007 issue.



After the Explosion

by Sarolina Chang (Radcliff Library)

On March 6, 2001, 42 students and teachers died at an elementary school in Fang Lin village (Jiangxi province, China), where third graders are required to assemble firecrackers.

I am coming home now, Mother,
I know it is only ten in the morning,
And we've just started the third hour.
I won't be assembling the firecrackers today,
Not at lunch break or after school.

Please don't yell at me when I get home,
Because this time
I don't have to give in my lunch money
For not finishing my daily chore.

Please don't run so fast, Father,
I won't be at school
When you get there.
I am riding this black cloud home
I promise I won't wander far and away.

I've learned a lot
Since I started third grade,
I'm now quite good at math,
Look

1 day
2 hands
10 fingers
20,000 pieces of *paozhu* to make
20 long firecrackers
1 week
6 school days
120,000 pieces of *paozhu* to make
120 long firecrackers.

Don't run so fast, Father.
Don't cry so loud, Mother.
I am coming home.



Sarolina Shen Chang, originally from Taiwan, has worked at Schoolcraft's Radcliff Library since 2001. She came to the U.S. in 1973 for advanced study in American History at the University of Notre Dame, moved to Michigan in 1980, and taught at Wayne County Chinese Language School from 1987 to 1999. In U.S. and overseas journals she has published dozens of poems and other writings, some in English and others in Chinese under the pen-name Si Li. The above poem appeared previously in the *World Journal* (New York/ Taipei) and in the Schoolcraft-based literary journal *The MacGuffin* (Spring/Summer 2003).

Needed: A Sober Look at China

by Randy Schwartz (Editor)

The year 2008 marks the 30th anniversary of China's opening to the West. Since then, the pace of change has been staggering in a country that is home to one-fifth of the Earth's people.

Both the positive and negative experiences from China over the past 30 years make an extremely fertile topic for study and course activities in virtually all disciplines, because they concentrate huge questions in such spheres as culture, politics, philosophy, economics, education, history, and science.

Here are a few indicators of what is happening in China—

- In less than one generation, China has undergone the same degree of industrialization, urbanization, and social transformation as did Europe in two centuries.
- In 2007, China contributed more to the world's total economic growth than did the United States.
- There are more than 100 billionaires in China, and the number is growing rapidly.
- The state-owned China National Petroleum Company became, in 2007, the world's most valuable corporation, with a market capitalization more than twice that of second-place Exxon Mobil.

But the market-oriented, capitalist-style development that has led to China's recent growth raises all sorts of troubling questions—

- There is a huge gap between rich and poor. China is the first world power in modern times that is both rich in aggregate terms and poor on a per-capita basis, with hundreds of millions of rural peasants and urban workers still living in deprivation.
- Development has been allowed to proceed at breakneck speed. According to figures from Beijing, a total of 727,945 industrial accidents occurred in the country in the year 2005 alone, killing 126,760 people. Almost two-thirds of Chinese citizens are worried about food safety, and one-fifth have no confidence in the safety of their drinking water.

- There has not been adequate regard to issues of pollution, resource depletion, and sustainability. Almost incredibly, 16 of the world's 20 most-polluted cities are in China. In 2007, China became the world's leading emitter of carbon dioxide, a primary greenhouse gas.

Sarolina Chang's poem on the previous page provides one vivid snapshot of the problem. In-depth sources of information include a new ethnographic study by Univ. of Michigan sociology professor Ching Kwan Lee, *Against the Law: Labor Protests in China's Rustbelt and Sunbelt* (Univ. of California Press, 2007).

After 30 years of "modernization", what has China been left with: is it *socialism* or *capitalism*? Does it matter? What is the best way to organize things, and might the answer vary from one part of the world to another? These are some of the deeper questions opened up by what we see happening in Asia.



A busy shopping area one Saturday in the fastest-growing metropolis in the world: Chóngqing, which lies in the Sichuan region of western China. Photo by Emeritus English Prof. Gordon Wilson, Spring 2006.

Does Japan Deliver a Superior Education?

by Matt Hartzel

Matthew E. Hartzel of Livonia, MI wrote this essay as a student in English 102 with instructor Sam Hays in Fall 2006. In April 2007, he graduated from Schoolcraft College and received the \$500 second-place award in the annual Pythagorean Prize contest recognizing the best students in mathematics at the College. Matt is currently studying computer and electrical engineering at the Univ. of Michigan-Dearborn.

It is fairly well known that Japanese students consistently score higher than American students in main areas of study, such as mathematics and science. In 2003, Japanese 15-year-olds scored sixth in the world in math and second in science, while American students scored 28th and 22nd respectively, according to an international study involving 41 nations (Schleicher 12, 39). If the Japanese education system is as much better than the U.S. system as it appears, why doesn't the United States try to make its education system to be more like the Japanese? Is The United States foolish for not being more like Japan, or is Japan's education system causing too much stress and frustration for students at a young age?

No education system is perfect, and while the Japanese system may be close to the extreme of overworking students, the U.S. may be closer to the opposite extreme. While Japanese students consistently score higher than American students in main areas of study, the Japanese education system is not completely superior to America's, and there are improvements that can be made to both systems.

Pros and Cons of Japanese Education

There are good reasons why Japanese students rank among the top in the world.

Japanese children are often brought up with strong values of self discipline, effort and perseverance because these values are highly portrayed in Japanese culture. Studies have found that over 95% of Japanese are literate and over 95% graduate from high school; in general, "the average Japanese high school graduate has attained about the same level of education as the average American after two years of college" (Ellington). Competition to pass high school acceptance exams and more rigorous college acceptance exams gives the proper motivation for students to use their previous learning to try to succeed in school (Japan-Guide). In many cases acceptance to a top university guarantees a future job for the student in their chosen area of study, and this is why many students are highly motivated to do well and be accepted to colleges (Kim).

The Japanese school year for elementary through high school students is longer than America's, with only a one-month summer vacation and a few other slightly shorter vacations within the school year. This allows Japanese students to retain more knowledge when going into the next school year. Students' remembering much of their studies from the previous year allows Japanese teachers to request that students use prior knowledge to solve problems along with a new concept, which is better than the typical practices of an American teacher (Feldman 6).

Teaching positions are much harder to obtain in Japan than in the U.S., because Japanese teaching positions have higher salaries, greater prestige, along with stronger, more specific preparations (Ellington). This has tended to prevent the problem of teacher shortages, along with giving greater motivation for teachers to care about getting the job done.

While Japanese schools may appear superior at a first glance, there is more to the situation than just high scores. Japanese public school quality has actually decreased over the past few years because of the government wanting to decrease students' workload. What this has actually led to is a great increase in *Juku* enrollment, which are extra cram classes students can pay to take in addition to regular school work (Rowley and Tashiro 52). *Juku* adds another heap of work, stress, more focus, and steals free time from students. It would appear that the decreased quality of Japanese public schools has actually caused an increased workload for many students. This added stress from overwhelming workloads on top of already high competition and frustration over passing university acceptance exams is one of the reasons for Japan having one of the highest suicide rates amongst teens (Cerralbo).

The lowered amount of work from public schools has also placed a burden on teachers, in that many times teachers end up teaching far ahead of where students are, which is also partially due to students focusing more on their *Juku*. According to research by James Kim, many high school students do not even pay attention in class because passing grades tend to be given even for those compiling very low scores (as low as 35%), and it is also not uncommon for students to pass on to a higher course without passing, or even taking, the prerequisite course. In addition, even though many high schools have acceptance exams, Kim also states that many of these admissions are based on the number of slots open, rather than on exceeding the cutoff grade on the exam. This allows for students to get into higher-ranking high schools with low entrance exam scores as long as other students performed worse than they did.

Some final criticisms often heard about Japanese schools include the system's failure to promote students to become independent, think for themselves, develop cultural

and artistic senses, develop international viewpoints, and develop social skills (Bracey 328).

Pros and Cons of American Education

After looking over the highlighted good points of Japanese education, it may seem hard to pick out positive portions of the education system in the United States.

The areas in which U.S. schools are most admired are their promotion of creativity and individuality in students. While American students are encouraged to be creative and innovative by asking questions, Japanese students rarely, if ever, ask questions. The latter doesn't seem too surprising, considering that in Japan, commonly "the nail that sticks up gets hammered down". The United States is also admired for its approach to developing kids' social and individual skills in their early years of school, instead of the way many Japanese schools get kids right into facts, books and work disciplines at a very young age (Usdan 35).

American schools also tend to have a greater teacher-student relationship for younger to middle aged students, where teachers are often available if a student needs extra help, and teachers may interact with parents to figure out how to better help with a student's special situation. One final plus for the U.S. education system is that many teachers often teach with multiple different styles in an attempt to clarify information for students who may learn differently. For example, use of visual activities, readings, notes, games, and other different methods are common in the U.S., as opposed to Japan's general by-the-book, study-hard curriculum.

Though American schools have a few positive aspects in their favor, they are still not quite up to par with the rest of the world in straight academics. I believe that the system and values in the U.S. have tended to make the kids here lazier in many cases. There is a lack of competition for getting into schools and a lack of motivation to do well. Many American students do not feel that they need to try as hard in their academic work because many teachers and parents are very accepting of lower marks, which may be due to parents often putting more emphasis on kids' extracurricular activities than on their school work (Harper). With generally easy admissions to many universities and community colleges, American students are unmotivated to try to excel in their studies, and instead get by with the bare minimum, retaining hardly any knowledge. Another problem comes from unmotivated teachers, which may result from the low pay generally associated with teaching, especially in beginning years. There is a shortage of teachers in the United States in some fields, which is probably due to the low pay, and this may lead to less educated and qualified people being put into teaching positions, and in the end this hurts the students.

In addition, American school curricula are often based on the use of lengthy cumulative textbooks, which are rarely, if ever, completed within a semester or school year (Ellington).

Probably one of the largest problems with America's education system, besides the kids' lack of motivation, comes from the long summer breaks between school years. During this time many students may forget much of what they learned the previous school year, and then return to school needing to use the first month or so as a refresher. With motivation for students being low, teachers under-qualified, and longer summer breaks, it is no wonder that kids in the U.S. continuously score lower than in Japan and many other countries in main academic fields.

Possibilities for Improvement

I believe there are a number of improvements that can be made to both systems that could help the kids in both countries.

To begin, I will start with improvements I believe can be made in the United States. I believe the U.S. really needs to somehow increase academic competitive levels and deliver a stronger education. Entrance exams, interviews, or other techniques could be used to help keep kids on top of their academic skills, and also help to keep parents behind them and pushing for their kids' success. Another way to help the American education system would be to help motivate teachers. To do this it could help to add more prestige to the field, increase the pay for teachers, and make the learning process toward becoming a teacher more rigorous and specific to the teaching field. Although no kids are going to want to hear it, shortening the summer vacation slightly or requiring several refresher days during the summer could also help to keep students from losing as much between school years.

Now I will present my beliefs on what Japan can do to help improve its students' academic situation. I think the number one thing Japan needs to do is begin putting the effort back into improving their public schools again. Kids' work ethics are usually already in place through family and cultural values, and teachers are well prepared and capable of teaching, so Japan just needs to fix the school curriculum to fit what the students end up needing most. I believe increasing public school quality will help eliminate Japanese students' need for *Juku* to get into high-ranking high schools and universities. The elimination of *Juku* would allow for a drastic decrease in a Japanese student's workload, which would offer students more free time along with decreased stress and frustration. The extra free time and lowered frustrations may help to lower Japan's teen suicide rates, because kids will not be required to spend all of their time preparing for difficult exams. One final thing Japan could try to do to improve its education system would be to help develop younger kids' social and individual skills instead of starting them right into books and facts at a young age. This would allow for Japanese students to explore a creative side to problems and projects and help improve students' individuality.

The changes I have mentioned are all possible solutions to improve each system, and they show areas where both systems could learn from each other. It is not a one-sided

continued on page 13

Books that Open Doors to East Asia

I have selected and described the books below because they offer readers insights into the culture, history, and economic trends in East Asia. Consider incorporating them into your reading and coursework this year. — Editor

Nisbett, Richard E., *The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently—and Why* (Free Press, 2003) [Bradner Library, call no. BF 311 .N565]

A psychology professor at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Nisbett has come to reject his former view that perception and thought are essentially the same in all human cultures. He argues that the Asian worldview is typically broad and contextual, in contrast to that of the West which is analytic and individualistic, seeking to isolate particular objects from their surroundings. He traces these differences to geography and history—survival in Asia placed a greater premium on collective and interdependent activity—and he explores their ramifications in medicine, law, science, human rights, international relations, and other spheres.

Lu Hsun, *Selected Stories* (W. W. Norton, 2003)

Short of actually living in one of their villages, you probably have no more intimate way of knowing the Chinese peasantry than by reading these still-vivid stories from Lu Hsun (1881-1936), one of the great writers of the 20th Century. He unfolds these brief but entertaining tales with a lucid style and a tone that is wry and ironic, at once both critical of and sympathetic to his characters' foibles. Mao Tse-tung called Lu Hsun "a hero without parallel in our history." This English translation by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang was first published in Beijing in 1960; a new introduction by Ha Jin (see below) helps situate the work within Chinese history and literature.

Ha Jin, *Waiting* (Pantheon, 1999)

Winner of the National Book Award, this novel tells the story of a long, chaste love affair between a Chinese army doctor and a nurse that he meets at his hospital. Trapped in an arranged marriage from which he cannot extricate himself, the doctor has to put off his true desires literally for decades—an allegory of life in an authoritarian state. Born in Liaoning province, near the Korean border, Ha Jin himself served in the People's Liberation Army for six years. He came to the U.S. as a graduate student in literature in 1985, and is currently a professor at Boston University.

Nora Okja Keller, *Comfort Woman* (Viking, 1997)

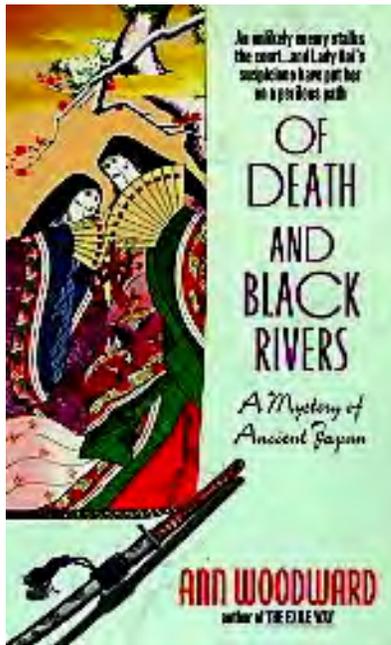
Following the death of her mother Akiko, Beccah learns that during the occupation of Korea in WW2, Akiko had been one of the thousands of "comfort women", as the Japanese euphemistically called the sex slaves that they held in their military brothels. The retrospective story alternates between the point of view of mother and daughter, as Beccah gradually learns that she must protect Akiko from the demons that still haunt her. This was the first novel from Keller, a Korean-American living in Hawaii. Michiko Kakutani, reviewer for the *New York Times*, praised it as "lyrical and haunting... a powerful book about mothers and daughters and the passions that bind one generation to another."

William Poy Lee, *The Eighth Promise: An American Son's Tribute to His Toisanese Mother* (Rodale Books, 2007)

This memoir has been named the 2008 selection for the "Ann Arbor/ Ypsilanti Reads" project. Lee, raised in housing projects in San Francisco's Chinatown, helped organize the first Chinese-American civil rights march (1968) before graduating from UC-Berkeley and heading to law school. More recently, he visited his mother's ancestral village in Toisan (southeastern China), and upon returning to the U.S. he taped 30 hours of reminiscences with her for use in this book. In alternating chapters, mother and son recount episodes in their family's history. We come to see how their lives in America have both preserved and transformed their heritage from China, including the eighth and final marriage promise that Lee's mother had made to her own mother: to live life in complete compassion for all people.

Ann Woodward, *Of Death and Black Rivers* (Avon Books, 1998)

Ann Arbor writer Ann Woodward studied Japanese and researched the country's history in order to craft her Lady Aoi mysteries, set in the Heian period (11th Century). In this installment Aoi, astute lady-in-waiting to a royal princess, becomes suspicious of the behavior of General Miura after he triumphantly returns to the capital, having subdued an uprising by "barbarians" in his homeland in the north of Japan. But when she tries to rescue a naive young woman from the wiles of the general, she is herself ensnared in a web of dark intrigue. The tale provides readers a view of court life in late-classical Japan; a better sense of the country's substantial regional cultural differences; and a glimpse of the status of Japanese



noblewomen in this period. (It is notable that one such woman wrote what is widely considered the world's first novel.)

David Peace, *Tokyo Year Zero* (Knopf, 2007)

On the day of Japan's surrender in 1945, Police Inspector Minami and his squad of detectives are called to investigate the murder of a woman whose body has been found at a Tokyo air raid shelter. Over the coming months, his team—operating within both the tenacious Japanese culture of rigid hierarchy and the brutal, overbearing occupation by Allied troops—uncovers a dark trail of serial homicide. Based on a real-life serial-killer case in post-WW2 Japan, this novel, the seventh by British author Peace, was described by *The Observer* (UK) as “both a gory psychological whodunit and a meditation on the origins of modern Japan.”

James McGregor, *One Billion Customers: Lessons from the Front Lines of Doing Business in China* (Free Press, 2005)

Steering clear of gung-ho boosterism about this subject, the author highlights cautionary tales that take the form of a series of case studies. We read, for instance, about the smuggler Lai Chang-xing, a peasant-turned-billionaire who fled China during an anti-corruption campaign, and about Rupert Murdoch having to kow-tow to the Beijing leadership to get his satellite network STAR TV into the country. McGregor, formerly a China business executive with Dow Jones and bureau chief with the *Wall Street Journal*, dissects problems that imperil the nation's continued rise in the global economy. In addition, he offers American entrepreneurs a view into the mindset of their Chinese counterparts, and a variety of tips for how to do business over there.

Sasha Issenberg, *The Sushi Economy: Globalization and the Making of a Modern Delicacy* (Gotham, 2007) [Bradner Library, call no. TX 747 .I74]

Between roughly 1970 and 1990, the average price paid to Atlantic fishermen for bluefin tuna multiplied by 100, largely because of the world's astoundingly increased craving for morsels of raw fish with rice. How did sushi, until recent decades virtually unknown outside Japan, suddenly become an accepted part of eating habits worldwide? Philadelphia investigative reporter Issenberg follows strands of history, economics, and cuisine, from the Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo to sushi bars in Austin, Texas, to argue that the burgeoning trade in sushi is evidence of globalization's positive impact.

Paul Bracken, *Fire in the East: The Rise of Asian Military Power and the Second Nuclear Age* (Harper Perennial, 2000)

The author, a political scientist at Yale University, shows that with the nuclear “club” expanding in Asia, the West can no longer exercise global military dominance. The implication is that Western capital and culture will not be able to penetrate the continent with impunity as in the past. While he analyzes prospects for arms control and diplomacy to help defuse tensions, Bracken concludes that the process of globalization is at least as likely to result in a dangerous escalation of national rivalries as it is to result in the much-yearned-for era of international union and prosperity.

Joan Stanley-Baker, *Japanese Art*, revised and expanded edition (Thames & Hudson, 2000)

Fascinating and profusely illustrated, this book helps readers understand the painting, calligraphy, decorative arts, and architecture of Japan from its earliest times to the present. Considered by many to be the best introduction to the history of the arts in Japan, this book is the work of an expert at the Tainan National College of the Arts (Taiwan).

Paul U. Unschuld, *Medicine in China: A History of Ideas* (Univ. of California Press, 1985)

Chinese medicine is an international treasure. Its scope stretches from traditional beliefs and practices such as acupuncture and herbal remedies, to today's cutting-edge therapies and research programs. Unschuld, an historian of medicine at the University of Munich, explains the history of Chinese medical theories by relating them to the social, political, and philosophical currents that prevailed in each era, from the Confucian *yin-yang* principle to Taoist macrobiotics, and from Indian Buddhist influences to Marxist doctrines of dialectical materialism. ●

Unlearning the Stereotypes about Arabs and Muslims

by Jehan Saleh (Communication Arts)

The Arab world is a vast land of differing cultures, societies, peoples, and history, and today it is populated with over 700,000,000 people concentrated on two continents, Africa and Asia (Said). The diversity and richness of these lands is seldom revealed in U.S. media. The Middle East, with its vitality, rich culture, tastes and smells is a wonderfully delightful area to explore and one in which you can easily fall in love, as I have.

I have dedicated myself to exploring the way in which mass media influence our perceptions and beliefs about Arabs and Islam. As a Ph.D. student, I would like to gather information about the way in which Arabs and Muslims are viewed by Americans through a series of experiments. At Wayne State University, where my doctoral advisor is Assoc. Prof. Hayg Oshagan in the Department of Communication, I am trying to do some quantitative research to learn what role U.S. television, the Internet, and other forms of media have in creating an image and an audience response regarding Arabs and Muslims.

Very little detail of the human density and the passion engulfing Arab and Muslim life has entered the awareness of U.S. citizens or even those people whose profession it is to report on the Islamic and Arab worlds. The media play a vital role in the way in which viewers and readers feel, think, behave and act towards this ethnic group. In fact it is hardly an overstatement to say that Muslims and Arabs are essentially covered, discussed and apprehended either as oil suppliers or as potential terrorists. Please allow me to briefly introduce you to the impact of these stereotypical images and the ways in which they may influence how you develop your beliefs about Arabs and Muslims, by giving you a brief history of where these stereotypes originated and the power of movies and TV.

Stereotypes of Arab people and the Middle East originated in Europe as a reaction to the spread of Islam under the Ottoman Empire and earlier in Spain and elsewhere. Europeans feared Arabs because they had conquered much of Europe, yet Islam is a religion that was flexible enough to allow all of their citizens to live in one country no matter their race, color, religious convictions or decree. Islam and Arabs ruled much of Spain (Andalusia) and flourished for about 900 years, creating over 75 universities in Spain alone. Scholars from all over the world were sent to places such as Granada, Seville and Ronda to learn about mathematics, literature, music and the like. This growing influence placed a great amount of fear into many Europeans. Much of the stereotypes U.S. viewers see about Arabs and Muslims were brought over to the Western hemisphere by Europeans.



Jehan Saleh in Mecca, Saudi Arabia during her *hajj* (pilgrimage) last month. Her family is from Lebanon.

Hollywood has also played a huge role in shaping the perceptions and understanding about Arabs and Muslims in U.S. culture. American studios are fascinated by Arabs and Muslims, and see the Arabs as an easy subject to portray in film because of the mystery and lack of knowledge about them as a people.

Stereotypes in cinema date back to the early 1920's. From then through the 1930's, 'exotica' and 'folklore' were prevalent themes used to depict Arabs. Arab characters in these films were thieves, rapists, murderers, and anti-Western people. Some examples of these movies are "The Rage of Paris" (1921), where an "Arab kills the husband of a good American" who criticizes Arabs (Shaheen). "The Son of the Sheik" (1926) as well as "The Sheik" (1921) portrayed Muslims as brutal people. Sheiks, who are grouped along with Arab Muslims, are represented as people who are uncivilized, uncompassionate, barbaric, and who destroy the economy, as seen in "Network" (1977) and "Rollover" (1981). You can also see many stereotypes in films such as "Jewel of the Nile" (1985) where an "Arab kidnaps Western women", in "Frantic" (1988) where an Arab directs nuclear weapons at Israel and the United States, and in the movie "American Ninja 4: The Annihilation" (1991) where an Arab influences foreign policies (Shaheen).

How do we educate our students when they are bombarded with views of false reality? Formulating courses on cross-cultural awareness and infusing cross-

cultural awareness into our classroom is pertinent to the growth and development of our students. Furthermore, it will enrich them and give them leverage in the ever-expanding international workplace. Corporate America is rich in diversity, and America is home to millions of foreigners—in fact, it was built by the hands and legs of hard-working immigrants. Arabs and Muslims have contributed to the field of entertainment, science, mathematics, language, civilization, medicine, engineering and more.

U.S. viewers, when subjected to ongoing portrayals of an ethnic group in movies or on TV, begin to shape their reality based on their viewing. The reality is that not all terrorists are Arabs or Muslims. U.S. viewers now have the task of unlearning these stereotypical portrayals. And a fun task it is to unlearn something when it involves a great deal of exploration and adventure. •

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Two Conferences on International Education

February 12–13, 2008

“Essential Building Blocks for International Education”, Second annual International Conference on International Education, FedEx Institute of Technology, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN

More info: <http://conferences.memphis.edu/icie>

Co-sponsored by the Tennessee Consortium for International Studies, Southwest Tennessee Community College, and the University of Memphis.

The keynote speaker is Naomi Tutu, a child of Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, who has raised her voice as a champion of human dignity, taught about race and gender at colleges in the eastern U.S., and served as a development consultant in West Africa.

April 18-19, 2008

15th annual Conference of the Midwest Institute for International/ Intercultural Education (MIIE), Lorain County Community College, Elyria, OH

More info: contact the Editor or Josselyn Moore

Concurrent sessions on infusing global dimensions into many disciplines; regional study of East Asia, South Asia, Russia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America; international issues of gender and religion; opportunities and experiences for overseas study and teaching; organizing and implementing student travel and study abroad; and more.

Education in Japan *continued from page 9*

problem, with America simply needing to change its system to be more like Japan's, as many people have tended to believe. Instead, the United States needs to try to take on a bit more of Japan's academic competitiveness, while Japan needs to teach its students to be more creative and individual. Of course, these changes would take some time to blend with the culture to reach their full effectiveness, but once they did, I believe they would offer a better system for educating the countries' youth.

Neither of these systems are perfect, nor will they become perfect with the suggested changes, but I believe the improvements would better balance the benefits from each system to help create a better educational system for students in both countries. •

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Multicultural Events Calendar for SE Michigan

See also the schedule for Focus East Asia (page 5).

Nov. 15, 2007 – Mar. 30, 2008: “Silver Speaks: Traditional Jewelry of the Middle East”. Selections from the 1,000-piece collection of Marjorie and David Ransom. With their shimmering intricacy and fine craftsmanship, the silver necklaces, bracelets, earrings and other pieces in the exhibit are far more than personal decoration: an Arab woman’s jewelry told you who she was, which tribe and region she belonged to, and her social and marital status. Lower Level Gallery, Arab American National Museum, 13624 Michigan Avenue, Dearborn. For more info, see <http://www.theaanm.org>.

Jan. 11-25, 2008: “Hateful Things”, a traveling exhibit from the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia (Ferris State Univ.). Displays 39 items of material culture embodying the terrible Jim Crow legacy, from the late 19th Century to the present. Sponsored by the SC Season for Nonviolence Committee and others. Lower Waterman Center, Schoolcraft College, Livonia. For more info, see <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/news/jimcrow>.

Jan. 27, 2008: Ninth annual World Sabbath of Religious Reconciliation. An interfaith holy day dedicated to making peace among the religions, races, and nations of the world, featuring calls to prayer in different faith traditions; musical presentations; children’s display of peace banners; and presentation of peace awards. Christ Church Cranbrook, 470 Church Road, Bloomfield Hills. 4-5:30pm. For more info, see <http://www.wsdoyofpeace.org>.

Feb. 1, 2008: “A Night of Mariachi” by the group Alma de Mexico (Soul of Mexico), who have entertained countless audiences with their skill and precision on the *vihuela*, *guitarra de golpe*, *guitarron*, violin, and trumpet. Sponsored by the Global Education Committee. 7:30-9:30pm. Smith Theatre, Oakland Community College— Orchard Ridge Campus, Farmington Hills. For more info, see <http://www.oaklandcc.edu/entertainment>.

Feb 3, 2008: Performance by Mady Kouyate of Senegal, known widely for his playing on the *kora* (a 21-string traditional instrument) as well as *balafon* (wooden xylophone), percussion, and song. Mady comes from a long line of ancestral *djelys*, or *griots*, the musicians and praise singers of West Africa. Free of charge with museum admission fee. 1:30pm. Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, 315 E. Warren Avenue, Detroit. For more info, call 313-494-5824 or see <http://www.maah-detroit.org>.

Feb. 8, 2008: “Historical Trauma and Boarding School Syndrome”, a presentation by Warren Petoskey (Spokesperson, Odawas for Change) about the forcible assimilation of Native American children into U.S. culture at government boarding schools between 1879 and 1918. Sponsored by the SC Native American Cultural Club and others. 6-8pm. Room MC-200, McDowell Center, Schoolcraft College, Livonia.

Feb. 12, 2008: Amir Hussain, “Dispelling Myths and Stereotypes of Muslim and Arab Communities”. Hussain, Assoc. Prof. of Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount Univ., will speak on findings from his book *Oil and Water: Two Faiths, One God*. Part of the “Weaving Our Community” series presented by the Michigan Region of the Anti-

Comerica-Ford Global Thursdays

Every Thursday evening at 7:30pm, Comerica and Ford Motor Company sponsor Global Thursdays at the Arab-American National Museum (13624 Michigan Ave., Dearborn), a series of programs and concerts by diverse local and international performers. Tickets: \$10 general admission, \$12 at the door; discounts for students, AANM members, and series ticket holders. More information can be found at <http://www.theaanm.org>

Jan. 31: C.J. Chenier & The Red Hot Louisiana Band
 Feb. 7: Safaafir, Iraqi *maqam*
 Feb. 14: Abuakwa African Music & Dance Ensemble
 Feb. 21: Le Trio Joubran, Palestinian ‘oud trio
 Feb. 28: Roots Vibration, Caribbean reggae
 Mar. 6: Nadir’s Distorted Soul, Detroit funk and rock
 Mar. 13: Karim Nagi, Egyptian percussion and dance
 Mar. 20: Claudia Calderon, Latin American folk
 Mar. 27: Shashank, East Indian flute
 Apr. 3: Burkina Electric, West African electronica
 Apr. 10: Jere Stormer’s Folk Out II, Mich. acoustic music
 Apr. 17: Babylon Circus, French ska/reggae

University Musical Society

These performances by international artists are scheduled in various venues in Ann Arbor. For more information and tickets, visit <http://www.ums.org>.

Feb. 1: Sérgio and Odair Assad, “Brazilian Guitar Festival”
 Feb. 10: Wu Man on the *pipa*, a Chinese lute-like instrument
 Mar. 12: Leila Haddad, “Gypsy Dances from Rajasthan to the Nile”
 Mar. 29: joint dance performance by Urban Bush Women and Compagnie Jant-Bi
 Apr. 18: Mehr and Sher Ali, “Qawwali Music of Pakistan”

Defamation League. 7 pm. Lawrence Technological Univ., Southfield. For more info, call 248-353-7553.

Feb. 16, 2008: “Chinese New Year Celebration” with the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company, who fuse the dynamic freedom of American modern dance with the grace and splendor of Asian art. 3 pm. Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Avenue, Detroit. For more info, see <http://www.detroitssymphony.com>.

Feb. 16, 2008: Canton International Dance Festival. The Village Theater, 50400 Cherry Hill Road, Canton. For more info, call 734-394-5300.

Feb. 21-24, 2008: “Remembering Ousmane Sembène”. Four features and one short film by director Ousmane Sembène of Senegal, the Father of African Cinema, who died last June at the age of 84. Detroit Film Theatre at Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Avenue, Detroit. For more info, see <http://www.dia.org/dft>.

Feb. 26, 2008: The Chieftains, Ireland's energetic musical ambassadors, take the stage for a rollicking celebration of traditional Irish and Celtic music. Winners of six Grammys, the Chieftains have gleefully entertained audiences for over 40 years. 8pm. Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Avenue, Detroit. For more info, see <http://www.detroitssymphony.com>.

Mar. 7, 2008: Irish folk music by Blackthorn, a Royal Oak-based group famed for its authentic Irish sound laced with gorgeous four-part harmonies. 7:30pm. Student Center Arena, Oakland Community College—Highland Lakes Campus, Waterford. For more info, see <http://www.oaklandcc.edu/entertainment>.

Mar. 13–15, 2008: 38th annual Native American Critical Issues Education Conference. Sponsored by Michigan Indian Education Council. Soaring Eagle Inn & Conference Center, Mt. Pleasant. For more info, see <http://www.mea.org/conferences/08-nativeamerican.pdf>.

Mar. 14-16, 2008: “Nanking” (USA/2007; 107 min.), directed by Bill Guttentag and Dan Sturman. The almost unbelievable story of the Japanese invasion of Nanking, China in the early days of WW2. This film focuses on the efforts of a small group of unarmed Westerners who provided refuge for over 200,000 Chinese. Detroit Film Theatre at Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Avenue, Detroit. For more info, see <http://www.dia.org/dft>.

Mar. 15, 2008: Jin Hi Kim, “Digital Buddha”. A concert of Korean *komungo* (fretted long-board zither) and the world's only electric *komungo* solo with video *mandala* (Buddhist cosmic imagery) and a video mix that is grounded in meditation but utilizes contemporary art technology. 5-6:30pm. Britton Recital Hall, Moore Bldg. (School of Music), 1100 Baits Drive, Univ. of Michigan North Campus, Ann Arbor. For more info, see <http://www.ii.umich.edu/cks>.

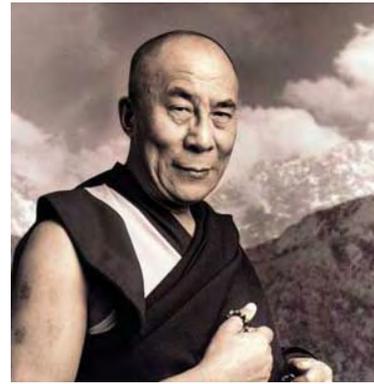
Mar. 20, 2008: Seventh annual SC Multicultural Fair, a vibrant celebration of the international cultures on our campus. Featuring country displays, cultural performances, demonstrations of languages and crafts, and international food. 10am-3pm, VisTaTech DiPonio Room, Schoolcraft College, Livonia.

Mar. 26, 2008: Abraham H. Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, “Evolving Trends of Anti-Semitism”. Part of the “Weaving Our Community” series presented by the Michigan Region of the ADL. 7 pm. Community House, 380 S. Bates, Birmingham. For more info, call 248-353-7553.

Apr. 5-6, 2008: 36th annual “Dance for Mother Earth” Pow Wow. Tribes gather from throughout the Midwest bringing their native music, dance, crafts, and food. Univ. of Michigan, Crisler Arena, 333 E. Stadium Blvd. near Ann Arbor-Saline Road, Ann Arbor. For more info, see <http://www.umich.edu/~powwow>.

Apr. 7, 2008: “Global Roundtables: An Interactive Symposium”. Faculty-moderated discussions about a range of provocative current events and global trends. Designed to allow students from many different disciplines to be exposed to new ideas in a “Did you know?...”-type format, and to practice their critical thinking and argument skills. 10-11:30am. VisTaTech DiPonio Room, Schoolcraft College, Livonia.

Apr. 13, 2008: The African Children's Choir. Aged 7-11, many have lost parents through war, famine, or disease, but each is musically gifted, and their charming smiles and colorful song



The Dalai Lama from Tibet speaks in Ann Arbor on April 20.

and dance will warm your heart. 3pm. Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Avenue, Detroit. For more info, see <http://www.detroitssymphony.com>.

Apr. 20, 2008: The 14th Dalai Lama, Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader, delivers the Peter M. Wege Earth Day lecture on sustainability and environmental issues. The lecture is free, but tickets must be reserved in advance, available beginning Mar. 5. The lecture is 2-4pm at Univ. of Michigan, Crisler Arena, 333 E. Stadium Blvd. near Ann Arbor-Saline Road, Ann Arbor. (The Dalai Lama will also lead three teaching sessions on “Engaging Wisdom and Compassion” on Apr. 19-20 at Crisler, with paid admission.) For more info, see www.DalaiLamaAnnArbor.com.

Apr. 29, 2008: “Immigration Today: Balancing Our Security, Humanitarian and Economic Interests”. Discussion will feature Deborah Lauter, the Anti-Defamation League's civil rights director, and David Koelsch of the Immigration Law Clinic at the Univ. of Detroit Mercy School of Law. Part of the “Weaving Our Community” series presented by the Michigan Region of the ADL. 7 pm. Lawrence Technological Univ., Southfield. For more info, call 248-353-7553.

May 11, 2008: Tiempo Libre performs with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. From their irresistibly danceable mix of high-voltage Latin jazz, to the seductive rhythms of a sultry, tropical night, Miami-based Tiempo Libre is one of the hottest young Latin bands. 3 pm. Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Avenue, Detroit. For more info, see <http://www.detroitssymphony.com>.

May 29, 2008: Dr. John A. Powell of the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at Ohio State Univ., “Impact of a Community Divided: Moving Forward”. Part of the “Weaving Our Community” series presented by the Michigan Region of the Anti-Defamation League. 7pm. Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, 315 E. Warren Avenue, Detroit. For more info, call 248-353-7553.

Jun. 5-8, 2008: The Mambo Kings serve up their explosive blend of Latin jazz and Afro-Cuban rhythms that have made them internationally known. Jeff Tyzik, conductor. Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Avenue, Detroit. For more info, see <http://www.detroitssymphony.com>.

Jul. 9 – Oct. 12, 2008: “Kenro Izu: Sacred Places”. An exhibit of over 60 of Japanese-born artist Kenro Izu's black-and-white photographs of religious sites and monuments in Asia, the Pacific Islands, the Middle East, and Europe. Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Avenue, Detroit. For more info, see <http://www.dia.org>.

Dip Your Feet into an Ocean of World Music

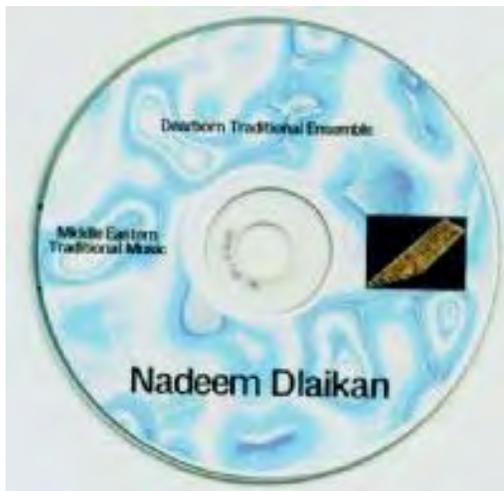
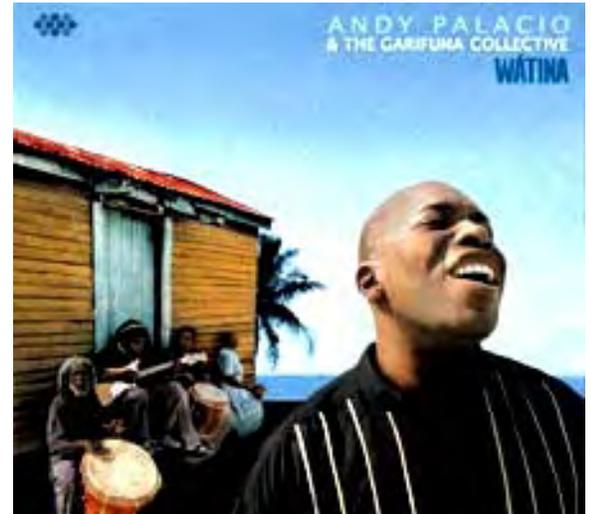
Andy Palacio and the Garifuna Collective

Wátina (Cumbancha Records, 2007)

Available at Amazon.com. Samples and further information at:
<http://andypalacio.rockpaperscissorshop.biz>

Wátina means “I called out”, an apt metaphor for the history of an African people stranded in the Western world. The Garifuna culture grew from the intermarriage between native Caribbeans and a group of West African slaves who shipwrecked off St. Vincent in 1635. Since then, the Garifuna people have fought to maintain their homeland and their unique culture, of which this new CD is a shining example. Their story is told further in the film “The Garifuna Journey”, which formed part of the Focus Africa series organized by SCII in 2006.

Andy Palacio is not only Belize’s most popular musician and performing artist, but a cultural activist committed to preserving his Garifuna culture. This is a stunning new album featuring an all-star, multigenerational lineup of musicians, filled with enchanting rhythms, powerful melodies, and a deep soulfulness.



Nadeem Dlaikan and the Dearborn Traditional Ensemble

Middle Eastern Traditional Music

Available at:

<http://www.arabamericanmuseum.org/shop> (click on “Music & Videos”)

This serene and meditative folk music recalls the gentle Lebanese breezes, and harkens back to an ancient culture of Arab nobility, science, and art.

Born in Alai, Lebanon and now residing in Southgate, Michigan, Nadeem Dlaikan is leader and founder of the Dearborn Traditional Ensemble. The group conserves the traditional musical genres found in Arab music. Dlaikan is an acknowledged virtuoso on his handmade *nai*, a nine-hole, single-reed flute. He grows the bamboo that he uses to make the *nai*, as well as the *munjarah* (five-hole, single-reed) and *mijwiz* (double-reed) flutes. He was honored with the Michigan Heritage Award in 1994 and the prestigious National Heritage Fellowship in 2002. In December 2004, he and his accompanists were the headliners at Schoolcraft College’s Cairo Coffeehouse, a Middle Eastern cultural evening organized by SCII.

Various artists

Tengir-Too: Mountain Music of Kyrgyzstan (Smithsonian Folkways, 2006)

Available at Amazon.com

Created variously with plucked stringed instruments, fiddles, flutes, Jew’s harps, and powerful voices, this intense, pulsating music is rooted in the nomadic culture of mountainous Kyrgyzstan. Some of it is the work of solo artists who will remind you of lonely blues bards, and some is from a full ensemble called Tengir-Too.

The CD is Volume 1 in the “Music of Central Asia” series from Smithsonian Folkways. The recordings in this series, praised as “extravagantly gorgeous” by *New York Times* critic Ben Ratliff, were captured live in travels made by Theodore Levin, an ethnomusicologist at Dartmouth College. The most recent volumes (4-6) feature the Alim Qasimov Ensemble, The Bardic Divas, and the Badakhshan Ensemble, all three of whom appeared in a joint concert at the Michigan Theater (Ann Arbor) this past Oct. 24.

