

## Global Humanities Institute

Report on Learning Opportunities for the Humanities in  
China, India and El Salvador

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*The Global Humanities Institute is a new globalization project of Montgomery College, funded in part through a challenge "Bridging Cultures" grant by the National Endowment of the Humanities. Our purpose is to support the systematic integration of other cultures and countries to the study of the humanities. Our project includes faculty training and support of teaching, cultural community engagement, research and scholarly work, and scholarly exchanges abroad as we travel to China, India, and el Salvador. We invite you to join us as we work to meet the imperative goal of preparing students for a global future. To help us meet our challenge, contact the Montgomery College Foundation at (240) 567-7900 or go to [www.montgomerycollege.edu/onlinegiving](http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/onlinegiving).*



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## **Background**

This report was conducted for the Global Humanities Institute [GHI], an entity at Montgomery College partially funded by a challenge grant from National Endowment for Humanities. It provides findings in four main areas: research, data, facts, and information on the state of the humanities and global humanities, particularly in higher education in China, India, El Salvador, the three academic partners of the Global Humanities Institute; research through various databases, government websites, international education and global study websites, and other resources in order to gain data and information on which universities in India would serve to be suitable for faculty meetings on the humanities; research of relevant cultural locations and sites for the group to visit when in China, India and El Salvador. This includes, but is not limited to, cultural and historical museums. Seasonal events, theater performances, and other significant cultural events are also examined; and last, research results relate the best practices for integrating the cultural awareness piece/program with academics in the classroom.

## **State of Humanities and Global Humanities in China**

Prior to arriving in China and engaging in critical exchange with its faculty and Administrators, our GHI members should have general understanding about the state of Humanities in China. Knowing what trends, themes and approaches that drive the Humanities in Higher Education in China will adequately prepare GHI members to have intelligent exchanges with their hosts. Overall, research revealed that there is an upward swing in interest to increase the presence of Humanities in higher education in China. Humanities offerings are on the rise.

### Current Theories and Curriculum Considerations within the Humanities in China

#### *Anti-poverty Theory*

A major theory that influences Humanities in current institutions of higher education in China was coined “anti-poverty theory” by Nobel Economic Prize winner Amartya Sen, as “lack of capability instead of just low income” (Zhao). GHI members should be aware of this theory in order to understand the influence of 30 years of reform and open policy in the country, and how this reform puts a growing responsibility on colleges and universities to further educate and train the agricultural masses, and how curriculum The anti-poverty theory is meant to contrast with “transfusion-oriented” anti-poverty that emphasizes material inputs rather than capability construction to solve problems. “Capability construction” is capability to enhance people’s awareness to engage in management of community affairs, effectively formulate management systems in rural communities, alleviate villager’s difficulties, improve development, and bolster communication and exchange with outside organizations. In other

words, redistribution of wealth, or even throwing money at the problem, is not a solution. When China entered a 30 year phase since implementing reform and open policy, various reforms and approaches resulted:

- 1) Production group in People's communes to production villages in towns to the self employee to the household contract responsibility system, 2) agricultural tax move from partial to full release, 3) villagers manage affairs in village on own, 4) families replace production groups as agriculture production units, 5) Communities establish network of social management, public service and social support in rural areas, playing a role in welfare, social aids and charity, public security, family planning, hygienic service, environmental protection, and social dispute mediation, 6) villagers' new awareness of laws, rights, economics, regulations in the market, competitive and cooperative approaches for increased wealth, 7) advocacy of modern science and technology, display creativity, seek freedom and happiness. (Sen)

Again, anti-poverty theory has served as a significant impact on current Humanities in China's institutions of higher education. It is one of a variety of theories that GHI members should be aware of before engaging in intellectual dialogue with it Chinese hosts.

### *Poor Theory*

Another theory that presently guides studies in China's Humanities within higher education is "poor theory." GHI members should also be aware of its influence in the educational system to aid meaningful dialogue with faculty and Administrators in China. Poor theory is most prevalent in college texts of Chinese cinema and Chinese urbanization. Less concrete in its definition than anti-poverty theory, it has neither a clear method or is absence of method (Abbas). To go further, it is defined as a method that we can glimpse when we struggle with the anomalous details that don't fit into reading (Abbas). Poor theory has been detailed as revealing images of urban poverty, and with these images of a city more and more tell us less and less about a city. This can be deduced from the effects and distortions provided by cinema, architecture, design and new media (Abbas). With poor theory, it is concluded that we must start with the betrayal of fact. GHI members will certainly go to large urban areas in China. They will encounter the commercial images and depictions laid out before them. These are the same images that Chinese curriculum in the Humanities has begun to question. Poor theory is something for them to consider in the back of their minds in order to not assume what is presented is the true reality.

### *Demand for Independent Thinking in the Liberal Arts*

Chinese instructors of higher education are experimenting more with the inclusion of projects and new curriculum approaches to add independent thinking in the Liberal Arts. This is providing a bridge that did not formally exist between American Faculty, or GHI members, and Chinese Faculty. Traditional Eastern approaches did not tend to look for student participation, option, and/or discussion. But Chinese instructors are increasingly adopting a more Westernized instructional approach. This is being stimulated by leaders in Beijing who are bemoaning a lack of patents, modern inventions and Nobel Prizes (Hvistendahl). The response has been to advocate changes designed to produce more creative graduates. China's elite universities have introduced small residential colleges for undergraduates; this gives more of a community college feel to campus life and programs. GHI members should be aware and appreciative of this growing trend. In addition, other institutions of higher education have unveiled general education programs not previously provided. A sample class approach is that English students at United International College are informed they each have 15 seconds to address the class on a topic-- any topic. This is a major departure from traditional Chinese classroom.

### **State of Humanities and Global Humanities in India**

Before Montgomery College faculty and Administrators arrive in India, knowledge relative to the state of Humanities in the country is necessary. Understanding approaches, themes and trends that fuel the Humanities in Higher Education in India will assist with meaningful intellectual exchanges. Although reports have revealed interest of instructing within the Humanities since 1948, such offerings are limited; currently, much of the focus relates to studying languages and the divide between regional languages and English in India. Currently, Humanities in India is seen as rather bleak with decreased funding and government support.

### Curriculum Considerations and Approaches within the Humanities in India

#### *Definition of Humanities in India*

Humanities in India have remained rather fluid (India Foundation for the Arts). The first major study on higher education in India came with the 1948 report of the Radhakrishnan Commission proposed a distinction between i) facts and nature, ii) events/society, and iii) values/spirit (Kumar). Until the 1980s, currency of terms "humanities" and "social sciences" at a university was limited (India Foundation for the Arts). Most disciplines that are grouped together under the humanities and the social sciences today were loosely referred to as the "arts"—universities offer students choices between "science" and "arts" streams. In India, "Arts" departments in universities typically include these disciplines: literature, language, philosophy, history, education, psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science,

geography, and economics. A precise, objective definition of what disciplines constitute the arts and humanities in India is impossible (India Foundation for the Arts).

### *Current Research and Funding in the Humanities*

At present, research in the Humanities is in a rather unimaginative state, monitored by the government of India through regulatory boards, the University Grants Commission, or special councils (University Grants Commission). Funding comes from the government, special councils like the Akademi, or National Academy of Fine Arts, the Department of Higher Education, and Ministry of Culture or philanthropic organizations including Indian and foreign donors (Lalit Kala Akademi; Mishra). At present, there is a shrinking budget for the arts and humanities, and the government remains the largest funder for more than three quarter of expenditures (India Foundation for the Arts; Mishra).

### *The Language Divide*

Humanities scholars are studying the divide in India between regional languages and English. The medium of instruction up to undergraduate level usually consists of various regional languages; then, with post graduate education and advanced research English is the language of communication (Meganathan; Satpathy). This brings about a major problem because there is little translation of critical works from regional language to English and vice versa; this divide is responsible for a lack of critically engaging research (Meganathan; Satpathy). This unbalanced approach puts English thought and language in the governing position (Satpathy). The task that is ahead for art research in India is to invest in development of original theoretical frameworks and critical perspectives for studying cultural forms not wholly dependent on Western frameworks, as well as pay attention to the language contexts and practices in which these forms are embedded (Meganathan; Satpathy).

### **Report on the State of Humanities and Global Humanities in El Salvador**

Similar to China and India, faculty should arrive to El Salvador with a general understand for the role that the Humanities play in higher education within college and universities in the country. In the case of El Salvador, research has shown that the Humanities are in an anemic state overall. There are few universities in number, and the standard of education is at a lower end (El Salvador—Higher Education). The main reason that institutions of higher education are deficient comes from the lack of scholarship and knowledge of faculty, ill-prepared and non-committed students, and insufficient resources (USAID). This certainly adversely impacts the state of Humanities.

## State of Humanities in El Salvador

### *Struggling Institutions of Higher Education*

Struggling institutions of higher education impact the Humanities, and despite exceptions, an overwhelming majority of institutions of higher education in El Salvador suffer severe deficiencies and perform at a low standard. The country has a limited number of universities from the start with twelve (El Salvador—Higher Education; World Educational Services). The largest is the University of El Salvador in San Salvador. It serves as the major lifeline for higher education in the country (El Salvador—Higher Education). The university's difficult history is reflective of the overall state of higher education in the country. Founded in 1841, the university had the misfortune of being leveled by an earthquake in 1986, and then was ransacked by soldiers numerous times during civil war (Aldo). In 2002, through a loan from Honduras-based Central American Bank for Economic Integration, the university was rebuilt (USAID). The result was the reconstruction of 12 damaged facilities and classrooms, the addition of a new cultural center, creation of a modern sports complex, and the completion of two smaller campuses with a new library and a department of medicine (USAID). More aid in the amount of a 7 million dollar loan from Spain allowed for the inauguration of a public research health center in 2003 (USAID). Unfortunately, although more aesthetically pleasing, apparently the university's appearance is a bit deceiving; the infrastructure is still damaged or antiquated, there is a lack of sufficient computers and books, and professors are not well paid (Eastbrook).

### *Ill-Prepared Students, Archaic Teaching Methods, and Low Compensation*

The majority of higher education institutions in El Salvador suffer severe shortages and function at a low standard because of faculty lack instructional experience and knowledge, students are less than committed and ill-prepared for the rigors of higher education, and campuses lack resources and funding (USAID). The teaching methods of faculty are often obsolete. The rote learning approach is common among instructors copy notes onto a blackboard in classrooms (Guzman; Weisberg). This brings about a classroom environment that lacks flexibility and imagination. Again, it is difficult to get quality instructors in the colleges and universities because the salaries of Faculty are relatively low compared to other professional careers, ranging from \$500 to \$1,000 dollars a month; in addition, these faculty lack ability in new pedagogies (USAID).

## **Universities in India Most Suitable for Faculty Meetings**

To more clearly understand the colleges and universities in India that would best serve our faculty members' meetings on the Humanities, research was first conducted on the top universities that serve the Humanities, with basic background information provided in this report; I alphabetized these institutions because their order of rank altered with various studies. However, these universities consistently ranked within the top ten. Then, further research was done, beyond these ten institutions, to gain better understanding for the most suitable locations for our Faculty to gather—such considerations were the campus grounds, surroundings just outside of the institution, accessibility to foreign students and faculty, and degree of dedication to the Humanities. From this information and other research, I provide a list, in alphabetical order, of what I believe to be the most suitable locations for our faculty to hold meetings on the Humanities, and provide points of justification.

### Top Colleges and Universities in the Humanities in India

#### 1) Christ University—Bangalore

Christ University was formerly Christ College (Autonomous) affiliated to Bangalore University. Established in July 1969, Christ College is a premier educational institute of Bangalore (Christ University). The college has an innovative and modern curriculum.

#### 2) Hindu College—New Delhi

The college boasts of an accomplished faculty of about 120 members, and more than 2,000 students (Hindu College: University Enclave). The college is also proud of its efficient and very supportive non-academic staff. It offers a number of courses in the Sciences, Humanities and the Social Science streams (Hindu College: University Enclave).

#### 3) Lady Shri Ram College for Women—New Delhi

A center for academic excellence and achievement, this institution is considered one of the finest institutions for Social Sciences, Humanities, Commerce, and Statistics. Professional courses like Elementary Education and Journalism are also considered among its strengths (Lady Shri Ram College for Women).

#### 4) Loyola College—Chennai

Loyola College was founded by the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in 1925, with the primary objective of providing university education in a Christian atmosphere for deserving students, especially those belonging to the Catholic community (Loyola College: A Jesuit Institution).



Although this college is meant primarily for Catholics, it admits other students irrespective of caste and creed (Loyola College: A Jesuit Institution; Studying in India).

5) Madras Christian College—Chennai

The college was founded as a school in 1837 (Madras Christian College). It is known as much for its academic standing and leadership building as it is for social commitment. Today, the college has more than 5,000 students and over 220 faculty members serving in 31 departments (Madras Christian College).

6) Miranda House—New Delhi

Miranda House, a residential college for women, is one of the premier women's institutions of Delhi University. It was founded in 1948 by the then Vice-Chancellor Sir Maurice Gwyer; its foundation stone was laid by Lady Edwina Mountbatten (Miranda House: University College for Women). Miranda House offers liberal education in Humanities and Science to more than 2,500 students (Miranda House: University College for Women).

7) Presidency University—Kolkata

Established in 1817, the college was founded by Raja Ram Mohun Roy. It has schooled a number of other eminent personalities of Bengal, such as Raja Radhakanta Deb, Maharaja Tejchandra Ray of Burdwan, David Hare, Justice Sir Edward Hyde East, Prasanna Coomar Tagore and Babu Buddinath Mukherjee (Presidency University: Kolkata; Studying in India).

8) St. Stephen's College—New Delhi

Founded on February 1, 1881, St. Stephen's is the oldest college in Delhi (St. Stephen's College). It was first affiliated to Calcutta University, and later to Punjab University. With the establishment of Delhi University in 1922, it became one of its three original constituent colleges (St. Stephen's College).

9) St. Xavier's College—Mumbai

St. Xavier's College strives to form men and women who will build a more just and humane world (St. Xavier's College: Autonomous, Mumbai; "One India Education, List of Central Universities—Ranking 2013"). It strives for scholarship that focuses on critical and creative thinking, with the aim of social transformation (St. Xavier's College: Autonomous, Mumbai; "One India Education, List of Central Universities—Ranking 2013"; Studying in India).

10) St. Xavier's College—Kolkata

St. Xavier's College is a 150-year-old institution with rich heritage and long tradition (St. Xavier's College, Kolkata). As a Jesuit higher educational institution, it aims to form men and women with fundamental human and spiritual values. From 83 students in 1860, it had 6,000 students in 2010 (Xavier's College, Kolkata; Studying in India).

#### Most Suitable Locations in India for MC Faculty to Hold Meetings on the Humanities

##### *Christ University, Bangalore*

Christ University is a rather new school, founded in 1969 (Christ University); being a newer school, the employees bring forth more current scholarship that is similar to that of Montgomery College faculty. It quickly became an academic powerhouse; it was the first college in Karnataka to be accredited by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and is rated A+, the highest rating a college can achieve (Christ University). Montgomery College faculty and Administrators tend to favorably look at highly-credited institutions. The diversity of the student population and faculty would be a good welcome for our faculty; the tree-lined campus is host to 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students from every state in India (Christ University). It has computer labs and free access to wireless internet in many parts of campus; this would serve the technological needs of our faculty should we gather here for meetings. The campus is set off on its own, and very lush—it has its own summer garden on campus. Yet, the convenience of cappuccino bars, a supermarket, discount shopping center and mall are all a five- to ten-minute walk from campus (Christ University). The Humanities are highly valued, and the college designates an entire department to the Humanities. In fact, this is one of the best ranked institutes containing Humanities in the entire country; due to its approach to higher education, Christ University would serve to be a strong location for faculty at MC to gather to discuss the Humanities.

##### *Fergusson College, Pune*

Fergusson College is one of India's oldest and most prestigious liberal arts colleges. Founded by nationalist leaders in 1885, and alma mater to two prime ministers and scores of national leaders, Fergusson enjoys a beautiful green campus in the thriving, centrally-located Deccan Gymkhana neighborhood (Fergusson College, Pune; "One India Education, List of Central Universities—Ranking 2013"; Studying in India). This neighborhood has well-received restaurants and hotels, and a thriving sports community with various athletic facilities (Deccan Gymkhana). This would give our faculty access to necessary amenities. This college is quite accommodating to foreign faculty and students, and is known for its performing arts resources and activities set for foreign students through the Alliance Program Center (Fergusson College, Pune; Studying in India). The college has a student population of undergraduate and post graduate students that nears 5,500 (Fergusson College, Pune; "One India Education, List of

Central Universities—Ranking 2013”; Studying in India). This location would allow for Montgomery College faculty to gather at a location that has a small school, community college feel; this may bring a sense of comfort and relief from the more active and congested urban locations in India with heavy traffic, sprawling markets and large crowds.

#### *Madras Christian College, Chennai*

One of India’s oldest institutions of higher education, this is also a very international school; on the webpage you can even find an invite for “Global Alumni” to gather (Madras Christian College). Although the humanities are not given a specific department designation, the college has various programs that fall within the Humanities, including Language and English. Similar to Fergusson College, the student population is relatively small with about 5,000 students (Madras Christian College). The grounds are very lush and picturesque, providing a great environment to hold meetings, while allowing a nice get-away from the urban sprawl.

#### *Osmania University, Hyderabad*

This is a small university in the south of India, and has been ranked number one amount southern universities in India (Osmania University Hyderabad; Nunn). This university provides the opportunity to expose our faculty to the far-less explored southern part of the country, allowing for a greater breadth of understanding for Indian culture. It also has no immediate religious affiliation, should this be a concern. What makes this university unique, as well, is its close connection to our US government; it contains the Walt Whitman library which was donated by USAID (Nunn; Osmania University Hyderabad; USAID). The openness of the university to Americans would be a welcome to our faculty, and make for an ideal location to hold meetings.

#### *St. Stephen’s College, University of Delhi*

St. Stephen's College aims at helping its members realize spiritual and moral as well as intellectual and aesthetic values (St. Stephen’s College). It was founded in 1881 and is the oldest college in Delhi (Institute for Education of Students). The College has an all-India and all-denomination membership; it has students and teachers from all communities and from all parts of India. There are also some teachers and students from abroad. This open-mindedness and diversity would prove favorable for the gathering of Montgomery College faculty. There is provision for nearly 250 gentlemen and 108 ladies to reside in College (St. Stephen’s College); more research would need to be put forth to know if our Faculty could have housing. If not, that is fine, being a part of the University of Delhi. Unlike Fergusson College and Madras Christian College, this institution is in a large urban area. Having MC faculty meet at a college

that is in the heart of Indian culture (Delhi), yet whose campus is small in size and easy to move around in, provides a real a bonus.

#### *University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad*

A more contemporary institution founded more than 35 years ago, the University of Hyderabad was the first federally funded university in the southern part of India (University of Hyderabad). In 2010, the university was ranked No. 1 in India by the Times of India (Center for International Education Exchange; “One India Education, List of Central Universities—Ranking 2013”). It has the educational credentials that would satisfy our faculty and Administrators. The University has over 400 faculty and 5,000 full-time students, and eight schools, including a school of Humanities (University of Hyderabad; “One India Education, List of Central Universities—Ranking 2013”). Like Osmania University, this university brings the opportunity for our faculty to gather in southern India, which is far-less explored than the northern and central regions. Our faculty may gain a greater expanse and understanding of India as a result. A final point is that this university does not have a direct religious affiliation attached, should this be a concern.

#### **Relevant Cultural Locations and Sites to Visit in China**

Being such an expansive country, there are numerous sites in China that faculty may visit to gain cultural perspective. Research and interviews have revealed that the cities of Beijing, Dunhuang, Shanghai and Xian are the most prominent cultural centers (Wan). Perhaps less essential for visiting, but quite culturally rich regions also include Guilin, Hong Kong, Lasha, Lijiang, Nanjing, and Suzhou (Wan). Also, it is important to compare the regions with findings of colleges and universities with a strong Humanities presence when selecting cultural locations. Please refer to previous sections’ “Report on the State of Humanities and Global Humanities” for China, India and El Salvador.

#### Important Cultural Museums

##### *Forbidden City Museum, Beijing*

Lying at the city center, this museum was the imperial palace for twenty-four emperors during the Ming and Qing dynasties; it was first built throughout 14 years during the reign of Emperor Chengzu in the Ming Dynasty that took place from 1368-1644 (Forbidden City-Palace Museum). The museum displays a total of 429 ceramic objects, representing a comprehensive history of the development of Chinese ceramics, and has a large array of dynastic painting and calligraphy, among other items (Palace Museum). It is imperative that if one visits this capital city, that this museum is a necessary visit to truly understand Chinese culture (Wan). The size

and architectural structure of the museum can easily leave one awestruck. Rectangular in shape, it is the world's largest palace complex and covers 74 hectares. Surrounded by a 52-meter-wide moat and a 10-meter-high wall are more than 8,700 rooms (Forbidden City-Palace Museum). There are unique and delicately structured towers on each of the four corners of the curtain wall (Forbidden City-Palace Museum). These afford views over both the palace and the city outside.

### *Shanghai Museum*

The museum contains ancient Chinese art, and possesses a collection of over 1000,000 objects, about 120,000 of which are precious national-graded works of art (Shanghai Museum). In addition, it holds a large collection of ancient Chinese bronze, paintings, calligraphy, and ceramics (Shanghai Museum). Its style and presentation surround visitors with artifacts demonstrating ancient wisdom and philosophy (Shanghai Museum, Art Gallery). This museum is celebrated world-wide for its collection (Wan). The exterior design of the round dome and the square base symbolizes the ancient idea of a round heaven and a square land (Shanghai Museum, Art Gallery).

### *Suzhou Museum*

A lesser known yet exquisite cultural museum in China is the Suzhou Museum (Wan). It opened not long ago in 2006 (Suzhou Museum). It has paintings and calligraphy of the Ming and Qing dynasty, and holds a vast array of porcelain and handicraft works (Suzhou Museum). The structure of the museum is considered a modern architectural wonder. For any architect concerned with contextual design, Suzhou would present a formidable challenge (Ivy). It is built on a canal, and part of the canal city, old Suzhou, founded 2,500 years ago (Ivy).

### *Xian Museum*

The museum is located in Shaanxi province, a birthplace of Chinese civilization (Shaanxi History Museum). It was the capital of 13 dynasties including Zhou, Qin, Han, and Tang (Shaanxi History Museum). The Terra Cotta Warriors and Horses are the most significant archeological excavations of the 20th century, and life size terracotta figures of warriors and horses arranged in battle formations are the star features at the museum (Museum of Qin Terracotta Warriors and Horses). This museum has become a landmark on nearly all visitors' itinerary to China. This would be an important cultural site for faculty (Wan).

Other notable museums include:

- Beijing Museum of Natural Art, Beijing
- Flagstaff House, Hong Kong

- Geological Museum of China, Beijing
- Hong Kong Museum of Art
- Hunan Provincial Museum, Dongfeng
- Nanjing Museum, Nanjing
- Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai

### Cultural Festivals

Research reveals a large array of cultural festivals in China. The issue is whether our faculty will be in that region during that time period. This list is complete in that it provides events from early to late in the year with the best-received cultural festivals in the country.

#### *Ice Sculpture Festival, Harbin*

The city of Harbin has its Ice and Snow Festival each year in January (Harbin Ice and Snow Festival). This Siberian-esque city located in frigid northeast China becomes an ice and snow playground (Harbin Ice and Snow Festival; Scarlatelli). It is a celebration of art and light, ice and snow, featuring incredible, life-size castles, structures and colorful lanterns all constructed from meter-thick blocks of ice pulled from the Harbin's Songhua River and lit with LED lights (Scarlatelli). If our faculty members are able to be in the area during this time, this would be an enjoyable cultural festival to join (Wan).

#### *Spring Festival (Country-wide)*

The Spring Festival marks China's New Year, and takes place in February. It is the most important festival for the Chinese people and is when all family members get together, just like Christmas in the West (Traditional Chinese Festivals). The cities of Shanghai and Beijing bring the largest celebrations in China. In Shanghai, thousands will head for Longhua Temple, the city's oldest temple dating back more than 1,800 years, to attend bell-ringing ceremonies on New Year's Eve and Lunar New Year's Eve (Scarlatelli). Beijing residents will hit one of the hundreds of temple fairs taking place in the city; the most famous takes place at Dongyue Temple, where revelers party for five days as they take in shows that include acrobatics and opera (Scarlatelli).

#### *Buddha Bathing Festival, Dengfeng*

This festival would bring our Faculty a more traditional Buddhist ceremony. The Shaolin Temple's hometown of Dengfeng hosts an annual Buddha Bathing Festival in celebration of the original Buddha Sakyamuni's birthday in May (Scarlatelli). This festival provides a lot of cultural and religious lessons of China. There is a ceremony in which a figure of the Buddha is placed in a bowl surrounded by an altar of flowers that represents his birthplace, the Garden of Lumbini

(Scarlatelli). It's then bathed in holy water, which monks themselves later use; meant to drive away evil and cleanse the spirit, the purification ceremony is followed by traditional dance, meditation and feasting (Scarlatelli).

#### *Dragon Festival, Beijing*

The festival, also referred to as Duanwu Festival, is a traditional holiday that commemorates the life and death of the famous Chinese scholar Qu Yuan, who is known as China's first poet (Dragon Boat Festival). It takes place on the fifth day of the fifth month on the Chinese lunar calendar (Dragon Boat Festival); usually this lands in the month of June (Wan). The Dragon Boat Festival is a celebration where many eat rice dumplings (zongzi), drink wine (xionghuangjiu), and race dragon boats (Dragon Boat Festival). Other activities include hanging icons of Zhong Kui (a mythic guardian figure), hanging mugwort and calamus, taking long walks, writing spells and wearing perfumed medicine bags (Dragon Boat Festival). All of these activities were regarded by the ancients as an effective way of preventing disease, evil, while promoting good health and well-being (Dragon Boat Festival).

#### *Miaonian Festival, Leishan*

Attending this festival would serve to be a distinctive cultural experience for our faculty. China's Miao ethnic minority is still relatively untouched by tourism, which provides a rare opportunity for visitors to observe and participate in the community's annual New Year's celebration (Ethnic Groups in China; Scarlatelli). Leishan holds one of the busiest Miaonian festivals (Ethnic Groups in China). Miao women wear elaborate traditional garb, and visitors can watch bullfights, horse racing and listen to traditional music played on the lu sheng, a multi-piped bamboo instrument (Ethnic Groups in China; Scarlatelli). The festival takes place in November.

#### *Dong New Year's Festival, Qiandongnan*

Attending this festival means quality time and rich understanding for the Dong ethnic group. The Dong people in Qiandongnan bring in the traditional New Year with an ethnic group of some 2 million people in China (Basic Travel Guide). This minority has preserved their traditional culture and customs, from intricate architecture and famous drum towers to traditional food, which includes pickled carp and glutinous rice cakes (Basic Travel Guide; Scarlatelli). The Dong song, antiphonal style singing, Dong opera, wrestling, scrambling for festive lanterns, sightseeing of Dong villages, and an exhibition of folk customs are all part of the festivities (Basic Travel Guide).

Other notable festivals include:

- Laba Festival, January

- Lantern Festival, February
- Qingming Festival, April
- Double Seventh Festival, August
- Mid-autumn Festival, September
- Chongyang Festival, October
- Winter Solstice, December

### Cultural Theater

Theater in China is commonly referred to as “opera.” Therefore, Chinese opera not only contains our traditional understanding of operatic performances, but also various types of theatrical performances and genres. Currently, there is a new surge of interest in Chinese opera and theater (Melvin). Beijing is the number one place to find cultural theater in China, and is equivalent to New York in the States.

#### *Beijing National Grand Theater, Beijing*

The National Grand Theatre, also known as Beijing National Center for the Performing Arts, is surrounded by an artificial lake, and features a spectacular glass and the titanium egg-shaped Opera House, designed by French architect Paul Andreu (Theatre Beijing). Guests arrive in the building after walking through a hallway that goes underneath the lake (Theatre Beijing). Performances at the theater include Chinese opera, plays, music concerts, dance, ballet, drama, and the Chinese Philharmonic Orchestra (Melvin; Theatre Beijing).

#### *Peking Opera, Beijing*

Peking Opera of China is a national treasure with a history of 200 years (China National Peking Opera Company; Introduction of Peking Opera). In the 55th year of the reign of Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty (1790), the four big Huiban opera troupes entered the capital and combined with Kunqu opera, Yiyang opera, Hanju opera and Luntan in Beijing (Introduction of Peking Opera). Through a period of more than half a century of combination and integration of various kinds of opera brought the evolution of present Peking opera, the biggest kind of opera in China (Introduction of Peking Opera). This is an important theater in China (Wan). Belonging to the China National Peking Opera Company is the Mei Langfang Theater, named after a great master of Chinese Peking opera, Mei Lanfang (China National Peking Opera Company; Theatre Beijing). This great theatre is a combination of both traditional and modern art (China National Peking Opera Company; Melvin). It contains 1068 seats for the audience, with an area of more than 13000 square meters and five floors on the ground and two underground (China National Peking Opera Company). The theater has multiple uses—for performances, exhibitions,



conferences, and making audio-visual records (China National Peking Opera Company; Theatre Beijing).

### *Shanghai Grand Theater, Shanghai*

This is not a theater in Beijing, but a very popular one none the less. With a distinctive architectural style and a brilliant appearance, Shanghai Grand Theater is a city landmark (Shanghai Grand Theater). When night falls, the whole construction resembles a crystal palace. Having three theaters of different sizes and being equipped with advanced lighting and stereo facilities, the Grand Theater is now the stage for world-class works of art, international art activities and education (Shanghai Grand Theater). Shanghai Grand Theater concerts performed include the Three Tenors, plus many European operas, classical music dramas and musical concerts by the top symphony orchestras; performances by some of the world's most-famous ballet companies are often given in the large theater (China Highlights; Shanghai Grand Theater). Also, a number of original Chinese operas, dramas, pantomimes and traditional musical concerts can frequently be seen (China Highlights; Shanghai Grand Theater). Quite a few international art activities are held here, including the China Shanghai International Art Festival, the SCO Members Art Festival, the Shanghai International Film Festival, the French Culture Year, the Italian Culture Year and the German Culture Week (China Highlights; Shanghai Grand Theater).

Other notable cultural theaters include:

- Century Theater, Beijing
- Guangzhou Huanghuagang Theater
- Guangzhou Xinghai Concert Hall
- Hangzhou Grand Theater, Hangzhou
- Harbin Opera Theater, Harbin
- Oriental Opera Hall at the Shanghai Oriental Art Center, Shanghai
- Poly Theater, Beijing

### **Relevant Cultural Locations and Sites to Visit in India**

Among the regions in India, Delhi (New and Old) has the greatest abundance of relevant cultural locations and sites to visit. However, the list below provides insight into important museums, cultural centers and theaters, and enriching festivals throughout the entire country. The attractions are listed in alphabetical order per category.

#### Important Cultural Museums

### *Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum, Delhi*

The former residence of Indira Gandhi is now a fascinating museum, displaying artifacts, photos and newspaper clippings, as well as personal belongings, including the blood-stained sari she was wearing when she was assassinated in 1984 (Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum; Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum, Delhi; Lonely Planet: Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum). Some of the rooms are preserved as they were at the time. Another section is devoted to her son Rajiv, who was also assassinated in 1991 by a suicide bomber; displayed are fragments of the clothes he was wearing (Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum; Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum, Delhi). On the way out, you'll pass an enclosed crystal pathway that marks Gandhi's final footsteps before her murder (Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum).

### *National Museum, New Delhi*

The National Museum in New Delhi was established in 1949. The Museum presently holds approximately 2,000,000 objects of a diverse nature, both Indian as well as foreign, and its holdings cover a time span of more than five thousand years of Indian cultural heritage (National Museum). The collections of early Indian sculpture in the museum are quite rich, including those from the Kushan era (National Museum, New Delhi).

### *Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi*

The Nehru Memorial Museum and Library was established under the Ministry of Culture of the Government of India (Nehru Memorial Museum and Library). Jawaharlal Nehru served as India's first Prime Minister and was a major political figure for India. This memorial museum and library has four major constituents namely, a Memorial Museum, a Library on modern India, a Centre for Contemporary Studies and a Planetarium (Nehru Memorial Museum and Library).

### *Qutub Shahi Tombs, Hyderabad*

The Qutub Shahi tombs represent the most authentic and majestic display of the Qutub Shahi dynasty architectural traditions today (Qutub Shahi Tombs). The tombs are dedicated to the seven Qutub Shahi kings who ruled Golconda for nearly 170 years (Qutub Shahi Tombs). The tombs' styles are numerous displaying Persian, Hindu, and Pathan forms of architecture (Qutub Shahi Tombs). Those who have been to the Qutub Shahi tombs believe it is a necessary stop in Hyderabad (Nunn).

### *Sarnath Complex and Museum, Varanasi*

In order to preserve the antiquities found from this site, a decision was taken in 1904 by the Government to construct a site museum adjacent to the excavated site at Sarnath

(Archeological Survey of India: Sarmath Museum). The building was completed in 1910 to house, display and study the antiquities (Archeological Survey of India: Sarmath Museum). The antiquities in the museum are datable from 3rd century BC to 12th century AD (Archeological Survey of India: Sarmath Museum). This is a very significant cultural museum in India (Nunn).

Other notable museums include:

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Mumbai
- Cowasji Jehangir Hall, Mumbai
- Government Museum, Chennai
- Indian Museum, Kolkata
- Napier Napier Museum, Thiruvananthapuram
- National Handcrafts and Handlooms Museum, New Delhi
- Patna Museum, Patna
- Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad

### Cultural Festivals

#### *Chennai Music and Dance Festival, Chennai*

The Chennai Music and Dance Festival is a celebration with classical music and dance from South India; it is held between mid December to mid January (Dances of India; Nunn). The festival lasts for a period of one month (Nunn). Venues are held around the city in auditoriums, well-known temple premises and heritage bungalows, performed by famous artist throughout India (Dances of India). The city of Chennai is called the “Land of Classical Dances,” and the oldest classical style, Bharatanatyam, has been nurtured in the temples (Dances of India). This classical dance is associated with mythology, philosophy and spiritual beliefs of the Hindu culture; these factors are represented in the festival (Dances of India).

#### *Delhi International Arts Festival, Delhi*

This festival attracts artists, writers, and tourists from all over the world, and serves as a significant platform for cultural diplomacy (Prasiddah Foundation). This is the first multi-art, multi-venue annual cultural festival, and began in December 2007, spanning over 17 days (Prasiddah Foundation). The festival is comprised of visual and performing arts, films, literature, and world cuisines (Prasiddah Foundation). This is a less known, less traditional festival in the country, but provides a very international mix that meets the interests of many.

#### *Diwali Festival (Country-wide)*

Diwali, or the Festival of Lights, is the biggest and the brightest of all Hindu festivals (Nunn). It is a four day celebration, each day separated by a different tradition. Historically, the origin of Diwali can be traced back to ancient India, when it was an important harvest festival (Das). Yet, Diwali also commemorates the return of Lord Rama along with Sita and Lakshman from his fourteen year long exile and vanquishing the demon-king Ravana (Das; Valmiki). In joyous celebration of the return of their king, the people of Ayodhya, the Capital of Rama, illuminated the kingdom with earthen oil lamps (Das; Valmiki). Diwali is characterized as a celebration of life, enjoyment and goodness (Das).

#### *Festival of Holi (Country-wide)*

Also known as the Spring Festival, it takes place in late February or early March (Society for the Confluence of Festivals in India). Yet those who celebrate recognize it as a Hindu celebration on Phalgun Purnimar, the 12<sup>th</sup> month of a Hindu calendar (Hinduism). It is a festival of colors and lasts for two days (Society for the Confluence of Festivals in India). On the first day a great bonfire is made, followed by prayer (Hinduism; Society for the Confluence of Festivals in India). The second day it is celebrated with people throwing colored chalk on each other and the enthusiastic beating of drums (Hinduism; Society for the Confluence of Festivals in India). Holi is meant to unify, and allow people to forget discrimination based on gender, caste, and religion (Hinduism; Society for the Confluence of Festivals in India). Many believe that nature also celebrates Holi by “wearing its best clothes,” meaning a good crop is promised to the farmers as the fields began to fill with crops and blooming flowers (Hinduism; Society for the Confluence of Festivals in India).

#### *Navratri Festival (Country-wide)*

Navratri Festival is regarded as one of the most holy and revered festivals of the Hindus (Festivals of Delhi). For nine nights with millions of fantastically costumed devotees swaying in a fusion of dance and devotion, dedicated to the Goddess Shakti (Festivals of Delhi; Gujarat Official State Portal). Also known as the Divine Mother, the Goddess assumes many forms. Three of her forms consist of Goddess Durga (destructive), Goddess Lakshmi (protective) and Goddess Saraswati (knowledge); devotees of the Divine Mother perform the “devi-sthaapna” in their homes wherein they invite the Goddess and perform “pooja-path” for nine days with fasting (Festivals of Delhi; Gujarat Official State Portal).

Other notable cultural festivals include:

- Kerala Temple Festivals, January
- Aashaadha / Shraavana, July

- Krishna Janmashtami/Govinda, August
- Ganesh Chaturthi, September
- Onam, September
- Pushkar Camel Fair, November

### Cultural Centers, Theaters and Events

Research revealed that aside from the major religious sites and centers, theater and music are a very popular part of cultural entertainment in India. The lists reflect this.

#### *Chandni Chowk, Delhi*

This is one of the oldest and busiest markets in Old Delhi, India. It was built in 17th century by the great Mughal emperor of India, Shah Jahan (Chandni Chowk). The market was once divided by canals (now closed) to reflect moonlight, and it remains one of India's largest wholesale markets (Chandni Chowk). Silver, gold, costume jewelry, and wedding paraphernalia are some of the items sold at the markets (Daily Walking Tour—Chandni Chowk).

#### *Jama Masjid, Delhi*

Jama Masjid of Delhi is the largest mosque in India (Jama Masjid). The Jama Masjid stands across the road in front of the Red Fort. Built between 1644 and 1658, Jama Masjid is one of the last architectural works of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan (Jama Masjid). Jama Masjid Mosque was built in red sandstone and marble by more than 5000 artisans (Jama Masjid).

#### *Qutb Minar, Delhi*

This UNESCO world heritage site was originally built in the early 13th century, a few kilometers south of Delhi, the red sandstone tower of Qutb Minar is 72.5 meters high with alternating angular and rounded flutings (UNESCO). The surrounding archaeological area contains funerary buildings, notably the magnificent Alai-Darwaza Gate, the masterpiece of Indo-Muslim art (built in 1311), and two mosques, including the Quwwatu'l-Islam, the oldest in northern India, built of materials reused from some 20 Brahman temples (UNESCO).

#### *Ravindra Bharathi National Theater, Hyderabad*

Ravindra Bharathi has been a prestigious national theatre, constructed by the Government of Andhra Pradesh in the name of Sri. Rabindranath Tagore, the first Nobel laureate from Asia, to serve the cultural needs of Andhra Pradesh, one of the 28 States of India (Ravindra Bharathi).

Cultural programs performed at the theater include dance, drama, and classical music performances (Ravindra Bharathi).

### *Red Fort, Delhi*

This UNESCO heritage site was built in 1650 by Shahjahan who meant to build the largest mosque in India (Archeological Survey of India: Red Fort). Its square quadrangle with arched cloisters on the sides and a tank in the center is 100 meters wide (Archeological Survey of India: Red Fort). Built on a raised plinth, it has three imposing gateways approached by long flights of steps. Its prayer-hall, with a facade of eleven arches, flanked by a four-storied minaret on either end is covered by three large domes ornamented with alternating stripes of black and white marble (Archeological Survey of India: Red Fort).

### *Taj Mahal, Agra*

The Taj Mahal is considered to be the greatest architectural achievement in the whole range of Indo-Islamic architecture (Taj Mahal). This immense mausoleum of white marble, built in Agra between 1631 and 1648 by order of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his favorite wife, the Taj Mahal is the jewel of Muslim art in India and one of the universally admired masterpieces of the world's heritage (Taj Mahal). Its architecture has been described as a rhythmic combination of solids and voids, concave and convex and light shadow (Taj Mahal).

Other notable cultural theaters and events:

- Alauddin Khan Samaroh Music Festival, Maihor
- Bharat Rang Mahotsav Theater Festival, New Delhi
- Nandikar's National Theatre Festival, Kolkata
- NRI Music and Dance Festival, Gurgaon
- Prithvi Theatre Festival, Prithvi
- Purple Umbrella Theater Festival, New Delhi
- Tansen Samaroh Music Festival, Gwalior

## **Relevant Cultural Locations and Sites in El Salvador**

Among the regions in El Salvador, the capital, San Salvador, has the most relevant cultural locations and sites to visit, especially with regards to museums. Yet, the lists also show some cultural places “off of the beaten path” of key museums, cultural centers and theaters, and enriching festivals.

### Important Cultural Museums

### *Museum of Anthropology, San Salvador*

The Museum of Anthropology, or the David J. Guzman Museum, is a modern facility and considered the perfect start for a cultural tour of El Salvador (Museums Showcase the Culture of El Salvador). By visiting, one can learn about the early history of El Salvador; it is home to the very popular artifact found in the Tazumal ruins—the native god Xipe Totec (Museums Showcase the Culture of El Salvador). Festivals and conferences are also held in the museum.

### *Museum of Art of El Salvador, San Salvador*

The Museum of Art of El Salvador opened its doors in 2003 and it showcases 19th century and contemporary Salvadorian art (Lonely Planet; Museums Showcase the Culture of El Salvador). The museum has three halls dedicated to temporary exhibitions for national and international art. The other hall, named the Great Hall, is dedicated entirely to Salvadorian paintings from artists such as Carlos Alberto Imery and Valero Lecha; the paintings portray everyday life and the culture in El Salvador (Museums Showcase the Culture of El Salvador).

Other notable mentions:

- City Museum, San Salvador
- Museum at Joya de Cerén, La Libertad
- Museum at San Andrés, La Libertad
- Museum at Tazumal, Chalchuapa
- Museum of Popular Art, San Salvador
- Museum of Revolution, Morazan
- Museum of Words and Images, San Salvador
- Sculpture Museum Enrique Salaverría, San Salvador

### Cultural Festivals

#### *Panchimalco Flower and Palm Festival, Panchimalco*

This festival is held in May of every year, and you will be able to enjoy the beautiful displays of flowers and palms that are set up throughout the country (Lonely Planet). On the first Sunday of May every year, the small town of Panchimalco, celebrates its two patron saints with a “Fiesta de las Flores y Palmas,” or “festival of flowers and palms” (Flower and Palm Festival—Panchimalco). Although the origin of this event comes from pre-Columbian Maya culture and used to commemorate the start of the rainy season, today, it honors Catholic saints (Flower and Palm Festival—Panchimalco). Early in the morning, women strip the palm branches and gather flowers to create a large colorful decoration; in the afternoon is a procession led by males who

perform dances inspired by the Spanish Reconquest or “Danza de Moros y Cristianos” (Flower and Palm Festival—Panchimalco). Large altars adorned with flowers and palms are slowly carried by young women, dressed in typical costumes, through the steep streets of the town (Flower and Palm Festival—Panchimalco).

#### *Feast of San Salvador, San Salvador*

This public holiday is celebrated in honor of its patron saint, “El Divino Salvador del Mundo” (Figueroa). It has religious feasts attended by many people from the rest of the country as it is a time for trading and organizing fairs (El Salvador Feast of San Salvador). “La Bajada” is the final day of celebration of the weeklong August festival, and one of the most popular of these religious feasts is “La Bajada” (Figueroa; El Salvador Feast of San Salvador). “La Bajada” or “The Descent” is celebrated on August 6<sup>th</sup>, symbolizes God in the form of Jesus Christ descending to participate in the world (Figueroa; El Salvador Feast of San Salvador). It is called “La Bajada” because on this day the agricultural workers from the San Salvador volcano and neighboring towns came together to worship the patron saint and to take part in the procession through the thoroughfares of the capital city (Figueroa; El Salvador Feast of San Salvador).

#### *Salvador Independence Day (Country-wide)*

Many believe this is the most celebrated day in El Salvador to commemorate when freedom was gained after the Central American Independence Act was signed on September 15, 1821, ending the 300 years of Spanish rule (Clinton; El Salvador Celebrates Independence Day). Parades are the most important part for the Independence Day celebrations and these parades last the entire day (El Salvador Celebrates Independence Day). The youth want the celebrations to be a memorable experience, so the schools start by preparing to bands months ahead to perform at the celebration (El Salvador Celebrates Independence Day). At the end of the day, fireworks light up the night skies.

Other notable cultural festivals include:

- Soldiers’ Day (Country-wide) (May)
- Balls of Fire Festival, Nejapa (August)
- Fiestas Agostinas (Country-wide) (August)

#### Cultural Centers and Theaters

##### *El Arbol de Dios, San Salvador*

Arbol de Dios is the gallery, workshop, and nonprofit office of El Salvador's most revered living artist, Fernando Lloret, who founded an art movement in a small mountain town in 1972 by teaching locals to use available materials to express their lives (El Arbol de Dios; Lonely Planet).



His colorful style of art, which is filled with natural and religious references, has since swept the country and can be found in hundreds of shops and at the National Cathedral (El Arbol de Dios; Lonely Planet). The gallery includes a gift store, screen-printing workshop, and a ceramic space on the back patio and takes about 40 minutes to explore; a few of the original pieces that inspired thousands of copies are located there (El Arbol de Dios).

#### *Ilobasco, El Salvador*

Ilobasco is well known for its artistic clay figurines that capture every day customs and lifestyles in El Salvador (Henriquez). The making of something so small with amazing detail often surprises visitors (Gateway El Salvador). The miniature pottery of artist, Dominga Herrera, has become so popular in El Salvador that the Museum of Popular Art houses an entire exhibition of her work alone (Gateway El Salvador). The clay works are also practical—many go to buy sets of clay pots, pans and dishes in Ilobasco (Gateway El Salvador; Henriquez). Pottery workshops are often held in the area to further educate visitors (Henriquez).

#### *National Theater of El Salvador, San Salvador*

The National Theatre of San Salvador is the oldest theater in Central America, and is considered a cultural and architectural gem (National Theater of San Salvador). It was built between 1911 and 1917 after an international competition promoted by the Salvadoran Government; the winning design was awarded to French architect Daniel Beylard (Lonely Planet). The theater shows an impressive façade with a central colonnade, combining neo-classical, Gothic and Renaissance architectural movements (Lonely Planet; National Theater of San Salvador). The theater has been the scene of Italian operas, operettas, drama, scientific conferences, charity concerts and major motion picture films (National Theater of San Salvador).

#### *San Sebastian, San Vicente*

San Sebastián is a small picturesque town about 20 minutes from San Vicente (Lonely Planet). This beautiful town specializes in the art of weaving with many designs of bright colors (Henriquez). Hammocks, table cloths, and bed sheets are popular purchases, yet visitors learn much about the different types of arts and crafts from El Salvador by being at San Sebastian (Henriquez; Lonely Planet).

Other notable cultural centers and theaters:

- La Luna Casa de Arte Music Hall, San Salvador
- Opera de El Salvador, San Salvador
- Parker Music Hall, San Salvador

## **Conclusion**

This report contains findings in four main areas: facts and information on the state of the Humanities and global humanities, particularly in higher education in China, India, El Salvador; research through government websites, databases, international education and global study websites, and other resources in order to gain information on which universities in India would best serve faculty meetings on the humanities; findings of relevant cultural locations and sites for the group to see when in China, India and El Salvador. I includes cultural and historical museums, seasonal events, theater performances, and other significant cultural events. Research results convey the best practices for integrating cultural awareness programs with academics in the classroom.

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