

By Laura Dunn

## News from the Center for Dharma Studies

Through a wide range of publications and programming, CDS faculty and students are deepening the study of the dharma traditions



Since its founding in 2015, the GTU's Mira and Ajay Shingal Center for Dharma Studies (CDS) has established itself as a leader in the scholarly study of the Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions—three distinct yet interrelated religious traditions that emerged in ancient India. In addition to supporting GTU PhD and MA students in concentrations like Hindu Sacred Texts and Yoga Studies, the CDS plays a leading role in the publication of several academic journals, a book series, and numerous edited volumes. These publications not only advance the diverse and growing field of Dharma Studies, but provide significant opportunities for GTU students to gain experience and showcase their own work.

The *Journal of Dharma Studies: Philosophy, Theology, Ethics, and Culture* (Springer), co-edited by CDS Director Dr. Rita Sherma and Dr. Purushottama Bilimoria, is the flagship journal of the CDS and the primary journal in the field of Dharma Studies. The journal's mission is "to employ theoretical and empirical

methodologies for the intersubjective understanding, and real-world applications of the conceptual resources, textual sources, and experiential practices in order to foster critical-constructive reflections on Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist traditions." These three distinct religions emerged in ancient India and share 2.5 millennia of mutual engagement. Currently, *JDS* is the only academic journal published by an eminent global publisher that gives primacy to the thought, values, and praxis of these religions that are now global in scope. In addition to well-known scholars from across the country, several GTU doctoral students serve on the editorial team of *JDS*, including editorial manager Laura Dunn, and assistant editors Cogen Bohanec and Thomas Calobrisi.

*Sophia: International Journal of Philosophy and Traditions* (Springer), was founded in 1962, and is currently edited by Dr. Bilimoria, a distinguished teaching and research fellow and core doctoral faculty at CDS/GTU. *Sophia* is a ranked journal with a fifty-six-year reputation in the

field of philosophy and religion. The vision of *Sophia* has also born fruit in the book series, *Sophia Studies in Cross-Cultural Philosophy of Traditions and Cultures*, which now includes nearly thirty books that "encompass global traditions, and critical treatments that draw from cognate disciplines, inclusive of all...religions and cultures."

Rita Sherma and CDS visiting professor Graham Schweig also serve as senior editors for the *Journal of Vaishnava Studies*, the only academic journal dedicated to Vaishnavism, one of the largest branches of Hindu theology and practice.

CDS has also played a primary role in several edited volumes (current and forthcoming), including the *Routledge History of Indian Philosophy* (Routledge, 2018), *Vivekananda: His Life, Legacy, and Relevance* (Lexington, 2018), *Prayer, Worship, Ritual & Contemplation in the Hindu World* (Routledge, 2019), and *Prayer, Veneration, Ritual & Contemplation in Jainism* (Routledge, 2019). The upcoming essay collection, *Sustainable Societies: Interreligious, Interdisciplinary*

*Responses* (Springer, 2018), co-edited by Sherma and Bilimoria, with associate editor Pravina Rodrigues, a GTU doctoral candidate, is the outgrowth of a successful two-day GTU conference and features essays by numerous GTU faculty and students.

Rita Sherma notes that the Mira & Ajay Shingal Center for Dharma Studies “represents the leading edge in interdisciplinary academic study of the dharma traditions, highlighting social-scientific as well as theological, ethical, aesthetic, and applied approaches.” The CDS also houses the GTU’s Dharma & Sustainable Societies Initiative, which Sherma says, “brings the principles, practices, and potential for engagement of Hindu thought into dialogue with discourses on contemporary challenges.”

Through its prolific publications and a diverse array of academic programs, public events, and research projects, the Mira & Ajay Shingal Center for Dharma Studies provides global leadership in the scholarly study of the dharma traditions, and offers the entire GTU family an enriching and engaging avenue for meaningful cross-cultural and interreligious dialogue and experiences.

Visit [www.gtu.edu/cds/publications](http://www.gtu.edu/cds/publications) for links to these CDS publications. ♦

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## Sacred World Art Collection Finds New Home



**A**fter many months of careful cataloging, the GTU Collection of Sacred World Art is now accessible to the GTU community!

Visitors to the library this fall may have noticed two new storage cabinets on the main floor. Over the last few months, nearly half of the more than three hundred items in the GTU Collection of Sacred World Art have been brought from temporary storage and relocated to a permanent home in these state-of-the-art archival storage units. Constructed by Delta Designs, these cabinets are used by museums nationally and will provide secure housing for the Collection of Sacred World Art.

Many of the world’s religious traditions have in common a vibrant material culture that’s reflected in the collection. Lanier Graham, a professional curator, professor of museum studies and world religions, and president of the Institute for Aesthetic Development, generously donated the collection several years ago in order to enhance the GTU’s focus on interreligious study and dialogue. From Neolithic Hongshan jade figurines to Ashanti ceremonial masks, the GTU Collection of Sacred World Art represents one collector’s quest to represent the breadth of sacred art from around the world.

GTU students and faculty may borrow items from the collection for research, classroom use, or other educational purposes. Other researchers may access the collection on site. Items can also be displayed in GTU offices or public places with permission.

Members of the GTU community and other scholars interested in accessing the collection can contact Clay-Edward Dixon, director of library services, at [cedixon@gtu.edu](mailto:cedixon@gtu.edu). A complete object list is available by contacting the assistant curator at the Center for the Arts & Religion, Lydia Webster, at [lwebster@gtu.edu](mailto:lwebster@gtu.edu).

Learn more at [www.gtu.edu/sacred-world-art](http://www.gtu.edu/sacred-world-art). ♦