

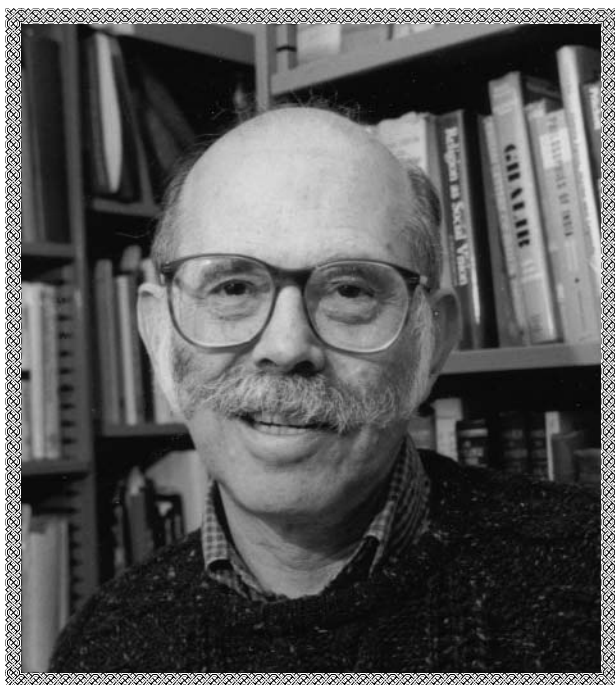
CHICAGO SOUTH ASIA NEWSLETTER

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Tribute to Bernard Cohn, 1928-2003

The University of Chicago community is deeply saddened by the death of Bernard S. Cohn, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology and History. Friends and family paid tribute to this great man who was at the forefront of anthropological studies on modern India, and a great friend and professor to many. Barney, as his friends knew him, will be greatly missed.



Photograph by Bruce Powell

The following tribute was delivered by Sudipta Sen at the family service in Chicago on December 3, 2003.

Remembering Barney

I am truly honored today to be able to say a few words to you about my mentor, teacher and friend Barney Cohn. I represent, like David Lelyveld and Nick Dirks here at the podium, and many others besides, Barney's wider family, clan and tribe. We are

among Barney's intellectual survivors spanning at least three continents, North America, Europe, India, and at least two generations since the nineteen-fifties.

My acquaintance with Barney turned my life around irrevocably. I have to say that it was perhaps my singular stroke of good fortune that I decided to write to him about my research ideas eighteen years ago, almost to this day. I am quite sure that many of his students have a very similar story.

Barney to us was always the consummate magician out of whose hats (and we all know how much he loved those hats!) came an endless flurry of ideas, questions and curiosities. His wit, his measure of irony, and his sense of fair play was rapier sharp, and these qualities shone 'til the very end, despite the various ailments that would have debilitated the spirit of an ordinary mortal. He simply shrugged off his mental and physical hardships. I accompanied him to London on more than one occasion, and it was remarkable how intimately he knew that city in its past and its present. It was often I who was lost with my map. Barney always seemed to know which way to go, navigating through his deeper memory of public monuments and imperial architecture.

Barney kept the critical scholarship on Indian anthropology and history, on the British Empire and colonialism, ticking for a long time indeed. It is going to be very difficult for us to accept that this vital consciousness is no more. The pied piper of almost half a century of the most daring and innovative history and ethnography has finally rested his flute.

I invite you all to join me in the fondest remembrance of a brilliant fall day in Hyde Park, with the Chicago wind with its talons still retracted, and of Barney in front of a blackboard, copious whiskers powdered with chalk dust, juggling perilously with hat, sheaves of paper, gloves, notes and ideas, as if always on a precipice of thought... and of that long meandering walk to a hidden cafeteria in the hospital, or that little known hot-dog stand in the park district.

As you trudge along with him, in that space of time, you have almost unknowingly become a richer human being.

Sudipta Sen was a graduate student of Barney Cohn. He completed his Ph.D. in the Department of History at the University of Chicago in 1994 and currently is an Associate Professor in the Department of History at Syracuse University.

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Fulbright-Hays Teachers' Group Project in India, Summer 2003

During the summer of 2003, the South Asia Language and Area Center coordinated the second of two Fulbright-Hays Group Projects in India in recent years. The program provided Chicago-area teachers with an in-country opportunity to learn more about topics related to their teaching curricula in the social sciences and humanities.

The five-week itinerary was structured to include two major geographic circles, while the program focused on three primary goals: to introduce participants to the regional history through lectures and visits to historic sites; to include visits to local non-governmental organizations (NGO's) involved in a variety of community projects; and to provide an opportunity to visit schools in a variety of economic and social contexts.



Pictured are Neeti Sethi Bose, John Evans, and a young student at Katha Khazana School, Delhi. Photograph by John Leary.

The northern circle of the itinerary included Delhi, Agra, Bhopal, Sanchi, Orchha and Khajuraho, while the southern circle included Chennai, Mahabalipuram, Madurai and Kodaikkanal. The schedule in Delhi focused on introductory tours of the historic and governmental sites of the city, supplemented by more in-depth programs, including a guided walking-tour of Old Delhi, a guided tour of the National Museum, a lecture on the history of Delhi, and an introduction to Mahatma Gandhi's life and philosophy. The group also made visits to several local NGO's, including Katha and Katha Khazana, a literary project and school, and the publishing group Kali for Women.

The circle from Uttar Pradesh into Madhya Pradesh allowed the group to visit some of the most famous cultural sites of central India including the Taj Mahal and Agra Fort in Agra, the Taj-ul Masjid and Hindu temples of Bhopal, the Buddhist stupas at Sanchi, the 16th century Bundela capital at Orchha and the Hindu temples of Khajuraho. The schedule in Bhopal also included visits to the National Museum of Man, Bharat Bhavan, a meeting with regional *adivasi* artists, and a discussion with the organizers of the Sambhavna Trust, an NGO dedicated to assisting victims of the 1984 Union-Carbide disaster with on-going legal, medical, and financial assistance.

The time in Chennai focused on a four-day visit at Children's Garden School in the Mylapore neighborhood of Chennai, and its sister school the Ella Sharma Memorial School, in Sholinganallur. Teachers and school administrators greeted the group with typical "southern hospitality": serving up *tali* meals, *dosai* and coffee, while the children invited the teachers into their classrooms for a mini-school fair with demonstrations and displays of the local festivals, music, and art.

After relaxing by the sea and visiting the ancient Pallava sites at Mahabalipuram, the group moved on to Madurai for a two-day seminar on Indian literature in English conducted by the Study Centre for Indian Literature in English and Translation (SCILET) at American College. Other programs in Madurai included tours of the Meenakshi Temple and Jain sites at the outskirts of town, visits to village temples associated with the worship of local deities, including an Aiyandar temple known for its terracotta images, and an afternoon at the Centre for Experiencing Socio-Cultural Interaction (CESCI), a NGO dedicated to rural development, where the group was treated to a performance of local folk dances.

The last leg of the trip before unwinding back to Delhi was to Kodaikkanal. Located in the Western Ghats, Kodaikkanal offers a cool contrast to the heat of the plains and is the home of a Kodaikkanal School, an international baccalaureate school. Enroute to the mountains, the group visited the town of Pattiveeranpatti where participants were treated to gourmet southern Indian breakfast with the family of S. K. Soundarapandian, the uncle of University of Chicago South Asia Outreach Coordinator, Neena Mahadev.

Soundarapandian took the group on a tour of a vocational school in "Patti" founded by his family. He then led the small procession of Toyota "Qualises" up the back route to Kodaikkanal, stopping along the way at Goodwill Children's School, another school the family has supported for years. Here the group was treated to lunch amidst the lush greenery of the tropical forests of the Palani Hills.

On a personal note, I would like to note that a trip of this nature poses many challenges, from the July weather to the predictable stresses of traveling in a group for five weeks. However, the program was well received by the participants. As one participant commented in the evaluation, [the program] "made a lot of what I teach come to life for me in ways I did not anticipate." From my perspective, this is the primary purpose of the trip and I am pleased to hear this opinion articulated.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the Fulbright-Hays program and to the many people who made this trip possible. I would not have been able to coordinate this program without the professional knowledge, enthusiasm and creativity of the key in-country-coordinators: Sharada Nayak, Managing Trustee, Educational Resource Centre, Delhi; Neeti Sethi Bose, Lecturer, National Institute of Fashion Technology, Delhi; C. R. Vijayalakshmi, Biology Teacher (CGS), and J. Rajasekaran, Program Coordinator and Consultant for the southern India circle.

I am also grateful to the numerous guest speakers and guides who enriched the program with their expertise. Special thanks go to Geeta Dharmarajan, Director, Katha; Narayani Gupta, Professor of History, Jamia Millia Islamia University; Anil Nauriya,



Advocate, Supreme Court of India; Shobita Punja, Art Historian and author; Urvashi Butalia, Co-founder of Kali for Women; N. Archarya and the artists of Adi Kala Vikas Manch; R. Venkataraman, Professor Emeritus of History, Madurai Kamaraj University; Paul Love, R. Padmanabhan Nair and Premila Paul, of the SCILET program at American College; and Eveline Meyer of the University of Bern.

Finally, I am grateful to the teachers who joined me in this adventure, contributing their unique insights and talents to the program. The twelve participants, listed with the name of the school they taught at the time of application to the program, included Balazs Dibuz, Quest Academy; Karen Ekpenyong, Josephinum High School; Rachele Esola, St. Patrick High School; John Evans, William P. Gray Elementary School; Ross Freshwater, Senn High School; Melissa Gibson, Lake Forest Academy; James Kessler, Conserve School; John Leary, Francis W. Parker School; Dean Pinos, New Trier High School; Richard Sauer, Lincoln Park High School; Barbara Singer, Senn High School; and Benjamin Widner, Glenbrook South High School.

Sally Noble

South Asia Student Conference
February 27 & 28, 2004
Divinity School Commons

The South Asia Student Conference provided University of Chicago graduate students an opportunity to come together and present their work on South Asia. Its aim was to establish a dialogue across temporal and regional specializations among graduate students focusing on aspects of South Asia at the University.

Guest moderators at the Student Conference included Rachel Dwyer, Gautam Bhadra, Sudipta Kaviraj, and Boria Majumdar. Faculty Advisors for the Conference were Sheldon Pollock, Dipesh Chakrabarty and John D. Kelly.

Members of the Committee on Southern Asian Studies would like to extend their thanks to Sharmistha Gooptu, a graduate student in the Department of History, for her personal commitment in initiating and implementing this project.

Conference Schedule, Day 1, February 27

Panel 1: Cinema in a Changing World: Film in the Imaginary of the Subcontinent

Aaron Rester, History of Religions. *Sacred Space, National Space, Cinematic Space*

Sharmistha Gooptu, History. *Leisure, Profit, Aesthetics: An Early History of Cinema in Bengal*

Babli Sinha, English. *Contestations of Identity and the Reception of Silent Film in India: 1910-1935*

Discussant: Dipesh Chakrabarty, Professor, SALC and History

Panel 2: City, Court, Fringe, and Textual Practice

Prithividdatta Chandrashobhi, SALC. *Are the Viraktas in Vijayanagara Subaltern?*

Whitney Cox, SALC. *Periyapuram among the Public Narratives at Cidambaram*

Mark Flummerfelt, SALC. *Poetry and Place: Bhanubhakta's Nepali Ramayan in Nepal and Darjeeling*

Discussant: Sheldon Pollock, Professor, SALC

Panel 3: Legal Categories and Practices of Law in South Asia

Beatrice Jauregui, Anthropology. *Toward a Cultural History of Discourses and Practices of Statist Corruption in India*

Ethan Kroll, SALC. *Svatva: Philosophical Approaches to Proprietary Right in Early Modern Sanskrit Discourse*

Neena Mahadev, MAPSS/Anthropology, South Asia Outreach. *In the Name of National Sovereignty and Security: Problems in Normativizing Labor Rights in Sri Lanka's Plantation Industry*

Mona Mehta, Political Science. *Fact-finding commissions: Devices of Democratic Accountability or Breach of Democratic Practice--the Nanavati-Shah Commission of Inquiry into the Gujarat Violence, 2002*

Discussant: Rochona Majumdar, Harper Fellow & Assistant Professor

Conference Schedule, Day 2, February 28

Panel 4: Frames from the Cityscape: Faces of Urbanity in Twentieth Century India

Jenny Huberman, Anthropology. *Consuming Children: Reading the Impacts of Tourism in the City of Banaras*

Anthony D'Andrea, Anthropology. *From Ashram to Meditation Resort: Osho Sannyasins, Counterculture, and Spiritual Tourism in Pune, early 2000s*

Nikhil Rao, History. *House, But No Garden: Apartment Living and Urban Identity, Bombay 1930-1950*

Cassie Adcock, History of Religions. *Identifying the "Religious" in Religious Reform: The Arya Samaj in British India*

Discussant: John Kelly, Professor, Anthropology

Round Table: The State of South Asian Studies

Sudipta Kaviraj, University of London--SOAS; Visiting Professor, University of Chicago

Rachel Dwyer, University of London--SOAS

Gautam Bhadra, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta

Boria Majumdar, University of Oxford; Visiting Lecturer, MAPSS, University of Chicago

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South Asia Watch Series on Kashmir

South Asia Watch, a University of Chicago student group, has recently organized a series entitled *Kashmir: A Cultural and Historical Perspective*. Kashmir is the center of a vibrant and dynamic heritage, and the focal point of an on-going international conflict between India and Pakistan. The purpose of the series is to explore the overlapping social, cultural, historical, and political elements that define Jammu and Kashmir within South Asia.

The first component of the series was a teach-in on the historical and political dynamics of the Kashmiri conflict. The event was co-sponsored by the Center for International Studies, the Norman Wait Harris Fund, and the Committee on Southern Asian Studies. The speakers included **Ronald Inden**, University of Chicago; **Joseph E. Schwartzberg**, University of Minnesota; **Sumit Ganguly**, University of Indiana-Bloomington; and **Alyssa Ayres**, Doctoral Fellow, Franke Institute for the Humanities.

The second component of the series, *Literary Traditions of Kashmir*, was an evening of story-telling and scholarly exploration. **Arshia Sattar**, a Ph.D. graduate of SALC, and current Visiting Lecturer at Middlebury College, unraveled some of the cultural and historical complexities of Kashmir through an exploration of the *Kathasaritsagara*. She offered interpretations of the text and stories to show what they reveal about the people who transmitted them over the generations. An insightful introduction was given by **Wendy Doniger**, Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor in the Divinity School.

Future Kashmir Project events will include film screenings, a Kashmiri musical performance, discussions on religion and identity in Kashmir, and discussion of the Kashmiri conflict.

For further information, email malika@uchicago.edu

South Asia Seminar, 2003-04

The University of Chicago Committee on Southern Asian Studies hosted several guests who presented papers at the South Asia Seminar. Recent visitors have included:

Mrinalini Sinha, Associate Professor of History and Women's Studies, Pennsylvania State University

Robert Goldman, Professor of Sanskrit, Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of California at Berkeley

Ajay Skaria, Associate Professor of History, University of Minnesota

Pratap Mehta, Professor of Philosophy and of Law and Governance, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Future seminar presenters include:

Janaki Bakhle, Columbia University, March 11

Nita Kumar, University of Michigan, April 8

Sugata Bose, University of London-SOAS, April 22

Critical Philology Series

As part of the South Asia Seminar, Professor Sheldon Pollock recently initiated a Series on Critical Philology. The series addresses both general theoretical questions in the understanding of South Asian-language texts, and particular strategies for strengthening the teaching of such texts at the advanced level. These theoretical questions can include assessing the constraints placed upon interpretation by South Asian modes of producing, reproducing, and reading texts—such as text-critical protocols, commentarial concerns, oral performance of written texts, the gradual transition from manuscript-culture to print-culture, as well as more general hermeneutical issues. Pedagogical strategies may include anything from ways of increasing the intellectual content of language instruction to the development of new teaching materials. The scope of the seminar has intentionally been left open, so that presenters will feel free to address whatever issues they see as central to the scholarly practice of understanding South Asian texts and the teaching of that practice.

Participants in the Series on Critical Philology include:

Robert Goldman, University of California, Berkeley

Gregory Schopen, University of California, Los Angeles

Harunaga Isaacson, University of Pennsylvania

Paul Losensky, Indiana University

Charles Hallisey, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Rupert Snell, University of London--SOAS, May 13.

Additional Fall Quarter Speakers

Other visiting scholars who delivered talks on campus during Fall Quarter 2003 include:

Robert Travers, Department of History, Harvard University. Guest lecturer, Nicholson Center for British Studies.

Bina Agrawal, Institute of Economic Growth, University of Delhi. Guest lecturer, Center for Comparative Constitutionalism.

Isabelle Onians, D.Phil., Oxford University, Oriental Institute. Guest lecturer, SALC.

Yigal Bronner, East Asian Studies Department, Tel Aviv University. Guest lecturer, SALC.

Lawrence McCrea, Visiting Lecturer of Sanskrit, Harvard University. Guest lecturer, SALC.

Arvind Rajagopal, Associate Professor, Department of Culture and Communication, New York University. Guest lecturer, Political Communications and Society Workshop.

New Faculty

Pamela Lothspeich The Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations welcomes Pamela Lothspeich (MA University of Washington; Ph.D. Columbia University) as a Visiting Lecturer in Hindi Language. Lothspeich studied comparative literature with an emphasis on South Asian literature in Hindi, Bengali and Sanskrit in the Department of Middle East and Asian Languages

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and Cultures and the Center for Comparative Literature and Society at Columbia University. She has studied Hindi and Bengali both in the US and in India.

Lothspeich's dissertation research concerns Hindi adaptations of the *Mahabharata* in the late colonial period. She examines 20th century Hindi narrative poems and plays which employ the story of the central conflict between the Pandavas and the Kauravas in the *Mahabharata*, which often function as a nationalist allegory for the colonial condition of India's subjugation under British occupancy. She is currently finishing translations of three Hindi plays based on the *Mahabharata* with a critical introduction.

Lothspeich lives in Chicago with her husband--who, like herself, is a polyglot. They have two daughters, Zoe and Ursula.

Faculty News

McKim Marriott joined a pair of panels at the Madison South Asia Conference that honored social anthropologist Pauline Kolenda. He presented a paper entitled "Learning from Pauline about Caste Ranking." Kolenda's early methodological work contributed to the development of Marriott's South Asian ethnology--a social science constructed from indigenous categories and logics.

At the Conference on Indic Religions co-sponsored by the Center for the Study of Developing Societies in New Delhi, on December 20, he presented a paper titled "Multidimensionality as South Asia's Religion." The paper offered a formal model of unity and diversity. In December, at the Centre for Postcolonial Education in Varanasi he spoke on "The Categories and Logics of India's Civilization."

Marriott also revisited sites of his long-term previous residence and fieldwork that began during the 1950s--Wai, a small city in Satara North district of Maharashtra, and "Kishan Garhi," an agricultural village in Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh.

COSAS Associate News

Michel Rabe, Associate Professor of Art at St. Xavier University, will chair a panel to be called, "C.A.M.E.R.A: Connoisseurship in the Age of Mechanical & Electronic Reproduction of Antiquities" at the next Symposium of the American Committee for Southern Asian Art (ACSAA), Boston, May 6-9, 2004. His current research focuses on Kushanaesque Bodhisattva images with spurious inscriptions in Middle India.

Graduate Student News

Brian Collins (History of Religions) is teaching "Introduction to Hinduism" at Loyola University this Spring semester.

Jonathan Gold (Philosophy of Religions) successfully defended his dissertation entitled "Intellectual Gatekeeper: Sa-skya Pandita Envisions the Ideal Scholar" and recently received his Ph.D. in Philosophy of Religions from the Divinity School.

Beatrice Jauregui (Anthropology) presented a paper entitled,

"Intermarriage in Contemporary India: Theorizing Social Change via Hybridity, Non-linearity and Simultaneity," at the 2003 American Anthropological Association Conference.

Debali Mookerjee (SALC) is currently teaching at Cornell University and has successfully defended her dissertation entitled "Unfinished Histories: Gendered Violence & National Identity in Women's Writings." In addition, she was awarded the Percy Buchanan Essay Prize for the best graduate research paper on South Asia at a competition held by the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs. Debali also presented a paper at a conference on women and migration at the Developing Countries Research Centre at Delhi in December, and will present a paper at the Association for Asian Studies in March.

Shreyash Palshikar (SALC) gave a paper on the role of money, *paisa*, and *Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti* at the International Conference on Maharashtra at Pune University over the summer. He also made a presentation at Harvard University as part of the Diasporic Torch Ablaze Conference for South Asian Educators. He is spending a year in India to finish his doctoral research on a Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Fellowship.

Bali Sahota (SALC) taught Introductory Hindi-Urdu over the summer at University of Chicago and is presently teaching "Readings in World Literature" in the Humanities Core. In addition, Bali is scheduled to teach "*Ramayana* and the Epic Imagination" and "Indian Romanticism" over the Winter and Spring quarters respectively in the University of Chicago Graham School of General Studies.

Kamal Sadiq (Political Science) successfully defended his dissertation that examined illegal immigration into India from Bangladesh, and compares it to illegal flows of Filipinos and Indonesians into Malaysia. He graduated in December 2003. Kamal's paper "Have Documents, Will Travel: The Role of Documents in Illegal Immigration" won the 2003 Ethnicity, Nationalism and Migration Section Graduate Student Paper Award at the International Studies Association meeting. There he also participated in a panel on globalization studies. In August he presented a paper, "Seeing Like The State Wants Us To See: Methodological Problems in Developing Countries," and was a roundtable participant on the discipline of Political Science at APSA. He recently accepted a tenure-track position in the Political Science Department at University of California-Irvine.

Ananya Vajpeyi (SALC) is publishing a forthcoming article entitled, "Prolegomena to the Study of Places and Persons in Violent India," in *Seminar: A Monthly Symposium*, Special Issue on "Violence" to be guest edited by Shiv Visvanathan, which will be released early this year.

Sharmista Gooptu (History) published an article titled "An Appeal Beyond Aesthetics: An Exploration of the Iconicity of New Theatres" in *EPW*, on the unique appeal of cinema in a changing colonial city, through a study of one of the leading film studios of Bengal in the 1930-40s. An expanded version of that article was published in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and Middle East*. An article by Gooptu will appear in a volume on South Asian popular culture, published by Routledge in June.





South Asia Outreach Teachers' Workshop

During the summer of 2003, South Asia Outreach sponsored a Teachers' Workshop entitled, "Boundaries: The Juxtaposition of Religion, Ethnicity and Politics in South Asia." The purpose of the workshop was to better inform teachers about political change in South Asia and better equip them with materials for teaching students about the history behind current events in the region.

The workshop offered a glimpse into the internal histories and politics of South Asia regarding issues of boundaries and border conflicts, sectarianism, and ethnic conflict. Participants learned about the role that these forces have played in shaping the political fabric of modern South Asia, and the contemporary manifestations of these phenomena in the region. Positive developments currently being made in South Asian politics were also highlighted. Through the Workshop, teachers were able to enhance their abilities to present the complex historical and political influences that shape contemporary South Asia.

2003 Teachers' Workshop Presentations:

Bali Sahota, Graduate Student, South Asian Languages and Civilizations, made a presentation on the emergence of Hindutva.

Scott Richard, Graduate Student, History of Religions, discussed the complex history of the Hindu-Muslim relations in North India.

Shreeyash Palshikar, Graduate Student, South Asian Languages and Civilizations, gave a talk on the roots of communalism in South Asia.

Kamal Sadiq, Graduate Student, Political Science, gave a presentation on insurgency in Kashmir, Assam and Punjab.

Jennifer Dowler, South Asia Outreach, and graduate of Committee on International Relations Masters Program, gave a presentation on the Indo-Pakistan War of 1966, and of 1999 (Kargil War).

Neena Mahadev, South Asia Outreach, and graduate of the Masters of Arts Program in the Social Sciences, gave a presentation on ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka.

Marta Nicholas, gave a presentation on Bangladesh and the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971.

Aaron Rester, showed clips from the televised mini-series Ramayan, and gave a talk entitled, "Hinduizing the Nation in the Television Ramayan."

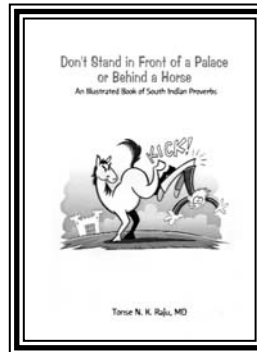
Summer 2004 Teachers' Workshop

The next Teachers' Workshop will be held in Summer 2004. This year, all of the University of Chicago Area Studies Outreach Programs will collaborate in a 5-day workshop addressing a variety of issues from global and regional perspectives.

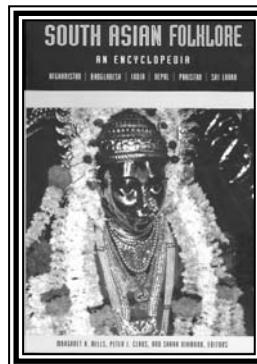
Further information on the 2004 Teachers' Workshop will be available in the spring. If you would like to be on our teacher's mailing list, please contact Neena Mahadev, South Asia Outreach Coordinator, at (773) 702-8635.

Teachers' Corner

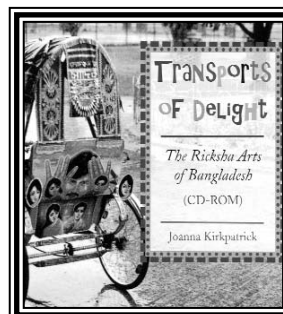
South Asia Outreach has recently acquired the following publications and materials that can be borrowed and used in a variety of different ways in your classroom:



'A proverb in your speech is like chutney with your rice,' so goes a southern Indian saying. The book *Don't Stand in front of a Palace or Behind a Horse* serves a bit of literary chutney from India with this quaint collection of popular proverbs in Kannada, an Indian language with a rich literary history. This book is an excellent resource for any elementary or secondary English teacher who would like to introduce the topic of multiculturalism through the genre of proverbs.



This book, *South Asian Folklore: An Encyclopedia*, documents various South Asian folk traditions by presenting a sample of the diverse range of South Asian cultural practices and productions. Over 500 articles by more than 250 authors are presented in this volume on gender and folklore, epic, folk art, material culture, life cycle rituals, and theatre and drama. This resource would be very useful as a supplement to any lesson that focuses on folklore or South Asian culture in general.



Combining more than 1,000 brilliantly colored photographs, videos, music, and text, this CD-ROM documents a distinctive folk art of urban Bangladesh: rickshaw art. The owners of rickshaws personalize their vehicles with elaborate paintings that incorporate geometric motifs, drawings of animals, mythic and religious themes, and pictures of movie stars. This CD offers a window into Bangladeshi culture and religion, as it examines the question posed by pictorial representation in a predominantly Muslim society.

For more information about our book or video library, please contact South Asia Outreach at (773) 702-8635, south-asia-outreach@uchicago.edu, or visit our website at <http://southasia.uchicago.edu>.

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Kemper's study succeeds on a number of fronts. He gives readers decisive insights into the world of Sri Lankan media and product consumption. He contextualizes Sri Lankan advertising strategies within a broader Asian panorama. He gives a thorough account of historical antecedents to modern ad campaigns on the island. Most significantly, he gives readers a new perspective on daily life in Sri Lanka, bringing into relief discrete on-the-ground realities that exist alongside the nation's (much written about) political, religious and economic dissonances. The book's great strength, and indeed its potential weakness, is that it moves its focus away from Sri Lanka's nodes of strife and spotlights 'popular' manifestations of rural/urban sensibility, global/local economics, and national/ethnic identity - manifestations produced by and for a mainly Sinhala population.

Ben Schonthal

University of Chicago

Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India.

By Ashutosh Varshney.

Yale University Press, 2002.

In an essentially well-researched book, Ashutosh Varshney examines the history of ethnic violence between Hindus and Muslims in post-Independence India. He makes the simple yet powerful argument that ethnic violence has a lower chance of occurring in settings where strong civic ties exist between members of the ethnic groups in conflict. The book could not have been better timed: the last decade has witnessed the resurgence of civil wars and ethnic violence on a global scale on the one hand, while on the other, there has been a renewed interest in ideas of social capital and civic engagement, sparked in part by the publication of political scientist Robert Putnam's book *Making Democracy Work*.

The first conclusion that emerges from the data on riots, which is culled primarily from newspaper reports, is that communal riots in India are an urban phenomenon. According to Varshney, there are two types of civic networks at work in urban areas: associational and quotidian forms of civic engagement. Both promote peace, though associational forms are more robust than quotidian forms of engagement. While everyday interactions make the formation of peace committees possible during tense times, associations such as intercommunal business organizations prevent the outbreak of violence by tying together the interests of the two communities.

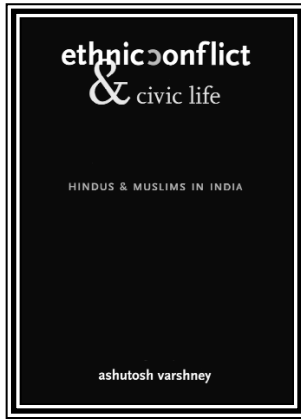
The author presents some statistical analysis to support his argument; however, the series of sloppily presented tables raises more questions than it answers. For example, he tests three competing hypotheses about riot-proneness in a regression analysis based on data from 68 cities. Proponents of the first

hypothesis, the 'literacy hypothesis' argue that higher levels of literacy are associated with lower occurrences of riots. Proponents of the second hypothesis argue, however, that a higher proportion of Muslims in a city increases the chances of violence because the larger numbers make them more assertive and thus threaten the respective Hindu population. Finally, adherents to the 'anti-modernity hypothesis' argue that larger cities are prone to violence because conditions of modernity provoke "culturally chauvinist backlashes." Puzzlingly, while the dependent variable (riot proneness) spans a period of 50 years, the explanatory variables (literacy rates, population size and the proportion of Muslims) seem to be taken from a point in time not specified to the reader. Are we to assume that these socio-demographic variables remained static during the entire time that these riots occurred? This is probably not a good assumption to make.

Also, since riots generally occur in pockets of cities, it may have been useful to look at how these variables affect frequency of riots at a lower level of analysis. The promising opportunity to exploit the variation across time and in neighborhoods within cities, to increase the number of observations and test the hypotheses in a more rigorous fashion is thus lost. Moreover, it is standard practice in regression analysis to control for other factors that may influence the dependent variable, but Varshney does not introduce any other controls besides these three variables. For example, income levels in the cities or political factors such as the parties in government or temporal proximity of elections are not taken into account. Although Varshney argues that "the large n analysis clearly establishes the "town or city" as the unit of analysis and emphasizes the investigation of local mechanisms," political context and the role of the state can play an important role in the onset of violence, as the recent violence in the state of Gujarat has demonstrated. This problem is addressed to some extent in his detailed and historical analysis of Surat and Ahmedabad, but Varshney could have made the argument more convincingly if these variables had been considered explicitly in the statistical analysis.

Based on his statistical analysis, Varshney finds that high levels of literacy are not associated with a lower occurrence of riots, thus rejecting the literacy hypothesis. He also finds that while the proportion of Muslims does seem to have an effect on riot proneness when it is more loosely defined, this effect disappears when more stringent definitions of frequency of riots are adopted. He rejects the second hypothesis without exploring the possible causes of this difference in effects. Finally, population size of a city is strongly associated with ethnic violence: this seems to provide confirmation of the antimodernist hypothesis. Varshney rejects this explanation, however, by arguing that the correlation between population size and riot proneness is not caused by a backlash resulting from erosion of cultural heritage, but from the weakening of civic ties as the population size increases. Of course, an alternative explanation could be that the probability of ethnic violence is higher in large cities because--unlike in smaller settings such as towns and villages--groups of rioters operate under conditions of anonymity. Varshney, however, does not explore this possibility.

The rest of the book is essentially an attempt to elaborate on and provide evidence for the argument that strength of civic ties between Hindus and Muslims matters for the prevention of com-





munal riots. The research design is well crafted and Varshney carefully selects and pairs three riot prone cities with three peaceful ones. While each pair has a roughly equal distribution of Hindus and Muslims, the second and the third pairs have other controls. While Aligarh and Calicut have an equal proportion of Hindus and Muslims, Hyderabad and Lucknow also share a common history of Muslim rule and cultural similarities while Ahmedabad and Surat are from the same state. Criticisms notwithstanding, the argument that civic ties may help in preventing violence between groups is plausible and Varshney's historical analysis is detailed, nuanced and fascinating. Overall, the book is worth reading for scholars of Indian politics and those studying ethnic violence in general.

Ira Parnerkar

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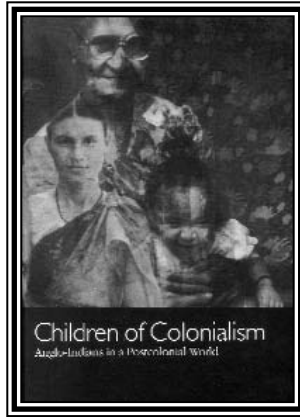
Children of Colonialism: Anglo-Indians in a Postcolonial World

By Lionel Caplan.

Oxford University Press, 2001.

Children of Colonialism reminds us that "[w]hile a group..., or its representatives, may affirm a common identity, there is also a possibility that different sections or classes may insist on quite distinct kinds of cultural belonging, and that these diverse claims can exist contemporaneously or succeed one another over time as circumstances alter..." In so doing the book is a welcome newcomer in the tradition of Christopher Hawes' excellent 1996 monograph *Poor Relations*, on Anglo-Indians (Eurasians), a field still sparse and too often lacking in rigor. Lionel Caplan is Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at SOAS and has spent his career studying Anglo-Indians and other Indian Christian communities in Chennai and throughout South India. This geographical research choice is in itself a refreshing change from the overwhelming focus on North Indian communities and social issues.

Caplan uses a fairly conventional ethnographic approach. His first two chapters review the histories of Anglo-Indians in South India and current debates on identity formation, Creole cultures, colonial Census enumeration, and the "science" of race in the nineteenth-century Raj. Chapters three through five are blessedly jargon-free, if somewhat dry discussions of Anglo-Indians' hybrid locations and practices of self-definition. What emerges is that it is lower-middle class families who most stridently adhere to a distinct though idiosyncratic imagined England. Elite and subaltern Anglo-Indians both participate more readily in the larger South Indian society, and so, whether by choice or by necessity, are less preoccupied with the stereotypical Anglo-Indian dream of migrating to Australia, Canada or the US. In his last three chapters, Caplan returns to classically ethnographic analysis of Anglo-Indian emigration patterns and social practices.



Children of Colonialism deserves credit on two particular counts. First, Caplan is committed to examining class diversity among Chennai Anglo-Indians and refuses to focus exclusively on an emblematic lower middle-class, desperately clinging to vestiges of British-inspired gentility, referred to in the 1987 novel, *The Trotter-Nama* as the "packers and leavers." There is far more to modern Anglo-India than down-at-hell, heavy-drinking loco-drivers or the slatternly wild-eyed *ayah* in her dirty print dress depicted by Merchant-Ivory in 2000. Secondly, Caplan consistently distinguishes the experiences of men and women by drawing convincing links between gender, belonging, and social class-mobility. For example, women's commitment to socio-economic advancement through higher education has frequently made them leaders in families in which the men appear to have had a harder time adapting to life post-1947. In an interesting example of how class and gender are expressed sartorially among Chennai Anglo-Indians, Caplan shows Anglo-Indian women's varying views of wearing saris: poor women do so to avoid "eve-teasing" and because they are cheaper than tailored "frocks," and upper-class women do so "to communicate their self-definition as both cosmopolitan and Indian." It is in the area of gender, however, that one of the weaknesses of *Children of Colonialism* emerges: Caplan never quite succeeds in moving beyond the colonial-era dichotomy of the "go-ahead" (pushy, loose) Anglo-Indian woman versus her often impoverished, "shiftless" male counterpart. The "Indianization" of formerly Anglo-Indian jobs and the difficulty of attaining competency in Tamil are advanced by men and women alike to excuse men's comparative failure to thrive, and Caplan seems content to take these views at face value. His account begs vital questions that continue to engage, for example, African-American scholars and activists: If minority women have negotiated difficult economic conditions hedged about with racial prejudice, why have men displayed far more difficulties? Are men in minority communities really always passive victims? Lastly, is everyone really content to inhabit racial stereotypes?

This is a problem possibly connected to an endemic weakness in studies of race in India—a lack of engagement with racial and colonial practices from other regions, notably the Atlantic world, Australia, and South America. Caplan nods to sociological studies of African-American poverty, and even refers to Jorge Klor de Alva's excellent work on *mestizaje*; yet Caplan's India exists largely in a vacuum. The book succumbs to the knock-on effects of conceptual vacuum-packing: rightly highlighting the specificity of his Chennai-based research, Caplan swiftly retreats: "I have no reason to believe that the historical, social or cultural developments to be considered...are in any significant way different for settlements in other major urban centers of India." I can't help but wish that he had done more with the specifics of Chennai, because wouldn't the active anti-Brahmin movements of Tamil Nadu and the comparative scarcity of communal tensions have implications for Anglo-Indians that are potentially quite distinct from inter-racial and inter-caste politics that affect Anglo-Indians in the north and west of India? Despite these weaknesses, and a slight over-emphasis on secondary literature, *Children of Colonialism* is thorough and solid, and the book will make a useful, accessible text in courses on race and contemporary Indian society.

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ગુજરાતી ક્રિ.ક.મરાઠી વેદ.જ્ઞ.રાજસ્યાની ૧૧/૫ પાલી



Beyond Nationalist Frames: Postmodernism, Hindu Fundamentalism, History

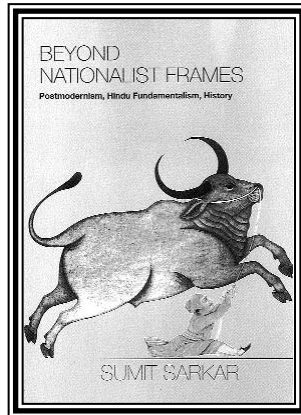
By Sumit Sarkar.

Indiana University Press, 2002.

Sumit Sarkar's book *Beyond Nationalist Frames* is a collection of essays on a variety of topics and time periods. Several of the essays are quite interesting in themselves and do provide fresh insights on important issues in South Asian historiography and politics. However, the work as a whole has a disjointed quality and does not seem to develop or present any single thesis. The introduction alludes to the fact that sections of the book were written "for varied occasions, without any thought, until quite recently, of incorporation into a single format," yet Sarkar concludes by saying, "I think they do have a certain unity."

The unifying elements that pervade the book are questions of historiographic methods, including a commitment to a nuanced version of Marxist thinking and writing that is aware of, and affected, by postmodern thinking, yet does not surrender entirely to it. Sarkar takes pains to point out the evolution of his own thinking as it relates to debates within academia and South Asian studies, and couches his own writings with frequent references to other South Asian scholars including Partha Chatterjee and Gyan Prakash as well as Western intellectuals ranging from Marx to Foucault, Derrida and Habermas.

The book begins with long essays considering time and identity as historical problems. In these sections, the writing style is somewhat laborious including sentences like, "More generally, I want to use the theme of silences and disjunctures for a brief discussion, in my concluding section, of the potentialities, but also the limits, of the current strong swing away from Marxian class approaches towards a concentration on identity politics alone--a focus that is, moreover, often accompanied by a fairly uncritical valorisation." Some of the points in this section are subtle and point to problems in approach centered wholly on identity politics. The book becomes more readable as it progresses to more focused and specific essays that deal with nationalism, Hindutva, the BJP, India's atom bomb and the effects of politics on the writing of history. It concludes with the simple sentences, "Now Justice will be pushed down to third place in the Preamble, below Security (i.e. no doubt, the Bomb) and Prosperity." One could not wish for greater clarity or frankness. The tone of the writings becomes more involved and rhetorical in the essays dealing with contemporary politics and the author makes use of mostly English language materials on Golwalkar, Savarkar and Hedgewar, without reference to their Marathi writings. This makes these final pieces more readable, yet they lack the depth that comes with access and reference to the vernacular materials that round out the earlier chapters in which he has access to the Bengali writings of the authors.



Overall I found some individual essays in the book to contain helpful insights and suggest useful interdisciplinary approaches to scholarship, yet I was not able to discern more than vague thematic connections between the early textually rich essays on nineteenth and twentieth century Bengal and more pointed political pieces on contemporary BJP politics. The book contains helpful cautions to scholars who may focus exclusively on identity.

Shreyash Palshikar

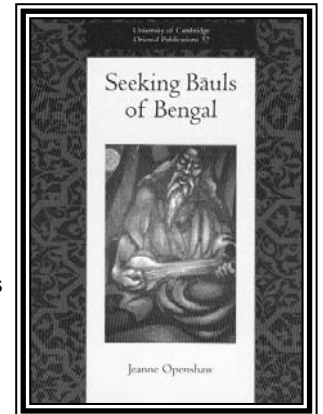
University of Chicago

Seeking Bauls of Bengal

by Jeanne Openshaw.

Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Openshaw's book on the *Bauls of Bengal* is based on seven years of anthropological fieldwork, and focuses primarily on the perceptions and identities constructed around the term *Baul*, and the people associated with it. Those interested in *Bauls* may take a selective approach to reading the book: the first two sections examine historical appropriations of the term *Baul*, which is then recontextualized and problematized with a discussion of ethnographic and manuscript research in two fieldwork locations. The latter three sections of the book specifically address one particular *Baul's* ideological engagement with various Vaishnava and (to a lesser extent) Sufi conceptions, especially concerning the position of householder or renouncer, as well as with materialist attitudes in esoteric *Baul* ritual.



One of the most useful sections of the book is Openshaw's examination on the treatment of *Bauls* by various authorities. By citing both seminal and obscure works, the author highlights how elusive the term *Baul* has been, through early Victorian condescension of *Bauls* as indigent bearers of a debased culture, urbanized elitist Hindu romanticizations of *Bauls* as the archetypal and timeless 'wanderer,' and other standpoints. Most importantly, the author reveals the problems which linger on in academic discussions on the *Bauls* today, and in a variety of disciplines. Specifically related to this is the continued insistence on necessitating a link between *Bauls* and a certain *sampraday*, conceiving of them broadly as an identifiable and singular community or ideology. This has inspired, for instance, an ahistorical mode of constructing *Baul* identity, whereby an enumeration of defining characteristics is made manifest by biased groupings of themes in *Baul* songs. Also important is a long-standing fascination or fetish with defining the word *Baul* at an etymological level.

Openshaw's problematizing of such ideas is made evident in her research on two specific areas of West Bengal. In her work, she discovered that certain areas have been influenced by the



Santiniketan-esque *Baul*, the Tagorian idealization of the unattached mendicant, which had at least rendered an ambiguous position on *Bauls* by other residents. In contrast, the perceptions of *Bauls* in other locations were informed by the influence of orthodox Vaishnavism, where they were regarded as a social threat due to an alleged disregard for structure and morality.

For the remainder of the book, the author centers her work around the practices and opinions of a particular *Baul*, Raj Khyapa, and suggests alternative terms for conceiving *Baul*-ness. She opts for the term *bartaman*, referring to a philosophy centered on the 'here and now' and on knowledge acquired through sense perception. Considering the *Baul* as *bartaman*, the author argues, allows for a more productive space between the scholarly and indigenous categories of householder and renouncer. While the *bartaman* attitude incorporates certain renunciation acts, such acts are inverted and manipulated to other ends. In addition, esoteric practice entails control of the body, specifically through the 'four moons' practice, which is usually performed with a sexual partner, and re-establishes a primacy for the husband-wife as couple. Such practices, indeed the perception of the term love itself, are directly related to the divination of the human body, at the expense of transcendent deities and images. In addition, Openshaw considers 'four moons' practice as involving a shift or erasure of boundaries between self and non-self.



An interesting section of the book discusses *harikatha*, the 'talking about' practice and ritual, often incorporating a language of esoteric terms. Encoded and secretive, such terms are often deployed with considerable rhetorical skill, fostering a dislocation from conventional representations--a common lyrical aspect of many *Baul* songs. For instance, the term *caitanya* can refer to the saint of Bengali Vaishnavism, 'menstruation' (significant in 'four moons' practice), 'consciousness' (a literal meaning), or even the erect linga (which has become conscious). Such interpretations, the author mentions, are not impervious to the appropriation of Islamic terminology.

This leads to a particularly absent theme in the book's many informative discussions, that of 'Muslim' *Bauls*. Although Openshaw provides curious little tidbits on such *Bauls* throughout the book, her research, like most on *Bauls*, remains within the domain of West Bengali *Bauls* in Hindu communities. This is unfortunate since many of her theories would have lent themselves to an analysis of *Bauls* in Bangladesh, and specifically those who claim certain affinities with the legacy of Lalan Shah. Such an examination might shed light on *Baul* identity with regard to Bangladesh nationalism, Islamic reform, or other *faqir* music communities such as *boyatis* and *Maijbandari* Sufis. In addition, the author herself admits to her own lack of presence as fieldworker and researcher in the text. As so much of the work is centered around issues of identity and agency, her position as a female and married outsider, and as a scholar who worked in Bengali off-and-on for a period of years, would surely have added much to the discussion.

Bertie Kibreah

University of Chicago

Student Photo Exhibit



"The Lamdon School." Photograph by Natalie Brown.

SOUTH ASIA OUTREACH is hosting a student photo exhibit that will be featured in Foster 103 during the Spring Quarter, from April 9 through June 11. Photographs will comprise topics pertaining to South Asian subject matter and the geographical region of South Asia. From the selected exhibition photographs, one photo contest winner will be chosen and announced at the exhibit's opening reception on April 9, 3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

To receive further information, contact Amanda Huffer at South Asia Outreach: ahuffer@uchicago.edu

Chicago South Asia Newsletter

Previous editions of the *Chicago South Asia Newsletter* can be accessed at <http://southasia.uchicago.edu/pubs.htm>

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, or if you have questions or comments about the Newsletter, please contact us at, phone: (773) 702-8635, fax: (773) 702-1309, or email: south-asia-outreach@uchicago.edu

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Neena Mahadev, South Asia Outreach Co-Coordinator

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Chitrānkan: Contemporary Paintings of Rural Madhya Pradesh

*An exhibit of paintings and drawings by artists from
rural Madhya Pradesh, India.*

The artists represented are members of *Adi Kala Vikas Manch*,
an artists' cooperative dedicated to promoting the art
and livelihood of India's *adivasi* artists.

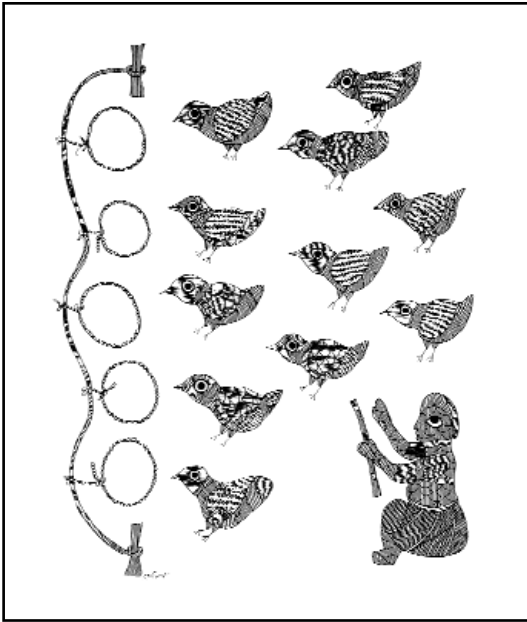
The exhibit includes brilliantly colored paintings, black and white
ink drawings and prints of natural scenes, traditional religious
subjects, and contemporary interpretations of
traditional themes and styles.

Sponsored by the University of Chicago's South Asia Outreach
Educational Project and participants in the University of Chicago's
2003 Fulbright-Hays Groups Project in India, who have lent the
artwork on display from their personal collections.

The exhibit will be available for viewing 3pm to 5pm on Fridays,
from January 16 through March 19. Refreshments will be served.
The exhibit can also be viewed by appointment.

University of Chicago, Foster Hall 103, 1130 E. 59th Street

**Call South Asia Outreach at 773-702-8635 for
more information or for an appointment.**



"Untitled." A man trapping birds, Shrimati Durga Bai, artist.

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