Southern Asia at Chicago

The University of Chicago has been one of the leading academic centers for the study of Southern Asia in the United States for over five decades. Countries in which we have scholarly expertise include in South Asia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka; and in Southeast Asia, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Tibet (as an autonomous region), and Vietnam. Southern Asia at Chicago offers ten South Asian languages to students from beginning to advanced levels of proficiency. More than 50 faculty members in nineteen departments and five professional schools regularly offer more than 250 courses with South Asia content. This is one of the largest concentrations of faculty working on Southern Asia at any major research university in the nation. Founded in the 1950s, Chicago’s South Asia Language and Area Center (SALAC) is one of the oldest and most well-established Title VI Area Studies Centers in the United States, having been continuously funded by the program for over 50 years.

We invite you to explore highlights of our 2012-2013 programs and our future directions with this newsletter.

South Asia Outreach

The South Asia Language and Area Center (SALAC) is engaged in an active outreach program that impacts the broader community of educators and institutions in the greater Chicago area. Our core mission is to provide educators at all levels with resources and guidance for curricular development. As part of this mission, we design and conduct teacher training workshops and summer institutes for educators at the elementary, high school, community college, and college levels. The South Asia Outreach office offers for loan a large range of educational materials, including books on a variety of topics, documentary and feature films, curriculum units, comics, and interactive teaching kits. We regularly bring experts on South Asia’s cultures, histories, languages, and politics to K-12 classrooms. Our staff is composed of South Asia specialists who can answer questions and help teachers and other interested individuals locate resources outside our office. We are constantly working to acquire new, quality resources and update our existing materials. For anybody interested in finding out more about the region, publicizing South Asia-related events, or gaining access to the University of Chicago’s excellent resources and expertise, South Asia Outreach is an invaluable point of contact.
Center in Delhi

The University of Chicago will open a major new academic center in Delhi next spring, supporting and expanding opportunities for collaboration among scholars and students from India and Chicago, across academic disciplines.

The Center in Delhi will be a home for research and education for University of Chicago faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates working in India and throughout South Asia, as well as Indian researchers and students representing a wide array of institutions, and scholars from around the world.

President Robert J. Zimmer notes that the Center in Delhi will be an intellectual destination and will enable the University of Chicago to better support research and scholarship that will benefit faculty, students, and society:

“The Center in Delhi reflects the importance the University places on global engagement and our commitment in India and South Asia particularly. The Center will support the work of our faculty, provide a platform for collaboration and opportunities for Indian scholars, prepare our students with a much greater understanding of India, South Asia, and global issues, and contribute to intellectual discourse in and with India. Our goal is to create an intellectual destination in Delhi, where scholars and students from the United States, India, and around the world can benefit from the free exchange of ideas.”

The Center will promote scholarship and teaching under three broad umbrellas: business, economics, law and policy; science, energy, medicine and public health; and culture, society, religion, and the arts. It will represent all parts of the University, including the College, the academic divisions, the professional schools, and the University’s affiliated laboratories: Argonne National Laboratory, Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, and the Marine Biological Laboratory.

Located in the vibrant cultural and commercial district of Connaught Place, the 17,000-square-foot Center will provide space for seminars and conferences, as well as faculty offices and study areas. It will host Indian and South Asian students and scholars, serve as a base for UChicago students and faculty working at other institutions in India and throughout the region, and engage alumni and parents in India and South Asia.

The University of Chicago Faculty Steering Committee members, led by faculty director Professor Gary A. Tubb, will continue their ongoing engagement in South Asia. They will build on their longtime partnerships to help plan and guide the intellectual content and programming for the Center in Delhi. Faculty Steering Committee members are: Marianne Bertrand, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Robert Chaskin, Leela Gandhi, Young-Kee Kim, Peter B. Littlewood, William T. S. Mazzarella, Martha C. Nussbaum, and John A. Schneider. The Faculty Steering Committee will support a wide range of activities including: conferences and workshops, lectures, professional development programs, residencies and fellowships.
Letter from the Director

As we begin a new calendar year amid the ongoing rush of the academic term, it is perhaps fitting that this newsletter highlights both the continuing excellence of South Asian studies at Chicago as well as introducing some of our major new initiatives, including the soon-to-be-opened center in Delhi and the soon-to-be-populated Indian Ministry of Culture Vivekananda Visiting Professorship. In addition to these two new initiatives, we also have an all-new administrative team at the South Asia Language and Area Center (SALAC), in the Committee on Southern Asian Studies (COSAS), and have many new faculty members and students to welcome to our intellectual community.

Having assumed the directorship of SALAC in July, I am privileged to be part of this transformation. After fifteen years of steady guidance by Jim Nye, our indispensable South Asia librarian, my team and I are fortunate to be able to build on such a solid foundation. A 17-year veteran of the university, I formerly served as COSAS chair and as director of the Center for International Studies. My work is focused primarily on southern India, linking long-term human and environmental histories to contemporary problems. Joining us as Associate Director of both SALAC and COSAS is Irving Birkner, who has extensive administrative experience with the University, including work in development and with the Center for International Studies. Deanna Ramsay has recently assumed the job of Outreach Coordinator. Deanna has research experience in both South and Southeast Asia and is ably assisted by our three outreach assistants, Jess Adepoju, Sarah Ahmad-Myers, and Rachael Bolte. Other new SALAC staff include Toby T ieger, our Communications and Office Manager. Together with Dan Arnold, the chair of COSAS, we make up the Southern Asia administrative team, or at least the ‘front office’ part of it.

In addition to new staff, we are also pleased to welcome seven new faculty members to the South Asia community. In the South Asian Languages and Civilization Department, we welcome E. Annamalai (Tamil language and literature), Lavanya Collooru (Telugu language and journalism), and Whitney Cox (Sanskrit and Tamil literature). In the College, Anna Seastrand brings us new expertise in art history. Three new social scientists round out our faculty roster: Gayathri Embuldeniya (Comparative Human Development), Isa Hussin (Political Science) and Constantine Nakassis (Anthropology). In the library, Laura Ring has joined us as the Assistant South Asia Bibliographer. Both Laura and Whitney are Chicago PhDs, recently returned to us from distinguished careers elsewhere. Keep an eye out for faculty news from these terrific additions to our scholarly community.

The Indian Ministry of Culture Vivekananda Visiting Professorship was established to commemorate the legacy of Swami Vivekananda and to enrich scholarly life at the university. Supported by a $1.5 million gift to the University from the Indian Ministry of Culture, the new professorship was celebrated in a January 2012 ceremony attended by Indian President Pranab Mukherjee and Ambassador Nirupama Rao. This exciting new program supports visiting appointments by distinguished scholars in Indian studies. Following extensive review in both India and Chicago, the selection committee has chosen Sir Christopher Bayly of Cambridge University, who will join the faculty for Spring Quarter of 2014 and 2015, and Professor David Shulman of Hebrew University, who will be resident Spring Quarter of 2016 and 2017. Neither scholar needs an introduction to readers of this newsletter; with these new appointments our existing strengths in history and South Indian literature are magnified and we all look forward to courses, lectures, and discussions with these two eminent scholars. As Gary Tubb, chair of the selection committee, notes, “We are delighted to know that the first two incumbents of this distinguished chair will be experts on India who are already internationally renowned for their scholarship and teaching, and who each in his own way works to enhance the world’s understanding of the history, culture and people of India. Sir Christopher Bayly, through his careful attention to the lives of Indian
people and the wide-reaching impact of Indians on social and political change, continues to illuminate the role of India in modern history. David Shulman’s work explores the rich interactions of literature, philosophy, religion, and regional cultures in the intellectual and social life of India across the centuries.”

Another critical new initiative, this one with implications both inside and outside of South Asian studies, is the University of Chicago Delhi Center, scheduled to open in March 2013. This center is intended to serve the entire University community and will, we hope, be instrumental in helping expand research and teaching on South Asia beyond existing boundaries. The 17,000-square-foot center itself will be located in Connaught Place, New Delhi, at the heart of Lutyen’s Delhi and within easy reach of the Delhi Metro. Gary Tubb, former chair of the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations (SALC) and member of COSAS, was selected to serve as the faculty director of the center, taking over from Dipesh Chakrabarty, chair of the faculty committee that recommended forming the center. Not a degree-granting unit, the center will join the extensive network of Chicago overseas programs that host courses, conferences, workshops, and alumni events. As Ian Solomon, the new vice president for Global Engagement notes, “The University’s overseas centers, along with the numerous international activities on campus in Chicago, together create a dynamic global network for joint programming, teaching, and research activities.”

In all, then, the study of Southern Asia at Chicago – and beyond Chicago – seems poised for an exciting future. With new facilities to help us link our research and teaching in India and other parts of southern Asia to our work on campus and to extend our engagement with this critical region to new disciplines and new audiences, we are stronger than ever. We continue to rejoice in high quality facilities at home, as well, including the South Asia library collections. Most of all, however, it is people – students, faculty, and staff – who make the experience of studying South Asia at the University of Chicago so rewarding. With new faculty, new students, and new staff joining us, and with the continued good work of our existing colleagues, we look forward to a promising future indeed.

Kathleen Morrison
Director, South Asian Language and Area Center
Performing the Bengal Borderlands: Music, Movement, and Encounter

February 11-15, 2013

Rehanna Kheshgi and Ameera Nimjee, PhD candidates in Ethnomusicology, University of Chicago

South Asian Sound Interventions (SASI), in collaboration with the Department of Music, the Committee on Southern Asian Studies (COSAS), the Logan Center for the Arts, the Arts Council, and the Franke Institute for the Humanities at the University of Chicago, organized a week-long series of symposia, concerts, and workshops titled Performing the Bengal Borderlands: Music, Movement, and Encounter. The series brought together musicians, activists, and scholars to perform and discuss possibilities for alliance in the region spanning Bangladesh, Northeast India, West Bengal, and beyond.

The University of Chicago hosted both local and international guests who participated in the week’s programs. The series kicked off on February 11 with an evening concert of Hindustani music by performers Somjit Dasgupta (sarod), Amie Maciszewski (sitar), and Manny Bedi (tabla) in the Logan Center’s beautiful Performance Penthouse. Audience members first encountered the series’ distinguished guests, Dasgupta and Maciszewski, in one of their many roles as active performers. The concert’s repertoire ranged from renditions of classical ragas on two of India’s most iconic stringed instruments to semi-classical and folk songs that hail from all over South Asia.

The week’s events continued on February 12 and 13 with workshops by Somjit Dasgupta and Amie Maciszewski, respectively. Dasgupta began with a summary of his work as Eastern India Coordinator for the construction, acquisition, and restoration of musical instruments at Sangeet Natak Akademi in New Delhi. He continued with a set of short films of varying genres, which he directed and produced. The films survey the various processes involved in musical instrument making in the Bengal borderlands and explore associated beliefs and rituals.

Maciszewski shared her work as a public ethnomusicologist and teacher in Austin, Texas. She presented on her activities with festivals and NGOs both in the United States and in India, where she continues to teach and perform music and dance. Maciszewski screened her documentary, Disrupted Divas. Conflicting Pathways, on her work with India-based NGO Guria at a program hosted by the Smart Museum of Art, which was part of the exhibition The Sahmat Collective: Art and Activism in India since 1989.

Scholars and community members gathered at a unique and interdisciplinary symposium on February 14. Presentations included those by ethnomusicology graduate students Bertie Kibreah and Rehanna Kheshgi;
collaborative discussions by Professor Thibaut d’Hubert and Bangladesh-based Saymon Zakaria, and Professor Philip Bohlman and India-based Somjit Dasgupta; and talks on community engagement by Chicago radio host Marta Nicholas and Amie Maciszewski. Participants engaged with the week’s themes through discussion and audiovisual presentations.

The series drew to a close on February 15 with a mehfil gathering and jam session in Fulton Recital Hall. University of Chicago students, faculty, and members of the university’s wider community came together to play, sing, and dance a cross-cultural repertoire. Informal performances on the sitar, harmonium, Afghan rabab, Karnatic violin, and oboe were met with renditions of popular and folk songs and classical dances. The mehfil ended the week-long series Performing the Bengal Borderlands as it had begun, with a musical encounter. The mehfil and series were both productive and successful, engaging participants with borderland issues through musical sharing and dialogue. SASI will host a similar series of events in 2014 that will include interdisciplinary discussion and performance. Stay tuned for details at http://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/sasi/.
The Sahmat Collective

February 14 - June 9, 2013
Lauren Dean, B.A. candidate in Geographical Studies, University of Chicago

Sahmat, which means “in agreement” in Hindi and is also an acronym for the Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust, was formed after the death of activist and artist Safdar Hashmi, who was attacked by political thugs while performing a street play. Sahmat’s efforts over the last two decades have focused on street-based performance and art that highlights the ideas of secularism and inclusion that India’s democracy was founded upon.

The exhibit guides one through Sahmat’s efforts chronologically; however, the common thread of inclusion and secularism is woven throughout the works. Many of Sahmat’s projects emerged in direct response to major political events and communalist politics, particularly the destruction of the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya in 1992 and the Godhra train burning in 2002. Given the collective’s commitment to inclusive politics, many of the most powerful pieces in the exhibit are not intended for gallery viewing, but rather for dissemination through quotidian public spaces. This can be seen in projects such as Art on the Move, which advocated for communal harmony by erecting iconic and ritual forms on top of bicycles, push carts, and rickshaws, allowing the art to be moved through the city by laborers, street vendors, and rickshaw wallahs and making it accessible to all. In response to the emergence of a strong Bharatiya Janata Party, Sahmat invited autorickshaw and taxi drivers to paint poems advocating communal harmony on the backs of their vehicles to spread their messages throughout Delhi and Mumbai. Other projects, including the writing and translation of children’s books in multiple Indian languages, make Sahmat’s ideas of inclusivity accessible to viewers of all ages and backgrounds. The collective’s work roots itself in India’s democratic history by pulling inspiration from Bhakti and Sufi poets and borrowing democratic forms such as postcards from Gandhian movements.

While The Sahmat Collective focuses on public art, they have not remained outside of legal frays. After constructing mobile exhibition kits of their project “We Are All Ayodhya”, Sahmat’s work was confiscated on charges of blasphemy. Eight years later, the collective won a major legal battle defending their right to free speech. The exhibit is punctuated with an ongoing project that honors M.F. Husain, a prominent Muslim artist who painted controversial images of nude Hindu gods and goddesses.
The Tenth South Asia Graduate Student Conference

April 4-5, 2013

Rachael Bolte, Outreach Assistant, South Asia Language and Area Center

The Tenth South Asia Graduate Student Conference was held at the University of Chicago from April 4-5, 2013. The conference, titled “A Place of Literature”, was divided into sessions of panels chaired by University of Chicago faculty members and the sessions concluded with a keynote lecture from a visiting professor. The panels began with short presentations followed by a discussion led by the faculty chairs. The panels on Thursday, April 4 included: “Tamil and Telugu Literature” chaired by Rajagopal Vakulabhavanam, “Sanskrit Literature” chaired by Professor Gary Tubb, “Persian Literature” chaired by Associate Professor Franklin Lewis, and “Mughal Literature” chaired by Assistant Professor Thibaut d’Hubert. Dr. Whitney Cox, University of London, and Dr. A. Azfar Moin, Southern Methodist University, presented keynote lectures on Thursday. Friday’s panels included: “Satire and Nostalgia in Colonial North India” chaired by Associate Professor Rochona Majumdar, “Buddhist Literature” chaired by Professor Steven Collins, “Places of Urdu” chaired by Senior Lecturer Elena Bashir, and “Faiz Ahmad Faiz” chaired by Professor C.M. Naim. Dr. Charles Hallisey, Harvard Divinity School, and Dr. Frances W. Pritchett, Columbia University, delivered the keynote lectures on Friday.

In total, 17 students gave presentations including six students from the University of Chicago and 11 students from universities throughout the United States and abroad. The following students gave presentations:

Sravanthi Kollu (University of Minnesota), Malarvizhi Jayanth (University of Chicago), Shiv Subramaniam (Columbia University), Luther Obrock (University of California, Berkeley), Leila El-Murr (McGill University), Hajnalka Kovacs (University of Chicago), Hasan Siddiqui (University of Chicago), Usman Hamid (University of Toronto), Debjani Bhattacharyya (Emory University), Ahona Panda (University of Chicago), Sravani Biswas (Syracuse University), Davey Tomlinson (University of Chicago), Justin Fifield (Harvard University), Alexander Jabbari (University of California, Irvine), M.A. Ahmad Khan (Cambridge University), Francesca Chubb-Confer (University of Chicago), and Taimoor Shahid (Columbia University).

The conference was sponsored by the Committee on Southern Asian Studies, the Franke Institute for the Humanities, the Nicholson Center for British Studies, the Council on Advanced Studies, Theory and Practice in South Asia Workshop, the University of Chicago Divinity School, the Buddhist Studies Group, the Department of History, the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture, the Division of the Social Sciences, the Department of Comparative Literature, and the Division of the Humanities. PhD candidates in the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations Ishan Chakrabarti and Jane Mikkelson organized the conference.

The South Asia Graduate Student Conference has been held every year since 2004. Abstracts of the papers presented at the Tenth South Asia Graduate Student Conference can be found online at http://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/sagsc/sagsc-x/sagsc-x-abstracts/.

See page 16 for a full list of speakers and presentation titles.
Travels of Law: Networks, Trajectories, Transformations

April 12, 2013
Rachael Bolte, Outreach Assistant, South Asia Language and Area Center

The Travels of Law Conference on April 12, 2013, was a day-long workshop to develop collaboration and scholarship on the movement of law, legal ideas, and agents across the Indian Ocean. The event, held at International House, brought together scholars from the University of Chicago and universities in the United States and abroad.

The workshop featured a series of panels, in which a paper was presented and then discussed by another participant. The “Networks” panel featured papers by Fahad Bishara, Anand Yang, and Eve-Darian Smith; “Trajectories” featured papers by Julia Stephens, Riyad Koya, and Nurfadzilah Yahaya; “Transformations” featured papers by Michael Gilsenan, Iza Hussin, Rohit De, and Renisa Mawani; and “Future Directions” featured a paper by Justin Richland.

The eleven participants, who presented papers at the workshop, included: Fahad Bishara (Harvard University), Rohit De (University of Cambridge), Michael Gilsenan (New York University), Iza Hussin (University of Chicago), Riyad Koya (University of California, Berkeley), Renisa Mawan (University of British Columbia), Justin Richland (University of Chicago), Eve Darian-Smith (University of California, Santa Barbara), Julia Stephens (Harvard University), Nurfadzilah Yahaya (Washington University in St. Louis), and Anand A. Yang (University of Washington, Seattle).

This workshop was sponsored by the Committee on Southern Asian Studies and the International House Global Voices Program.
Celebrating 100 Years of Indian Cinema: A Retrospective of Films by Adoor Gopalakrishnan

April 11-12, 2013
Ranu Roychoudhuri, PhD candidate in South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago

As cinema in India completes its one hundred years, The University of Chicago offered its tribute to that rich historical lineage by organizing Celebrating 100 Years of Indian Cinema from April 11 through April 13. Aptly named, the event featured a two-day-long retrospective of films by Adoor Gopalakrishnan, discussion with the filmmaker, and a day-long symposium entitled “Parallel” to What? Pasts and Futures of Indian Arts Cinema.

Gopalakrishnan (b. 3 July 1941), who attended the event, is an internationally reputed Indian film director and a pioneering figure in the history of Indian cinema. Trained at the prestigious Film and Television Institute of India (Pune), Gopalakrishnan’s simple and subtle art of filmmaking often interacts with international cinema yet as he puts it “retaining Indianess in narrative and style.” During the past four decades, his works have won multiple national awards in India; they have been screened in all the major film festivals around the globe and have won several prestigious awards like the Sutherland Trophy and the FIPRESCI prize. The retrospective, held in the newly opened screening theater in the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, offered a unique opportunity not only to the university community but also to all the cinephiles in and around Chicago to see four of Gopalakrishnan’s much discussed films: Mathilukal (The Wall, 1987), Vidheyan (The Servile, 1993), Ellippathayam (Rat Trap, 1981), and Nizalkkuthu (Shadow Kill, 2002).

After the first two days of film screenings along with intensive and extensive discussions with Gopalakrishnan, the final day was devoted to a more theoretical discussion on cinema more generally and particularly the ways in which the film form has taken shape in India.

The keynote address at the symposium was delivered by Ashish Rajadhyaksha (Director and Senior Fellow, Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bengaluru, India), one of the founders of the discipline of film studies in India. In his keynote titled “Realism without Reform: Other Histories of India’s Parallel Cinema”, Rajadhyaksha focused on “realism” and the ways in which this issue has been addressed in Indian cinema. The keynote was followed by two panels with four enriching and thought-provoking papers by Moinak Biswas (Professor, Film Studies, Jadavpur University), Bhaskar Sarkar (Associate Professor, Film and Media Studies, University of California-Santa Barbara), Meheli Sen (Assistant Professor, Rutgers-The State University of New Jersey), and Erin O’Donnell (Assistant Professor, East Stroudsburg University). The panels were chaired by William Mazzarella (Professor, Anthropology and Social Sciences in the College) and Suranjana Ganguly (Professor, University of Colorado-Boulder). The symposium ended with a roundtable discussion featuring Tom Gunning (Edwin A. and Betty L. Bergman Distinguished Service Professor, Cinema and Media Studies & Art History, University of Chicago).
Chicago), Daniel Eisenberg (Professor, Film, Video and New Media, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago), Rochona Majumdar (Associate Professor, South Asian Languages and Civilizations and Cinema and Media Studies), and Ashish Rajadhyaksha.

Rochona Majumdar and William Mazzarella were the conveners of the event; it was sponsored by the Office of the President, the Humanities Division, the Committee on Southern Asian Studies, and the Franke Institute for the Humanities.
The Films of Leena Manimekalai

April 17-19, 2013
Julie A. Hanlon, PhD candidate, Department of Anthropology, Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations

This April, the Committee on Southern Asian Studies at the University of Chicago welcomed a visit from Leena Manimekalai, an independent filmmaker, and conducted screenings of three of her films. Leena Manimekalai is not only a filmmaker, but also an actress and a published poet. Her works include dozens of films from various genres (documentary, fiction, experimental) and three anthologies of poetry (in Tamil, see http://ulaginazhagiyamuthalpenn.blogspot.com/). She has been awarded an EU Fellowship (2005), a Commonwealth Fellowship (2008), and the Charles Wallace Art Award (2011), as well as numerous awards and nominations for her films. Her recent work is funded by a PSBT Film Fellowship on Pre-Historic Tamil Women Poetry and an IAWRT Documentary Fellowship on the indigenous journalist-activist Dayamani Barla.

The first screening, which featured the film Sengadal (The Dead Sea), was held at the Home Room of International House. Sengadal takes place in the small fishing village of Dhanushkodi on the southernmost tip of Tamil Nadu. It powerfully addresses the plight of the local fishing community and the Tamil refugees, who are seeking escape from the ethnic violence in Sri Lanka. The film is an example of community participatory cinema, with many of the villagers of Dhanushkodi enacting in the film real life events of the community. The highly political nature of the fictionalized film initially caused a stir and temporary ban in Tamil Nadu. However, after some months of struggle, the film was cleared for public exhibition. Since that time it has been screened at film festivals across the globe and received wide acclaim. Following the screening, the audience had an opportunity to engage in a question and answer session with Leena Manimekalai. She discussed the technical aspects of how the film was produced and addressed some of the difficulties faced in making and exhibiting the film. For more information about the film, please see http://sengadalthemovie.com/.

The second screening, which was held on Friday, April 19, highlighted the versatility of Leena Manimekalai as an artist and independent filmmaker. The screening began with Tevataikal (Goddesses), a documentary film about the lives of three women who engage in non-traditional occupations: Lakshmi, a devotee of Shakti who sings and dances at funerals; Krishnaveni, who collects and buries unclaimed bodies from the streets of Pondicherry; and Sethuraku, who earns a living through fishing, a profession traditionally restricted to men. The film examines the complex position of women in Indian society. It shows particularly how these three women, who find themselves in difficult social and economic conditions, channel a potent female power and energy, becoming goddesses in their own right.

The third film shown was Pennati (My Mirror is the Door). The title in Tamil is a combination of the words for woman (pen) and mirror (kannati). This experimental and creative film interweaves scenes inspired by classical Tamil poetry, specifically poems by female poets from the Ettuttokai (Eight Anthologies) and Pattuppattu (Ten Idylls), and scenes inspired by the poetry of Leena Manimekalai, which draw on contemporary imagery and events. Described as a ‘cine-poem’, the film narrates poetry of past and present, and we see through the gaze of Leena Manimekalai, who stars as herself - a modern poet - the reflection of the rich tradition of female Tamil poets from which she draws her strength and inspiration. The second day of film screenings was also followed by a discussion session with the filmmaker.
Outreach Resources

Video Lending Library
http://southasiavideos.uchicago.edu/

The South Asia Video Lending Library maintains an ever-growing collection of films and audio recordings made in and about South Asia, ranging from popular Bollywood to rare historical fiction to contemporary documentaries. Educators, researchers, students and other interested parties are welcome to borrow from our film library. Our library is located in our Outreach Office, in Kelly Hall 103 at the University of Chicago.

In addition to the films housed on site, there are many others that are a part of the University of Chicago’s Library system. To borrow these films, patrons should contact the University of Chicago Library.

Over the past year we have added twenty films to our library of over 1,000 titles, including Naukri (directed by Hrishikesh Mukherjee), Rat Trap (directed by Adoor Gopalakrishnan), and the documentary Inshallah, Kashmir: Living Terror (directed by Ashvin Kumar). Our film library is always growing in size, and we welcome any suggestions for films we do not currently have. If you have suggestions for films you would like to see added to our collection, please contact us by email at ucsouthasia@gmail.com.
Celebrating 100 Years of Indian Cinema: A Retrospective of Films by Adoor Gopalakrishnan and the Symposium “Parallel to What? Past and Futures of Indian Arts Cinema”, April 11-13, 2013

Adoor Gopalakrishnan (Filmmaker)

The Fifth Annual International Education Conference, November 9, 2012

Julia de la Torre (Executive Director, Primary Source)
Alexander Barma (University of Chicago)
Lucy Gray (Education Consultant)
Lisa Davis (Smart Museum)
Michael Christiano (Smart Museum)

The United States and Afghanistan: Promoting Civic Engagement in the Classroom, November 10, 2012

C. Ryan Perkins (University of Chicago)
Diana Hess (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
Irving Brinkner (University of Chicago)


Erendo Leichombam (Founder, The Manipur International Center)

New Directions in South Asian Intellectual History, April 8-9, 2013

C.A. Bayly (University of Cambridge)
Faisal Devji (Oxford University)

Celebrating 100 Years of Indian Cinema: A Retrospective of Films by Adoor Gopalakrishnan and the Symposium “Parallel to What? Past and Futures of Indian Arts Cinema”, April 11-13, 2013

Adoor Gopalakrishnan (Filmmaker)
Ashish Rajadhyaksha (Centre for the Study of Culture and Society)
Monok Biswas (Jadavpur University)
Rochana Majumdar (University of Chicago)
Suranj Garguly (University of Colorado-Boulder)
William Mazzarella (University of Chicago)
Erin O’Donnell (East Stroudsburg University)
Mehfil Sen (DePaul University)
Tom Gunning (University of Chicago)
Bhashkar Sarkar (University of California, Santa Barbara)

Travels of Law: Networks, Trajectories, Transformations, April 12, 2013

Fahad Bishara (Harvard University) - “Paper Routes: Inscribing Islamic Law Across the Nineteenth-Century Western Indian Ocean”

Rohit De (University of Cambridge) - “Peripatetic World Court?: Cosmopolitan Courts and Nationalist Judges at the Twilight of Empire”
Michael Gilsenan (New York University) - “The Implications of Translation in Colonial Asia”
Iza Hussin (University of Chicago) - “Two Trajectories of Islam and Law: Re-reading the Mafalih and Constitution in 1890s Johor”
Riyad Koya (University of California-Berkeley) - “Community and Citizenship in Colonial Fiji: The Application of the Shari'a for Fiji’s Muslim Minority”
Rensia Mawan (University of British Columbia) - “The (Un)Timely Futures of British Justice”
Justin Richland (University of Chicago)
Eve Darian-Smith (University of California, Santa Barbara) - “An Uncertain Inheritance: Litigating Religion and Territoriality across Empires”

Brenda Beck (Filmmaker)

Concert with Josh Feinberg and Manpreet Bedi, November 16, 2012

Josh Feinberg (Sitar)

Death and the Queen: The Legend of Ponnivala Film screening, November 16, 2012

Brenda Beck (Filmmaker)

Concert with Josh Feinberg and Manpreet Bedi, November 16, 2012

Josh Feinberg (Sitar)
Manpreet Bedi (Tabla)

Bengal Borderlands, February 11-15, 2013

Somit Dasgupta (Sarod), Amie Maczewski [Tabla], and Manpreet Bedi (Tabla) - “Hindustani Strings at the Borderlands”, “Musical Instruments across the Bengal Borderlands”, Workshop, “Performing the Bengal Borderlands”, and “Mehfil: Musicians in Movement across the Borderlands”

The Films of Leena Manimekalai, ), April 17-19, 2013

Leena Manimekalai (Filmmaker)


Ashish Rajadhyaksha (Centre for the Study of Culture and Society)

Concert: Shubha Mudgal, June 9, 2013

Shubha Mudgal (Singer)
Study Abroad: Pune

The autumn quarter program in Pune explores topics in South Asian civilization. It is built upon a three-course civilization sequence, which examines the literature, religion, art, and society of the South Asian subcontinent through course work, field studies, and direct experience. Pune is a city of approximately four million inhabitants situated on the eastern foothills of the Indian western coastal mountains, or ghats, about 100 miles southeast of Mumbai. Famously labeled by India’s first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru as “the Oxford and Cambridge of India,” it is a major center for Indian art, religion and higher education, and an ideal site for cultural immersion.

During the first seven weeks of the quarter, the program is based in Pune, where students complete two of the three civilizations courses and participate in excursions to nearby cultural and historical sites. The first course, titled “Indian Religions and the Arts”, introduces students to the textual and religious traditions of South Asia. The second, titled “State and Society in India”, surveys the culture and politics of early-modern and contemporary India. The final three weeks of the quarter are devoted to the third course in the sequence, “History and Place in South India.” In this course, students examine aspects of pre-colonial society through the lens of place, monument and social memory. A significant component of this third course is an extended visit to a number of important South Indian archaeological and historical sites, including the Portuguese colonial city of Goa and the now deserted capital city of the Vijayanagara Empire. In addition to the civilization sequence, students take a fourth course in Hindi during the first seven weeks of the quarter. For students with no prior experience in South Asian languages, this language course is designed to facilitate their access to local culture and to provide a basis for further study. Advanced sections are held for those students with prior coursework or experience in Hindi.

The Pune program is operated in cooperation with the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS), an academic organization with an office in Pune and American headquarters at the University of Chicago.

Study Abroad Experience in Pune

By Regina Tanner, B.A. candidate in Anthropology, Class of 2014

On 27 September 2012, my family bid me a cheerful farewell as I boarded a flight from Chicago to Mumbai that would begin my quarter abroad in India. Before departing for India, I felt that I had a sense of what to expect for the three months that lay ahead. My study abroad department had distributed a neat, collate packet containing course descriptions, cultural information, packing suggestions, and all number of bulleted lists to help students prepare themselves. Retrospectively, I find my assurance gained through diligent reading amusing when compared to some of the startling divergences from expectations to which I quickly had to adapt. The magical realism in Midnight’s Children that I had read a few years prior now appeared to be India’s modus operandi.

From the time I landed in India and stepped into the balmy air of Mumbai, I was moved along by a current of people, light, and sound as everything seemed to be happening at the same time all the time. To read about the claustrophobic traffic of India is one way to gain an understanding of it, convincing oneself to cross the endless stream of auto rickshaws weaving impossibly between bumper-to-bumper vehicles blaring their horns is another. In the words of Dr. Chakrabarty, “In America, a red light means stop. In India, a red light means stop if you must.”
Despite my initial misgivings, I found myself adjusting to my surroundings quite quickly. When I arrived in Pune, the city in which the study abroad program was anchored, I eventually learned proper haggling technique, where to have salwar-kameez sets made, and, most importantly, how to cross the street. I did not, thankfully, have to spend the majority of my time in a classroom as lessons often happened on location. Along with my classmates, I had the opportunity to visit the caves at Ajanta and Ellora and walk the ruins of the Vijayanagara Empire, sitting on the grounds of the ancient temple sites while we discussed materializing the past.

I find it difficult to unite my experiences, to bind them with words that would make a narrative. My time in India was at turns challenging, physically taxing, and bafflingly funny - I was told by a waiter with a completely straight face that I was only permitted to order Coca Cola products on the first floor of the restaurant, and, being on the third floor, my beverage options were restricted to those manufactured by Pepsi. When I meet up with my India classmates Stateside, the conversation inevitably turns to an exchange of humorous anecdotes of finding our footing abroad.

Studying abroad in India was also a tremendously rewarding experience, and I discovered that I was capable of much more than I thought. Although I kept in contact through telephone and email, I missed my family and friends enormously. Some days I could not overcome my self-consciousness at the stares of those interested in the fact that I was not from India. During the final weeks of the program, I had a painful allergic reaction that required medical attention. Prior to studying in India, I had never traveled without the accompaniment of my parents, nor had I been outside the United States for a length of time more than two weeks. The prospect of going thousands of miles away from anything familiar for months was more than a little daunting, but I take pride in my decision to do so. The sense of independence and confidence I gained when I discovered that I could indeed navigate a new country is invaluable to me. I know that, before long, I will make my way back to India.
Tamil Oratory and the Dravidian Aesthetic: Democratic Practice in South India
By Bernard Bate, PhD 2000, Columbia University Press, New York, 2009
Reviewed by E. Annamalai, Professor, Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago

Language modernity is discussed generally with reference to the written word. This book is about the spoken word as used in political oratory in Tamil, which is a modern invention, according to Bate, and places Tamil in the modern democratic practice. Bate talks about high Tamil (centamil) revolution in public speech spearheaded by the Dravidian party DMK. This refers to the shift in the style of language from the colloquial, which puts the public speaker on level with the listeners in language use and comprehension, to the literary, which creates a communicative distance between them. The distance is not as great as with English, which was the language of public speech in the early years of the twentieth century until the nationalist leaders passed resolutions to switch to Tamil. The literary style of the Dravidian leaders echoes the classical Tamil projected to embody the glory of Tamil’s past and banks on the passive reception of it by the unlettered. Bate cites a Tamil speaker who said memorably that she can’t speak publicly because she cannot read.

This switch is not exactly a revolution, but a transfer of the style of the literary discourse that was in practice to the political discourse. As Bate himself points out, Thiru. Vi. Kalayansundaram made this shift first, who comes from a literary background to the labor movement. He is not a Dravidianist. Before him, Arumuga Navalar of Sri Lanka used a similar literary style in public speech to persuade his listeners against being persuaded by Christian sermons. His choice of this style was natural as Navalar quoted from Saivite religious and moral literature to make his counter-arguments. If Navalar used it to counter the religious and moral other, viz., Christianity, the Dravidianists chose this high language to counter the political other, viz., the Aryans.
The discourse of the book is about answers to the questions that are raised by the choice of the high language to persuade the people using the low language. The questions are wide and deep. Bate’s answers are sound and innovative. The first question is the potential for failure in communication, and thus persuasion, which is the purpose of oratory. The high language has a metonymic meaning (as an akupeyar ‘a term that comes to stand for (something else)’) by association or contiguity. Bate demonstrates that akupeyar is the dominant trope in Tamil culture to make meanings. The high language carries the meaning of being the patrons of it, like the ancient kings of the Tamil country, and being its protector from the threat of Aryan languages (Sanskrit and Hindi). This language represents the autonomy of Tamil as well its purity. The use of this language conveys the sense that the Dravidian political party is the patron and protector of Tamil, which is more significant than the substance of the message. It is in some ways similar to Tamil speakers being swayed by classical music in semi-comprehensible Telugu by its rhythm. It is finding a place for the classical language in the public sphere of the modern period as part of the Tamil renaissance (marumalarcci ‘re-blooming (of culture)’ that had begun a few decades earlier.

Another problem is of the feminine quality attributed to the high language, which is imagined to be in the relationship of mother to its speaker (tamil-t taay ‘Tamil mother’), and so is pristine. This is incongruous with the masculine quality of the public sphere. The feminine quality of language is also expressed in the praise of the male political leaders by the party volunteers with terms such as mallikai ‘jasmine’, which is feminine metonymically. Such terms symbolize the purity and power of language through the imagined purity and power of chaste Tamil women. This metonymic extension of meaning is an aspect of Dravidian (i.e. Tamil) aesthetic mentioned in the title of the book.

Yet another problem is the adoption of the language of old for use in the public sphere identified with modernity. The explanation is simple and it has to do with our idea of modernity. Modernity is not a replacement of tradition and is not of unidirectional progress. It can look backward to help move forward. Bate adds significantly to this debate about modernity with this study of Tamil oratory.

Any oration is preceded by the praise of the leaders in welcoming them through wall posters and hoardings put up before the day of the public event and in introducing the leaders on the stage before the speech by the lesser leaders of the party. Bate sees its continuity with the praise poetry of kings and gods in Tamil available from the beginning of its literature. He also sees parallels between devotional poetry and oratorical praise in that both get the singers of praise closer to the mighty or the almighty and thus gives them a sense of self-worth and possibilities. The parallel becomes obvious when a female political leader is compared to the goddesses irrespective of the rationalistic ideology of the Dravidian movement.
Praise brings material benefits as well to its singer. The praise that is an integral part of the new oratory in Tamil is expected to bring recognition and reward to the singer, as the praise of god is to solicit his or her grace. But the singer may go unrecognized and unrewarded, as the case of the female orator Kavita’s story reveals. She did not get to be seen by the corner of the eye (katai-kan) of the praised, as the language of devotion would put it.

This takes us to the last question that this book raises, but does not answer. How the distancing use of language with the listeners in public speech and the unreciprocated response of praise (Kavita’s passion (paacam) for the leader is unrequited (kai-k kilai)) are not considered to be a hindrance to participatory democracy and distributive power, which is the function of public speech in aid of modernity? Supplication to the powerful, be it in language or in polity, is contrary to the assertion of one’s rights and dignity. Bate’s answer seems to be that the institution of democracy and its operational process define modernity, but not their actual result on the ground. This would suggest that Tamil oratory and its aesthetic should undergo change for the democratic practice in Tamil Nadu to be real, and not to just remain symbolic.

![Bernard Bate, Author](image)
1, Lalla: The Poems of Lal Ded

Translated by Ranjit Hoskote, Penguin Books, 2011
Reviewed by Sonam Kachru, PhD candidate, Philosophy of Religions, University of Chicago Divinity School

Twenty years in the making, this book is a gift. At last, a book presenting a translation of the utterances of Lalla (or Lal Ded, that is, ‘Grandmother Lal’ in Kashmiri) — the much cited, much translated and much discussed (if as yet not much critically studied) poetic visionary and religious virtuoso of fourteenth century Kashmir — that one can use in a classroom; or, alternatively, a book, the product of long study, which one can still recommend to enthusiastic amateurs innocent of Kashmiri and yet interested in either the history of literature or the history of religions in Kashmir and greater South Asia. All of which is to say that at its best, it conspires to do what Lal Ded’s verses can do: afford pleasure, knowledge and improvement in the same package.

We should not allow ourselves to be restricted by the category ‘Poetry’ under which Penguin has chosen to introduce this book, and according to which label it will be no doubt be shelved in bookstores and libraries. For as Hoskote reminds us, Lal Ded is recalled as both teacher and poet among those communities who have preserved her words for us; her sayings, possessed by memory for the most part, are still a compass by which many Kashmiris continue to orient their lives; indeed, many of her words survive as proverbs, part of the now anonymous fund of Kashmiri wisdom; hand in glove with such memory of an exemplary life and mind is the fact that the astonishing range of voicing, register, tone and imagery of her verses, recognized as such, continue to provide a touchstone for the modern Kashmiri poetic voice and line.

Lalla’s distinctive verses are called vakh in Kashmiri (cf. Sanskrit vakya). Hoskote’s sensitivity to the dual reception of Lal Ded as teacher and poet is nowhere more clearly on display than in his refusal to translate the word “vakh” with the word ‘saying’ or ‘teaching’, which would emphasize the didactic, paraphrasable content of her verses at the expense of their literary texture. His choice of “utterance” preserves for us the thought that there is more here than didactic sayings put to verse to aid memory — the meter, texture, voice and literary registers are part of the meter-making arguments of Lalla. I find Hoskote’s sensitivity to such matters, and thus his translations of individual verses, among the most convincing features of this book.

The book, taking its title from one of Lal Ded’s signature ways to introduce a verse, consists in a critical introduction, the translation of some 146 verses, each of which receive substantial annotation in the concluding section of the book. It would have been even more useful with an index. In addition, one might have wanted the original Kashmiri on facing pages of the translation, (even as the recently released Penguin edition of Ghani Kashmiri’s Persian verse translated by Mufti Mudasir has included a transliteration of the Persian). But the substantial annotation Hoskote provides which includes citations from the Kashmiri, the resulting economy in length of the book, and the ease with
which the original verses are available, suggests the loss is understandable and not crippling.

As for transliteration of Kashmiri, it is here something of a gesture rather than an achievement – the results will not satisfy the scholar. But then, to my knowledge, no transliteration of Kashmiri has yet been found that can at once satisfy the linguist, and yet initiate a novice into the mouth-bending range of the Kashmiri vowel system. (The word rendered as ‘Ded’ in ‘Lal Ded’, an affectionate term for an elderly woman, for example, is virtually impossible to arrive at from the transliteration offered, and all because of the mischievous (semi-) vowel). If the transliteration used here does not convince, at least it will not wildly mislead.

Hoskote’s introduction is everywhere a fluent, un-hectoring, and a never flagging orientation to circumstances of the book itself, and the social, political and religious climate of medieval Kashmir; it serves as a guide not only to fourteenth century Kashmir, but also helps render salient the contemporary circumstances under which matters Kashmiri command attention in the subcontinent today.

Hoskote explains in the introduction that he selected the verses used in his book from published editions of Lal Ded’s words, most notably, the editions prepared by the inimitable George Grierson (1920) and Jayalal Kaul (1973). While scholars might complain that there are many more manuscripts now available to consult – something someone should very soon consult when studying Lal – Hoskote does render perspicuous something his predecessors have at times occluded in earlier editions. Hoskote has eschewed the task of preparing a philologically sound critical edition for two good reasons: one, if we want more than a handful of lines from individual verses to enjoy, our extant evidence of Lal’s words will not permit it; and secondly, we should not bemoan this. For our existing evidence indeed brings into view not the words of a single author, whose words are located at a single time and place in the Valley, but instead what Hoskote calls “a contributory lineage,” a living archive of traditions of Lal’s verses which he glosses in the introduction as “a sequence of assemblies comprising people of varied religious affiliations and both genders, representing the experience of various age groups and social locations, including both literate and unlettered, reciters and scribes, redactors and commentators.” I find this helpful and promising as a way to go forward. The results of such a shift of perspective allows us to see the strength in what must otherwise seem to a (naively critical) philologist as a conflation of idiom, languages, registers, and religious imagery in the words of Lal as recited and recorded in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It also allows Hoskote to recover with his translations this contributory lineage for contemporary readers, whose exposure to Lal is increasingly (since the last thirty years or so) dominated by narrowly communal redactions and interpretations of Lal, given the tragic exigencies current and former residents of the Valley are forced to endure.

The introduction does more. Putting Karine Schomer’s research on the doha to good use, and critically developing on Grierson’s work on the flexible, and novel formal properties of the vakh in connection with the doha, Hoskote usefully contextualizes the form and content of Lal’s verses in a wider literary tradition, one stretching from Central Asia to North India. He does all this, mercifully, without ever reducing Lal Ded’s singular voice into a generic Kashmiri
equivalent of the now too-ubiquitous-to-be-critical term of art, ‘bhakti’; that term, like ‘tantra’, or ‘yogini’, which Hoskote does indeed use, is a term that titillates the imagination, without always satisfying the understanding.

As for the translation, at its best Hoskote’s skill as a modern English poet serves him well. His choice of demotic English often succeeds in capturing the idiomatic Kashmiri Lalla evinces, her imperatives and turns of thought and phrase, and only very rarely does it betray him, as when he allows the length of the colloquial English line to dilate Lalla’s taut, surprise-inducing syntax and brisk images into prosaic, torturous certitude. But few, I believe, could succeed in those rare moments where Hoskote can’t. And Hoskote’s annotations almost always allow one to catch, however, briefly, a sense of what we might miss in overhearing Lalla in his translation. If I have a complaint with the annotations it is this: while creating an isomorphic map between Lalla’s religious vocabulary to well-individuated systems of self-transformation in Kashmir have preoccupied others before him, like, Grierson, or earlier still, Pandit Rajanaka Bhaskara in his pre-modern translation of Lalla into Sanskrit, it seems to me, in fact, that the relatively well-known technical terms require far less attention once generically apprehended than the “hard, ordinary” verbs (to use the critic John Hollander’s phrase) in Kashmiri which Lalla uses. Where Hoskote attends to the verbs, or colloquial nouns, the annotations serve the reader well, and Lalla’s words are luminous, never to be forgotten. It is ultimately the Kashmiri, and not the Sanskrit, I believe, that will open up echo-chambers of relevance for students of Lalla.

In conclusion, Hoskote’s work scores over previous efforts in its accessibility, his rare skill as a poet and translator, and in one more thing, everywhere on display: his judicious use of uncommon good sense. Hoskote has found a way to allow both, the significance of these utterances for poetics, and for students of the history of religion, to come into view together, without occluding either. The book is easy on hand and eye when reading; from the elegant solitary kong posh (saffron, in Kashmiri) on the cover to the binding; from the design of this book, its weight and the readable font, (Joanna MT); to say nothing of the elegant thoughts memorably expressed, crisp on the page – this book is a joy to have and to hold. May it be followed, and very soon in the same series, by a companion book on her Kashmiri successor, the inimitable (and too much neglected) Sheikh Nooruddin.
Sailing on the Sea of Love: The Music of the Bauls of Bengal
Reviewed by Rehanna Kheshgi, PhD candidate in Ethnomusicology, University of Chicago

First published in 1986, Charles Capwell’s book was groundbreaking for its focus on a musical tradition understood to be situated squarely in the realm of the vernacular, when a large majority of ethnomusicologists chose to focus on what have come to be labeled South Asian classical musical traditions. One can only speculate about the role the first edition of Capwell’s book played in helping to legitimize the music of the Bauls as a serious topic in music research, and the interest it helped to foster among international music promoters to sponsor Baul performances around the world. Capwell interrogated the “hypothetical realm of folk,” describing Baul musicians’ experiences with international travel, producing commercial recordings for film, radio and television, and performing at urban music festivals, which many feared would “undermine the validity of a folk tradition” (p. 59). Capwell assures readers in the preface to this new edition of his book, “Worries then that the traditions of the Bauls were likely to disappear have proved groundless; if anything, the Bauls are in many ways flourishing” (p. ix).

This second edition of The Music of the Bauls of Bengal has been reprinted with only a few updates to the bibliography and a brief preface, because Capwell’s main goal in reissuing the book is to make the material of this pioneering study available to readers in South Asia. Published by Kolkata-based Seagull Books, this edition is accompanied by a pair of digitally remastered audio CDs containing mainly field-recordings collected during Capwell’s doctoral fieldwork in West Bengal from 1969 to 1971. With engaging descriptions of the lifeways of the Bauls of West Bengal and translated passages from personal interviews, Capwell situates his Baul interlocutors geographically, historically, socially and musically in this important contribution to scholarship on a dynamic regional performance tradition of South Asia.

Capwell’s introduction and first chapter give an overview of the religious beliefs and customs of the Bauls residing in West Bengal. In Chapter Two, Capwell writes about Rabindranath Tagore’s role in shaping the Baul as an emblematic figure in the popular Bengali imaginary and the influence of Baul performance practice on Tagore’s own creative work. Chapter Three wrestles with genre categories such as folk song and devotional music, contrasting Baul songs with other regional musical traditions and bringing to light the difficulty of classification. In Chapter Four, Capwell focuses on the life stories of particular Bauls, including the famous Naboni Das Khepa Baul and his sons Purno and Laksman Das who toured in the United States in 1969, as well as Bauls born in areas that are now part of Bangladesh who fled to India in the wake of the 1971 Liberation War. By presenting the contrasting experiences of these particular Bauls, describing the challenges they faced, and the decisions they made to pursue greater social and economic mobility, Capwell effectively challenges simplistic generalizations associated with Baul culture that would brand them as wandering bardic beggars. Chapter Five describes contexts for performance, impressing upon the reader the variety of spaces and situations through which Baul performers interact with their patrons.

Capwell goes beyond transcribing, translating, and interpreting the texts of Baul songs in the remaining five chapters. His description of musical instruments, and his analyses of temporal organization, pitch use, tonality, and musical structure contribute to the depth of his investigation. It is rare to find a study with such a thorough musical analysis that focuses on a performance tradition outside the canon of ethnomusicological inquiry. In this aspect, the work was pioneering for its time, and evidence for its continued relevance can be found in Capwell’s preface by following the web link to the Baul Archive, recently established by director, Sally Grossman (www.baularchive.com). The foundation of Capwell’s ongoing collaborative work with the Baul Archive can be located in the journey charted by this book, which grows out of Capwell’s own archive of recorded audio material. In fact, an even earlier version of Capwell’s
book, the dissertation manuscript and accompanying open reel tapes, were among the first items to be accessioned by director Shubha Choudhury into the New Delhi Archives and Research Centre for Ethnomusicology when it opened in 1982.

The in-depth focus on the music, instruments and contexts of Baul performance is one of the great assets of Capwell’s work. His analysis of pitch, rhythm and structure of Baul songs is thorough, oriented towards an audience well versed in the notation of Western classical art music that continues to provide an important foundation for musical transcription and analysis in ethnomusicology. Capwell boldly proposes hypotheses for the structural organization of Baul songs, supporting his claims with musical evidence. For those familiar with staff notation, these transcriptions, paired with the audio recordings on the accompanying CDs, provide a visual and aural dimension to the music that is thoughtfully contextualized in Capwell’s prose. For example, the melodic line of Sasanko Das Mohant’s performance of the song “Jiber bujh sudin aj holo” is transcribed in full in Appendix B, the song text is translated into English in Appendix A, and sections of the transcription are discussed in detail in Chapter Ten. A table is also included which walks the reader/listener through the song, pointing out important events in the musical structure, which Capwell shrewdly interprets.

In the preface to this second edition, Capwell gestures to changes in technology, state cultural policy, communal relations, and a growing awareness of gender inequalities that have emerged since the book’s first edition was published in 1986. He draws attention to recent scholarship that has addressed some of these issues (Openshaw 2002, 2010; Sen 2009; Trottier 2000). In addition to these studies, Capwell’s work is extended by scholarship that focuses on Bauls in both India and Bangladesh. Lisa Knight’s recent book, Contradictory Lives: Baul Women in India and Bangladesh (2011), spans both regions and brings gender into focus. Knight’s exploration of gender dynamics within Baul communities challenges the hereditary models of transmission featured in Capwell’s work, which focuses especially on male Bauls that trace authority through patrilineal genealogies. Knight instead foregrounds the importance of initiation regardless of lineage, and the possibility for women to choose the level of their involvement in spiritual practices.

The reissuing of Capwell’s text, which had long been out of print, will allow a wider readership to access this important material. As Bauls continue to reach new audiences, the need for insightful ethnographic work complemented by audio recordings and analysis becomes ever more crucial.
**Student Awards**

Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships are awarded by the Center to graduate students who enroll in summer intensive or year-long programs of South Asian language instruction. This year we awarded four summer FLAS Fellowships and eight academic year FLAS Fellowships to students studying Gujarati, Hindi, Tamil, Tibetan, and Urdu. The FLAS Fellowship Program is funded with generous support from the U.S. Department of Education.

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<th>2013 Summer FLAS Recipients</th>
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<tr>
<td>Karl Schmid - Divinity School, Tibetan</td>
<td>Cordelia Wilson - Divinity School, Tibetan</td>
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<td>Andrew Kunze - Divinity School, Gujarati</td>
<td>Karl Schmid - Divinity School, Tibetan</td>
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<td>Sarah Gomer - Divinity School, Hindi</td>
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<td>Nell Hawley - Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, Hindi</td>
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COSAS Dissertation Write-up Fellowships provide funds for dissertation completion on topics relation to Southern Asian studies. Generally, research for the dissertation has been completed by the time the fellowship is to commence. Below are the 2013-2014 fellows:

| Joy Brennan - Divinity School         | Kristyn Hara - Department of Anthropology                     |
| Asif Bushra - Department of Political Science | Pierre-Julien Harter - Divinity School                       |
| Erin Epperson - Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations | Chandani Patel - Department of Comparative Literature        |
| Abhisek Ghosh - Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations | Malavika Reddy - Department of Anthropology                   |
| Julie Hanlon - Department of Anthropology and South Asian Languages and Civilizations | Alexander Rocklin - Department of History of Religions       |
|                                      | Amin Sadr - Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations |
COSAS Pre-Dissertation Research Fellowships support pre-dissertation research in South or Southeast Asia. The funds are intended to enable University of Chicago graduate students to conduct preliminary research that will lay the foundations for their dissertation research and to help develop dissertation proposals — for example, to travel to field sites, to survey holdings in archives, and to identify and meet with scholars, research participants, or other advisors with whom a student plans to work in South or Southeast Asia.

COSAS Summer Language Study Fellowships support students who propose to be engaged in either formal or informal language study over the summer in a South or Southeast Asian language that would benefit their doctoral research.

COSAS, Other Research Fellowships
Courses offered in 2012-2013

The University of Chicago regularly offers one of the widest ranges of courses with South and Southeast Asian content in the nation. This wide variety of courses across departments and professional schools offers graduate and undergraduate students various opportunities for in-depth language and area study. This deep knowledge of world areas in conjunction with theoretical sophistication remains the most significant hallmark of a Chicago education. Examples of courses offered in 2012-2013 are:

Anthropology
- Anthropology of Development, Alan Kolata
- Displaced Nations and The Politics of Belonging, Gayathri Embuldeniya
- Knowledge/Value: Property & Intellectual Property, Sunder Rajan
- Reading/Research: Anthropology, John Kelly
- Self Determination: Theory and Reality, John Kelly

Bangla
- First Year Bangla, Mandira Bhaduri
- Second Year Bangla, Mandira Bhaduri
- Third Year Bangla, Thibaut D’Hubert
- Fourth Year Bangla, Thibaut D’Hubert
- Readings: Advanced Bangla, Thibaut D’Hubert

Biological Sciences
- Infectious Disease Epidemiology, Networks, and Modeling, Schneider

English
- India in English, Leela Gandhi
- Radical Ethics, Leela Gandhi

Environmental Studies
- Naturalizing Disaster, Nature, Vulnerability, and Social History, Mark Lyceatt

Gender and Sexuality
- Islam/Politics/Gender, Iza Hussin

Hindi
- First Year Hindi, Jason Grunebaum
- Second Year Hindi, Jason Grunebaum
- Third Year Hindi, Ulrike Stark
- Fourth Year Hindi, Ulrike Stark
- Readings: Advanced Hindi, Ulrike Stark

History
- Coll. Subaltern Studies, Dipesh Chakrabarty
- Colonizations-2, John Kelly
- Colonizations-3, Sunder Rajan, Elizabeth Brummel
- History & Literature of Pakistan: Postcolonial Representations, C. Ryan Perkins
- Introduction to East Asia Civilizations, Mark Bradley
- South Asia From the Peripheries: Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the Transnational, C. Ryan Perkins
- The Transformation of 18th C. Empire, Spencer Leonard

History of Religions
- Against the Gods: Comparative Perspectives on Human Resistance to Higher Powers, Wendy Doniger, Lorraine Daston
- Problems in the History of Religions, Wendy Doniger
- Yogascara in the Indian Philosophical Tradition, Matthew Kapstein

Humanities
- Readings in World Literature, Sascha Ebeling

International Relations
- Reading/Research Intl Relations, Mark Bradley
- Thesis Research/Writing I, Mark Bradley

Malayalam
- First Year Malayalam, Nisha Kommattam
- Second Year Malayalam, Nisha Kommattam
- Third Year Malayalam, Nisha Kommattam
- Readings: Advanced Malayalam, Nisha Kommattam

Marathi
- First Year Marathi, Philip Engblom
- Second Year Marathi, Philip Engblom

Medicine
- Sivananda Rehabilitation Home in India: Forgotten Diseases Program, John Schneider

Music
- Introduction to World Music, Kaleyy Mason
- Music of South Asia, Kaleyy Mason

Near Eastern History and Civilizations
- Islamic Thought & Literature, Taherita Qutbuddin

Pali
- First Year Pali, Steven Collins
- Fourth Year Pali, Steven Collins

Philosophy of Religions
- Readings in Mahayana, Daniel A. Arnold

Political Science
- Democracy in India, Adam Ziegfeld

Public Policy Studies
- South Asia: Domestic and Foreign Policy Challenges, Frank Schell

Sanskrit
- First Year Sanskrit, Victor D’Avella/Jamal Jones
- Second Year Sanskrit, Gary Tubb
- Second Year Sanskrit: Readings in the Mahabharata, Wendy Doniger
- Third Year Sanskrit, Daniel Arnold/Gary Tubb
- Fourth Year Sanskrit, Daniel Arnold/Gary Tubb
- Readings: Advanced Sanskrit, Daniel A. Arnold/Gary Tubb

South Asian Languages and Civilizations
- Buddhism in South Asia, Christian K. Wedemeyer
- Coll. Subaltern Studies, Dipesh Chakrabarty
- Cosmopolitan and Vernacular: Language and Locality in South Asia, Matthew Rich
- Indian Philosophy I, Matthew Kapstein
- Indian Philosophy II, Daniel A. Arnold
- Introduction to South Asian Civilization, Muzzafar Alam/Rochona Majumdar

Love, Capital, and Conjugal in Africa and India,
- Rochona Majumdar
- Mahabharata in English Translation, Wendy Doniger
- Mughal India: Tradition & Transition, Muzzafar Alam
- Postcolonial Theory, Leela Gandhi
- Radical Cinema in India: A Historical Introduction, Rochona Majumdar
- Readings in Early Modern Hindi Literature, Vasudha Paramasivan
- Readings in Indo-Persian Literature, Muzzafar Alam/Thibaut D’Hubert
- Readings in the Bhakti Literatures of North India, Vasudha Paramasivan
- Reading Punjab, Elena Bashir
- Reading Punjab: Advanced, Elena Bashir
- Research Themes: Public Literary Spaces in South Asia, Thibaut D’Hubert
- Rumi’s Masnavi and the Persian Sufi Tradition, Franklin Lewis
- South Asia As A Unit of Study, Steven Collins
- Ta Reading Punjab, Elena Bashir
- Teaching South Asia, Steven Collins
- Wives, Widows, and Prostitutes: Hindi Literature and the “Woman’s Question”, Ulrike Stark

Study Abroad Program in Pune
- South Asian Civilization in India, Dipesh Chakrabarty
- South Asian Civilization in India, Mark Lyceatt
- South Asian Civilization in India, Rochona Majumdar

Tamil
- First Year Tamil, Bayaparamurial Annamalai
- Second Year Tamil, Bayaparamurial Annamalai
- Third Year Tamil, Bayaparamurial Annamalai
- Fourth Year Tamil, Bayaparamurial Annamalai

Telugu
- First Year Telugu, Rajagopal Vakalobhavanam
- Second Year Telugu, Rajagopal Vakalobhavanam

Tibetan
- First Year Tibetan, Karma Ngadup
- Second Year Tibetan, Karma Ngadup
- Third Year Tibetan, Christian Wedemeyer
- Fourth Year Tibetan, Christian Wedemeyer
- Readings: Advanced Tibetan, Christian Wedemeyer

Urdu
- First Year Urdu, Elena Bashir
- Second Year Urdu, Elena Bashir
- Third Year Urdu, Muzzafar Alam
- Fourth Year Urdu, Muzzafar Alam
- Readings: Advanced Urdu, Muzzafar Alam
Daniel A. Arnold

Daniel A. Arnold, Professor in the Philosophy of Religions at the Divinity School and Chair of the Committee on Southern Asian Studies, published a book titled Brains, Buddhas, and Believing: The Problem of Intentionality in Classical Buddhist and Cognitive-Scientific Philosophy of Mind with Columbia University Press in 2012 that won the 2013 Toshhide Numata Book Prize in Buddhism, awarded by the Center for Buddhist Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. The Toshhide Numata Book Prize in Buddhism is awarded on an annual basis to an outstanding book in the area of Buddhist studies. He has a forthcoming book, A Reader on Madhyamaka, which is a part of the series “Historical Sourcebooks in Classical Indian Thought” published by Columbia University Press. Professor Arnold has published several articles recently, including “The Deceptive Simplicity of Nagarjuna’s Arguments against Motion: Another Look at Mulamadhyamakakarika Chapter 2” in the Journal of Indian Philosophy, “Reaching Bedrock: Buddhism and Cognitive-Science” on berfrois.com, and “The Philosophical Works and Influence of Dignaga and Dharmakirti” on Oxford Bibliographies Online. Lastly, he has a forthcoming article in The Columbia Guide to Classical Indian Philosophy titled “Madhyamaka Critiques of Epistemology”.

Dipesh Chakrabarty

Dipesh Chakrabarty served as the Chair of the Faculty Steering Committee for the proposed University Center in India until June 20, 2013, and joined the Advisory Board of the newly formed Neubauer Collegium for Humanities and the Social Sciences. He remained a member of the Advisory Board for Non-Western Art of the Humboldt Forum, Berlin, and was invited to join the Scientific Advisory Board at the Center for Global Cooperation Research in Germany. He served on invitation as an Elector for the appointment of the Veere Haarmsworth Professor of Imperial and Naval History at the University of Cambridge. He also accepted an invitation to be a Nicholson Distinguished Visiting Scholar at the University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign. Dr. Chakrabarty continues his service as a member of the following boards: International Advisory Board for the series Culture, Economy and the Social, Advisory Board for Climate and Cultures in Germany, and Board of Advisory for the book series Reflections on (In)humanity. He acts as consulting editor for the journal Critical Inquiry. He added the Australian academic journals South Asia and Environmental Humanities as well as the electronic publication Interstitial Journal to the long list of editorial committees to which he contributes.

Steven Collins

Steven Collins is a co-Principal Investigator, with Juliane Schober of Arizona State, of a Luce Foundation-funded 3-year (2011-14) project called Theravada Civilizations. They have assembled a group of 17 specialists in South and Southeast Asian Buddhism for a series of five conferences, and three edited volumes. In 2010, he published Civilisation et femmes célibataires: le Bouddhisme dans l’Asie du Sud et du Sud-est: une étude de ’genre’ (Paris: Cerf); and in 2013 Self and Society: Essays on Pali Literature 1988-2010 (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Press). He is the editor of The Vessantara Jataka (Columbia University Press, Readings in Buddhist Literatures, forthcoming 2014-15).

Wendy Doniger

In March, 2013, Wendy Doniger published a 658-page book of essays, On Hinduism (Delhi: Aleph Book Company, 2013); it is selling well and they are printing a second edition; Oxford University Press will publish a U.S. edition early next year. Also, she was awarded the 2013 Col. James Tod Award, from the Mewar Charitable Foundation (MMCF), Udaipur, Rajasthan, instituted in 1996-97, “to honour a foreign national who, like Tod, has contributed through his works of permanent value an understanding of the spirit and values of Mewar.” Previous recipients of the award include Dominique Lapierre, V.S. Naipaul, Richard Attenborough, Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph, and William Dalrymple.
Leela Gandhi
Leela Gandhi, a Professor in the Department of English, has a forthcoming book from the University of Chicago Press titled *The Common Cause: Postcolonial Ethics and the Practice of Democracy, 1900-1955*.

Matthew Kapstein
Matthew Kapstein, the Numata Visiting Professor in the Philosophy of Religions and the History of Religions at the Divinity School, published a book in fall 2013 with Oxford University Press titled *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. He also edited the volume *Sources of Tibetan Tradition*, which was published by Columbia University Press. Professor Kapstein has also published several articles, including “Spiritual Exercise in Buddhist Epistemologists in India and Tibet” in *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy* and “Stoics and Bodhisattvas” in *Philosophy as a Way of Life*.

John D. Kelly

Mark Lycett

William Mazzarella
William Mazzarella, a Professor in the Department of Anthropology, published *Censorium: Cinema and the Open Edge of Mass Publicity* with Duke University Press. At the intersection of anthropology, media studies, and critical theory, *Censorium* is a pathbreaking analysis of Indian film censorship. The book encompasses two moments of moral panic: the consolidation of the cinema in the 1910s and 1920s, and the global avalanche of images unleashed by liberalization since the early 1990s. He also published several articles, including “A Different Kind of Flesh: Public Obscenity, Globalization, and the Mumbai Dance Bar Ban” in *Explode Softly: Sexualities in Contemporary Indian Visual Cultures* and “Reality Must Improve: The Perversity of Expertise and the Belatedness of Indian Development Television” in *Modernity, Media and Asia*.

Kathleen Morrison
Emeriti News

C. M. Naim
C. M. Naim, a Professor Emeritus in the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, is a regular contributor to *Outlook India* and has published several articles, including “Be Crazy with God…”, “Will Justice Katju Please Note?”, “The Maulana Who Loved Krishna”, “The Deadening Silence of Good Intentions”, and “A Musafir to London”. He has also published several other articles, including “Limits of Naipaul’s antipathies” in *The Indian Express*, “Two Fires” in the *TheSouthAsianIdea Weblog*, and “Beyond Belief” in the *Friday Times*.

Ralph W. Nicholas
Tarini Bedi
Tarini Bedi, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Illinois at Chicago, has a forthcoming review of Transnationalism Reversed: Women Organizing Against Gender Violence in Bangladesh by Elora Halim Chowdhury in PolAR Political and Legal Anthropology Review. She also published an article titled “Motherhood and Its Lack: Personal Loss and Political Community among Shiv Sena Women in Mumbai” in Women’s Studies International Forum.

Madhuvanti Ghose
Madhuvanti Ghose is the Alsdorf Associate Curator of Indian and Islamic Art in the Department of Asian and Ancient Art at the Art Institute of Chicago. She edited the volume Jitish Kallat: Public Notice 3 published by the Art Institute of Chicago.

Brannon Ingram
Brannon Ingram, Assistant Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Northwestern University, has a forthcoming publication titled “The Portable Madrasa: Print, Publics, and the Authority of Deobandi Ulama” in Modern Asian Studies.

Robert Linrothe
Robert Linrothe, Associate Professor in the Department of Art History at Northwestern University, published “Skirting the Bodhisattva: Fabricating Visionary Art” in the online journal Etude mongoles et siberiennes centrasiatiques et tibetaines. He has two forthcoming articles that will appear in Archives of Asian Art and Photography’s Orientalism: New Essays on Colonial Representations. This past February, he presented a paper titled “Montane Metonymy: Ibex in/as Landscape” at the College Art Association conference. In April, he presented his research on an illuminated manuscript of 17th century Zangskar at the International Association of Ladakh Studies conference.

Rama Sundari Mantena
Rama Sundari Mantena, Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of Illinois at Chicago, published several articles this year including “Vernacular Publics and Political Modernity: Language and Progress in Colonial South India” in Modern Asian Studies and “The Origins of Modern Historiography and Indian Intellectual History” in Eemaata: A Telugu webzine for a world without borders.

Antonio Terrone
Antonio Terrone, Lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies at Northwestern University, published several articles this year including “Tibetan Visionaries and Their Revelations: Studies on gter stons and their gter mas” in the Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies and “Messengers from Tibet’s Past: The Role of Charismatic Leaders in the Spread of Tibetan Buddhism in Contemporary China” in Asiatica Ambrosiana.

Sanjeev Vidyarthi
Sanjeev Vidyarthi, Assistant Professor in the Department of Urban Planning and Policy at the University of Illinois at Chicago, has published several articles this year including “Building A ‘World Class Heritage City’: Jaipur’s Emergent Elites and New Approach to Spatial Planning” in Contesting the Indian City: Global Visions and the Politics of the Local, “Making Sense of India’s Spatial Plan-making Practice: Enduring Approach or Emergent Variations” in Planning Theory and Practice, “Indianizing the Neighborhood Unit: The Jawahar Nagar Plan” in Transforming Asian Cities: Intellectual Impasse, Asianizing Space, and Emerging Translocalities, and “Holistic, Inclusive and Practical Teaching Plan-making at the Core” in Town Planning Review. He also presented the paper “One Idea, Many Plans: An American Design Concept in Independent India” at the Contemporary Issues in Planning and Design Lecture Series at the College of Design at Iowa State University.
Financial Support

The South Asia Language and Area Center gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the organizations and individuals listed below. It is because of this generous support that the South Asia Language and Area Center has been able to provide many programs and events to University of Chicago students and faculty, to K-12 teachers and other educational and cultural institutions in the Chicago area, and to the broader South Asianist community.

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Funds the University of Chicago to strengthen South Asian studies in the United States with a special emphasis on deepening knowledge of South Asia and supporting instruction in the less commonly taught languages of South Asia.

U.S. Department of Education Title VI Foreign Language and Area Studies Grant

Funds tuition and stipend fellowships for graduate students across the University of Chicago pursuing a full year or intensive summer of study of the less commonly taught languages of South Asia.

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Funds graduate students working in South and Southeast Asia for dissertation research, dissertation writing, and intensive summer language study. Also funds faculty overseas research, academic conferences involving students and faculty, and South Asia Library collections.

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