

Honoring Our Colleagues, Aiding Our Fellows

AIIS is pleased to announce a new research award and a new named fellowship: The Vina Sanyal Research Award and the Kumkum Chatterjee Memorial Fellowship in Indian History.



Vina Sanyal, née Boolchand (1933–2011) was a vivacious person with tremendous energy and intellectual curiosity. This award has been set up by her daughter 2012-2013 AIIS fellow Usha Sanyal, as a way of honoring her memory.

Vina Sanyal's life unfolded in an international context in ways that were unusual for a woman of her generation. She was born in Delhi. In 1949, when her father, Dr. Boolchand, received a one-year appointment to UNESCO in Paris as head of Staff Training, she

traveled alone by ship at age 16 from France to the United States, to attend Smith College in Northampton, Mass. After completing her sophomore year at Smith, in 1950 she returned to France and began intensive French language study while also enrolling at the prestigious Institut d'Études Politiques (Sciences Po), University of Paris, the premier educational institution where a number of French heads of state have trained. She graduated in 1953, aged 19, one of only 62 students (out of about 1,000 in her entering class) to do so that year. Her mother, Mrs. Boolchand, studied French alongside her daughters in Paris and later became professor and head of the French department at Punjab University, Chandigarh.

In 1959 Vina joined the Government of India's Department of Tourism at its headquarters in New Delhi. She worked there in various capacities, including in its Publicity Wing where she oversaw the production of promotional literature, films, and advertising campaigns conducted by the Department's international offices worldwide. Being a fluent French speaker, she served as Director of Tourism for many years in Geneva, Switzerland, liaising with field offices in Spain, Austria, and elsewhere in Europe. In addition, she traveled widely with her diplomat husband, Bimalendu Kumar Sanyal, accompanying him on his postings to Laos, Argentina, and Algeria. She represented India at the World Trade Organization, served on the board at the Alliance Francaise in New Delhi, and after her retirement in the early 1990s ran her own tour company, Maharani Voyages, which specialized in serving the French-speaking traveler market to India.

This award of \$1,000 will be given annually to a junior fellow with a particularly ambitious project for which a research supplement would be merited.



Kumkum Chatterjee, a professor in the Department of History at Pennsylvania State University passed away in State College, PA on December 13, 2012, after a courageous battle against cancer. Her colleague Professor Mrinalini Sinha described her as “a distinguished scholar of South Asian history, a wonderful colleague, an inspiring teacher and mentor, a dedicated citizen at Penn State University and in the profession at large, an exceptional human being, and a very dear friend.” Professor Chatterjee had been the AIIS trustee from Penn State from 2001 until the time of her death, had served on the AIIS executive committee from 2002-2005 and also served three years on the AIIS selection committee, the second year of her service as the committee chair.

Professor Chatterjee received her Ph.D from Calcutta University in Kolkata and taught in the History Department at Penn State starting in 1989. She was a preeminent scholar of early modern South Asia whose corpus of work helped to redefine the field of the early modern period in South Asia as well as its place in the world. She was the author of two monographs--*Merchants, Politics and Society in Early Modern India, Bihar 1733-1820* (1996) and *The Cultures of History in Early Modern India: Persianization and Mughal Culture in Bengal* (2009) and of several articles published in leading journals, including *Modern Asian Studies* and the *American Historical Review*. She was working on a new project on the currency of Mughal political culture in eastern India at the time of her death.

Professor Chatterjee's work on India covered a period from roughly the seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century, from the Mughal through the post-Mughal to the early "Company" period. Her work focused on merchants and scribes, on trade and political culture, on historical and travel writing, on Bihar and Bengal, and on courtly and popular culture. She worked with official East India Company archives as well as with a range of published and unpublished manuscript sources in Sanskrit, Persian, Bengali, and English. More recently, she was branching out into exploring visual culture. This unusual range shares a central theme: a commitment to understanding the contours of the early modern world in its own terms.

Every year an AIIS fellow will be designated as the recipient of this fellowship. The honor will be accompanied by a research supplement to support the recipient's project in India.

Bernard Bate Tamil Language Student Scholarship



AIIS and the friends and colleagues of the late Bernard Bate established the Bernard Bate Tamil Language Student Scholarship in partnership with the longstanding AIIS language program. Donations to the scholarship fund will go towards the support of students dedicated to the intensive study of Tamil language and culture at the AIIS language center in Madurai, Tamil Nadu. This scholarship honors the memory of Professor Bernard Bate who, tragically, died suddenly in the prime of life in March 2016. Barney Bates' longtime love of Tamil, and remarkable proficiency in this beautiful language, were fostered by the year he spent as a student and recipient of a fellowship for the AIIS Advanced Tamil Language Program in Madurai in 1988-89. His friends and

colleagues determined that creating a fund to support instruction in this less commonly taught language that Barney loved would be an excellent way to honor his memory and celebrate his scholarly career.

Bernard Bate explored the theory, ethnography, and history of political oratory and rhetoric in the Tamil worlds of South Asia. He was a member of the inaugural faculty of Yale-NUS College, National University of Singapore. At the time of his passing, he was a Stanford Humanities Center Fellow where he was working on his book project *Protestant Textuality*. He was the author of *Tamil Oratory and the Dravidian Aesthetic*, (Columbia, 2009/Oxford India, 2011) which offers a genealogy of Tamil political oratory and the emergence of vernacular politics in the Tamil-speaking lands of India and Sri Lanka. The book argues that sermonic genres introduced by Protestant missionaries in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, fused with culturally and historically deeper forms and aesthetics of language, provided the communicative infrastructure that enabled a new kind of agent, the vernacular politician, to address and mobilize a modern Tamil people within a distinctive social imaginary. Barney had received an NEH-supported AIIS Senior Research Fellowship in 2008-09 for the project "Speaking the Public Sphere: Tamil Oratory and Linguistic Modernity," that resulted in his book. Professor Bate was a Linguistic Anthropologist with a PhD from the University of Chicago.