

CURRICULUM VITAE

Ian Alister Woolford
Asian Studies Program
La Trobe University
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Education:

The University of Texas at Austin: Ph.D. 2012, South Asian Language and Literature (Hindi).
Dissertation: “Renu Village: An Ethnography of North Indian Fiction.” (Comprehensive exams
in literary theory, folklore and performance, and methodology of religious studies).

The University of Texas at Austin: M.A. 2004, Asian Languages and Cultures. Thesis:
“Bhojpuri Songs from North India: A Cross-Genre Analysis.”

Cornell University: B.A. *magna cum laude*, 2002, with majors in music (ethnomusicology) and
Asian studies. Honors Thesis: “The Hindu Wedding in Mauritius: Continuity and Change in an
Overseas Indian Community.”

Research Specializations:

Modern Hindi literature; North Indian village song and drama; Old Hindi devotional poetry;
Performance theory; Ethnographic and field method; Indian diaspora.

Teaching Specializations:

Hindi language and literature; South Asian literature, culture, and religion; Literary criticism;
Theory and methodology of folklore and performance; Translation theory.

Professional Experience:

- 2014- Lecturer in Hindi language and literature, La Trobe University.
- 2013 Instructor, Hindi language, Syracuse University.
- 2012-13 Visiting Scholar, South Asia Program, Cornell University.
- 2009-11 Instructor, Department of Asian Studies, The University of Texas at Austin.
- 2004-08 Teaching Assistant, Department of Asian Studies, The University of Texas at
Austin.

Publications and Select Presentations:

Link to digital copy of PhD dissertation, “Renu Village: An Ethnography of North Indian
Fiction,” The University of Texas at Austin, May 2012:

<http://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/ETD-UT-2012-05-5214/WOOLFORD-DISSERTATION.pdf>

Review of Smita Tewari Jassal, *Unearthing Gender: Folksongs of North India*, in *Journal of Anthropological Research*. Vol 69 no 2, 2013.

“East and West Meet on the Opera Stage: A Conversation with the Composer.” Lecture to proceed performance of Vanraj Bhatia's opera *Agni Varsha*. New York Department of Cultural Affairs. Spring 2012.

“Renu Village: Hindi Literature and North Indian Oral Tradition.” Cornell University, South Asia Seminar. Fall 2011.

“Phanishwarnath Renu, Singer of Tales.” The University of Chicago, Department of South Asian Studies. Spring 2011.

Four Articles for the *Encyclopedia of Asian American Folklore*. Kathy Nadeau and Jonathan Lee, eds. Greenwood Press 2010: “Rites of Passage in Indian America,” “Death Rituals in Indian America,” “Mythical Deities in Hindu America” and “Asian-American Religious Studies and Folklore.”

“Between Patna and Purnea: Renu's use of village song,” Southwest Conference on Asian Studies, Fall 2010.

“Ethnography as Language Pedagogy: Understanding Hindi Folk Songs.” Brown Bag Lecture, UT Texas Language and Technology Center. Nov 18, 2009.

“Vidyapati in North Indian Fiction and Performance.” Annual Conference on South Asia, Madison, WI. Oct 16, 2009. (Earlier version presented at Southwest Conference on Asian Studies. Huntsville, TX. Oct 4, 2008.)

“Renu Village: Writing an Ethnography of North Indian Fiction.” Southwest Conference on Asian Studies. Dallas, TX. Sept 30, 2006.

Review of Michael Madhusudan Datta *The Slaying of Meghanada: A Ramayana from Colonial Bengal*. Clinton B. Seely trans. in *Ethnic and Third World Studies Review*. Spring 2005.

“Cross-genre Analysis of Bhojpuri Folk Songs. *South Asia Graduate Research Journal* 13. Fall 2004.

“Understanding a North Indian Folk Song: *Aspitāl me balatkār*.” UT Asian Studies Graduate Student Conference. Austin, TX. Oct 1, 2004.

“Sorrow and Verbal Abuse: Women's North Indian Wedding Songs.” Southwest Conference on Asian Studies. Houston, TX. Oct 11, 2003.

“The Satya Sai Baba Movement: Forging a Hindu Identity in the Indian Diaspora.” East-West Center International Graduate Student Conference. Honolulu, Hawaii. Feb 22, 2003.

Forthcoming:

“Phanishwarnath Renu, Singer of Tales” an introduction to Murari Madhusudan Thakur's translation of Phanishwarnath Renu's *Parathī Parikathā*. Global Vision Press, New Delhi.

Work in Progress:

My current research concerns north-Indian folklore—the song and drama traditions of villages in eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar—and also on the relation between sung and written forms in South Asia. The book project is called *Renu Village: Hindi Literature and North Indian Oral Tradition*. I am also preparing an article “North Indian Folksong and the World, Sampling Indian Literature and the Global Field” which draws on my fieldwork in India, Trinidad, Mauritius, and Fiji. Additionally, I am working on translations of Hindi writing, having recently received permission to translate select fiction and essays of the 20th-century author and singer Phanishwarnath Renu and the poetry of his contemporary Amogh Narayan Jha.

Fellowships, Grants, and Awards:

- 2012 Nepali Language Fellow. Cornell University, South Asia Summer Language Program.
- 2012-13 Vocal Performance Fellowship, Ithaca College School of Music (declined).
- 2011 Gerron Fellowship. Department of Asian Studies, The University of Texas.
- 2009 Texas Language Technology Center, Graduate Research Fellow. To Develop the “Hindi Folksong Project” for Hindi language classes at The University of Texas.
- 2009 South Asia Graduate Summer Research Grant. UT Department of Asian Studies.
- 2008-09 American Philosophical Society, Lewis and Clark Exploration and Field Research Grant: “Vidyapati in North Indian Fiction and Performance.”
- 2007-08 Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship. For Hindi study at the University of Texas at Austin
- 2006-07 University Continuing Fellowship, The University of Texas at Austin.
- 2005-06 American Institute of Indian Studies, Language Program Fellowship for the study of Hindi in Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.
- 2003 Southwest Conference on Asian Studies Travel Grant.
- 2003-04 Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship. For Hindi study at the University of Texas at Austin
- 2003 Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship. For summer Hindi study at the American Institute of Indian Studies, Jaipur, India, Rajasthan.
- 2002-03 University Preemptive Fellowship, The University of Texas at Austin.
- 2002-03 Liberal Arts Fellowship, The University of Texas at Austin.
- 2002 Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship. For Tibetan summer language study, Cornell University.
- 2002 Einhorn Discovery Grant, Cornell University: “The Sai Baba movement in Overseas Indian Communities.”
- 2001 Harold A. Falconer Prize. For outstanding vocal performance student, Cornell University Music Department.
- 1999 Dean's Scholar Grant, Cornell University: “Bhojpuri Songs in Mauritius: Continuity and Change.”
- 1998-01 College Scholar, Cornell University.

Teaching Experience:

Syracuse University (2013)

Introductory Hindi language; Intermediate Hindi language.

Cornell University (2012)

Graduate seminar: Hindi Literature and North Indian Village Song.

The University of Texas at Austin (2009-11)

Hindi language: First-year sequence.

Undergraduate lecture course: Introduction to India.

Undergraduate seminar: Indian Village Life.

Other Teaching Experience:

Private Hindi language instruction and tutoring (2011-present)

As Teaching Assistant, The University of Texas at Austin (2004-08):

First-year Hindi; Second-year Hindi; Advanced Flagship Hindi; Introduction to India; History of Ancient India.

Other Professional Experience:

- 2012 South Asia Language Consultant for the production of Vanraj Bhatia's opera, *Agni Varsha*, New York, NY, Queens Council of the Arts.
- 2011 Panel Chair: "Modernity, Nationalism, and Visual Culture," Texas Asia Conference.
- 2007 Student Representative, Faculty Search Committee, South Asia Institute.
- 2004-05 Editorial Board, *SAGAR, A South Asia Graduate Research Journal*, The University of Texas at Austin
- 2003-04 Organizing Committee, Texas Asia Conference, The University of Texas at Austin.

Institutional grant writing experience:

- 2007 Authored successful proposal to the University of Texas Instructional and Technology Service to fund development of the Hindi-Urdu Flagship's online language-learning materials.
- 2005-06 Head member of writing team for The University of Texas South Asia Institute's winning bid to create the first National Flagship Program in Hindi and Urdu languages, funded by the United States Department of Education.

Outreach

- 2007-10 K-12 Outreach: South Asia Speaker, University of Texas South Asia Institute. Topics have included "The British Raj," "Culture, Gender, and Society in Ancient India," and "The Caste System of India."
- 2006-10 University of Texas "Hemispheres" International Studies Program: Presenter at

conferences for public school teachers. Topics have included “North Indian Villages: Women’s Voices,” “The Ramayana: The Life of an Ancient Religious Text in Modern India,” and “Indian Village Life: Tools for the Classroom.”

2002 “An Introduction to Indian Art forms,” Austin Nursing Center, Austin, TX.

2001 “Who’s Who in an Indian Wedding?” Global Studies, Ithaca High School, Ithaca New York.

Languages:

Hindi: Fluency in spoken language and excellent reading comprehension, including reading ability with Old Hindi poetry in Braj and Avadhi.

Other “regional” languages of the Hindi Belt: Ability with Bhojpuri, Maithili, and Angika, especially with regard to performance genres (through study at The American Institute of Indian Studies, and through fieldwork and study in north-India).

Nepali: Good listening and reading ability. I can speak Nepali with some effort, though often default to Hindi or Maithili (both comprehensible to many Nepali speakers in Nepal and India).

Sanskrit: Good reading comprehension.

French and German: Good reading comprehension.

Performance Experience in India and the West:

Singer (Baritone): Studies with John Rowehl, Rebecca Plack and Judith Kellock. In addition to recital, concert, and opera engagements, I performed the leading role of Yavakri in the world premiere of Indian composer Vanraj Bhatia's *Mahabharata*-based opera *Agni Varsha* in New York City in 2012. I have performed programs of western art song to music students in Forbesgang and Raniganj (Bihar, India).

Classical Indian music: Tabla study with Steven Slawek at The University of Texas, and classical Indian voice with the family of Hari Mohan Bhatt in Jaipur (Rajasthan, India).

North Indian folk music: Bhojpuri village song study (including *kajalī*, *harikirtan*, *birahā*, and *rāmāyan*) with Ram Sagar Singh, Sivnarayan Singh, and Paramanand Singh (Banpurwa Gaon, Varanasi); Bihari village genres (primarily *jogirā*, *nirgun*, *raspriyā*, and *bidāpat nāch*) with Ram Prashad Mandal, Jainarayan Mandal, Mahati Devi, and surviving singers of the village group formed by the 20th-century Hindi author Phanishwarnath Renu (Aurahi-Hingani Gaon, Bihar). I have performed on location in Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh.