



CENTRE FOR INDIA AND SOUTH ASIA RESEARCH

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THE UNIVERSITY
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT

**CENTRE FOR INDIA AND
SOUTH ASIA RESEARCH**

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This Report was prepared by CISAR Student Assistant (Summer 2018) Suhyun Choi under the guidance of CISAR Co-Directors Dr. Anne Murphy and Dr. Sara Shneiderman, with the support of the Work Learn Program.

THE CENTRE

The Centre for India and South Asia Research (CISAR) promotes interdisciplinary research related to South Asia, disseminating knowledge through seminars, lectures, and conferences. The Centre also seeks to create and promote institutional and scholar-to-scholar linkages between UBC and institutions in South Asia and beyond, and between UBC and South Asian communities in British Columbia.



CO-DIRECTORS' MESSAGE

2017-2018 was a busy first year for us as CISAR Co-Directors. Over the course of the year, CISAR hosted over 20 events, on a wide range of topics. In August-September 2017, the Centre hosted three international SSHRC-supported conferences/workshops, dealing with Punjabi cultural history, post-earthquake reconstruction in Nepal, and Bengali migration. In the months that followed, we brought together faculty and students to consider film, literary and cultural history, politics, the Rohingya refugee crisis, domestic violence and honour killings, nuclear proliferation, and more. This Report demonstrates the level and diversity of activity at the Centre. CISAR was a contributor to a major Canada 150 project entitled "Canada at 150+: Trauma, Memory and the Story of Canada," which included an exhibition at the UBC Asian Centre and at various public sites in Vancouver that was curated by CISAR Research Associate Raghavendra Rao, K.V. This year also saw the inaugural Annual Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Memorial Lecture, with a talk by Vivek Kumar of Jawaharlal Nehru University. Finally, in March, we hosted the South Asia Conference of the Pacific Northwest, which featured over 35 presentations by both established and emerging scholars, with keynote addresses by historians Ruby Lal and Gyanendra Pandey of Emory University.

But CISAR is more than a series of events. A major focus of our work is building fruitful institutional relationships. For example, we have worked over the last year to strengthen and initiate new partnerships with institutions in South Asia. We have seen the fruit of this effort already: CISAR Research Associate Sanzida Habib took part in a conference organized by the Sri Ram College of Commerce/Delhi University in July 2018 that we hope represents the start of a strong ongoing partnership with Delhi University colleges. A new agreement with Punjabi University Patiala (PUP) has been signed in recent weeks, and we are exploring further opportunities for partnership with institutions in South Asia.

This will remain a major focus of CISAR's work, moving forward. We have also worked to deepen and enhance our relationships with Canada-based institutions and community groups. We have partnered over the last year with the Dr. Hari Sharma Foundation, *Watan* online Punjabi magazine, the Chetna Association of Canada, Skyrocket Digital, and Nepal Cultural Society of BC for a series of events that engage the larger community and embed such events within a scholarly conversation. We will continue to build CISAR's larger presence in the community, and work to build the institutional and scholar-to-scholar linkages that support CISAR's mandate.

We have another busy year ahead of us. We invite you to come to one of our events—usually on Thursdays in Room 120 of the C.K. Choi Building or other designated locations on campus. Please check our website for full details. More importantly, we encourage you to engage with the CISAR community: the scholars, students, and members of the public who care about South Asia, and seek to understand it more fully. We welcome all to the conversation.

Sincerely,
Anne Murphy and Sara Shneiderman

August 16, 2018



CO-DIRECTORS



Anne Murphy (Ph.D. Columbia) is Associate Professor in the Department of Asian Studies and Co-Director of the Centre for India and South Asia Research at the University of British Columbia. In 2018-9 she is also Acting Associate Dean for Faculty and Program Development, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. She teaches and conducts research on the vernacular literary and religious traditions of the Punjab region (India & Pakistan). Current research pursues two interrelated lines of inquiry: modern Punjabi cultural production in the Indian and Pakistani Punjabs and in the Diaspora, and the early modern history of Punjabi's emergence as a literary language. Her monograph, *The Materiality of the Past: History and Representation in Sikh Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 2012), explored the construction of Sikh historical consciousness within texts, objects and religious sites from the eighteenth century to the present. She also edited a thematically related volume entitled *Time, History, and the Religious Imaginary in South Asia* (Routledge, 2011) that pursued parallel interests across languages and religious traditions in South Asia. She has pursued her continuing interests in commemoration and memorial practices in a volume entitled *Partition and the Practice of Memory* (Palgrave, 2018) co-edited with Churnjeet Mahn (Strathclyde University), and is currently working on two book-length translation projects: she is completing a collection of short stories by Lahore, Pakistan-based contemporary author Zubair Ahmed, and is beginning a new project on Waris Shah's 18th century text, *Hir*. She has published articles in *History and Theory*, *Studies in Canadian Literature*, *South Asian History and Culture*, the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, and other journals.



Sara Shneiderman (Ph.D. Cornell) is Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology and the School of Public Policy & Global Affairs/Institute of Asian Research. She is Co-Director of the Centre for India and South Asia Research, and Co-Coordinator of the UBC Himalaya Program. Her anthropological research explores the relationships between political discourse, ritual action, and cross-border mobility in producing ethnic identities and shaping social transformation in the Himalayas, including Nepal, northeast India, and Tibetan areas of China. Current research projects include a Social Science and Humanities Research Council Partnership Development Grant, "Expertise, Labour and Mobility in Nepal's Post-Conflict, Post-Disaster Reconstruction", a transdisciplinary partnership focused on Nepal's post-earthquake reconstruction; an ethnography of "post-conflict" state restructuring in Nepal that focuses on lived experiences of citizenship, territory and religiosity since 2006; an exploration of trans-

Himalayan citizenship across the historical and contemporary borders of India, China, and Nepal; participation in a University of Toronto-based project on infrastructure and development in Nepal's agrarian districts; and collaboration in a Yale University-based project on urbanization and land use change in the Himalayas. She is the author of *Rituals of Ethnicity: Thangmi Identities Between Nepal and India* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015; winner of the 2017 James Fisher Prize for First Books on the Himalayan region), co-editor of *Darjeeling Reconsidered: Histories, Politics, Environments* (Oxford University Press 2018); and author of several journal articles and book chapters on the themes of Nepal's Maoist movement; ethnic classification, affirmative action, and the politics of recognition in South Asia; and borders and citizenship in the Himalayas.

AUGUST - DECEMBER 2017

AUG 17
2017

Workshop

Bhai Vir Singh (1872-1957): Rethinking Literary Modernity in Colonial Punjab

This scholarly workshop was hosted by CISAR and the Department of Asian Studies and organized by UBC's Dr. Anne Murphy and Dr. Anshu Malhotra of Delhi University. A group of scholars from India, the United States, and Canada gathered at UBC to consider the literary production, thought, and impact of Bhai Vir Singh, a major figure in Sikh religious reform and in the formations of modern Punjabi literature.

This workshop was made possible by a Connection Grant from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), with supporting funds from the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies, the Department of Asian Studies, the Faculty of Arts, and the Hampton program at UBC. The Bhai Vir Singh Sahitya Sadan contributed towards the participation of Dr. Mohinder Singh, the Sadan's Director.



AUG 24-25
2017

Workshop

Knowledge Mobilization: South Asian Canadian Digital Archive

This two-day workshop brought together scholars, community historians, librarians, archivists, curators, digital humanities experts, and students to develop a South Asian Canadian Digital Archive (SACDA) and a network of South Asian Canadian Studies. SACDA's goal is to develop a pan-Canada digital platform for archival data, research, and materials for all Canadians: www.southasiancanadianheritage.ca/archive

This workshop was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and co-hosted by the South Asian Studies Institute at the University of the Fraser Valley, the Department of Asian Studies, and Royal BC Museum, Victoria, BC.

AUG 25
2017

Conversation

Violence Against Religious Minorities in India: A Conversation with journalist Rana Ayyub and Dr. Kamal Arora

In 1984, approximately 3500 Sikh men were killed in Delhi in violence following then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination. In 2002, almost 3000 Muslims were murdered after Muslims were blamed for setting fire to a train carrying Hindu pilgrims. What is striking is the similarities between these two events, even though they are almost two decades apart: the complicit role of the police and state, sexual violence against women, and the seemingly "unplanned" nature of the violence. Journalist Rana Ayyub and anthropologist Dr. Kamal Arora shared their experiences working on the Gujarat violence and with the Sikh 'widow colony' of 1984, respectively, as well as the lived experiences of those affected by such violence.

This event was co-sponsored by Radical Desi, a monthly grassroots magazine.

Rana Ayyub is a prominent independent Indian journalist and writer. In a decade-long career in political and investigative journalism with various mainstream publications, she has conducted ground-breaking investigations that have, for example, sent the first serving Home Minister of India behind bars.

Kamal Arora is an anthropologist and recently completed her PhD at the University of British Columbia. Her research consisted of an ethnography of Sikh women living in what is known as the "Widow Colony" in Delhi – the housing colony given to some Sikh widows and their families after the 1984 anti-Sikh violence.

SEP 14
2017

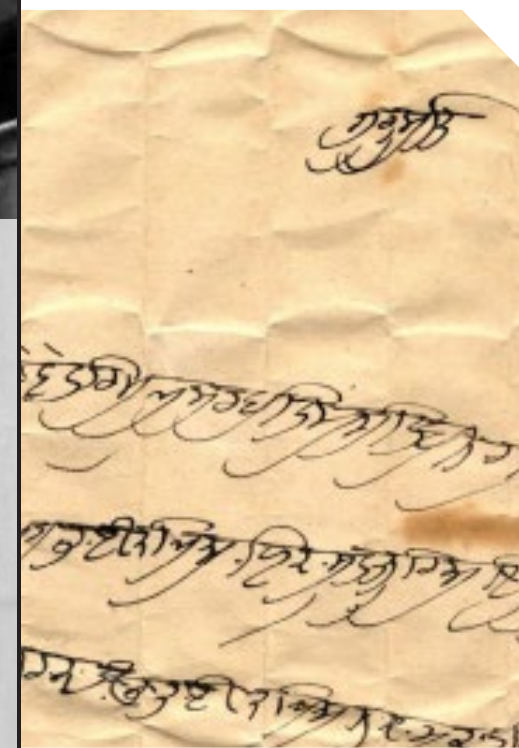
Lecture

The Ebb and Flow of Everyday Contacts: Forging Literary Communities in Early Modern Panjab

Texts in Punjabi have for much of their history been written in multiple scripts and engaged deeply with myriad textual, aural, and oral communities. The words and letters of literary agents in 17th century Punjab, this lecture argued, actively shaped communities and networks, pointing to the boundaries some wished to enforce, and the boundaries that others transgressed. Dr. Purnima Dhavan gave an insightful introduction to the relationships between literary communities in early modern Punjab.

This event was co-sponsored by the Department of Asian Studies.

Dr. Purnima Dhavan is Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of Washington, Seattle. Her primary focus is the social and cultural history of Early Modern South Asia.





SEP 14-17
2017

Workshop

Reconstructing Nepal: Politics and Practice after the 2015 Earthquakes and Constitution

In 2015, Nepal was struck by its worst natural disaster in several decades caused by twin earthquakes of 7.9 and 7.3 magnitude that left 9,000 people dead, 20,000 injured, and destroyed over 600,000 homes. The devastating socio-economic and environmental impacts of this catastrophe were compounded by the country's political dynamics. This four-day workshop, supported by a SSHRC Partnership Development Grant, 'Expertise, Labour, and Mobility in Nepal's Post-Conflict, Post-Earthquake Reconstruction' and organized by CISAR Co-Director and grant principal investigator **Dr. Sara Shneiderman**, brought together over 20 scholars and practitioners from across the disciplines and around the world to share their research experiences in post-conflict and post-disaster environments. More information about the partnership is available at <https://elmnr.arts.ubc.ca/>

The keynote speaker was **Deepak Thapa**, political analyst and Director of the Kathmandu-based research institute Social Science Baha, who delivered a lecture titled "Nepal's Prolonged Transition: End in Sight?" Over 10 years after the Maoist conflict came to a close, a new constitution has been implemented, and local, provincial, and federal elections completed. Mr. Thapa gave a wide-ranging lecture considering whether the transition is coming to an end, and what the contours of the Nepali state are likely to be in the future.

This event was co-sponsored by the Himalaya Program, the Department of Anthropology, the Institute of Asian Research, the School of Public Policy and Global Affairs, and a SSHRC Partnership Development Grant.



SEP 16-17
2017
Conference

Canada 150 Conference on Migration of Bengalis

This two-day conference examined and documented the history, settlement patterns and contributions of Bengalis to Canada, and British Columbia in particular. This event was co-organized by Simon Fraser University Professor (Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies) and CISAR Research Associate Dr. Habiba Zaman and CISAR Research Associate Dr. Sanzida Habib.

With keynote presentations by Dr. Tania Das Gupta (Department of Equity Studies, York University) and Dr. C. Emdad Haque (Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba), the conference featured paper presentations by speakers from both academia and the community on:

- the migration and settlement of Bengalis: history, demography, religion, and health issues
- gender culture, family, and work: stories of migration
- multiculturalism, Bengali organizations, and social justice issues
- Canadian Bengali youth: identity, social, cultural, and family life

In addition to the presentations, the conference hosted concurrent roundtable discussions with community members on:

- Migration, Settlement, Experience, and Community Service in Greater Vancouver
- Multiculturalism, Activism, and Social Justice



This event was co-sponsored by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), SFU Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, SFU Dean's Office, SFU Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, Dr. Hari Sharma Foundation, SFU David Lam Centre, SFU Institute for the Humanities, SFU Departments of History, and Sociology and Anthropology, SFU School of International Studies, and an anonymous donor.

Video clips of presentations and discussions are available on Youtube:
<https://goo.gl/ndSbBV>

← To view *Canada 150 Conference Proceedings*, visit <https://monographs.lib.sfu.ca/index.php/sfulibrary/catalog/book/73>



Canada 150+: Trauma, Memory and the Story of Canada

The South Asian Canadian Histories Association (SACHA, <https://www.sachacanada.ca>) was established in 2016 to bring together art, history, and research. The aim of the organization is to create, facilitate, support, and exhibit arts and research-driven initiatives rooted in South Asian Canadian history, culture, and identity. Two of its co-founders are CISAR's Co-Director, Dr. Anne Murphy, and CISAR Research Associate, Raghavendra Rao K.V.

SACHA's first major project, "Trauma, Memory and the Story of Canada," brought together artists, activists, and scholars to explore the difficult stories that comprise Canada's past in the context of the commemoration of 150 years since Canadian Confederation. The project was supported by the Canada 150 Fund, the Canada Council for the Arts, the City of Vancouver, the University of British Columbia, and the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies, with the additional support of Simon Fraser University Woodward's.



Jason Baerg, *Pihtôpitew - S/He Peels it off by Pulling* (Digital installation, SFU Woodward's Atrium and Digital Signage at UBC Point Grey)
Baerg created a new digital media work for projection that illuminates continuum, indigenous relationality and survivance.
A trailer of his work is available <https://youtu.be/OE8vAposg3I>



The project presented a series of public art events and exhibitions to explore experiences of trauma as neglected and yet foundational parts of the story of Canada. The core of the project was an art exhibition, at multiple sites, featuring works by five artists from across Canada and one from India: Vikky Alexander, Sonny Assu, Jason Baerg, Sameer Farooq, Hyung-Min Yoon, and Umesh M. S. The main exhibition took place in Punjabi Market, with additional works on display at UBC's Asian Centre and at the SFU Goldcorp Center in downtown Vancouver. The second major component of the project was a theatrical production that explored the intersections of the lives of Canadians coping with different kinds of trauma, distant and near, staged in a "Vancouver Special," a style of home associated with migration in the 1970s-80s. Other activities, such as walking tours, accompanied these two main initiatives. Two vinyl displays showcasing archival photographs from the British Columbia Historical Photograph Collection, Rare Books and Special Collections, UBC Library were also on display in Punjabi Market; they remain on view at the time of writing this Report.



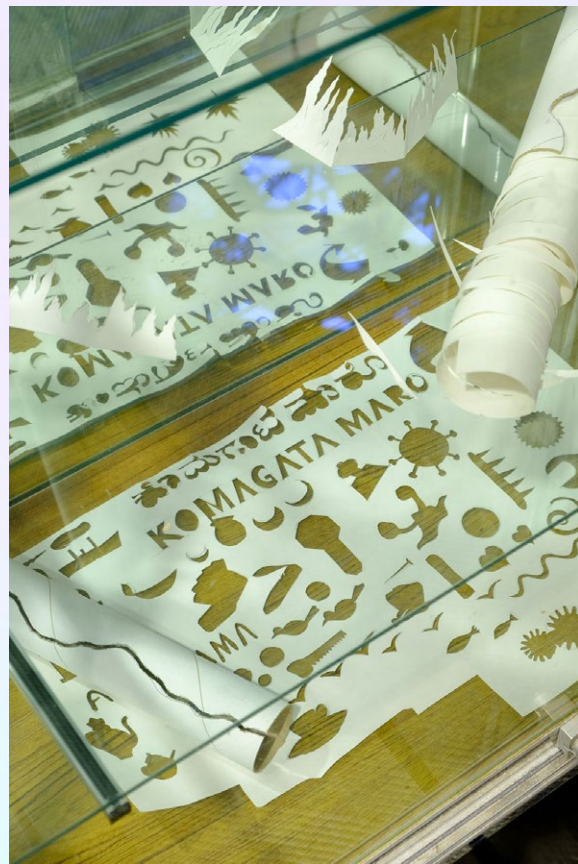
Art Exhibition at Punjabi Market, the UBC Asian Centre, and SFU Woodward's **Trauma, Memory, and the Story of Canada**

"Canada at 150+: Trauma, Memory and the Story of Canada" emerged as an idea out of recent commemorative events and reconciliation processes related to residential schools, the Komagata Maru incident, Japanese internment, and the Chinese Head-Tax, all of which emphasize the need to explore how the past shapes our present. By engaging with such histories and experiences, as well as others, the project called attention to the traumas inside and outside of Canada that must be recognized and understood as part of the Canadian story at 150+.

ABOVE Hyung-min Yoon, *Intended for you Alone* (Fencing in the "Punjabi Market" on the south side of the intersection at 49th and Main)
Yoon's work, based on research into the Komagata Maru incident in 1914, dealt with a broad notion of translation through gestures of recontextualization. The text was appropriated from Kafka's well-known parable *Before the Law*; a Q&A excerpt reflects the dynamics of global migration across jurisdictions.

BELOW Sameer Farooq, *Pouf, Sausage, Weight, Arc* (Exhibited at the UBC Asian Centre)
Farooq's work consisted of a series of hand-shaped ceramic objects fashioned by Farooq to imitate the forms and shapes of museum-quality packing material used to protect, shroud and wrap precious artifacts for shipping and storage as found in museums worldwide.

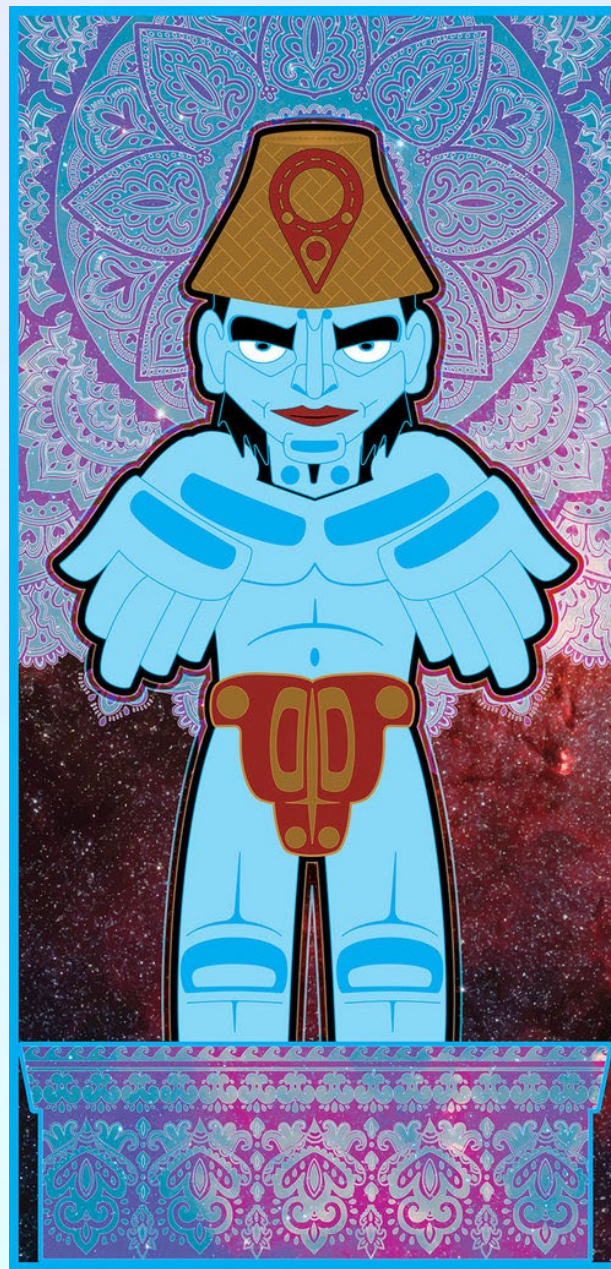




↓ Vikky Alexander, Photographic installation at Frontier Cloth House
Alexander's work was comprised of a mural size photograph in the window of an abandoned retail building 'Frontier Cloth House' on 51st and Main St. in Punjabi Market.



← Umesh M. S., *How This Will End* (Exhibition in the UBC Asian Centre & Asian Library)
Umesh M. S. was introduced to the CBC Radio play *Entry Denied*, about the exclusion of the passengers on the Komagata Maru, on the radio while ill in Europe, and listened to it amidst the news of the Bush administration's search for WMDs in Iraq in 2002. His dispersed exhibition in the UBC Asian Centre and Asian Library explored that which remains after the experience of loss.



↑ Sonny Assu, *Welcoming Those They Did Not Want* (Installation, All India Sweets in the "Punjabi Market" at 49th and Main Street)
"As we reflect on the colonial state of Canada's 150 anniversary," Assu tells us, "we need to question what it is exactly that we are celebrating. Instances like the Komagata Maru, the Japanese internment, the Chinese Head Tax and the legacy of genocide against the First people are blights on Canada's perceived rosy image. As an Ligwilda'xw person, indigenous to this colonized land, Canada 150 means something different to me. It isn't about cake, balloons and the celebration of how this county came to be. It's about acknowledging our horrific past, so we can learn from it and make a society truly worthy of reconciliation."



Theatrical Presentation
A Vancouver Guldasta

The other major component of this Canada 150+ project was *A Vancouver Guldasta*, the second site-specific theatrical production by playwright and SACHA Director of Performance, Paneet Singh.



The story focused on the Dhaliwals—a Punjabi family in Vancouver in the early 1980s—as they navigate through the experience of trauma of the violence occurring in Punjab, and their daughter's complicated friendship with Andy, the Vietnamese refugee teen who lives in their basement.

A Vancouver Guldasta was an examination of common experience, identifying home, and processing trauma.



For more details on the project "Canada 150+: Trauma, Memory and the Story of Canada," visit the SACHA website at: <https://www.sachacanada.ca>



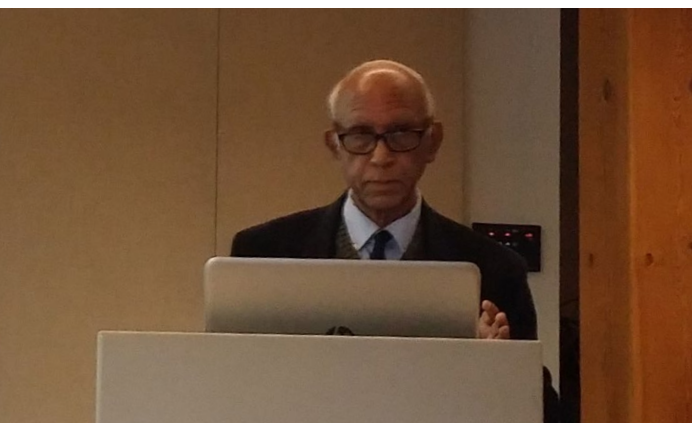
OCT 5
2017

Lecture

Understanding the Partition of Punjab in the Context of the Partition of India and Bengal

The journey of the Indian sub-continent to India, Pakistan and Bangladesh has been long and painful. In this lecture on the partition of Punjab—one of the most affected regions of the Partition—Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmed argued that the partition of the Punjab, although linked to the overall partition of India, was the result of the polarization between Hindu-Sikhs on the one hand and Muslims on the other in the wake of religious revivals amongst all three communities.

This event was co-sponsored by the Department of Asian Studies and Dr. Hari Sharma Foundation.



Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmed is Professor Emeritus of Political Science, Stockholm University, Visiting Professor Government College University, Lahore and, Honorary Senior Fellow, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore. His latest publications include: *Pakistan: The Garrison State, Origins, Evolution, Consequences (1947-2011)*, 2013 and *The Punjab Bloodied, Partitioned and Cleansed*, 2012.



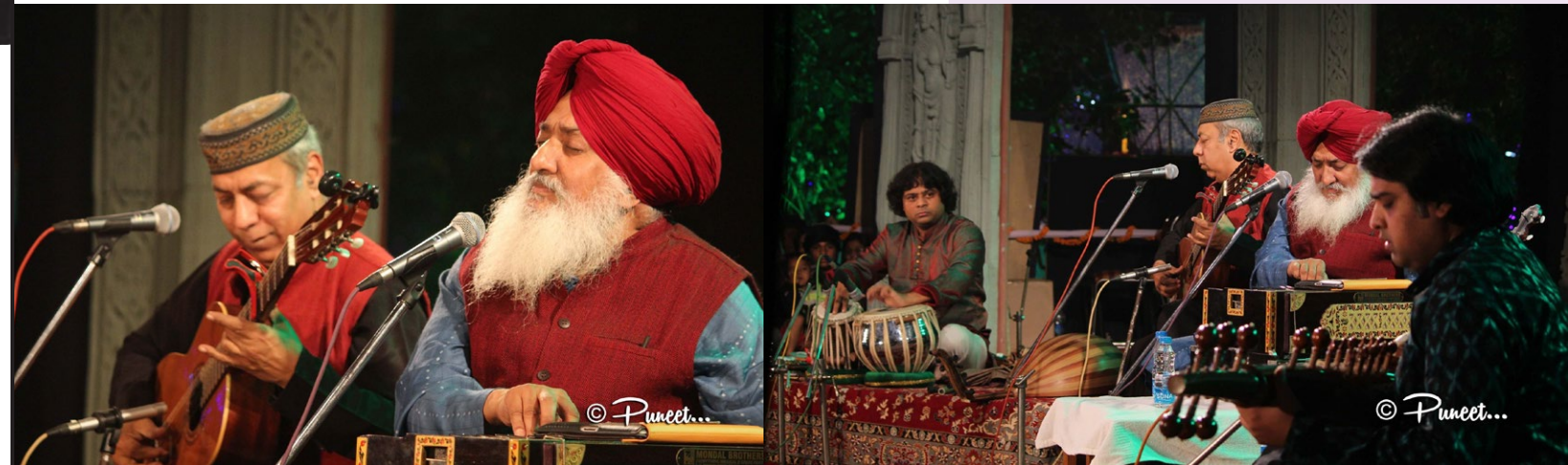
OCT 12
2017

Concert

Concert and Conversation with Musical Ensemble Chaar Yaar

The group *Chaar Yaar* or 'Four Friends' came into existence about nine years ago. As the name suggests, it comprises four musicians—namely, the composer, vocalist and poet Madan Gopal Singh; the ace guitarist and banjo player Deepak Castelino; the soulful sarod player Pritam Ghosal and an equally energetic multiple percussionist Amjad Khan.

This event was co-sponsored by the Department of Asian Studies, the Dhahan Prize for Punjabi Literature, the Vancouver International Bhangra Celebration, Skyrocket Digital, Indian Summer Festival, and Dr. Hari Sharma Foundation.



Sheela Gowda
Dark Room
2006

OCT 19
2017

Lecture

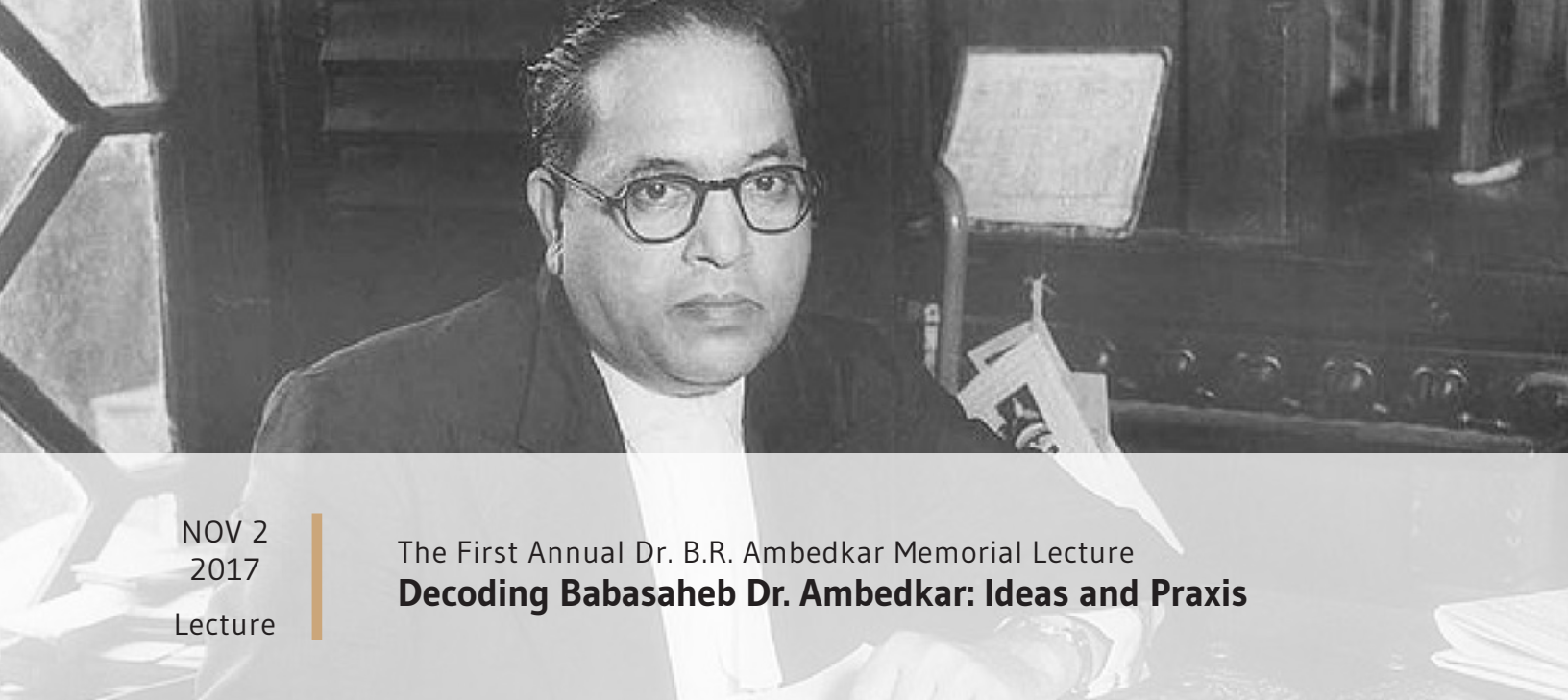
Contemporary Art in India Today: Bangalore and Beyond

Umesh M. S. is an artist based in Bangalore, India. He belongs to a generation of artists from Bangalore, India that was instrumental in introducing Installation and Conceptual art to the Indian art scene. He visited Vancouver in association with the project "Canada at 150+: Trauma, Memory and the Story of Canada."

Raghavendra Rao K. V. is the curator of the exhibition "Canada at 150+: Trauma, Memory and the Story of Canada," Artistic Director and founding member of the South Asian Canadian Histories Association, and Research Associate at CISAR. He is currently pursuing a long-term project titled "Mending Cracks" on trauma and recovery, which provided the inspiration and guide to the Canada 150+ project. Results of "Mending Cracks" were exhibited in Bangalore in 2016 December and at the UBC Asian Centre in 2017.

This event was co-sponsored by the South Asian Canadian Histories Association and the Canada 150 Fund.





NOV 2
2017
Lecture

The First Annual Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Memorial Lecture
Decoding Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar: Ideas and Praxis

Dr. Vivek Kumar deconstructed the reduction of Babasaheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar by mainstream academia, intelligentsia and media in Indian society. The lecture decoded the process by which Babasaheb Ambedkar has been viewed only as the messiah of dalits or the 'Chief Architect' of the Indian Constitution. By explicating the ideas of modernity and nation-building in Ambedkar's work, the lecture also highlighted why his idea of self-representation assumes importance in the process of nation building. Dr. Kumar traced the evolution of different shades of movements launched by Ambedkar—social, political, religious etc.—and the role he played in the making of the Indian Constitution.

This event was co-sponsored by Chetna Association of Canada, Dr. Hari Sharma Foundation, the Department of Asian Studies, the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Program in Buddhism and Contemporary Society (何鴻毅家族基金佛學與當代社會課程), and SFU Institute for the Humanities.



Dr. Vivek Kumar is Professor of Sociology at the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. His latest book is *Caste and Democracy in India: A Perspective from Below* (2014). He teaches courses on social science methodology, development and modernization in South Asia and the Indian diaspora.

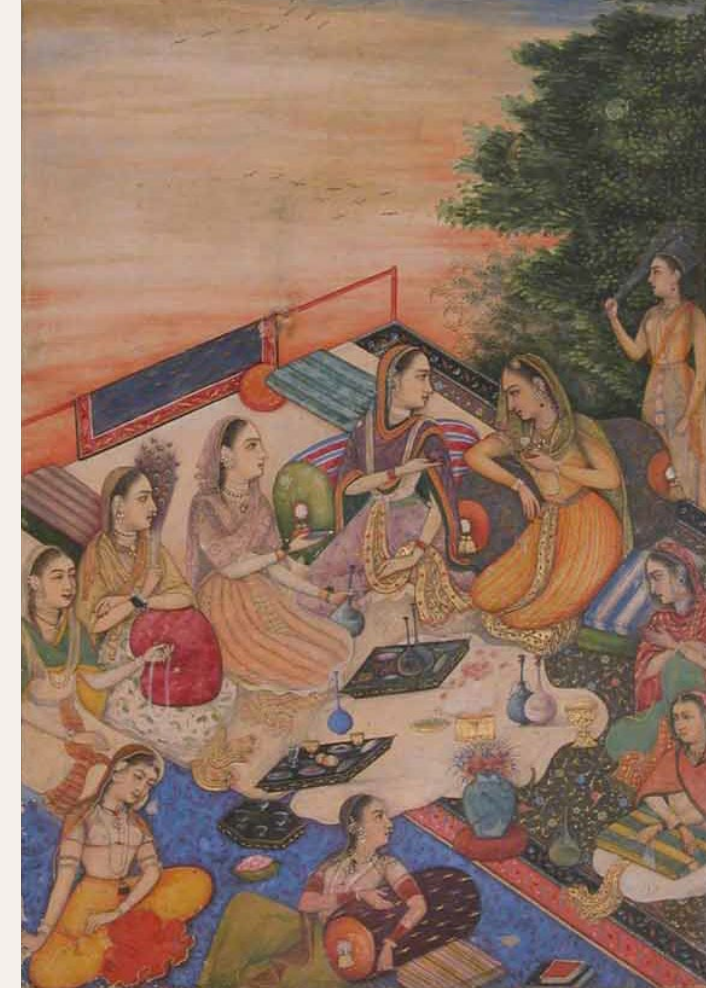


NOV 16
2017
Lecture &
Reception

Lecture
The Social Worlds of Indian Aesthetics

Dr. Allison Busch shared highlights from a book project, in collaboration with Molly Aitken, "Aesthetic Worlds of the Indian Heroine" that explores Mughal India's deep engagement with classical aesthetics through paintings and poems about female beauty. Evidence suggests how the gatherings where painting and poetry were experienced were a venue for self-cultivation and a means to strengthen bonds of love and friendship. The talk highlighted the importance of aesthetics and affect in shaping the social and political worlds of Mughal India's men and women.

"Women Feasting on a Balcony," Folio from the Davis Album (detail).
Theodore M. Davis Collection, Bequest of Theodore M. Davis, 1915,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Accession no. 30.95.174.26.



Dr. Allison Busch is Associate Professor of Hindi Literature in the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies at Columbia University. Her expertise is in the early modern period (c. 1550-1850), with a special interest in courtly India.

Dr. Busch is pictured here with Hari and Madhu Varshney, who made the CISAR Annual Reception possible with their generous gift.



CISAR Annual Reception



The lecture was followed by the CISAR Annual Reception. Tabla player Yogesh Kudva and singer Raghavendra Rao K.V. (CISAR Research Associate) performed songs in Marwari/Hindi by Kabir and in Kannada.

This event was made possible by Varshney Family Fund.

NOV 20
2017
Conversation

**Voices of Contemporary Himalayan Literature:
Manjushree Thapa and Tsering Wangmo Dhompa in Conversation**



Two acclaimed Himalayan authors, Manjushree Thapa and Tsering Wangmo Dhompa, discussed their recently published novels, short stories, poetry, and non-fiction, considering what it means to represent Nepal and Tibet in the English-language literary scene.

This event was co-sponsored by the Himalaya Program, the Department of Asian Studies, the School of Public Policy and Global Affairs, the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies, Asian Canadian and Asian Migration Studies, and the Faculty of Arts.

Tsering Wangmo Dhompa is the author of three collections of poetry: *My rice tastes like the lake*, *In the Absent Everyday* and *Rules of the House* (all from Apogee Press, Berkeley). She teaches creative writing and is a PhD candidate in Literature at the University of California in Santa Cruz.

Manjushree Thapa is the author of three novels, a short story collection and three nonfiction books about her homeland, Nepal. She is also a literary translator, and her translation of Darjeeling author Indra Bahadur Rai's novel *There's a Carnival Today* was released in South Asia in October 2017.

NOV 30
2017
Lecture

**A Tryst with Destiny?
The Politics of Buddhist Heritage and the Making of Modern India**

Dr. Douglas Ober detailed the important role that Buddhist heritage has played in the making of the modern Indian nation state from the time of the colonial Viceroy up through the current government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Special attention was paid to the early years of Independence and the enduring legacy of Buddhist diplomacy left by the country's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.

Dr. Douglas Ober is a Research Associate at CISAR. He holds a PhD from the Department of Asian Studies at UBC and writes on Buddhist movements in colonial and postcolonial Asia.



Maitreya Buddha. Thiksey Monastery, India.
Photo courtesy of Douglas Ober.

JANUARY
- MAY
2018

Student Opportunities in India and Beyond with the Globalink Research Award



Andrea Globa (Business Development Specialist, MITACS) provided information about the programs Mitacs offers to support international collaborations. She highlighted an award that supports student travel to the India Institutes of Technology, as Mitacs has a significant pool of funds to support collaborations with these institutions. For more information, visit www.mitacs.ca/globalink/globalink-research-award

Mitacs is a national, not-for-profit organization that has designed and delivered research and training programs in Canada for 18 years. Working with 65 universities, thousands of companies and non-profit organizations, and both federal and provincial governments, Mitacs builds partnerships that support industrial and social innovation in Canada.

Monsoon Mosques: Reading Kerala's Muslim Monuments

Mosques in Kerala offer a unique window into Kerala's relationship to the wider trading world of the pre-modern Indian Ocean. Dr. Sebastian Prange highlighted different layers of evidence that are yielded by these mosques to show that their significance extends far beyond their immediate purpose as places of worship. Rather, they serve as primary sources for understanding the development of Muslim communities in South India, links to wider Indian Ocean networks, and the place of Islam within this predominantly Hindu society.

This event was co-sponsored by the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies.

Dr. Sebastian R. Prange is Assistant Professor of South Asian history in the UBC Department of History. He studies the trading world of the medieval and early-modern Indian Ocean, with a special focus on the commercial networks, political alliances, and religious connections that linked India to Arabia and Southeast Asia.



Roundtable: Understanding the Rohingya Crisis

In what has been described as ethnic cleansing, more than 800,000 Rohingya fled to Bangladesh from Myanmar's western Rakhine State to seek refuge from persecution in the last year. Many have died in the exodus, which began following clashes between Rohingya militant groups and the Myanmar military in August 2017. With refugee camps lacking adequate infrastructure and resources, disease incidence and exploitation are high, creating dire conditions.

How did this crisis emerge? What is the role of Nobel Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi? How are refugees being cared for in Bangladesh? What are the prospects for peace in Rakhine state and the repatriation of refugees? How can Canada help deal with the Rohingya crisis? The roundtable brought together several scholars to discuss these and other questions related to the crisis.

S P E A K E R S

Dr. Mohammad Zaman is an independent consultant and spoke about issues related to repatriation and resettlement of the refugees.

Dr. Douglas Ober is a Research Associate at CISAR. He spoke on Rakhine history and historiography, Rakhine Buddhists and Buddhist nationalism.

Theressa Etmanski is a Canadian lawyer who has worked on human rights in Myanmar and its border regions. She covered the sexual and gender-based violence being committed by the Tatmadaw against Rohingya women.

Dr. Kai Ostwald is Assistant Professor with a joint appointment at the Department of Political Science and the School of Public Policy and Global Affairs at UBC. He provided background on Myanmar's post-election political climate, and the tenuous power-sharing arrangement between the military and the civilian government.

Dr. Sara Shneiderman is Associate Professor at UBC in Anthropology and the School of Public Policy and Global Affairs. She has written extensively on borders, citizenship, and statelessness in South Asia. She served as moderator for the roundtable.

This event was co-hosted by the Centre for Southeast Asia Research.

Health Policy in Nepal

Medical and public health professionals from UBC, University of Victoria, and the University of Washington explored the challenges and opportunities of working in Nepal, across fields including emergency care, family practice, health education, midwifery, and mental health.

S P E A K E R S

David Citrin, Departments of Anthropology and Global Health; Nepal Studies Initiative, University of Washington

Cathy Ellis, Department of Family Practice; Midwifery Program, UBC

Carol-Ann Courneya, Department of Cellular and Physiological Sciences, UBC

Maya Magarati, Indigenous Wellness Research Institute, School of Social Work, University of Washington

David Dunne, Gustavson School of Business, University of Victoria

Rina Pradhan, Department of Family Practice; Midwifery Program, UBC

This event was co-sponsored by the Himalaya Program and the Global Health Initiative & Division of Global Health, Department of Family Practice.

FEB 1
2018
Lecture

"Apna Punjab" [Our Punjab]: Sensorium and Aesthetics of Landscape in Punjabi Cinema



Dr. Prabhjot Parmar spoke to an enthusiastic undergraduate audience in ASIA 365, "Punjabi Cinema," taught in 2017-8 by Ranbir Johal, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Asian Studies. The class was joined by interested faculty, graduate students, and members of the public.

Dr. Prabhjot Parmar is Associate Professor of English at the University of Fraser Valley. Her research interests include South Asian literature and cinema, migration and diaspora studies, multicultural Britain and Canada, women's studies, memory and history, and world war and colonial soldiers.

FEB 7-8
2018

Film Screening
& Discussion

Asian Canadian History and Film at UBC

Our exploration of Asian Canadian film began on February 7 with a screening of *Random Acts of Legacy*, a 2016 documentary by filmmaker Ali Kazimi. Kazimi's film explores the history of a Chinese American family. What emerges from a pile of deteriorating 16mm home movies spanning from 1936 to 1951, which Kazimi rescued from an online auction, is the story of a Chinese American family set against the backdrop of race and class in Chicago, and one collector's obsession with the 1933-4 World's Fair. A second wider public screening of the film took place again at Emily Carr University on February 9, in collaboration with Rungh Magazine and other partners.



Ali Kazimi is a documentary filmmaker whose research interests include race, migration, indigeneity, history and memory, with a particular interest in South Asia and Canada. His documentary *Random Acts of Legacy* had its world premiere at the 2016 Hot Docs Canadian International Film Festival where it garnered an Honourable Mention for Best Canadian Feature Documentary and won the Best Documentary Award at the 2017 CAAMFest in San Francisco.

Punjabi Studies Program Student Screening

On February 8, students from ASIA 475, "Documenting Punjabi Canada" (taught in W2017 by UBC Asian Studies Ph.D. candidate Ajay Bhardwaj), and ACAM 350, "Asian Canadian Community-Based Media" (taught in W2017 by Alejandro Yoshizawa), presented their short films on South Asian Canadian history and experiences for discussion with Kazimi and a broader audience.



Panjab Saal Da Safar - 50 year Journey
Lovneet Aujla, Husan Bhullar, Amar Heer, Shaan Chahal
<https://youtu.be/V6AXz7bh6MU>



The South Okanagan Punjabi Community
Nimrit and Smirit Toor
<https://youtu.be/89eDMtSjxRw>



Asimilated
Sukhwinder Singh Gill
<https://youtu.be/Z4WmT4wJW0Y>

This series of events, Asian Canadian History and Film at UBC, was organized through a partnership between the Departments of Theatre and Film and Asian Studies, and made possible by the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies and the Onkarbir Singh Toor Memorial Punjabi Studies Enhancement Fund, with the support of the Asian Canadian and Asian Migration Studies Program, and Rungh Magazine.

FEB 15
2018
Celebration

Celebrate Language: International Mother Language Day



This year CISAR initiated a new UBC-wide celebration of International Mother Language Day to honour linguistic diversity around the world. The event began with a keynote address by Dr. Mark Turin (Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology, and Chair of the First Nations and Endangered Languages Program), followed by a presentation on the origins of the day by the UBC Bangladesh Students' Association. The event also featured a panel discussion titled "Towards a multilingual society?" that included community and academic leaders in linguistics, and language and literacy education.

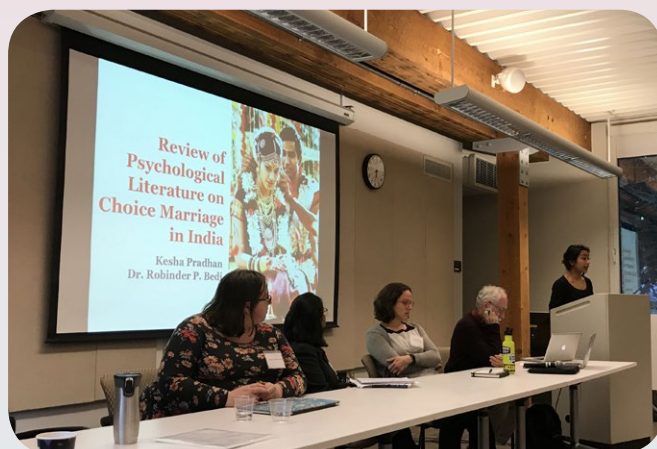
This event was co-organized by the Centre for Korean Research, the Centre for Chinese Research, the Department of Asian Studies, and the Centre for Community Engaged Learning.



MAR 2-3
2018
Conference

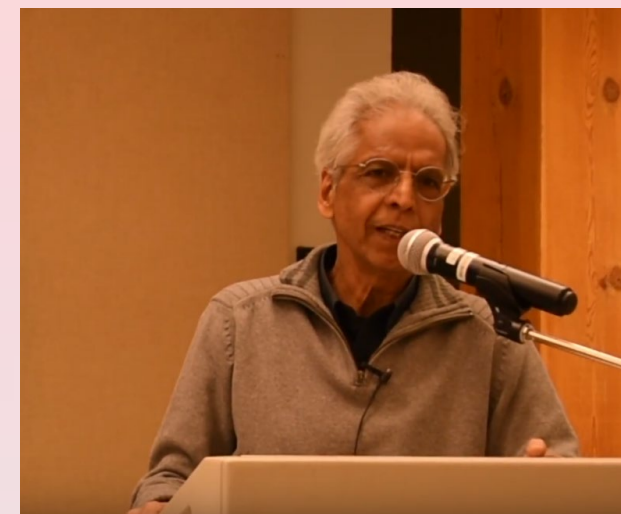
South Asia Conference of the Pacific Northwest

The South Asia Conference of the Pacific Northwest has been sponsored by the University of British Columbia and the University of Washington since the mid 1960's. The conference, known as SACPAN, was created with the aim of fostering strong intellectual discourse and connections among South Asia scholars in the Pacific Northwest. The location of SACPAN alternates between Seattle (at UW), Vancouver (at UBC and/or SFU), and since 2015, Oregon (at UO). In 2018, SACPAN was organized by CISAR and hosted at UBC's Vancouver Campus.



MAR 2
2018
Keynote

Unarchived Histories: Men, Home and India's Anti-Colonial Struggle



In this talk, Dr. Gyanendra Pandey, who has written on histories of violence and prejudice that have been unarchived in various ways, explored the question of historical and archival neglect in the case of domestic relations and men's place in the home in the period of militant anti-colonial struggle.

Dr. Gyanendra Pandey is the Art and Sciences Distinguished Professor at the Department of History, Emory University, Atlanta. A founding member and leading theorist of the Subaltern Studies project, Pandey has written extensively on colonial and postcolonial South Asia; ethnic conflict and nationalism; race and caste; citizenship and marginality; contemporary politics and democracy; and the history of history-writing.

A video recording of this lecture is available at <https://youtu.be/GG-UwMJH8zA>

MAR 2
2018
Keynote

The Small Things of History: Archive for Nur Jahan, the Great Mughal

Nur Jahan was the only woman ruler in the long dynasty of India's great Mughals. This talk explored how the Empress's extraordinary strengths, the emperor's lamentable weaknesses, the twists and turns of 17th-century politics, and the power of their love combined to defy a time and a culture that ought to have made the reign of Nur Jahan impossible, as well as why this phenomenal figure has been so effectively expunged from Mughal histories.

Dr. Ruby Lal is Professor of South Asian History at Emory University, Atlanta. Her fields of study include feminist history and theory, and the question of the archive as it relates to writing about Islamic societies in the precolonial and colonial world.

A video recording of this lecture is available at https://youtu.be/5_ZeEn2kwck





MAR 2-4
2018
Film Screening

The 2018 Harjit Kaur Sidhu Memorial Program Celebrating Punjabi Language and Culture at UBC

Film Screenings and Discussion with Award-Winning Punjabi Language Filmmaker Gurvinder Singh

The Harjit Kaur Sidhu Memorial Program celebrates the rich life of Punjabi language and culture and its importance in BC, in memory of a woman who shared such passions. The goal of the event, which was held for its tenth year in 2018, is to call attention to important new scholarship on Punjabi language and culture and bring it to UBC students and the broader Vancouver area audience; encourage and recognize achievements in Punjabi language cultural production; and honor students for their work in learning and using the Punjabi language. In 2018, the UBC/Sidhu program writer's award went to Inderjit Sidhu, who has played a vital role in developing the Punjabi literary community of BC.



MAR 2 *Awāzān* ("Voices," 2016)

A documentary on the UK-based Punjabi language poet Amarjit Chandan. The film premiered at UBC for SACPAN.



MAR 3 *Anhe Godhe dā Dān* ("Alms for a Blind Horse," 2011)

A film exploring the experience of marginality in contemporary Indian Punjab
Winner of two National Awards (India), screened at Venice Film Festival, and award winner at the Abu Dhabi Film Festival.



MAR 4 *Chauthī Kūt* ("The Fourth Direction," 2015)

A film portraying individuals and families negotiating a space between separatist and state forces amidst the violence of the 1980s in Punjab, India
Screened at Cannes and award winner at the Singapore Film Festival.

This program was made possible by the generous support of the Sidhu family, in loving memory of Harjit Kaur Sidhu (nee Gill), devoted wife, mother, and strong advocate for education, Punjabi culture and language, and women's issues. It was organized by the Department of Asian Studies, with the support of the Dean of Arts; the Asian Library; the Department of Theatre and Film; the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies; the Dr. Hari Sharma Foundation; the Gursharan Singh Memorial Lecture Committee; and the University of Toronto, Centre for South Asian Civilizations; and held in association with the South Asia Conference of the Pacific Northwest (SACPAN) organized by CISAR.

MAR 15
2018

Discussion

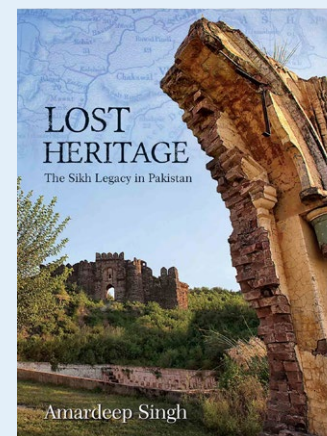
Book Reading and Discussion with Sarbjit Kaur Athwal, Author of *Shamed: The Honour Killing That Shocked Britain – by the Sister Who Fought for Justice* (2013)

In 1998, British-born Surjit Kaur Athwal went to India with her mother-in-law and never came back. She was murdered there because her in-laws thought that she was planning to divorce her husband and, in so doing, shame the family. In 2007, Surjit's mother in-law Bachan Kaur Athwal and husband Sukhdev Singh Athwal were found guilty for their part in planning this murder and were sentenced by a London court.

The decision to murder Surjit was taken in front of her sister in-law, Sarbjit Kaur Athwal. Sarbjit's testimony played a key role in the conviction of Bachan Kaur Athwal and Sukhdev Singh Athwal. In order to testify in the trial and get justice for Surjit, Sarbjit had to face significant obstacles and hardships, which she describes in her book *Shamed: The Honour Killing That Shocked Britain*, with her co-author Jeff Hudson. Three Canadian writers—Sukhwant Hundal, Sadhu Binning and Gurmail Rai—have translated this book into Punjabi.

A large group of students and faculty attended this event, which featured a reading from Athwal's book and a lively and passionate discussion.

This event was co-hosted by Watan online Punjabi magazine.

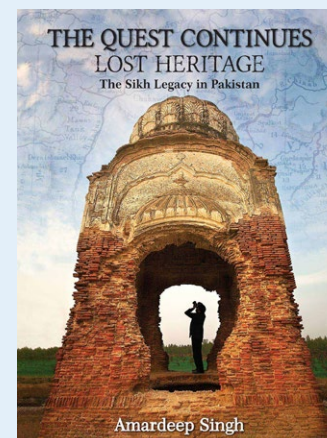


MAR 27
2018

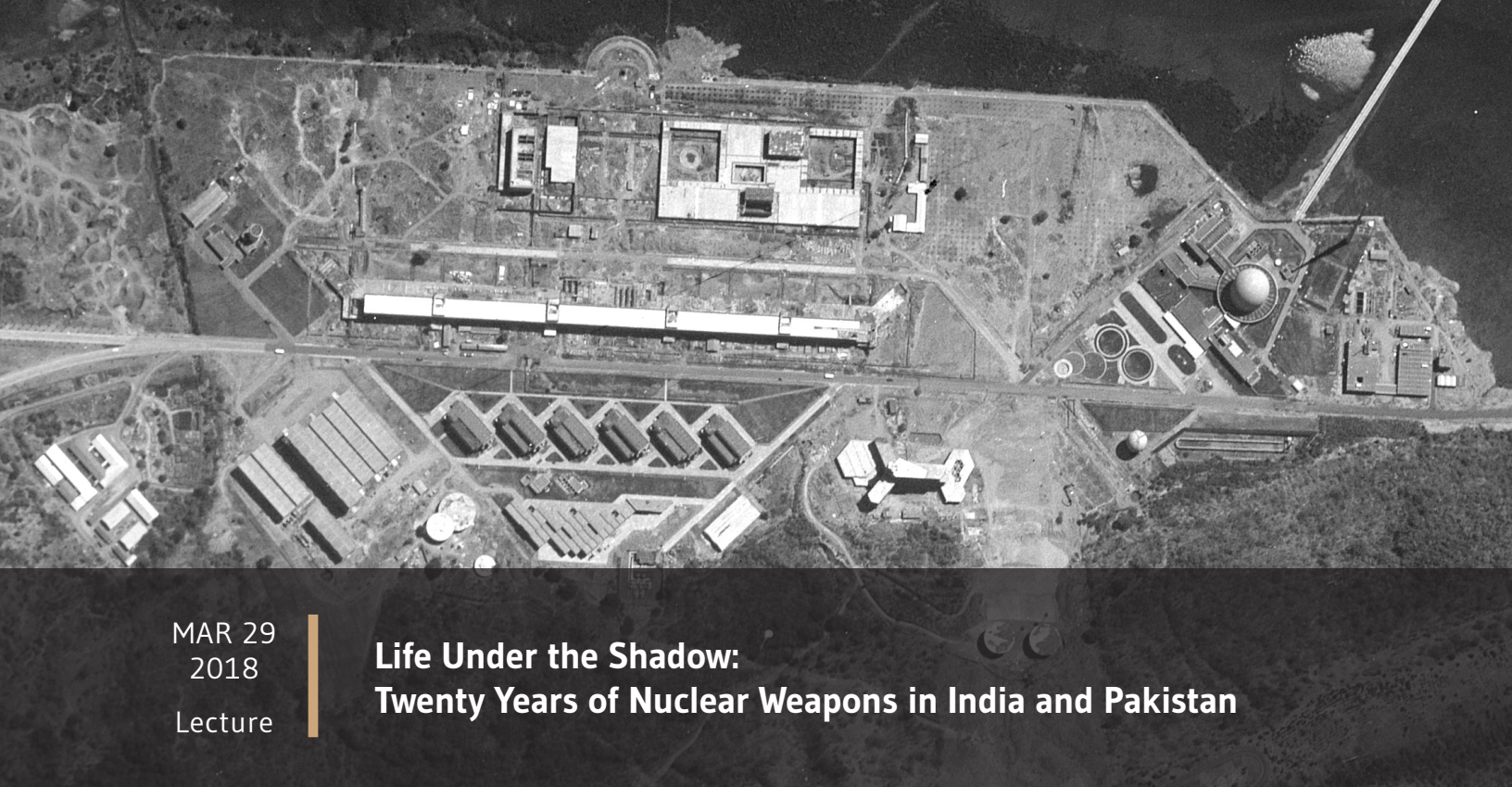
Lecture

The Sikh Legacy in Pakistan

In this lecture, Amardeep Singh presented his research on and documentation of historical sites related to the Sikh tradition in Pakistan. Amardeep Singh is the author of *Lost Heritage: The Sikh Legacy in Pakistan* and *The Quest Continues*.



This event was co-sponsored by the Department of Asian Studies and the UBC Sikh Students Association.



MAR 29
2018
Lecture

Life Under the Shadow: Twenty Years of Nuclear Weapons in India and Pakistan

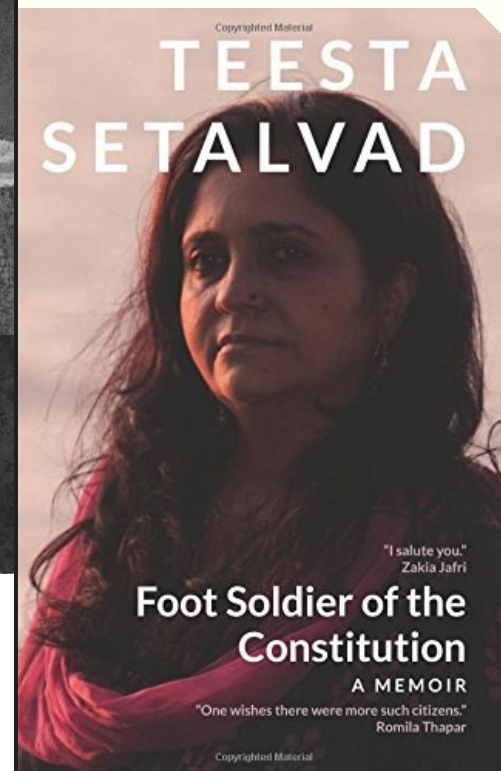
In May 1998, India and Pakistan conducted tests of nuclear weapons and since then the people of South Asia have had to contend with the possible use of nuclear weapons. In this talk, Dr. M. V. Ramana described what we know of the nuclear arsenals of India and Pakistan, their fissile material production capacities, nuclear weapon use doctrines, the role of the United States in shaping the security relationship in the subcontinent, and the risks of nuclear weapon use.



Dr. M. V. Ramana is the Simons Chair in Disarmament, Global and Human Security at the Liu Institute for Global Issues, School of Public Policy and Global Affairs at UBC. He is the author of *The Power of Promise: Examining Nuclear Energy in India*, Penguin Books, New Delhi (2012).

APR 16
2018
Conversation

The Politics of Bigotry and Growing State Repression in India Today: A Conversation with Teesta Setalvad



Teesta Setalvad is the Editor of *Communalism Combat* magazine and author of *Foot Soldier of the Constitution: A Memoir* (2017). She is a dedicated social justice activist who has been spearheading the campaign for justice for the victims of the 2002 Gujarat Muslim massacre. As a secularist, she has worked to expose majoritarianism and religious fanaticism in other parts of the world and has been vocal on issues related to women, Dalits, adivasis (indigenous persons), and LGBTQ.



This event was co-sponsored by
Radical Desi Magazine and the
Department of Asian Studies.

MAY 29
2018
Film Screening
& Discussion

Film Screening and Discussion with the Director *Connecting Threads: Made In India Fabrics for Africa*

This documentary portrays the transoceanic journey of cloth – primarily *Kangas* and *Vitenge* – unique textile genres that are exported from India to various entrepôts in Africa. It showcases the power of globalization, patterns of exchange and the role of the ubiquitous Vaniyas (merchants) who have an eye for fashion and serve as the linchpin between the two geographies.

Director Dr. Renu Modi is a Senior Lecturer and former Director (2008-2010) of the Centre for African Studies, University of Mumbai. She has written on issues of India-Africa economic relations, from a historical as well as a contemporary perspective, and has also served as a social development consultant with the Inspection Panel of the World Bank in 2005.



Appendix

LIST of EVENTS 2017-2018

August - December, 2017

| | |
|----------------|---|
| AUG 17 | Bhai Vir Singh (1872-1957): Rethinking Literary Modernity in Colonial Punjab |
| AUG 24-25 | Knowledge Mobilization Workshop - South Asian Canadian Digital Archive |
| AUG 25 | Violence Against Religious Minorities in India - <i>A Conversation with journalist Rana Ayyub and Dr. Kamal Arora</i> |
| SEP 14 | The Ebb and Flow of Everyday Contacts: Forging Literary Communities in Early Modern Panjab by <i>Dr. Purnima Dhavan</i> |
| SEP 15 | Reconstructing Nepal: Politics and Practice after the 2015 Earthquakes and Constitution - a SSHRC Partnership Development Grant workshop, with a keynote lecture by <i>Deepak Thapa</i> |
| SEP 16 | Canada 150 Conference on Migration of Bengalis |
| SEP 29 - DEC 3 | Canada at 150: Trauma, Memory and the Story of Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Art Exhibition (UBC, Punjabi Market, SFU Woodward's)· Theatrical Presentation "A Vancouver Guldasta" |
| OCT 5 | Understanding the Partition of Punjab in the Context of the Partition of India and Bengal by <i>Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmed</i> |
| OCT 12 | Concert and Conversation with Musical Ensemble <i>Chaar Yaar</i> |
| OCT 19 | Contemporary Art in India Today: Bangalore and Beyond by <i>Umesh M.S. and Raghavendra Rao K. V.</i> |
| NOV 2 | Decoding Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar: Ideas and Praxis by <i>Dr. Vivek Kumar</i> |
| NOV 16 | The Social Worlds of Indian Aesthetics by <i>Dr. Allison Busch</i> & CISAR Annual Reception |
| NOV 20 | Voices of Contemporary Himalayan Literature: <i>Manjushree Thapa and Tsering Wangmo Dhompa in Conversation</i> |
| NOV 30 | A Tryst with Destiny? The Politics of Buddhist Heritage and the Making of Modern India by <i>Dr. Douglas Ober</i> |

January - May, 2018

| | |
|-----------|---|
| JAN 11 | Information Session: Student Opportunities in India and Beyond with the Globalink Research Award by <i>Andrea Globa (Mitacs)</i> |
| JAN 18 | Monsoon Mosques: Reading Kerala's Muslim Monuments by <i>Dr. Sebastian Prange</i> |
| JAN 25 | Roundtable: Understanding the Rohingya Crisis with <i>Theressa Etmanski, Dr. Douglas Ober, Dr. Kai Ostwald, Dr. Sara Shneiderman, and Dr. Mohammad Zaman</i> |
| JAN 29 | Health Policy in Nepal with <i>Dr. David Citrin, Dr. Carol-Ann Courneya, Dr. David Dunne, Cathy Ellis, Dr. Maya Magarati, and Dr. Rina Pradhan.</i> |
| FEB 1 | <i>Apna Punjab</i> [Our Punjab]: Sensorium and Aesthetics of Landscape in Punjabi Cinema by <i>Dr. Prabhjot Parmar</i> |
| FEB 7 | <i>Random Acts of Legacy</i> (2016): Screening and Discussion with the Filmmaker <i>Ali Kazimi</i> |
| FEB 8 | Documenting Punjabi Canada: Student Projects and Discussion |
| FEB 15 | Celebrate Language: International Mother Language Day |
| MAR 2 - 3 | South Asia Conference of the Pacific Northwest (SACPAN) |
| MAR 2 - 4 | The Harjit Kaur Sidhu Memorial Program: Celebrating Punjabi Language and Culture at UBC – Film Screenings and Discussion with Punjabi Language Filmmaker <i>Gurvinder Singh</i> |
| MAR 15 | Book Reading and Discussion with <i>Sarbjit Kaur Athwal</i> , Author of <i>Shamed: The Honour Killing That Shocked Britain – by the Sister Who Fought for Justice</i> |
| MAR 27 | The Sikh Legacy in Pakistan by <i>Amardeep Singh</i> |
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| APR 16 | The Politics of Bigotry and Growing State Repression in India Today with <i>Teesta Setalvad</i> |
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