



LOOKING BACK, INFORMING THE FUTURE: THE 1947 PARTITION OF BRITISH INDIA

THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2017

Bikaner House, New Delhi, India

4:00-7:30pm

Harvard **South Asia Institute**
and **Critical Collective, New Delhi**



HARVARD UNIVERSITY
**SOUTH ASIA
INSTITUTE**



**CRITICAL
COLLECTIVE**

WELCOME

The Harvard South Asia Institute, along with the Critical Collective, welcome you to an exhibition and roundtable discussions on **"Trauma and History: Understanding Partition through Art"** and **"The 1947 Partition of British India: Looking Back, Informing the Future."**

Participants will share their research and art, on an event that forever has reshaped the relationships and politics in South Asia.

The discussion will explore fertile ground for building scholarship not only on the Partition but also more generally on mass migrations, forced population displacement, and other emerging research areas relating to involuntary population movement.

Thank you for joining us!

Regards,

Harvard University **South Asia Institute Team** and **Critical Collective**

SESSION 1

THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2017

Bikaner House, New Delhi, India

4:00 – 4:15 pm **Welcome**

Meena Sonea Hewett, *Executive Director, Harvard South Asia Institute*

4:15 – 5:30 pm **Panel Discussion**

"Trauma and History: Understanding Partition through Art"

Facilitated by **Gayatri Sinha**, *Critical Collective*

Artists **Amar Kanwar**, **Sonia Khurana**, and **Gayatri Sinha** explore the tensions, contradictions, and trauma related to the Partition of British India, and the role that the Partition has played in artistic themes and expressions in the years following the event.

5:30 – 6:00 pm **Tea Break**

SESSION 2

THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2017

Bikaner House, New Delhi, India

6:00 – 6:15 pm **Welcome**

Professor Tarun Khanna, Faculty Director, Harvard South Asia Institute; Jorge Paulo Lemann Professor, Harvard Business School

6:15 – 7:30 pm **Roundtable Discussion**

"Implications of Mass Dislocation Across Geographies"

Facilitated by **Professor Jennifer Leaning**, Harvard T. H Chan School of Public Health

Professor Tarun Khanna, Faculty Director, Harvard SAI, Harvard Business School

Presenters:

Shubhangi Bhadada, Research Fellow, South Asia Institute, Harvard University

Mihir Bhatt, Founder, All India Disaster Mitigation Institute

Mandvi Dogra, Co-Founder, SnapPeas, India

Rimple Mehta, Assistant Professor, Women's Studies, Jadhavpur University

Jhuma Sen, Assistant Professor, O.P. Jindal Global University

Navsharan Singh, Researcher, History Department, Delhi University

Srikant Singh, Freelance Researcher

The research focus is on the immediate and wide-ranging humanitarian consequences of the Partition of British India, a forced movement of millions of people across what suddenly became international borders. The aim of the research is to focus on the relief efforts and rehabilitation of refugees by all level of government and by local and national organizations. A burgeoning facet of the project seeks to understand the multiplex links between narratives, history, memory and geopolitical mobilization.

"The Partition: Oral Stories Project"

Facilitated by **Professor Tarun Khanna**, Faculty Director, Harvard SAI, Harvard Business School

Through the oral narrative, we seek to learn how people suffered, how they survived, who helped them along the way, their contacts with religious orders, the medical establishment, charities, the government, military and police, the railway official, and ordinary people living near the roads or in villages.

SESSION 1: ARTISTS



GAYATRI SINHA

Gayatri Sinha is an art critic and curator based in New Delhi. Her primary areas of enquiry are around the structures of gender and iconography, media, economics and social history. As curator her work has cited the domains of photography and lens based work from archival and contemporary sources. She has edited *Voices of Change: 20 Indian Artists* (Marg 2010), *Art and Visual Culture in India 1857- 2007* (Marg Publications, 2009); *Indian Art: an Overview* (Rupa Books, 2003); *Woman/Goddess* (1998); *Expressions and Evocations :Contemporary Indian Women Artists of India* (Marg Publications, 1996). She has curated extensively in India and abroad including at the India Art Summit and the Korean International Art Fair (2009), Newark Museum, and the Minneapolis Institute of Art (2008-09)



AMAR KANWAR

Recent solo exhibitions of Kanwar's work have been held at the Goethe Institut Mumbai (2016) and the Assam State Museum in collaboration with Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and North East Network (2015). Amar Kanwar has been the recipient of awards such as the Leonore Annenberg Prize for Art and Social Change (2014); an Honorary Doctorate in Fine Arts, Maine College of Art, USA (2006); the Edvard Munch Award for Contemporary Art, Norway (2005); MacArthur Fellowship in India (2000); Golden Gate Award, San Francisco International Film Festival, USA (1999), as well as the Golden Conch, Mumbai International Film Festival, India (1998).



SONIA KHURANA

Sonia Khurana studied art at the Delhi College of Art and later completed her Masters in London at the Royal College of Art in 1999. Khurana works primarily with moving image and performance, her practice includes drawing, text, sound, music, voice, architecture and installation. Her recent participations in exhibitions include: *Difficult loves: seven contemporaries*, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi, 2013; *Aesthetic bind - Phantomata*, November 2013 to January 2014, Chemould Prescott Gallery, Bombay, Liverpool biennial 2010, Liverpool, John Moores University; Gwangju Biennale, Korea, 2008.

SESSION 2: PANELISTS



SHUBHANGI BHADADA

is a Research Fellow, South Asia Institute, Harvard University. She has a BA LLB (Hons.) degree from National Law School of India University, Bangalore, India and masters from University of Oxford and Harvard Law School. During her LLM at HLS, she worked with the International Human Rights Clinic and the Immigration and Refugee Clinic.



MIHIR BHATT

directs the All India Disaster Mitigation Institute, founded in 1989. He is currently evaluating the humanitarian work of both UN and international nongovernmental agencies on tsunami relief and rehabilitation activities in coastal areas of South India, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. Bhatt received the Russell E. Train Institutional Fellowship from the World Wildlife Fund for building, from the bottom up, an action-focused research institution focused on a global issue—risk reduction—in the South, the Eisenhower Fellowship, and the Ashoka International Fellowship.



MANDVI DOGRA

Dogra's research looks into the different aspects of refugee management in East Punjab based on documents found in archives and oral narratives. It will look at the running of the camps and work of the East Punjab Liaison Agency.



TARUN KHANNA

is the Jorge Paulo Lemann Professor at the Harvard Business School and Director of the South Asia Institute. At HBS since 1993, after obtaining degrees from Princeton and Harvard, he has taught courses on strategy, corporate governance and international business to MBA and Ph.D. students and senior executives. His expertise is in the study of drivers of entrepreneurship in emerging markets as a means of economic and social development.



JENNIFER LEANING

is the François-Xavier Bagnoud Professor of the Practice of Health and Human Rights, Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health and Director of the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights. Dr. Leaning's research and policy interests include issues of public health, medical ethics, and early warning in response to war and disaster, human rights and international humanitarian law in crisis settings, and problems of human security in the context of forced migration and conflict.

SESSION 2: PANELISTS CONTINUED



RIMPLE MEHTA

Mehta's research tries to locate the position of the displaced refugee women from East Pakistan in various camps, homes, and infirmaries in the Eastern Region of India. Through an analysis of official state and central government documents, memoirs, newspaper articles, and oral narratives, this paper tries to situate the refugee woman from East Pakistan between 1947 and 1965. Between the paternalistic state and various other intersecting social hierarchies, the 'unattached' refugee women were perceived merely as a 'permanent liability'. Given the lack of attention of the central government towards problems emerging in the eastern region, the refugee women from East Pakistan had to display exemplary grit and determination to hold ground.



JHUMA SEN

Drawing from archival records in Delhi and Kolkata, Sen's research maps how the process of Partition transformed postcolonial India's legal and constitutional order. This transformation is most marked in the way the state grappled with, and created the legal categories of citizens and refugees and embarked on a mission to legislate and frame policies on these subjects. The presentation will explore the 'events' surrounding and following Partition that made the state negotiate the boundaries of citizenship rights and refugee relief and rehabilitation.



NAVSHARAN SINGH

There are many silences in the Partition historiography including the silence around widespread sexual violence, women's right to bodily integrity and sexual safety and the implications of widespread violence for human security. This paper addresses two areas – a) health, sanitation and the caste issue in the Partition plan and, b) the psychosocial trauma which was lived by children and adolescents during the Partition. Singh's research is built on the oral narratives collected for the project.



SRIKANT SINGH

Singh's work discusses some of the information contained in the records found, in a chronological and categorical manner, so as to give some idea of what the Archive work in Delhi might hold for this project and for the interested researchers. His focus is on evacuation, reception of 'refugees', camps, health and medical issues, and little bit on rehabilitation, apart from some brief discussion on other related matters.

VIDEO EXHIBITION

AUGUST 08 – 16, 2017

"Trauma and History: Understanding Partition through Art"

The video exposition **Trauma & History: Understanding Partition through Art** seeks to read into the ruptures of the events of Partition and its aftermath through the video works of eight artists – Amar Kanwar, Anita Dube, Atul Bhalla, BV Suresh, Gigi Scaria, K. M. Madhusudhanan, Shilpa Gupta and Sonia Khurana. The works track India's emergence from the event of the traumatic division, the attainment of Independence in 1947 and the complexities of post-Independent India. Exploring the thematics of trauma and memory, the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi, the demarcation of borders and personal histories, the videos seek to re-tell memories around Partition, by a generation of contemporary artists. The artist positions the work as chronicler and interpreter of an event that survives mainly as memory and oral history. The works also challenge seventy years of the making of a nationalist identity by enquiring into the shift in historical trajectories, the coerced formation of states with its 'partitioned' people. It is a telling statement on how post colonial India visualizes its past, present and future. .

ARTISTS



ATUL BHALLA

Mashk, 2006, 5 minutes 23 seconds

Atul Bhalla has explored the physical, historical, and political significance of water in the urban environment of New Delhi through artworks that incorporate sculpture, painting, installation, video, photography, and performance. His recent solo shows include *Adrift* (On the Dvaipayana), LightBox Gallery, Harvard Art Museums (2016); *you always step into the same river*, SepiaEYE New York (2015); *Ya Ki Kuch Aur*, Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi (2014). Bhalla is an Associate Professor at the Shiv Nadar University at the department of Art Design and Performance. A conceptual artist, Bhalla's themes are often based around water. In *Mashk*, the artist explores a community of traditional butchers, who use a leather water-carrier mashk made out of a halal goat.



ANITA DUBE

Kissa-e-Noor Mohammed, 2004, 15 minutes

Anita Dube is an Indian contemporary artist. She completed her graduation in history from the University of Delhi in 1979 and a Master's in art criticism at the MS University of Baroda in 1982. Some of her recent solo exhibitions are *Yours Disparately*, *Nature Morte*, New Delhi (2014-15); *Chance Pieces*, *Nature Morte*, Berlin (2013). Some of her selected group exhibitions include *After Midnight: Indian Modernism to Contemporary India 1947/1997*, Queens Museum, New York (2015); *Sparsha: Touching The Senses* (Ritual And Contemporary Art), Kunstmuseum Bochum, Bochum (2014-15). Anita Dube is appointed curator for the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, 2018. *Kissa-e-Noor Mohammed*, a video installation created by Dube, follows the character of Noor Mohammed, whose environment transforms him from a kind and amiable man to an extreme fundamentalist.



SHILPA GUPTA

100 Hand drawn Maps of India, 2007-08, single channel video projection, 3 minutes 42 seconds video loop

Shilpa Gupta, who studied in the Sir J. J. School of Art (Sculpture), has had solo shows at the Museum voor Moderne Kunst in Arnhem, Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati, OK Center for Contemporary Art in Linz and Arnolfini in Bristol, and has participated in biennales in Berlin, Lyon, Gwangju, Havana, Yokohama, Liverpool, amongst others. Her work has been shown in Tate Modern, Centre Pompidou, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New Museum, Devi Art Foundation, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and Mori Museum.

ARTISTS



AMAR KANWAR

A Season Outside, 1997, 30 minutes

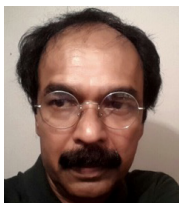
Recent solo exhibitions of Kanwar's work have been held at the Goethe Institut Mumbai (2016) and the Assam State Museum in collaboration with Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and North East Network (2015). Amar Kanwar has been the recipient of awards such as the Leonore Annenberg Prize for Art and Social Change (2014); an Honorary Doctorate in Fine Arts, Maine College of Art, USA (2006); the Edvard Munch Award for Contemporary Art, Norway (2005); MacArthur Fellowship in India (2000); Golden Gate Award, San Francisco International Film Festival, USA (1999), as well as the Golden Conch, Mumbai International Film Festival, India (1998). *A Season Outside*, written and narrated by Kanwar, portrays the militarized relationship at the Wagah-Atari border of India and Pakistan, and the anxiety created between the two places and its people.



SONIA KHURANA

The World, 2004, 7 minutes

Sonia Khurana studied art at the Delhi College of Art and later completed her Masters in London at the Royal College of Art in 1999. Khurana works primarily with moving image and performance, her practice includes drawing, text, sound, music, voice, architecture and installation. Her recent participations in exhibitions include: Difficult loves: seven contemporaries, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi, 2013; Aesthetic bind - Phantomata, November 2013 to January 2014, Chemould Prescott Gallery, Bombay, Liverpool biennial 2010, Liverpool, John Moores University; Gwangju Biennale, Korea, 2008.



K.M. MADHUSUDHANAN

History is a Silent Film, 2007, 17 minutes

K. M. Madhusudhanan studied Painting from Fine Arts College, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, and print making at the Faculty of Fine Arts, MS University of Baroda, Gujarat. His work confronts India's film history, her colonial period and contemporary war politics. Madhusudhanan's installation of 90 charcoal drawings titled *The Logic of Disappearance - A Marx Archive* has been shown at the Kochi Muziris Biennale: Whorled Explorations (2014-15), and in a solo exhibition at Baltic 39, Newcastle, as part of the AV Festival (2016). The series *Penal Colony* has been shown at the Venice Biennale: All the World's Futures, 2015.

ARTISTS



GIGI SCARIA

Talk to Mahatma, 20 minutes

Gigi Scaria completed his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at the College of Fine Arts, Thiruvananthapuram in 1995. Scaria later undertook a Master of Arts at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Scaria's solo exhibitions, Amusement park (Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai, 2009), Difficult to imagine, easy to construct (Art Asia Miami, 2008), Site under construction (Videospace Budapest, 2008) featured video art that included interviews (fictional and non-fictional), documentaries and animation. Gigi Scaria has participated in West Heavens, Shanghai, the 54th Venice Biennale, the 3rd Singapore Biennale, Prague Biennale.



BV SURESH

Albino, 2011, 5 minutes 31 seconds

BV Suresh studied Painting at the M.S University of Baroda, Gujarat and completed his Master of Arts (Painting) from Royal College of Arts, London. He was awarded the Grand Prize at Sixth Biennial of Contemporary Indian Art, Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh in 1966. He was a recipient of the senior fellowship from the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India from 1995-96. His important solo exhibitions include Khamoshiki Daasta, Samukha Art Gallery, Bangalore (2016), Chronicles of Silence, Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi. He presently teaches at the Fine Arts Department, S.N.School of Arts and Communication, University of Hyderabad.

NOTES

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PARTITION TEAM

The Harvard University South Asia Institute works with faculty and researchers from across the globe to explore issues in the context of the Partition, and together examine their relevance and impact today, both in South Asia and beyond.

PROFESSORS



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