SALA 2016

Cultural Practices in the South Asian Public Sphere
The 16th Annual Conference of the South Asian Literary Association
JANUARY 5-6, 2016
Wyndham Garden Hotel, 3401 S IH 35; Austin, Texas

Conference Schedule

MONDAY; JANUARY 4, 2016

6:00-9:00 PM  MEETING: Executive Committee
Lake Austin

DAY 1: TUESDAY; JANUARY 5, 2016

8:00 AM onward  REGISTRATION
Lobby

9:00-9:30 AM  CONFERENCE WELCOME: Moumin Quazi, SALA President
Lake Austin
OPENING: Abdollah Zahiri & Jana Fedtke, Conference Co-Chairs

9:30-10:45 AM  SESSION 1 (PANELS 1A, 1B, & 1C)

Panel 1A  Kashmir Unfinished: Aesthetics, Politics, and Solidarity
Lake Austin  Panel Chair: John Maerhofer, City University of New York

1. The Work of Mourning: Affective Law and the Search for Disappeared Men in Kashmir
   Ather Zia, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley

2. Emerging Kashmiri Literature: Rethinking Violence and Resistance in a “State of Exception”
   Amrita Ghosh, Seton Hall University

   John Maerhofer, City University of New York
Panel 1B
Executive Learning Center

**Pakistan in the Public Sphere: Literature, Pop Music, Drones, and Film**
*Panel Chair: Jana Fedtke, American University of Sharjah*

1. “No sir! Na janaab! Ehtesaab bas ehtesaab!”: Pakistani Popular Music as Resistance
   Saba Pirzadeh, Purdue University & Tehmina Pirzada, Purdue University

2. **Drone-Zone as a Camp: A New Public Space in Pakistan**
   Muhammad Waqar Azeem, Binghamton University-State University of New York

3. “…that shithole”: A Post-9/11 Portrayal of a Public and Private Pakistan in Season 4 of *Homeland*
   Jana Fedtke, American University of Sharjah

Panel 1C
San Gabriel

**Translation, Nation-Building, and Censorship**
*Panel Chair: Maryse Jayasuriya, University of Texas at El Paso*

1. **The Polyglot Colonial and Precolonial Translations of the Qissa-i-Kamroop-o-Kala**
   Zeeshan Riyaz Reshamwala, University of Denver

2. **Pedagogy of Alienation: Epistemic Hegemony of the Mental Space and Fatal Fault Lines in the National Space**
   Shahzeb Khan, University of the Punjab, Lahore

3. **The Murder of the Author: Censorship and Indian Public Sphere**
   Sourit Bhattacharya, University of Warwick

11:00 AM-12:15 PM

**SESSION 2 (PANELS 2A, 2B, & 2C)**

Panel 2A
Lake Austin

**The Private and the Public: Self-Representation, the Media, and Literature**
*Panel Chair: Afrin Zeenat, University of Dhaka*

1. **The Courtyard House and the City: Private and Public Spatial Consciousness in South Asian Muslim Women’s Literary Self-Representation**
   Diviani Chaudhuri, State University of New York at Binghamton

2. **Let the Women Speak: Colonized Representations of Muslim Women in Media**
   Sobia Khan, Richland College, Dallas

3. **Literary Public Sphere/s and the History of Pakistani Literature in English**
   Waseem Anwar, Forman Christian College University, Lahore
# Panel 2B
**Executive Learning Center**

**History, Religion, and the Law in Public Spaces**

*Panel Chair: J. Edward Mallot, Arizona State University*

1. **Art as Representation of Contestations within the Public Sphere: The Case of the Indian Statue of Mother Mary**  
   Richa Raj, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi

2. **Hierarchies and Counterpublics in Chaitanya Tamhane’s Court**  
   Shakti Jaising, Drew University

3. **Volatile Virtuopolis: Contemporary Feminist Movement and Mobilization in Urban India**  
   Shreyosi Mukherjee, National University of Singapore

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# Panel 2C
**San Gabriel**

**Alternative Publics**

*Panel Chair: Nalini Iyer, Seattle University*

1. **Locational Counterpublics, Human Rights, and Sexuality in India**  
   Kanika Batra, Texas Tech University

2. **Sitthani—Verbal Porn Performed in the Public Sphere during a Pious Ceremony**  
   Rajnish Dhawan, University of the Fraser Valley

3. **Speaking for the ‘Other’: In/authenticity of Representation: A Study of Kiran Desai’s The Inheritance of Loss**  
   Meena Sharma, Dibrugarh University, Assam

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**12:15-1:45 PM**

**LUNCH on your own**

**1:45-3:00 PM**

**SESSION 3: PRESIDENTIAL ROUNDTABLE**

**Panel 3A**
**Lake Austin**

“Intolerance and Challenges to Free Speech in the Indian Public Sphere”

Participants:
Josna Rege, Worcester State University  
Nalini Iyer, Seattle University  
Sourit Bhattacharya, University of Warwick  
Amritjit Singh, Ohio University

**3:15-4:30 PM**

**SESSION 4 (PANELS 4A, 4B, & 4C)**

**Panel 4A**
**Lake Austin**

**Minorities, Diaspora, and the Digital Public Sphere**

*Panel Chair: Moumin Quazi, Tarleton State University*

1. **Refueralization of the Public Sphere in Relation to the Tibetan Question**  
   Abheeshta Nath, Govt. College for Women, Kerala University
2. Desi Food Blogs in the Diaspora & the Transnational Public Sphere  
   Sukanya Gupta, University of Southern Indiana

3. “We Are All Untouchable Until No One Is”: Dalit Women, Dissidence, and the  
   Digital Public Sphere  
   Ruma Sinha, Syracuse University

Panel 4B  
Executive Learning Center  
Phantasms of Neoliberalism and the South Asian Public Sphere  
Panel Chair: Gautam Basu Thakur, Boise State University

1. Dawn of the Living Dead: South Asian Zombie Films and Social Critique  
   Amit Rahul Baishya, University of Oklahoma

2. Fathers and Sons: Amitabh Bachchan, Shahrukh Khan and the Bombay  
   Melodrama in the Age of Neoliberalism  
   Anustup Basu, University of Illinois

3. The Accidental Selfie: Queen and the Indian Metropolar Public Sphere  
   Gautam Basu Thakur, Boise State University

Panel 4C  
San Gabriel  
Public Spaces in Novels of the South Asian Diaspora  
Panel Chair: Summer Pervez, Forman Christian College University, Lahore

1. An Ear to the Spheres: Attending to National and Transnational Political  
   Communities in Three Novels of the South Asian Diaspora  
   Josna Rege, Worcester State University

2. Lying in Public(s): The Multiple Public Spheres of Meera Syal's Anita and Me  
   Asha Jeffers, York University

3. Personalising the Public: Reading Jhumpa Lahiri’s The Lowland  
   Nasmeem Akhtar, Dibrugarh University, Assam

END OF SESSIONS FOR DAY 1

4:30-5:30 PM  
GRADUATE CAUCUS  
Lake Austin

5:30-6:30 PM  
GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING  
Lake Austin

6:30-8:15 PM  
DINNER on your own

8:15-10:00 PM  
HAMARA MUSHAIRA: LITERARY ARTS EVENT  
Lake Austin  
Organized and moderated by Amritjit Singh, Ohio University  
Invited Readers: Chaitali Sen (Austin, TX) and Roshni Rustomji (Alameda, CA)  
Featuring several readers of the SALA membership
DAY 2: WEDNESDAY; JANUARY 6, 2016

8:00-8:45 AM  REGISTRATION
Lobby

8:00-9:00 AM  GRADUATE STUDENT PROFESSIONALIZATION
Lake Austin

Panel Chair: Aniruddha Mukhopadhyay, University of Florida
This panel is designed to benefit graduate student members of the South Asian Literary Association by providing them with professionalization advice from more experienced members of the organization. The panel eschews formal presentations and instead uses three brief 5 minute contributions from experts in the field to allow for a more robust discussion session.

1. Aniruddha Mukhopadhyay (University of Florida) – Panel Chair
2. Moumin Quazi (Tarleton State University) – will speak on the importance of service experience to a candidate’s marketability
3. Cynthia Leenerts (East Stroudsburg University) – will speak on the ways in which young scholars can expand their research and teaching horizons beyond their specializations
4. Melanie Wattenbarger (University of Mumbai) – will speak on the challenges of doing international research in the field of South Asian Studies, particularly as a woman

9:15-10:30 AM  SESSION 5 (PANELS 5A, 5B, & 5C)

Panel 5A  A New Feminist Public Sphere
Lake Austin
Panel Chair: Reshmi Mukherjee, Boise State University

1. The Millennial Indian Woman and an After-life of the Public Sphere
   Manisha Basu, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

2. Indian Women Food Bloggers: Creating Contradictory Knowledge of "Home," Domestic Labor and Culinary Creativity
   Nandini Dhar, Florida International University

3. Cyber Rhetoric and Indian Women’s Empowerment
   Reshmi Mukherjee, Boise State University

Panel 5B  Islamophobia: The Public Muslim and the Critical Muslim
Executive Learning Center
Panel Chair: Amrita Ghosh, Seton Hall University

1. The Muslim (as) Terrorist in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s One Amazing Thing
   Atreyee Gohain, University of North Florida

2. The Indian Interwebs, Islamophobia, and Its Counterpublics
   Afrin Zeenat, University of Dhaka
3. “A TenseTerrain”: Family Mirroring Nation in Wajahat Ali’s *The Domestic Crusaders*
   Elizabeth Redwine, The Abbey Theatre

**Panel 5C**
**San Gabriel**

**Sri Lanka in the Public Sphere**
*Panel Chair: Amritjit Singh, Ohio University*

1. Memoir and the Public Sphere: *Running in the Family* and the Shape of its Audience
   Roger McNamara, Texas Tech University

2. Bricks, Mortar, Words: Memorializing Public Spaces Destroyed in the Sri Lankan Ethnic Conflict
   Maryse Jayasuriya, University of Texas at El Paso

3. Public History Embodied
   Kathleen Hewett-Smith, American University of Sharjah

10:45 AM-12:00 PM

**SESSION 6 (PANELS 6A, 6B, & 6C)**

**Panel 6A**
**Lake Austin**

**Literary Elites and Canon Formation**
*Panel Chair: Dorothy Lane, Luther College, University of Regina*

1. Radioactive Masculinity: Anxious Atomic Publics and the Postcolonial Bomb
   Dibyadyuti Roy, West Virginia University

2. Lit, Elite: A Postcolonial Inquiry into the Role of Public Sphere of Imagination as an Informal Participant in Region-Making and Shaping of Gujarati Identity
   Chirag Trivedi, B K Majumdar Institute of Business Administration, Ahmedabad University

3. Literary Public Culture: From AIPWS to Jaipur
   Michaela Henry, Brandeis University

**Panel 6B**
**Executive Learning Center**

**Social Justice in the Public Sphere**
*Panel Chair: Abdollah Zahiri, Seneca College*

1. Tossing Caste, Nation, Economics and Race into the Public Sphere: Arundhati Roy’s “The Doctor and the Saint”
   Pennie Ticen, Virginia Military Institute

2. Writing the Modern, Re-writing the Social: Communist Aesthetics and the Early Public Sphere in Kerala
   Ardra N.G., Jawaharlal Nehru University

3. Diasporic Agency: Deepa Mehta’s Centripetal Reading of Caste/Indigenous Colonialism in *Water*
   Abdollah Zahiri, Seneca College
Panel 6C
San Gabriel

Graphic Novels, Young Adult Fiction, and Film in South Asian Diasporic Spaces
Chair: Kathleen Hewett-Smith, American University of Sharjah

1. Marvel’s No Normal, Religion, and the Public Sphere
   Umme Al-wazedi, Augustana College

   Prathim-Maygra Dora-Laskey, Alma College/University of Oxford

3. Speaking for Diasporic Youth: Tanuja Desai Hidier’s Young Adult Novels
   Nalini Iyer, Seattle University

12:00-1:30 PM
LUNCH on your own

1:30-2:45 PM
SESSION 7 (PANELS 7A, 7B, & 7C)

Panel 7A
Lake Austin

Myths, Spirituality, and the Cinematic Imagination
Panel Chair: Umme Al-wazedi, Augustana College

1. The Cultural Manifestation of Surpanakha and Her Necessary Promiscuity
   Devaleena Das, University of Wisconsin Madison

2. Cinema and Social Space: A Perspective on Images of Femininity and Practices of Viewership in Hindi Cinema
   Nisha Tiwari, Independent Scholar

3. Urban Space and the “Uncinematic”
   Pragya Trivedi, University of California, Irvine

Panel 7B
Executive Learning Center

Imagining the South Asian Body
Panel Chair: Kanika Batra, Texas Tech University

1. The Neo-Intimate Hindu Sphere: Sexual ‘Purity’ in the Neometropolitan Indian City
   Debojoy Chanda, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

2. Egocentric Monitoring within the Public Sphere: Imagining the South Asian Body
   Mayuri Deka, The College of the Bahamas

3. “That Turning Blur is Me”: The Photographed Body in Mukul Kesavan’s Looking Through Glass and Hari Kunzru’s The Impressionist
   J. Edward Mallot, Arizona State University
### Panel 7C
**Public Spaces**  
*Panel Chair: Asha Jeffers, York University*

1. **Rural/Urban Imagination**  
   Sarika Chandra, Wayne State University

2. **Engendering Urban Spaces in Aditya Vikram Sengupta’s Asha Jaoar Majhe**  
   Aniruddha Mukhopadhyay, University of Florida

3. **Spirituality and Public Space**  
   Asha Sen, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

### 3:00-4:15 PM
**SESSION 8 (PANELS 8A, 8B, & 8C)**

#### Panel 8A
**Theory in Contexts: Travel, Ecology, and Politics**  
*Panel Chair: Waseem Anwar, Forman Christian College University, Lahore*

1. **Disinherited Migrant Refugees: Neither the Past, the Present nor the Future Belongs to the Silenced Lives of the Tide Country**  
   Hema Chari, California State University, Los Angeles

2. **A Strange Encounter of Aesthetics with an Imperial Public Sphere in Alex Strick van Linschoten and Felix Kuehn’s Poetry of the Taliban**  
   Yubraj Aryal, University of Montreal

3. **Sites of Encounter - Sites of Exchange**  
   Dorothy Lane, Luther College, University of Regina

#### Panel 8B
**Gender in South Asia and the Caribbean Diasporas**  
*Panel Chair: Melanie Wattenbarger, University of Mumbai*

1. **Publicity of the Privacy of Purdah: Studying a Memsahib’s Depiction**  
   Susmita Roye, Delaware State University

2. **Challenging the Colonial Narrative: An Exploration of Interviews with Formerly Indentured Women**  
   Alison Klein, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

3. **Indo-Trinidadian Women and the Indian Public Sphere: Women under the Influence?**  
   Delphine Munos, University of Liège
Panel 8C  Transnational Public Spheres
Panel Chair: Sobia Khan, Richland College, Dallas

1. The Diasporic South Asian Public Sphere: Disconnections and Connections in Kiran Desai’s The Inheritance of Loss
   Joya Uraizee, Saint Louis University

2. The Orient Writes Back: Hamid’s The Reluctant Fundamentalist as a Counter-orientalist Narrative
   Binod Paudyal, University of Utah

END OF SESSIONS FOR DAY 2

4:30-5:45 PM  RECESSION
Lake Austin

6:00-7:15 PM  CONFERENCE KEYNOTE ADDRESS: “IN THE AGE OF UAVS: TARGETED KILLINGS, COLLATERAL DAMAGE, AND DRONES IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE”
Lake Austin
Prof. Barbara Harlow
Louann and Larry Temple Centennial Professor of English Literature at UT Austin

SALA 2016 AWARDS CEREMONY
Prof. Barbara Harlow
Louann and Larry Temple Centennial Professor of English Literature at UT Austin, SALA Distinguished Achievement Awardee

8:00-10:00 PM  SALA CONFERENCE DINNER (tickets $25)
Bombay Bistro, 4200 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX (512-462-7227)