



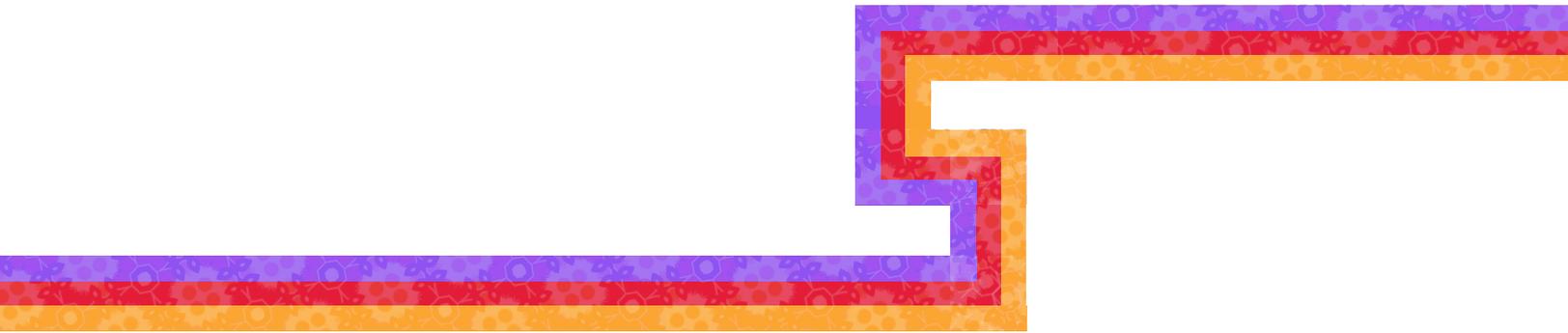
BIENNIAL REPORT

2020 - 2021



Distinction
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UFV ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

We have had a busy two years at the SASI as we undertook some behemoth projects with the South Asian Canadian Legacy Project as well as our continuing work to research the South Asian Canadian diaspora in BC. We found the work fulfilling and exhilarating as we discovered invaluable treasures in the archives. We are excited at the prospect of curriculum in our schools that reflects our community's history, culture and heritage. The prospect of finishing a social history of South Asian Canadians with twenty authors has been nothing short of commendable. Finally, recording the rich and robust landscape changing labour movements in our communities is inspiring, and traveling our exhibits across BC is something we are looking forward to.



We hope you enjoy reading about the fruits of our labour – staff, researchers, students and partners have been with us along the way and it has been a really rewarding time for all of us. Needless to say we could not have done this without the SASI team, our Advisory Committees and Project Management Team. Your dedication and commitment is something we are so proud of.

Thank you for your continued support as we start to celebrate 15 years of being an Institute at the University of the Fraser Valley. Join us in 2022 as we start to celebrate our work, our partnerships, and our communities.

MISSION



The South Asian Studies Institute (The Institute/SASI) at the University of Fraser Valley brings together scholars and students, members of the community, and international scholars from diverse disciplines to create a nexus point for programs and activities that support our vision.

VISION

The SASI initiates, directs and implements the development, strengthening and maintenance of research, South Asian Studies, and engagement linkages in collaboration with faculty, students and community. We build knowledge by undertaking research and engagement on historical and contemporary Canadian South Asian Diaspora. The SASI vision takes direction from UFV's strategic direction to be a leader of social, cultural, economic and environmentally responsible development in the Fraser Valley.



RESEARCH



#SikhHeritageMonth: Meaning, Purpose and the Farmers Protest

UFV’s Peace and Reconciliation Centre (PARC) Visiting Scholar and SASI Research Fellow Dr. Inderjeet Singh Mann presented a blog commemorating April as Sikh Heritage Month. The blog, aligned with his research, reflected upon the farmers movement in India and its connection to activism in the Sikh community.



For further information please scan the QR or click the [here](#).



SASI Presents “Where Are The Women? Love, Solace, and Courage”

This research project re-imagines archival images and their connected stories through an inclusion of women’s voices and lived experiences. The research, based on the interview of four South Asian women from the Fraser Valley who were separated from their partners for a number of years before reuniting with them in Canada, sought to interrupt that flow of time to re-inscribe the untold story into the images so that the story becomes complete. This research included re-researching the archival images, and reimagining old family portraits- complete with the story as we learn it.



The SASI is grateful for the kind and generous support of the BC Historical Federation and the awarding of the Centennial Legacy Fund grant which allowed us to collect these stories which are too often ignored. We hope this project motivates other women to come forward with their incredible stories of settlement and migration.

For further information please scan the QR or click the [here](#).



2020

FEBRUARY 13TH

‘Haq and History’ Exhibit Launch at UFV’s S’eliyemetaxwtexw Gallery.

FEBRUARY 17TH

‘We Are Hockey’ Family Day Closing Event.

MARCH

SASI Hosts ‘Ehsaas Film Festival’.

APRIL

SASI Students Complete a Successful Work Term.

ENGAGEMENT



SASI Partners with the Association of Critical Heritage Studies on Panel

The SASI partnered with the Association of Critical Heritage Studies – Canada, the University of Alberta Kule Institute for Advanced Studies and Northumbria University to present a symposium entitled “Constructing Heritage in Canada’s South Asian Diasporas.” The June 16th symposium featured panelists: Dr Satwinder Kaur Bains; Dr Sri-lata Ravi, University of Alberta; Itrath Sayed, Simon Fraser University; Kathleen Boodhai, Northumbria University and was moderated by Dr. Shabnam Inanloo Dailoo, Athabasca University and Dr. Susan Ashley, Northumbria University.

CONSTRUCTING HERITAGE IN CANADA'S SOUTH ASIAN DIASPORAS

A Symposium presented by
The Association of Critical Heritage Studies-Canada (ACHS-Can)
In partnership with the University of the Fraser Valley South Asian Studies Institute,
University of Alberta Kule Institute for Advanced Study, and Northumbria University.

This symposium examines the construction and performance of cultural heritage in South Asian diaspora communities in Canada. Panelists bring critical perspectives on how and why 'heritage' is important in grassroots settings, and whose heritage is omitted from the Canadian historical record.

How does diasporic heritage challenge (or not) the term South Asian, or the term Canadian?

We invite a broad range of scholars and practitioners working in areas that touch on the South Asian experience in Canada, to consider how diasporic (re)writing might contribute to official and unofficial expressions of heritage.

**16th June 2021,
At 10 am (PST)
via Zoom**

Moderators: Dr. Shabnam Inanloo Dailoo & Dr. Susan Ashley
(Co-Chairs ACHS-Can)

Speakers

Dr. Satwinder Kaur Bains, University of the Fraser Valley
"Heritagization from below" - who is listening?

Dr. Sri-lata Ravi, University of Alberta
Constructing Heritage: Tamil Hindu Temples in Alberta

Itrath Sayed, Simon Fraser University
Who Gets the Record Keepers? - Colonial Museum Community History and Heritage in British Columbia

Kathleen Boodhai, Northumbria University
Hybrid Hindu Identities: Transplanted heritage and meaning-making practices amongst Hindu immigrants in Toronto

For more information
susan.ashley@northumbria.ac.uk

To Register use this Eventbrite link:
<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/constructing-heritage-in-canada-s-south-asian-diasporas-tickets-148190104073.aspx>

Logos: AC HS Canada, Northumbria University, KIAS, SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES INSTITUTE

This symposium examined the construction and performance of cultural heritage in South Asian diaspora communities in Canada. Panelists brought critical perspectives on how and why 'heritage' is important in grassroots settings, and whose heritage is omitted from the Canadian historical record.

For further information please scan the QR or click the [here](#).



Yogendra Yadav: The Ongoing Farmers Movement : Looking Back, Looking Ahead

The SASI hosted renowned political activist and intellectual Yogendra Yadav who spoke about India's farmers movement. The Indian diaspora took special interest and played a key role in the movement. Focusing on extraordinary milestones and the hopes ahead, Yogendra instilled a sense of optimism and hope. Yogendra Yadav is an author, social activist, journalist and psephologist, whose primary interests are in the political and social sciences.



He has taught Political Science at Panjab University, Chandigarh (1985-93) and has been a Senior Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi since 2004. He has published a number of articles and books. His current book, "Making Sense of Indian Democracy: Theory as Practice" was published in 2020. He was an editor and advisor for various publications, such as the European Journal of Political Research. He is the national convener of Jai Kisan Andolan (JKA), and also a convener of All India Kisan Sangarshana Coordination Committee (AIKSCC) of the Sanyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) that lead the current farmers' movement in India.

If you missed the conversation, you can watch it by scanning the QR or on the [SASI's Youtube channel](#).



2020

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APRIL

SASI Launches the 'Collecting South Asian Settler Stories' Webpage.

APRIL

SASI Director Works as Part of a Covid-19 Collaborative Research.

APRIL

SASI Appoints Three Fellows as Part of the Crime Reduction Research Program.

JUNE

SASI Stands in Solidarity with #BlackLivesMatter.

Virtual Opening of New Exhibition: Komagata Maru: Discrimination Meets Determination

On April 14th, 2021 the South Asian Studies Institute launched a permanent outdoor exhibit and temporary indoor exhibit at the Sikh Heritage Museum located in the National Historic Site Gur Sikh Temple, Abbotsford BC. The exhibit, titled "Komagata Maru: Discrimination Meets Determination" pays homage to historic 1914 and to the power of determination to enact meaningful change by South Asian would-be immigrants through the threaded connections to ongoing legacies of racism. The exhibit was based on the original 2014 exhibit which was curated and designed by the Vancouver Maritime Museum to coincide with the centennial of the Komagata Maru incident.

The opening virtual launch featured reflections by descendants of the passengers of the Komagata Maru including Raj Toor and Sukhi Ghuman and poetry reading from author of *Chanting Denied Shores* Tariq Malik and a new poem by Dr. Kusum Soni.



The online event was very well attended, with the approximate 70 attendees including community members from across BC, the three levels of the Government and UFV faculty, staff and the students. The dignitaries who attended the event and shared their insights included Abbotsford Mayor Braun, Abbotsford MLA Mike De Jong, and Abbotsford MP Brad Vis.

The event titled "Komagata Maru: Challenging Injustice: Conversations for Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" was a joint partnership between SASI and the Vancouver Maritime Museum.

The temporary exhibit inside the museum will be available until June, 2022 with the museum being open seven days a week from 9:30am – 4:30pm. The section of the exhibit installed permanently as an outdoor feature of the Sikh Heritage Museum is with funding support to SASI from the BC Arts Council. The SASI has also published a catalogue on the exhibit with financial support by Vancouver Heritage Foundation's Yosef Wosk Publication Fund.

For online tour of the exhibition please visit: <https://www.southasiancanadianheritage.ca/komagata-maru-challenging-injustice/> and <http://canadiansikhheritage.ca/exhibitions/>

The video from the live launch can be viewed by scanning the QR or [here](#):



2020

SEPTEMBER

Province of BC Announces it is providing SASI with a \$1.14 million grant.

SEPTEMBER 26

SASI Receives Arty Award from Abbotsford Arts Council.

OCTOBER

SASI Highlights its New South Asian Canadian Legacy Project Team.

OCTOBER

SASI Contributes New Energy to UFV's Race and Antiracism Network.

SASI Symposium 2020 Caste, Diaspora & the Future with Dr. Suraj Yengde

The SASI annual symposium featured a keynote address by noted scholar Dr. Suraj Yengde followed by a Q&A moderated by SASI Director Dr. Satwinder Kaur Bains.

Dr. Yengde, a Senior Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School is author of the bestseller “Caste Matters” which was recently listed as “Best Non-Fiction Book of the Decade” by The Hindu. Suraj is also co-editor of “The Radical in Ambedkar Critical Reflection” published by Allen Lane, 2018. Suraj is India’s first Dalit Ph.D. holder from an African university. He curates a widely popular column “Dalitality” covering caste related issues for the Indian Express. He is a Human Rights attorney, who is also an anti-caste and anti-racism advocate. He has been an ongoing contributor to the Columnist at The Huffington Post, Hindustan Times, LiveMint, The Mexican Times, and The Conversation.

In his talk Dr. Yengde looked at the kinetic sources of caste and its porosity among the diasporic Indian society. The ongoing interest around issues of caste in the diaspora resulted in a large response and symposium turn out. The SASI will be engaging in a three year long plan to embed caste conversations in their work through various programming and research. The symposium was co-sponsored by Poetic Justice Foundation, Chetna Association of Canada and the Hari Sharma Foundation.



Dr. Yengde’s presentation can be viewed by scanning the QR or [here](#).



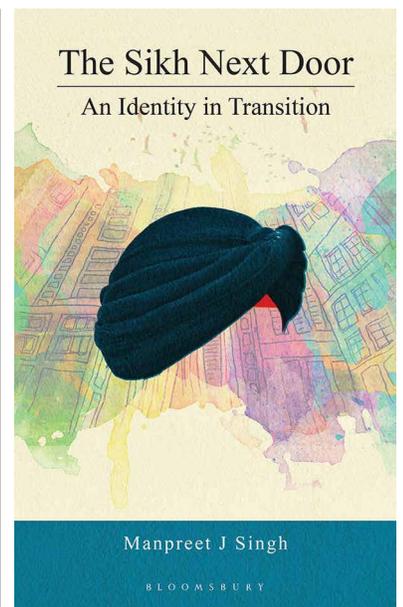
Online Book Launch: “The Sikh Next Door: An Identity in Transition”

The South Asian Studies Institute (SASI) was pleased to be part of the online book launch for Dr. Manpreet J. Singh’s book, *The Sikh Next Door: An Identity in Transition* published by Bloomsbury Academic, India on October 21, 2020.

The SASI has had a working partnership and MOU with the University of Mumbai through its established Indo-Canadian Studies Centre (ICSC) since 2012.

Dr. Manpreet J Singh visited the SASI in 2016 based on a joint Fellowship from ICSC Mumbai and SASI UFV and worked on the Sikh Diaspora in British Columbia.

This Fellowship paved her way for this book when she met with community members to conduct her research through personal interviews as well as through diverse site visits. She also went through the narratives of the social history of Canadian Sikhs living in British Columbia. Dr. Kanwal Singh Neel from Simon Fraser University, B.C., Canada moderated the book launch which was hosted by CoHaB, the Indian Diaspora Centre in partnership with Indo- Canadian Studies Institute, University of Mumbai.



The book is available for purchase [here](#) or scanning the QR will direct you to the webpage.



OCTOBER 21

SASI Hosts Online Book Launch “The Sikh Next Door: An Identity in Transition”.

OCTOBER

Honourable Mention for Edited Collection Co-Edited by Dr. Satwinder Kaur Bains.

OCTOBER

Gur Sikh Temple and National Historic Site, Sikh Heritage Museum Receives the National Trust for Canada Award as ‘Resilient Historic Place’.

OCTOBER

Dr. Kusum Soni Joins the SASI as Coordinator

SASI Alumni Sheetal Deo Named 2021 Young Distinguished Alumni Award at UFV



The SASI nominated winning recipient Sheetal Deo for UFV's 2021 Young Distinguished Alumni. Sheetal is a former student volunteer with the South Asian Studies Institute, and former leader with its student organization the South Asian Peer Network Association (SAPNA). Sheetal Deo (BA '12) was the kind of undergraduate student who would take electives in the summertime as a way to relax and hang out with friends. That's a good thing, because it helped her discover her love for philosophy, political science, and social justice. Sheetal, who earned her Bachelor of Arts at the University of the Fraser Valley in 2012, is now an established lawyer living in the Gold Coast area of Australia, having completed her Juris Doctor, Master of Laws, and Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice, all at Bond University in Queensland, Australia. We offer our heartfelt congratulations to Sheetal for her social justice work in Australia as a UFV alumni.

Please click [here](#) or scan the QR for the full article.



Reflections of Working at the SASI: Sadhvi Suri, Co-op Digital Asset Technician

Sadhvi, a CIS student at UFV analyzed and transcribed interviews of some of the founding board members of the Fraser River Funeral Home, the first funeral home to have a crematorium in Abbotsford.

She worked at SASI as Digital Asset Technician and Assistant Web Developer for the South Asian Canadian a Digital Archive Project. In addition to that, she helped with the maintenance of the Canadian Sikh Heritage website



Please click [here](#) or scan the QR for the full article.



Former SASI Student Mr. Landon Kaetler Heads to Thompson Rivers University Law

Landon Kaetler, a former student research assistant was recently accepted into Thompson Rivers University's Law Program. Landon proudly credits his experiences learned during his time at the SASI, and through its Director, Dr. Satwinder Kaur Bains, for his success. Landon plans to look at criminal law, constitutional law, and disability/human rights law.



Please click [here](#) or scan the QR for the full article.



2021

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NOVEMBER

SASI Symposium 2020
– Caste, Diaspora & the
Future with Dr. Suraj
Yengde.

JANUARY

SASI Launches New
Sikh Heritage Museum
Newsletter.

JANUARY

SASI Receives MITACS
Grant.

FEBRUARY

'Haq and History' Exhibit
Launch at UFV's
S' eliyemetaxwtexw Gallery.



SOUTH ASIAN CANADIAN LEGACY PROJECT

#ThreadingOurStories

The South Asian Canadian Legacy project aims to raise awareness and knowledge about the valuable contributions of South Asian Canadians to British Columbia's diverse cultures, history, heritage, economy, and society.

Six new resources launching in April 2022 empower you to discover, learn, research, and share the stories of South Asian Canadians who helped build this beautiful province.

Our stories range from tragedy to triumph. From the historic town of Paldi, where South Asian entrepreneurs cultivated a sense of community to the shores of Burrard Inlet where passengers aboard the Komagata Maru steamship protested racist immigration policies. South Asian Canadian stories are woven into the fabric of our country and sharing them empowers us to reduce racism in our society.

SASI has been privileged to partner with the Royal BC Museum, BC Labour Heritage Centre, OpenSchool BC, and the Abbotsford Community Foundation to produce this important work.

Launching
April 2022

SCAN WITH YOUR PHONE FOR MORE

Engage with the six projects from the South Asian Canadian Legacy Project.

www.threadingourstories.ca



PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY:



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:



OpenSchoolBC



BC LABOUR
HERITAGE
CENTRE

Thamilini Jothilingam reaches into the bankers box and pulls out a weathered black and white photograph. The delicate print of South Asian Canadian entrepreneur Mayo Singh standing in front of his mill town Paldi's store front in 1917 tells a story of resiliency and community building that continues to inspire today. These images, once destined for decay, are now slated for a new life as part of the South Asian Canadian Digital Archive (SACDA).

As the Digital Asset Archivist, Thamilini and her team of student research assistants have been methodically digitizing thousands of photos, documents, and videos from privately held collections. The end results will be a publicly accessible digital archive that recognizes our shared past, strengthens our present, and builds a better future by recording and sharing the stories of South Asian Canadians through the twentieth and twenty-first century.

SACDA launches in April with 15 collections and three exhibits that tell the stories of early South Asian migration to Canada.

Collections at launch:

- Jeavan Deol Family Fonds
- Baltej Singh Dhillon Fonds
- Dr. Kanwal Inder Singh Neel Collection
- Joan Mayo Fonds
- Yucho Chow Collection
- Bhagleant "Bonto" Singh Family Fonds
- Chandra Bodalia Fonds
- Chindow Sidhu Family Fonds
- Del Monte Studio Collection
- Mayo Singh Family Fonds
- Ram Sundaram Family Fonds
- Charan Gill Family Fonds
- (DIS)Enfranchisement - 1907-1947: The Forty Year Struggle for the Vote Exhibit Collection
- Komagata Maru: Continuing the Journey Exhibit Collection
- Labour History Exhibit Collection

Researchers, librarians, students, and community members will benefit from advanced search tools, account functionality, and a lightbox feature to save archival assets for research purposes.

The SACDA team at the UFV South Asian Studies Institute will continue their mission of preserving South Asian Canadian History through the continuous acquisition of new collections and the curation of new exhibits.

Explore the digital archive today at:
www.sacda.ca



Photo: Cowichan Valley Museum and Archives



Nerlap Sidhu, a teacher at Eugene Reimer Elementary School in Abbotsford, peers over the shoulder of Harbir, one of her grade-seven students, to see him penciling together the nodes of an elaborate diagram. The web of interconnecting words written by Harbir includes terms like, "Gurdwara", "farming", and "India", reflecting his cultural roots and family heritage.

This period, Nerlap's students are working on one of the many activities produced as part of Saffron Threads — a new educational resource for K-12 teachers produced in partnership with OpenSchool BC that explores South Asian Canadian history, culture, and heritage.

"I learned that every country has a diverse history and within in that history there is knowledge to be learnt and told", says Jaskaran, a grade 7 student at Eugene Reimer.

Saffron Threads' detailed activity plans and resources help teachers bring important topics for all students into the classroom including migration, discrimination, identity, and culture. The resources span across all grade levels and explore social studies, math, food studies, and more.

And the learning is extending outside the classroom. Saffron Threads is inspiring conversations around the dinner table.

"I learned about my origins, roots, and ancestry", says Harbir. "It's important to learn about South Asian Canadian history. I have now have the ability to have great and lengthy discussions with my family [about it]."

A timeline building card game, coined "Time Shuffle", has also been produced to introduce students to historically significant events in South Asian Canadian History.

Painting the resources with a beautiful visual treatment, Vancouver artist Sandeep Johal created a set of artwork (right) to be included on the Saffron Threads website, Time Shuffle box, and learning resources.

Saffron Threads resources will be available via digital download for free starting in April 2022.

Share the resources with a teacher in your community at:
www.saffronthreads.ca.

SOCIAL HISTORY BOOK

South Asian Canadians have a long, rich, vibrant, robust, and evocative history in what we call British Columbia.

The South Asian Canadian Social History book is the culmination of almost ten years of connecting, learning, recording, and consulting with South Asian Canadians in BC. Writing history in the first-person narrative by South Asians was particularly important for us and we have shaped this social history book to reflect our stories, our profiles, and our rich and challenging history.

Read the social history book online at
www.threadingourstories.ca





HISTORIC SITES

We have established linkages and partnerships that further the historic record through engagement, signage, future development, and enhancing existing infrastructures. This effort includes updating the history of these sites with new images and descriptions. There is an updated Heritage BC Cultural map and a print catalogue that amplifies and highlights the history behind these sites and their contemporary influence on future generations.

Sharing the sites of historic significance for South Asian Canadians in BC engages us with our heritage, improves knowledge, and increases cultural tourism. This limited list of historic sites gives inspiration to communities to continue to build the heritage register for BC.

LABOUR HISTORY RESEARCH

In partnership with the BC Labour Heritage Centre, a record of the historic South Asian Canadian Labour Movement in British Columbia has been written.

This history has been included in a new book, "Union Zindabad: South Asian Canadian Labour History in British Columbia" in print and available freely online via the South Asian Canadian Digital Archive.

"Zindabad" is used as a rallying cheer or exclamation of support in Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Odia and Bengali languages, literally translating to "Long live [idea or person]." In the BC labour movement, cries of "Farmworkers Zindabad!" have been heard at massive protest rallies in recent decades, but the phrase has a history that reaches across the Pacific Ocean. The title of the book encapsulates the spirit of South Asian Canadian labour activism: "Long Live the Union!".

HAQ AND HISTORY TRAVELLING EXHIBITION AND OUTREACH BOXES

Haq and History, a bilingual travelling exhibit in Punjabi and English, showcases the history and contributions of the diverse South Asian Canadian Diaspora in BC. In partnership with the Royal BC Museum, the team has built on and revamped the exhibit to make it portable for travel across British Columbia.

Haq and History Outreach Boxes provide materials, images, and activities that bring content about the community of Paldi to life. There are archival documents, photographs, and games that helps users think critically about what it would have been like to live there in that community and what the significance of that community today.

No matter where you are in BC, there will be materials ready to be accessed. Six copies of the Outreach Box have been produced. Some will circulate throughout the province with community partners while others will be permanently available at the Royal BC Museum.

GRANTS AND FUNDING



The SASI received a number of grants reflecting the breadth and depth of the work being undertaken

SASI Receives Provincial Grant



The Province of British Columbia provided the SASI \$1.14 million in funding with support from the Abbotsford Community Foundation to deliver the South Asian Canadian Legacy Project. The funding allows SASI to continue pushing forward work showcasing past and present contributions of the Punjabi community to British Columbia.

BC Arts Council, Arts Infrastructure program grant



The BC Arts Council, Arts Infrastructure program grant in the amount of \$24,436 was awarded to the SASI for the installation of a permanent exhibit based on the Vancouver Maritime Museum's 2014 exhibit titled "Komagata Maru: Challenging Injustice." The exhibit was displayed at the Sikh Heritage Museum located in the National Historic Site and Gur Sikh Temple in Abbotsford, BC.

BC Arts Council, Expanded Arts and Culture Resilience Supplement Award



The SASI received the Expanded Arts and Culture Resilience Supplement Award from the BC Arts Council in the amount of \$18,000. This grant assists cultural organizations cope with the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis and was used to support SASI work related to project outcomes that were hampered by the COVID pandemic.

Vancouver Heritage Foundation's Yosef Wosk Publication Grant



The SASI received the Vancouver Heritage Foundation's Yosef Wosk Publication Grant in the amount of \$2,000 which assisted in the catalogue publication based on the Vancouver Maritime Museum exhibit "Komagata Maru: Challenging Injustice." The catalogue publication was released on April, 2021.

2021

NOVEMBER

SASI Symposium 2020
– Caste, Diaspora & the
Future with Dr. Suraj
Yengde.

JANUARY

SASI Launches New
Sikh Heritage Museum
Newsletter.

JANUARY

SASI Receives MITAC Grant.

FEBRUARY

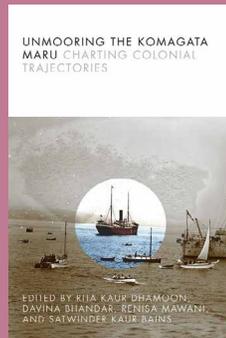
'Haq and History' Exhibit
Launch at UVF's S'
elijemetaxwtexw Gallery.

PUBLICATIONS



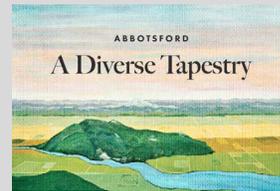
The SASI released a number of publications reflecting the breadth and depth of the work being undertaken

Honourable Mention
for Edited Collection
Co-Edited by Dr.
Satwinder Kaur Bains



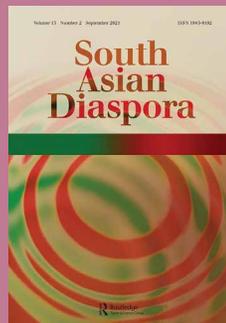
The Jury for the Canadian Studies Network gave an honourable mention to *Unmooring the Komagata Maru: Charting Colonial Trajectories*, co-edited by SASI Director Dr. Satwinder Kaur Bains, in the category of the 2020 prize for Best Edited Collection in Canadian Studies. Drawing from various disciplines, the collection situates the history of South Asians in Canada within a larger global-imperial history, emphasizing the ways in which the Komagata Maru incident is related to issues of colonialism.

SASI contributed several chapters and the introduction to a collaborative book project on the history of Abbotsford titled *Abbotsford: A Diverse Tapestry*. According to one of its authors Robert Martens, “this book tells the stories of many communities that have shaped, and continue to shape, the diverse tapestry that is Abbotsford.



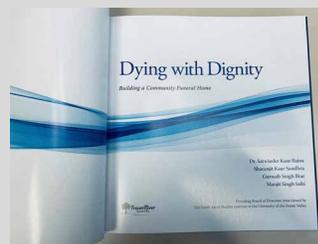
Abbotsford – A Diverse
Tapestry

The body politics
of gender in Sikhi:
shaping, shifting and
pushing boundaries



This paper, co-authored by SASI Director Dr. Bains and Coordinator Sharanjit Kaur Sandhra explores the history of Sikh feminist thought and practice as envisioned by the founder of the Sikh faith, Guru Nanak. The paper contextualises the historical significance of the time Guru Nanak lived in and that of his profound feminist thought. The paper overall argues for the need to push boundaries and interpretations by using Sikh feminist thought within Sikh vichaar and practice.

The SASI was the lead researching institute and coordinator for a newly published book titled *Dying with Dignity* which is a detailed history of the first crematorium built in the Fraser Valley (Abbotsford) under the auspices of the Fraser River Community Crematorium Society (FRCCS). The book will be launched in Spring 2022



Dying with Dignity

2021

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FEBRUARY

SASI Renames Golf
Tournament to the 'Bajwa
Dhami Building Bridges
Golf Tournament'.

APRIL 14

Virtual Opening of New
Exhibition: Komagata
Maru: Discrimination Meets
Determination.

APRIL 23

SASI Lecture on Caste:
Farmer's Movement and
Emerging Solidarities in
Rural Punjab.

APRIL

Guest Blog by SASI
Research Fellow Dr. Inder
Mann.

AWARDS



SASI Recipient of Darpan Magazine's 'Heritage Defender' Award



The SASI was recognized for its contribution to heritage preservation in British Columbia. SASI received the Heritage Defender award on October 15 at the 11th annual Darpan Extraordinary Achievement Awards. Dr. Satwinder Bains, Director of the SASI, accepted the award on behalf of SASI and the university. “The Heritage Defender award recognizes the South Asian Studies Institute’s work in collecting, preserving, and providing access to South Asian heritage and history,” Bains noted. “This award recognizes the work of the South Asian Studies Institute’s staff, colleagues, advisors, associates, friends, donors, and partners who we have the good fortune to work with. We are grateful for the recognition of our commitment to build the South Asian Canadian historic and heritage record as we connect across BC and nationally.” UFV Provost James Mandigo says that the award is welcome recognition for the important work done by SASI.

“The entire UFV community celebrates with SASI their dedication to the preservation and communication of the history of the South Asian community in Canada, and in British Columbia in particular. It’s wonderful to see this dedication and hard work being recognized by the greater community as well. Congratulations to all involved.”

The Heritage Defender Award honours the extraordinary achievement of a South Asian or organization that is preserving and promoting South Asian heritage and culture. The work that SASI does is inspiring and has given further recognition to the South Asian community in Canada,” noted Darpan representatives when announcing the award. “The organization’s work and success deserves praise and recognition, and this award is our way to acknowledge and applaud the work and passion.”



2021

BIENNIAL REPORT 2020-2021

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MAY

SASI Commemorates
#AsianHeritageMonth.

MAY

SASI Joins National Forum
on Anti-Asian Racism.

MAY

SASI Director Dr. Satwinder
Bains Recipient of UFV's
Faculty Service Excellence
Award.

MAY

Yogendra Yadav: The
Ongoing Farmers
Movement: Looking Back,
Looking Ahead.

Abbotsford's Gur Sikh Temple and National Historic Site Receives the National Trust for Canada award as a Resilient Historic Place

The Sikh Heritage Museum in Abbotsford, located in the National Historic Site Gur Sikh Temple received the “National Trust for Canada award as a Resilient Historic Place.”

Established in 2013 through the generous sponsorship of Ecclesiastical Insurance, these awards honour projects and sites in two categories: exemplary commercial, institutional or mixed-use projects (transformative projects); and places that demonstrate exemplary heritage stewardship and long-term sustainability (resilient historic places). With these awards, the National Trust also recognizes the people who have contributed to the successful regeneration of historic buildings and sites across the country.



According to the awarding letter, the independent awards jury was a unanimous decision. The Gur Sikh Temple, a 109 year old building, is managed by the Khalsa Diwan Society, Abbotsford. Since 2011, the SASI has taken on the curating and management of the Sikh Heritage Museum, located in the ground floor of the Heritage building.

To view a short clip on the significance and meaning of resiliency for the Sikh community in Abbotsford, please click [here](#) or scan the QR code.



2021

MAY

A Moment of Reckoning:
Every Child Matters.

MAY

SASI Receives Heritage
BC Award in Collaboration
with UBC Sociology.

JUNE

SASI Partners with the
Association of Critical
Heritage Studies on Panel.

JULY

SASI Begins Two
Year 'Caste Matters'
Conversation.

Faculty Service Excellence 2021: Satwinder Bains' impact is mighty at UFV and beyond

A visionary leader with an unshakable commitment to equality and cultural justice, Dr. Satwinder Bains was the 2021 recipient of UFV's Faculty Service Excellence Award. "As a woman of colour, not only is she smashing glass ceilings of patriarchy within academia, but also in conservative cultural spaces," says Anita Lal, co-founder and director of the Poetic Justice Foundation, and one of Bains' many nomination references. "With each win she brings down barriers for future generations of women."

And as her robust CV attests, Bains is no stranger to putting in the hard work it takes to make a difference.

An early association with Abbotsford Community Services led to connections



at UFV, inspiring Bains to join the university more than a decade ago. Today, she is as an associate professor in the department of Social Cultural and Media Studies. In addition to teaching, she made an immediate impact by spearheading a \$2.25M donation drive crucial to establishing the BC Regional Innovation Chair in Canada-India Partnership Development — and with it UFV's South Asian Studies Institute, which she has guided as director since 2006.

Please click [here](#) or scan the QR code to view the entire article.



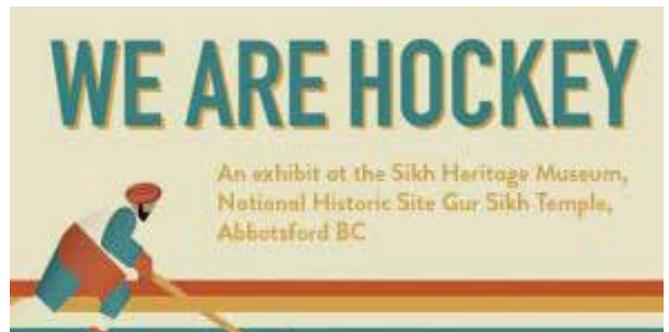
SASI Received Arty Award from Abbotsford Arts Council

The Arty Awards are an annual celebration of the creative and performing arts talent of Abbotsford, recognizing winners in nine categories: Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Media Arts, Literary Arts, Lifestyle, Arts Advocate, Emerging Artists Youth Achievement, and Lifetime Achievement. The award for the Literary Arts Arty went to Co-curators Sharanjit Sandhra & Dr. Satwinder Kaur Bains of UFV's South Asian Studies Institute (SASI) for their work on the "We Are Hockey" catalogue, part of the "We are Hockey" exhibit.



To view the catalogue and learn more about this work, visit www.southasiancanadianheritage.ca/we-are-hockey.

To view the full list of nominees, visit abbotsfordartscouncil.com/current/



SEPTEMBER

3rd Annual Bajwa Dhani Building Bridges Golf Tournament a Success.

SEPTEMBER

South Asian Canadian Legacy Project – Year Two.

SEPTEMBER

SASI Receives Heritage BC, Canadian Council of Archives Young Canada Works, and Irving K Barber Digitization Grants.

OCTOBER

SASI Recipient of Darpan Magazine's 'Heritage Defender' Award.

A YEAR OF REFLECTION AND RECKONING



A Moment of Reckoning: Dr. Satwinder Kaur Bains, Director

We pause to acknowledge the heartbreaking grief and pain of indigenous families who lost their beloved children. Tk'emlups te Secwépemc First Nation Chief Rosanne Casimir calls the discovery of 215 children buried in a mass grave an “unthinkable loss that was spoken about, but never documented by the Kamloops Indian Residential School,” which was the largest school in the country’s Indian Affairs residential school system. For more than a hundred years, 160,000 Indigenous children across Canada were forcibly removed from their families and placed into boarding schools where their language, spirituality, culture and basic humanity was literally beaten out of them. Many of them died. We can no longer plead ignorance, continue omission, condone erasure, be accomplices to the neglect of these facts and evidence in Canadian history. We need to own up to our dark past and our not so informed present. No longer can we wring our hands and say we had nothing to do with it.



Today we do. Today we are being held to account for what we are going to do. This known yet omitted history is the cause of indescribable pain and anguish in our communities and we cannot be oblivious to it anymore. For all of us: we must make the time to educate our selves if we have not already done so and commit to a better world. This cannot ever happen again. And we must learn our history.

Please take a moment to download the documents by clicking on the link or scanning the QR code listed below and read them, learn the truth, hold people accountable and start the work towards a collective reconciliation with our past.



- [Why do we not know about the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls – June 3, 2019.](#)
- [10 years work of reports written about settler supremacy and the perpetuation of racism.](#)
- [What does The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report recommend? 2019.](#)
- [Where are the children buried? Read Dr. Scott Hamilton’s report.](#)
- [A residential school timeline from 131 – 1996.](#)
- [In Plain Sight – Nov 2020, tells of the rampant racism in the health care sector in BC.](#)
- [The BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.](#)

2021

OCTOBER

Director Featured in Podcast Series, ‘The Conversation’.

NOVEMBER

Alumni Sheetal Deo Names 2021 Young Distinguished Alumni Award at UFV.

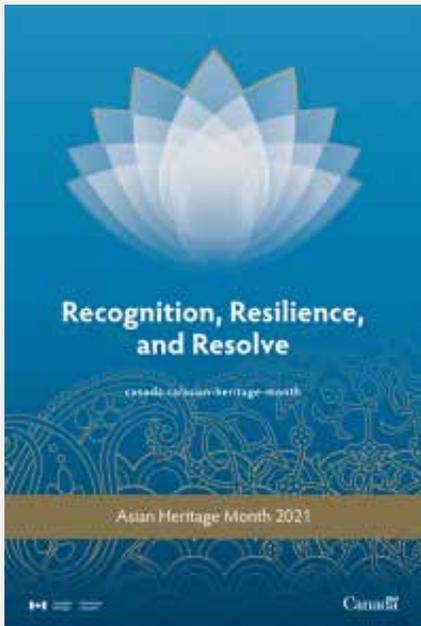
NOVEMBER

SASI Coordinator in Knowledge Network Series ‘British Columbia – An Untold History’.

NOVEMBER

SASI Produced Film ‘Solidarity Lives’ Screened at VISAFF 2021.

SASI Joins National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism



Dr. Bains, SASI Director was part of the Academic Advisory Committee joining scholars, activists and professionals from across Canada to create a national strategy combatting hate. She spoke on coalition building across Asian Canadian Communities. The conversation comes in light of the exponential rise in anti-Asian violence, hate and crime in British Columbia, with Vancouver being named as the anti-Asian hate crime capital of North America. SASI Coordinator Sharanjit Kaur Sandhra was also invited to speak in the same forum on the June 11th sector table on “Education (K-12, public education, higher education).”

On June 10-11, 2021 the National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism brought together distinguished speakers from across sectors to have frank discussions about the ongoing crisis of anti-Asian racism in Canada. The virtual event focused on the articulation of bold and concrete recommendations for change as well as strengthening relationships of advocacy with other anti-racism movements.

Please click [here](#) or scan the QR code to view the entire article.



2021

NOVEMBER

Haq and History Exhibit
Travels Across School
District #34.

NOVEMBER

Minister Melanie Mark Visits
Sikh Heritage Museum and
SASI.

The South Asian Studies Institute Stands in Solidarity with
#BlackLivesMatter

Over the past 14 years, the South Asian Studies Institute has committed itself to listen, learn and work in our communities to oppose oppressive systems and acts of aggression like casteism and racism against vulnerable populations. We are committed to undertaking the work to dismantle systemic white privilege and power, to confront all levels of racism, undertake decolonization and work with others to fight oppressions we encounter.

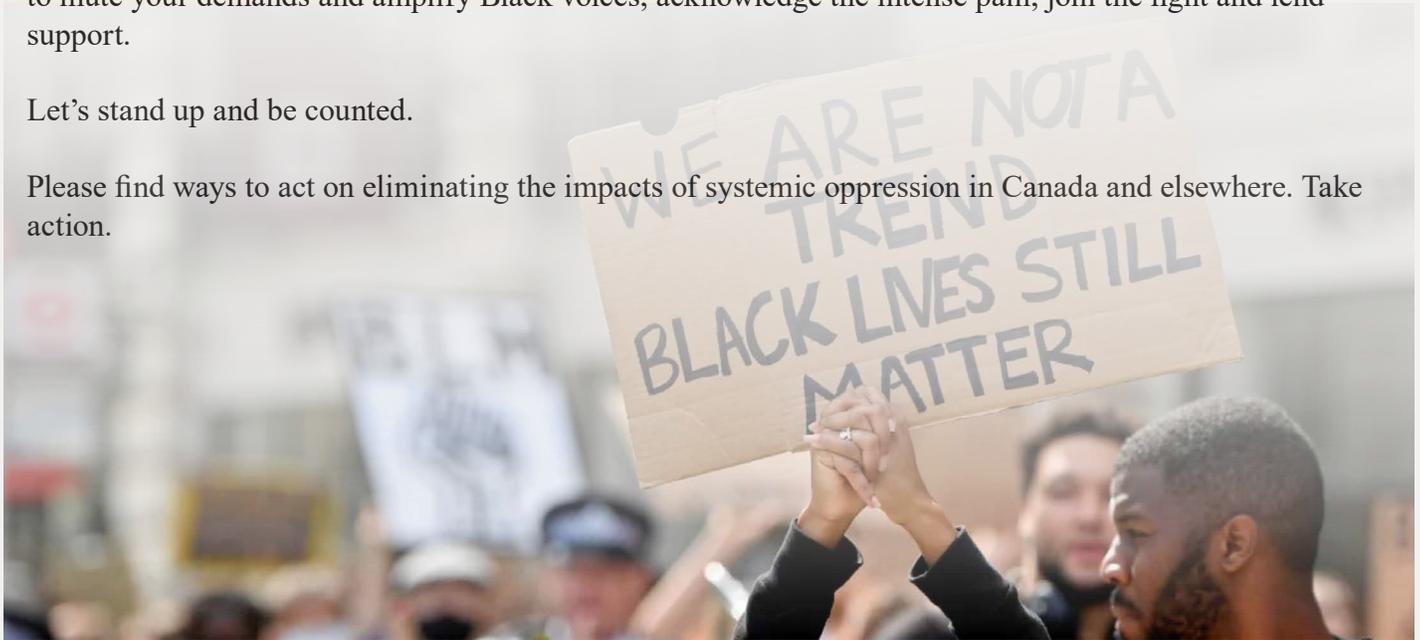
We know the deep emotions that are evoked by the slow acknowledgement of Canada’s own racist past and present and the systemic structures that continue to uphold and perpetuate the status quo. In this hour of revolution against anti-Blackness, we stand with #BlackLivesMatter.

As people of colour, we acknowledge that we have a role to play in affecting systemic change, as we work to understand our own privilege and societal struggles.

Statements matter, but action matters more. For those who benefit from the current system, this is the time to mute your demands and amplify Black voices, acknowledge the intense pain, join the fight and lend support.

Let’s stand up and be counted.

Please find ways to act on eliminating the impacts of systemic oppression in Canada and elsewhere. Take action.



At this time, if you can, you might consider donating to organizations such as these

Please click the link or scan the QR to be directed to the websites of these different organisation for further information.



- [Black Lives Matter](#)
- [FBCFBN](#)
- [IDLENOMORE](#)
- [MPD150](#)
- [Community Justice Exchange](#)
- [M4BL](#)

RESEARCH CHAIR



Dr. Jon Thomas, BC Regional Innovation Chair on Canada-India Partnership Development hosted a number of talks for the Fraser Valley community through the Esposito Family Centre for Innovation Entrepreneurship (EFCIE)

Innovation and Competitiveness Linkages in India: Exploring Opportunities for IIT Bombay & Canada Cooperation (Hosted by EFCIE)

Building on rich experiences of building partnerships with Japan and his current work at IIT Bombay, Dr. Momaya explored the potential and possibilities for research collaborations between Canada and India, focusing on emerging industries such as digital platforms, nanotechnology, biopharmaceuticals, and clean technology.



Human-centered AI in Sustainable Energy Optimization for Smart Homes and Buildings (Hosted by EFCIE)

In this talk, Dr. Shabani explained how his research team has developed a solution using Artificial Intelligence (AI) that could provide a data-driven strategy for energy optimization in a smart building while improving comfort and productivity. More specifically, he explained the importance of early market data collection and its role in the design of a human-centered AI solution in product development.

Human-centered AI in Sustainable Energy Optimization for Smart Homes and Buildings (Hosted by EFCIE)

In this presentation, Dr. Michael Parr spoke from his experience in the biotechnology sector to look at the process of evaluating a new idea or technology, and forming a new company. He also discussed strategies for managing risks and gave practical advice for finding support, mentors, and investors to enable ones vision to become a viable company going forward.

Human-centered A.I. in sustainable energy optimization for smart homes & buildings

WEDNESDAY
 March 17, 2021
 1:15-2:15 p.m. PST
 Zoom webinar

REGISTER
bit.ly/efcie-mar17-webinar

Presented by the UVV Esposito Family Centre for Innovation & Entrepreneurship. Learn more about EFCIE events, grants, and partnership opportunities at www.espositoefcie.com

UNIVERSITY OF THE FRASER VALLEY

VENTURING INTO BIOTECHNOLOGY

FEATURING MICHAEL PARR, PRESIDENT & CHIEF SCIENTIFIC OFFICER, SITKA BIOPHARMA

Wednesday
 March 24, 2021
 1:15-2:15 p.m. PST
 Free Zoom webinar

REGISTER FOR ZOOM LINK
bit.ly/efcie-mar24-webinar

Presented by the UVV Esposito Family Centre for Innovation & Entrepreneurship.

To learn more about the Esposito Family Centre for Innovation & Entrepreneurship, including future events, grants and partnership opportunities, visit www.espositoefcie.com

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