Bharat Britain
South Asians Making Britain
1870-1950
Conference Programme

13-14 September 2010
British Library Conference Centre, St Pancras, London

This major international conference marks the culmination of the AHRC-funded project ‘Making Britain: South Asian Visions of Home and Abroad, 1870-1950’, led by the Open University in collaboration with the University of Oxford and King’s College, London. ‘Bharat Britain’ will showcase new research from distinguished scholars, curators and writers worldwide. Held in partnership with the British Library, it will explore the manifold ways in which South Asians impacted on the formation of Britain’s cultural and political life prior to Independence and Partition in 1947.

For further details please go to:
www.open.ac.uk/arts/south-asians-making-britain/conference.htm
### 13 September

**Registration and Refreshments**

**10.00-10.15**

**Welcome and introduction:** Rick Rylance (Director of AHRC) and Susheila Nasta (Director of ‘Making Britain’, Open University)

**Keynote:** Nayantara Sahgal, ‘The Importance of Strangers’

**Chair:** Susheila Nasta (Open University)

**Plenary Panel: Imperial Relations: Class, Race and Gender**

**Chair:** Ruvani Ranasinha (King’s College, London)

- Chandani Lokugé (Monash University, Australia), ‘Dialogue with Empire: The Aestheticization of the Indian Woman in Cornelia Sorabji’s Fiction and Sarojini Naidu’s Poetry’
- Siobhan Lambert-Hurley (Loughborough University), ‘Forging Global Networks in the Imperial Era: Atiya Fyzee in Edwardian London’

**Lunch**

**Parallel Sessions**

**1a Only Connect: Religious/Philosophical Conversations**

**Chair:** Sumita Mukherjee (University of Oxford)

- David Lelyveld (William Paterson University, US), ‘Aligarh and Bloomsbury: Ideologies of Friendship’
- Ron Geaves (Liverpool Hope University), ‘Creating a National Muslim Presence in Britain, 1883-1907’
- John Stevens (University College, London), ‘“Again had Eastern prophets set us free”: Keshab Chandra Sen and the Conflict between Matter and Spirit in mid-Victorian Britain’

**1b Stepping on the Threshold: Women Writers, Travel and Identity**

**Chair:** Peter Morey (University of East London)

- Anna Snaith (King’s College, London), ‘Sarojini Naidu in London’
- Mithu Banerji (Royal Holloway, University of London), ‘An Alternative Renaissance: Toru Dutt’s Subtexts of Defiance and the Reinvention of the Modern Self’
- Shane Malhotra (Open University), ‘Writing the Raj: The Search for Anglo-Indian Understanding in the Novels of Alice Sorabji Pennell’
1c Making Tracks at the End of Empire

Chair: Ankhi Mukherjee (University of Oxford)
Ruksana Majid (University of Sheffield), “India Invites”: G. V. Desani, the Ministry of Information and Imperialist Propaganda during World War II
Jackie Gold (Emory University, US), “Civilizing Sabu of India”: Redefining the White Man’s Burden in Interwar Britain
Savithri Preetha Nair (Independent Scholar), ‘Doing Science Beyond the Nation: An Indian Woman Scientist in Britain in the War Years, 1939-1945’

1d Cultural Exchange

Chair: Partha Mitter (University of Sussex)
Michael Collins (University College, London), ‘A Passage to England: Rabindranath Tagore in London, 1912-1913’
Madhumita Lahiri (University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg), ‘Best Sellers: South Asia, South Asians, and British Popular Culture’
Sonal Khullar (University of Washington, US), ‘The Art of Ajanta: From Colonial Discovery to Nationalist Rediscovery’

15.30-16.00 TEA / COFFEE

16.00-17.00 Keynote: Antoinette Burton (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, US), ‘Brown, Black and British: Writing Postcolonial Histories’
Chair: Lyn Innes (University of Kent)

17.00-17.30 Rozina Visram and Susheila Nasta in conversation with Mukti Jain Campion (Culture Wise, London), ‘Unpacking the Archives and Shifting the Furniture: The Background to “Making Britain”’

17.40-18.00 Launch of the Making Britain Database

18.00-19.30 Drinks reception and launch of the exhibition ‘South Asians Making Britain: 1858-1950’, with a welcome by Professor Brigid Heywood (Pro-Vice Chancellor, Open University)
14 SEPTEMBER

9.00-9.30 Registration and Refreshments

Chair: Anshuman Mondal (Brunel University)

10.30-11.45 Plenary Panel: For King and Country? South Asian Soldiers in the First and Second World Wars
Chair: Stephen Morton (University of Southampton)
Santanu Das (Queen Mary, University of London), ‘The Singing Sepoy: Bharat, Britain and the First World War’
Dominiek Dendooven (‘In Flanders Fields’ Museum, Ypres, Belgium), ‘Commemorating Non-European Involvement in the First World War in Belgium, 1998-2010’
Florian Stadtler (Open University), ‘Battle for Britain? South Asian Soldiers in Britain during the Second World War’

11.45-12.00 Tea/Coffee

12.00-13.00 Parallel Sessions

2a Lascars in Britain
Chair: Rozina Visram
Georgie Wemyss (Goldsmiths, University of London), ‘The 1939-40 “Lascar” Strikes: Indian Seafarers, Citizenship and Contested British Histories’
Ceri-Anne Fidler (Cardiff University), ‘Navigating Britishness: The Case of South Asian Seafarers, c.1900-1950’

2b Nervous Conditions: Living Mixed Race
Chair: David Johnson (Open University)
Rehana Ahmed (Open University), ‘“The Lure of the Coloured Man”: Representations of Mixed-Race Relationships in Interwar Britain’
Shompa Lahiri (Queen Mary, University of London), ‘“Going Native”: Olive Christian Malvery in Imperial London’
### The Next Generation

**Chair:** Ruvani Ranasinha (King's College, London)

Julian M. Simpson (University of Manchester), ‘Setting the Scene for NHS Postwar Expansion: South Asian Doctors in Britain before 1948’

Ansar Ahmed Ullah and Jamil Iqbal (Swadhinata Trust, London), ‘Tales of Three Generations of Lascars’

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<th>Time</th>
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<td>13.00-14.00</td>
<td><strong>LUNCH</strong></td>
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<td>14.00-14.45</td>
<td><strong>In Conversation:</strong> Meera Syal with Shyama Perera, ‘Weaving the Threads of South Asian Britain: Past Histories, Present Futures’</td>
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<td>14.45-15.15</td>
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| 15.15-16.45| **Plenary Panel: Re-Presenting South Asia in London**  
**Chair:** Colin Chambers (Kingston University)  
Elleke Boehmer and Alex Bubb (University of Oxford), ‘India Arrived: Finding the Familiar in London’s Foreign Fields’  
Sarah V. Turner (University of York), ‘“Highly Charged Lines”: Representations of South Asia in Edwardian London’  
Ann David (Roehampton University), ‘Orientalism Challenged: South Asian Dance Performance in London, 1930s-1950s’ |
| 16.45-17.30| **Plenary Roundtable Discussion**  
**Chair:** Elleke Boehmer (University of Oxford)  
Participants: Meena Alexander (Graduate Centre, City University of New York, US), Humayun Ansari (Royal Holloway, University of London), Antoinette Burton (University of Illinois, US), Bashabi Fraser (Edinburgh Napier University), Vivian Ibrahim (University College Cork) |
| 17.30      | **THANKS AND CLOSE**                         |