

**SOUTH ASIAN LITERARY ASSOCIATION
2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**



Collective Currents in South Asian Collaborations
March 27-28, 2026
(Executive Committee Meeting on Mar. 26, 2026)
Hilton Charlotte University Place
8629 J M Keynes Dr.
Charlotte, North Carolina 28262

Conference Co-Chairs: Aniruddha Mukhopadhyay, Texas A&M University-Kingsville
Jana Fedtke, NYU Shanghai

THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026

8:00 AM-4:00 PM: REGISTRATION

7:30-9:00 PM: SALA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

DAY 1: FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2026

8:00 AM-4:00 PM: REGISTRATION

12:45-1:15 PM: SALA WELCOME ADDRESS

Room: Lakeshore Salon 4

- Maryse Jayasuriya, SALA President
- Statement from Conference Co-chairs

SESSION 1: 1:30-2:45 PM

1A: Collaborations from Around the World

Room: Keynes

Chair: Madhurima Chakraborty, Columbia College Chicago

“The Changing Logic of Collaboration: Ritual Logistics to Collective Memory in Nepal’s Dashain Festival”

Manling Xu, Peking University

“Indians Vs. Asians: Performances of Rivalry and Acts of Collaboration by Hasan Minhaj and Ronny Chieng”

Madhurima Chakraborty, Columbia College Chicago

“An Unwillingness to Collaborate: Trump’s Neo-Orientalism and Its Origins in Raspail’s *The Camp of the Saints*”

Jeffrey Cass, Arkansas Tech University

1B: Solidarities of Resistance

Room: Olmstead

Chair: John Hawley, Santa Clara University

“On Ideology, Literature, and the possibility of Solidarity in Gautam Bhatia's *The Wall*”

Srikanth Mallavarapu, Roanoke College

“Transnational Feminist Solidarity and Resistance in the Poetry of Tarfia Faizullah and Fatimah Asghar”

Subrata Chandra Mozumder, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

“Navigating Moments of Violent Religious and National Eruption: The Anonymous Witness-Narrator in Gitanjali Shree's *Our City That Year*”

Pennie Ticen, Virginia Military Institute

“Literature, Empathy, and Class Warfare: Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower and Amnesty*”

John Hawley, Santa Clara University

2:45-3:00 PM: BEVERAGE BREAK

SESSION 2: 3:00-4:15 PM

2A SALA-CEA Professionalization Panel: Graduate Students and Early Career Professionals

Room: Keynes

Chair: Moumin Quazi, Tarleton State University

Aniruddha Mukhopadhyay, Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Panelists: Maryse Jayasuriya, Saint Louis University

Cynthia Leenerts, East Stroudsburg University

Stacia Neeley Campbell, Texas Wesleyan University

Laura Petersen, Our Lady of the Lake University

2B: Cinematic Collaborations

Room: Burnham

Chair: Nidhi Shrivastava, Sacred Heart University

“Radical Education and Revolutionary Praxis through Cinema”

Ankita Rathour, Georgia Tech

Jason Christian, Kennesaw State University

“Transnational Film Adaptations as Collaborations: The Case of Ritwik's *A River Called Titas*”

Md Hasan Ashik Rahman, Binghamton University, SUNY

“Reborn and reformed race, filling the void: Overcoming the Self through dialogue and collaboration with the Other in Mira Nair's *Mississippi Masala*”

Swati Gilotra, University of Georgia

“Desi Man in Mira Nair's *The Namesake* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*”

Zahin Zaima, Saint Louis University

4:30-5:30 PM: SALA GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING

Room: Lakeshore Salon 4

5:45-6:45 PM: CEA OPEN BUSINESS MEETING

Room: Lakeshore Salon 4

DAY 2: SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2026

8:00 AM-4:00 PM: REGISTRATION

SESSION 3: 9:00-10:15 AM

3A: Collaborations against the Caste System

Room: Welwyn

Chair: Ruma Sinha, Mercer County Community College

“Caste Across Borders: The Politics of Analogy and Collaboration”

Ruma Sinha, Mercer County Community College

“Stories Within Stories: Caste, Faith, and the Form of Resistance in Kusumabale”

Ali Ahsan, University of Georgia

“Dalit Experience of Indian History and Democracy”

Soma Mandal, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi

“The Pan-Indian Dalit Rap: Forging Collaborative Counterpublic Spheres in New Media”

Jomal Jose, National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER), Bhubaneswar

3B: Justice as a Collaborative Process in the Sri Lankan Diasporas

Room: Burnham

Chair: Dinidu Karunanayake, Elon University, North Carolina

“Mediated Collaborations and the Politics of Recognition”

Kumi Silva, University of North Carolina

“Webs of Care and Collaboration: Disability Justice in the Writings of Leah Lakshmi Piepza-Samarasinha”

Maryse Jayasuriya, Saint Louis University

“Time of Disappearance: Staging a Post-War Sri Lankan Narrative of Inquiry”

Sandamini Ranwalage, Skidmore College, NY

“Shyam Selvadurai’s Buddhist Postmemories of Sri Lankan America”

Dinidu Karunanayake, Elon University, North Carolina

Discussant: Nalini Iyer, Seattle University

3C: Eco-critical Collaborations

Room: Glenwaters

Chair: Pallavi Rastogi, Louisiana State University

“Solar Dreams and Salomon’s House: Eco-Utopian Dialogues between Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis* and Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain’s *Sultana’s Dream*”

Jahidul Alam, Jackson State University

“From Truth to Trope: Ecological Memory and Refugee Consciousness in Enjeela Ahmadi-Miller’s *The Broken Circle*”

Pallavi Rastogi, Louisiana State University

“Ecofriendly Collaborations in Ghosh’s *The Nutmeg’s Curse* and Tahir’s *Where Cicadas Sing*”

Waseem Anwar, Kinnaird College for Women

10:15-10:30 AM: BEVERAGE BREAK

SESSION 4: 10:30-11:45 AM

4A: Diasporic Collaborations

Room: Olmstead

Chair: Cynthia Leenerts, East Stroudsburg University

“Superheroes, South Asian Histories, and Diasporic Identities: Adapting Ms. Marvel to a Global Audience”

Tharini Viswanath, University of South Carolina

“Listening Across Borders: Storytelling, Plagiarism, and Dream Dissolve as Diasporic Collaboration”

Tehmina Pirzada, Bradley University

“Listening in Slow Time: Translation, Diaspora, and Relational Ethics in Rajiv Mohabir's *Antiman*”

Ishan Mukhopadhyay, Brandeis University

4B: Collaborations of Resistance

Room: Burnham

Chair: Meghan Gorman-DaRif, San Jose State University

“Ethnographic Realism and the Maoist Struggle”

Meghan Gorman-DaRif, San Jose State University

“A Case for Decolonial Erotics: Amrita Pritam and Sahir Ludhianvi in Lotus”

Wafa Asher Syeda, The University of Chicago

“States of Ungroundedness: Envisioning a Counter-Intuitive Alliance on the Question of Land”

Asmita Saha and Ridita Mizan, Illinois State University

“India's Daughters’ and #MeToo: Investigating Women’s Stories in the 1947 Partition Archive”

Nidhi Shrivastava, Sacred Heart University

4C: Literary Collaborations

Room: Glenwaters

Chair: Jana Fedtke, NYU Shanghai

“A New Empire of AI? GenAI Usage among Contemporary South Asian Authors”

Jana Fedtke, NYU Shanghai

“Salman and Hanif Get Hurt: An Unusual Collaboration”

Hans-Georg Erney, Georgia Southern University

“Mother-Daughter Collaboration: Anita Desai and Kiran Desai”

Nalini Iyer, Seattle University

“Mera Joota Hai Japane, Ye Patloon Englishtani: A Case Study of English Haiku in India”

Rachayita Bhattacharyya, Indian Institute of Technology, Jodhpur

12:00-1:30 PM: LUNCH ON YOUR OWN

OR

CEA ALL-CONFERENCE LUNCHEON

SESSION 5: 1:30-2:45 PM

5A: Collaborations in Time: A Roadmap to South Asian Pasts, Presents, and Futures

Room: Glenwaters

Chair: Waseem Anwar, Kinnaird College for Women

"Women and Entrepreneurship: Light and Darkness in Displaced Life"

Umme Al-wazedi, Augustana College

"Envisioning Collaboration, Imagining Solidarity: Kinnaird ICPWE and Its South Asian Profile"

Waseem Anwar, Kinnaird College for Women

"Contrasting Collaboration: Partition Trauma in Rahad Abir's *Bengal Hound* and in Bollywood's *Refugee*"

Sonia Sharmin, Augusta University

"Regional Voices, Global Frames: Feminist Poetics and Translation in Contemporary Kashmiri Literature"

Feryal Banday, University of Cambridge

5B: Historical Contexts

Room: Burnham

Chair: Billie T. Guarino, St. Anselm College

"'I Want to be Killed by An Indian Bullet': Reimagining Collaborations and Everyday Resistance in Militarized India"

Billie T. Guarino, St. Anselm College

"Networks of Collaborative Witnessing in Sri Lankan Anglophone Literature and Nineteenth-Century US Abolitionism"

Brian Yothers, Saint Louis University

"The Pāṇinian Treatment of Nitya Samāsa (obligatory compounds): The Inapplicability of Internal Expansion (Svapada-Vigraha)"

Sudarshan Gautam, Indian Institute of Technology BHU Varanasi
Sukhada, Indian Institute of Technology BHU Varanasi

5C: South Asian Feelings

Room: Walden

Chair: Shwetha Chandrashekhar, University of South Dakota

Saumya Lal, Louisiana State University

"Blind Opacity: Ved Mehta, Cold War Institutionalality, and Disability Refusal"

Kalyan Nadiminti, Northwestern University

"What Comes After Tolerance?"

Shwetha Chandrashekhar, University of South Dakota

"Middle-Class Empathy and the Specter of a People's War in *The Lives of Others*"

Saumya Lal, Louisiana State University

"Ajeeb Feelings"

Mehak Faisal Khan, University of Notre Dame

SESSION 6: 3:00-4:15 PM

6A: Pedagogical Collaborations

Room: Burnham

Chair: Nalini Iyer, Seattle University

"Nature and the Divine: Designing Eco-Spiritual Curricula through Hindu Thought and Rabindranath Tagore"

Mommima Tarar, Western Washington University

"Pedagogy and empathy: Re-imagining Collaborative praxis within the Literature classroom"

Mayuri Deka, The University of the Bahamas
"The American Dream and the Public Humanities"
Umme Al-wazedi, Augustana College
"AI vs. Tagore: Can generative AI write like a human? A Comparative Analysis"
Austin Grant Bennett, Montana State University, Billings

6B: Folk Collaborations

Room: Walden

Chair: Hans-Georg Erney, Georgia Southern University
"Fighting for the Forest Way of Life in Ita Mehrotra's *Uprooted: A Graphic Account of the Struggle for Forest Rights*"
Bhawana Pillai, Texas Tech University
"Bridging the Artistic and the Academic: The Mobile Girls Kootam"
Sangamithra Nataraj, Michigan State University
"Reading Against the Beef Taboo: Folk Collaboration and Craft-Story Interactions in Bachch Dua Rituals"
Shreya Sharma, University of Hawai'i at Manoa

4:30-6:00 PM: CONFERENCE KEYNOTE & AWARDS CEREMONY

Room: Lakeshore Salon 4

Keynote Speaker: Aarthi Vadde, Duke University
"The Writer's Hand-at-a-Distance: Literary Craft after Large Language Models"

7:00-9:00 PM: SALA CONFERENCE DINNER

Zafran Kabab Palace
230 E W.T. Harris Blvd, Charlotte, NC

SPECIAL THANKS TO
The College English Association (CEA) for a wonderful collaboration.