



VARTA

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear oral historian:

Did you know that India's consumer rights movement was started by 9 women – all of them homemakers? It is a jaw-dropping historical fact that Kala Sunder's detailed oral history session with longtime consumer activist Dr Sakuntala Narasimhan brings out in this 2nd issue of Varta, the newsletter of the Oral History Association of India.

And consider this. After the end of Emergency, when L K Advani took office as the country's for Information & Broadcasting minister, he called a meeting of all the media heads of All India Radio and Doordarshan. He said: "I know gentlemen, you were asked to stand and you crawled". This is revealed by P V Krishnamoorthy, a pioneering All India Radio and Doordarshan director in an oral history session with Indira Chowdhury.

We also have pieces about how a digital exhibition by NCBS helped reveal

the fluidity of overlapping oral history narratives; how business histories morph into social histories; how a neighbourhood museum created a space for the 'overlooked local'; how Mumbai's mill workers were among the pioneers of trade unions in the country; how the Concordia University in Montreal opened its oral history archives and rolled it out to the public across the city; how Reflection Booths are a new way of capturing people's memories at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture; and a new book about Filipinos and Aboriginal Australians in Sydney.

We invite articles, suggestions and responses from you. Write to us at oralhistoryindia@gmail.com with Varta in the subject line.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Rama Lakshmi
Editor @ Varta

OHAI thanks Esha Basu for her work on the second issue of Varta.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Winter School in Oral History 2019

The Centre for Public History (CPH) in collaboration with the Archives at National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bangalore announces the fourth Winter School in Oral History on "Community, Environment and Oral History: Individual and Collective Memory" from 11-22 February 2019. The Faculty include Prof Michael Frisch (SUNY, Buffalo, USA), Prof Annie Valk (Williams College, USA), Prof Heather Goodall (UTS, Sydney, Australia), Ms Nandini Oza (Oral Historian and activist), Mr. Venkat Srinivasan (NCBS Archives, India) and Dr. Indira Chowdhury (CPH, India).

For details:

<http://www.srishti.ac.in/events/winter-school-in-oral-history-2019>



OHAI Presidential Address, Guwahati, 2017

Public Memory in Jaswant Garh, Arunachal Pradesh: a site of conflict, resistance, bribery and betrayal

Professor Meeta Deka, Former Head of Department of History,
President OHAI 2016-2017.

The third annual conference of Oral History Association of India on Public Memory and Oral History has been hosted for the first time in the North East, in collaboration with the Department of History, Gauhati University. The setting is ideal for the region, with its diverse culture, ethnic communities. The setting is ideal for the region, with its diverse culture, ethnic communities and a largely oral history-driven culture, and yet a virgin ground for the practice of oral history through public memory.

Public history, which is linked to public memory, is something relatively new to the region. Over the next two days, the conference will pivot around public memory and oral history of Cultural Heritage, Museums and Archives, Public Events, Verbal Arts, Media, Migration, Nation and Identity, Urban Spaces and Cultures, Natural Disaster, Environment and Collective Remembering. Renowned Oral Historians like Alessandro Portelli, Urvashi Butalia, Indira Chowdhury and other distinguished speakers are here.

Theme of the Conference

Very often, public history refers to historians who work in institutions such as museums, preservation offices, archives, and cultural resource agencies but several academic historians have also gone into this field.. Public history exposes the various ways in which the public constructs and maintains ideas about the past through public memory. Public history, then, as Suzanne Fischer, Curator of Technology at The Henry Ford defines 'very broadly, uses the methods of the historical discipline to facilitate

the usefulness of history in the world'. Kathleen Franz describes it as 'a probe into the historical origins of public history and current ideas about the relationship between historians, communities, and cultural memory'.

Academic/Public Divide

Two differences, as pointed out by Phyllis K. Leffler and Joseph Brent, divides academic and public history. One, academic historians argue, 'that historians needed training to teach 'public' history because it somehow constituted a different... type of historical inquiry,' and second, 'that those who used history in the public arena were involved in a 'profession' far different from those who taught in an academic setting'.

Central to the difference between Academic and Public History is the idea of audience. The former is motivated by its own particular interests and its own sense of 'unexplored area' and the audience for whom it is written is for other historians, research scholars, students of history and, in general, meets the basic need of the society to know about itself, and understand its relationship with the past and with other societies and cultures.

Where is the Divide?

All historians share a common process, which they label as research, analysis, and expression and presentation. Stacey R. Devlin asks Where Is The Divide? She argues that although skills like critical thinking, source checking,

analyzing evidence in academic history are unique to the discipline and, hence the divide; but at the same time she questions: Is it possible to be both an academic and a public historian? Is this divide real and irreconcilable? and cites the Booze: A Distilled History (written by Craig Heron, a professor at York University), as a book which is both 'accessible and humorous enough for both academics and nonacademics' and believes there can many more examples.

In the last few decades 'Public memory' as a tool and a source has become very popular not only in writing public history but also in the humanities, social sciences and the term is used in disciplines like architecture, communication studies, gender studies, English, history, philosophy, political science, religion, and sociology. This recent interest in public memory and rapid growth in the interdisciplinary study of monuments, television programs, YouTube channels, museums, city streets etc., Phillips argues, has emerged out of 'the increasing mistrust of 'official history'. This brings us to a distinction between memory and history 'as opposing ways of recalling the past'. To quote Kendall R Phillips:

History, with its apparent claims to accuracy and objectivity, is— or at least had been—viewed as implying a singular and authentic account of the past. Memory, on the other hand, is conceived in terms of multiple, diverse, mutable, and competing accounts of past events. ... "History" became increasingly (and rightly) untenable in the face of compelling critiques leveled by post



structural and multicultural critics, scholars turned to the notion of memory, or perhaps more accurately “memories,” as a way of understanding the complex interrelationships among past, present, and future.”

As such, there has been a shift to ‘memory studies’.

Although the term ‘public memory’ has a ‘monolithic resonance’, says Phillips, its character is ‘bivalent in its temporality’ and distinct from other basic forms of remembering.

Jaswant Garh: Public Memory and Oral History

An illustrative case of ‘public memory’ is Jaswant Garh, which lies on way to Tawang in the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, near Sela Pass, at 13,700 ft. above sea level. Jaswant Garh is a hill on which there is a memorial of a soldier named Jaswant Singh Rawat. The soldier belonged to the 4th Battalion of the Garhwal Regiment, which was deployed in this area during the India-China conflict in 1962. With the advance of the Chinese, the army retreated, but apparently this soldier remained and repulsed two attacks of the Chinese with a handful of men. This is etched in an inscription thus:

“In memory of No.4039009 RFN Jaswant Sing, MVC assisted by No. 4037614 L/NK Trilok Singh Negi and No. 4038646 RFN Gopal Singh Gusain, as part of a Coy 4th BN The Garhwal Rifles, on 17 Nov 1962, volunteered to silence an enemy MMG that had come close to their defences and was firing accurately at the locality. That very day 4th Garhwal had beaten back two of the enemy attacks on their location. RFN Jaswant Sing and RFN Gopal Singh supported by covering the fire. From Negi heroically closed within grenade throwing distance and destroyed the Chinese detachment of 5 men seizing the MMG. In the process, the MMG was duly brought back and handed over to the HQ 62 INF BDE. However in the process of returning, RFN Jaswant Singh and L/NK Negi were killed. RFN Gopal Singh though seriously

wounded came back with the captured weapon.”

It is said that he attacked the Chinese by moving from bunker to bunker, which are still preserved. Incidentally, bunkers are erections of stones and earth placed at vantage points to give protection to the area. He was operating with medium machine guns left behind by the Chinese army, to give the impression that he was not alone. He, however, was finally killed when the Chinese overran the post.

However, local legends and oral narratives woven around this historic figure are even more interesting. Oral narratives say that the smoke from his beedi let out his hideaway and he was killed. They say that he was a young, handsome and brave man who was in love with one of the local girls, called Nura. Nura and Sela, after whom the Sela Pass has been named, were two sisters, or as some say, maybe they were friends. The relationship between Jaswant and Nura was much to the dislike of the higher-ups in the army and Nura’s father as well. Nura was said to have been captured by the Chinese and tortured so much so that she committed suicide. This explains why Jaswant Singh decided to take revenge on the Chinese alone. It is said that it was Nura’s father who betrayed him and informed the Chinese that Jaswant was fighting alone. This gave the Chinese the chance to encircle and attack him from the rear and killed him. The interviewees, however, discard the truth of these legends.

Lobsang, 86 years, who lives in Jang and was a Brokpa (Yak Herder), in an interview spoke on the Battle of Jaswant Garh thus: “At Jang, there was a serious encounter at Nerarung bridge where Jaswant Singh of 4th Garhwal Rifles offered great resistance. A Monpa (inhabitant of the region) betrayed (he did not mention that it was Nura’s father) and reported to the Chinese that the encounter was made by the effort of only a single man. So, they gheraoed (surrounded) him, killed him and reported to the government in China of the bravery of Jaswant Singh as they never met any brave soldier as he.”

Another narrative stated that the Chinese Government became inquisitive to see this person who alone resisted them for quite some time, and hence, they chopped off his head and took it to China.

Lobsang’s narrative poses newer questions: Why did the Monpa betray his own men? Was he bribed? The possibility of bribery cannot be ruled out as Lobsang narrated that “at Sangezang, a Tibetan who seemed to be a high rank officer of the Chinese army offered me a bundle of Indian currency and asked me to get some dried meat. He expressed that the Indian currency was of no use to him. I was shaking with fear and refused to accept the money. He asked me to accompany him to China, which I declined by saying that I need to look after the herd of yaks. Then he told me that I could graze them even in China as there were greener pastures. Out of fear, I left the place immediately.”

Was Lobsang tempted with bribe? Was bribery one of the Chinese tactics to elicit information? As far as the Indian army was concerned, they believed that Jaswant ran away and was declared missing, not being aware of his brave deed.

It was only when the Chinese Headquarters tried to assess and analyze the situation and recognized Jaswant as a major hurdle in their progress that the Indian Government realized his great contribution to the defence of the country and subsequently conferred the Mahavir Chakra on him posthumously. Every Tuesday now, at Jaswant Garh, they change his uniform and major prayers are held.

What is interesting here is that the local people and the army began to look upon him as the sentinel of the region and elevated him to the position of a demi-god, believing firmly that his spirit does good to the people around and constructed a memorial to his honour. He was not considered dead and after he “retired” from the army, the Border Roads Organization (GREF) employed

him as Honorary Captain and served in this post for ten years. Jaswant Baba, as he is commonly known, therefore gets pension from the army as well as the Border Roads Organization. Amazing that till the time he retired, there was one Company (a Company is a division of about 100 men), with an Officer-in-Charge to look after Jaswant Garh and even now Garhwal Regiment places 4 to 5 men to look after the place.

Jaswant Garh as a space of conflict, resistance, bribery and betrayal created through public memory has been transformed into a 'place' showing aspects of stability with multiple stories centered around the tomb, temple and the inscription and other paraphernalia associated with it, such as the bunkers, canteen, toilet facilities etc. Public memory in this case appears to be more than Phillips' idea of 'bivalent in its temporality'.

The perception of Jaswant Garh as both the 'place' and 'space' of the conflict scene has been drawn from Michel Certeau who brings out a distinction between space (*espace*) and place (*lieu*), and which can be also be interchangeable.

Certeau has rightfully argued in *The Writing of History* that 'historians need to pay more attention to memory, folktale and anecdote, practices and acts which resist historiographical authority or institutionalized knowledge discourses'.

This is an edited extract from OHAI president Meeta Deka's presidential address at the Annual Conference of the Oral History Association of India, Public Memory and Oral History, Gauhati University, November 13-14, 2017.



Professor Meeta Deka, President
OHAI (2016-2017).

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Oral History Program at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

Kelly Elaine Navies, Museum Specialist, Oral Historian

The mission of our oral history program is to build, preserve, and maintain a rich collection that reflects our curatorial and exhibition needs.

Additionally, we seek to make our collection accessible to scholars and to the public. One of the highlights of our collection is the Civil Rights History Project. This project is a collaboration with the Library of Congress that features over 140 interviews with veterans of the Civil Rights Movement. One can access these video recordings from our website:

www.nmaahc.si.edu.

Another of our projects is the Collection Donor Oral History Project, which

features interviews with some of the individuals who have donated artifacts to our collection. Finally, throughout the year of 2018, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Poor People's Campaign, our exhibition, "City of Hope: Resurrection City and the 1968 Poor People's Campaign" featured oral histories with leaders of that movement.

Another component of our oral history program are recordings captured in our Reflection Booths, which are located in the history galleries. These booths allow visitors to record their reflections on their museum experience. Thus far, we have collected over 40,000 Reflection Booth recordings.

Finally, our program also features programming, outreach, and training workshop for classes and other educational groups.

BOOK PROJECT

Stories of Aboriginal elders and Filipino women

Deborah Wall, Filipino-Australian journalist and researcher specializing in Aboriginal studies and oral history

Motivated by reconciliation between Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Australians and other Australians -- a Filipino Australian born in Manila, Deborah Ruiz Wall completed oral history projects involving Filipinos and Aboriginal Australians in Sydney.

Her funded projects include Redfern Oral History (now part of an Aboriginal community website); Around the Dining Table, story sharing between Aboriginal elders and Filipino women from inner-city Sydney (presented live by narrators at Customs House Library in Sydney); and stories about Filipino women and Aboriginal women from Western Sydney (presented as a publication and an exhibit of the informants' photographs and cultural artefacts).

After becoming aware of ATSI people of Filipino descent, Wall recorded the descendants' narratives in 2015. With Dr Christine Choo, she turned these stories into a book, *Re-imagining Australia: Voices of Indigenous Australians of Filipino descent*, Southport, Keeaira Press, 2016. Their work demonstrated the people-to-people link between Australia and the Philippines before Australia's Federation in 1901.

The project focused on the informants' personal stories that showed glimpses of the experience of their Manilamen forebears. In another section of the book, the stories were contextualized into Australia's early colonial history.



Severo Corpus, Manilaman and Emma Ngobing, a Yawuru woman married in 1898 - Photo courtesy of Elsta Foy

The narrators in the book -- the descendants of Filipino and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders (ATSI) - identify themselves as Indigenous Australians of part-Filipino ancestry, and it can be drawn from cultural markers mentioned by the narrators themselves: Filipino food, dance and music passed on to them by their elders, and traits such as industriousness and resilience, close family ties, and deep spiritual beliefs. Why some Manilamen as aliens were not deported, and were able to remain

in Australia might in part be attributed to Australia's need to retain the labour of indentured Asian divers in the pearling industry. Only this industry was exempt from the application of the White Australia policy in 1901.



Reunion with Filipino relatives 127 years since the Puertollanos' forebear, Thomas Puertollano left for Australia. Kevin Puertollano (Front row, 5th from left), his sister, Roma Puertollano (4th from left) and cousin, Patricia Davidson (6th from left) - Photo by Deborah Wall, Marinduque Island, Philippines 2016.

Selected references:

F. V. Aguilar, 'Re-imagining Australia: Voices of Indigenous Australians of Filipino Descent' by Deborah Ruiz Wall with Christine Choo (review), *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints*, Vol. 65, No. 3, Sept 2017, pp. 411-414.

Storytelling: pedagogy for reconciliation (a Sydney experience of different approaches to oral history) / Deborah Ruiz Wall, *Oral History Association of Australia Journal* no. 30, (2008), p. 16-21; See also 'Sharing our Stories Around the Dining Table'.

Redfern Oral History, website:

<http://redfernoralhistory.org/OralHistory/More/DeborahRuizWall/tabid/156/Default.aspx>.

K.Tao, Kim & D. R.Wall, *Storytelling around the dining table: a workshop with Aboriginal and Filipino women*, Fairfield City Museum & Gallery, Smithfield, NSW, 2007.

I-Witness: 'Manila Men,' dokumentaryo ni Howie Severino, GMA Public Affairs, 1 December 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Tm-cP6IFw4>.

BOOK PROJECT

An oral history of Girangaon: the textile mill precinct of Mumbai

Meena Menon, policy researcher and activist

The writing of history has always been fraught with questions of accuracy, perception, judgement, and entitlement. But it has never been more apparent than it is today that the telling of history is hardly an exact science.

The role of the historian is critical. The ideological moorings of the historian cannot be separated from different versions of a historical age, event, person or work of art. The claim, therefore, of any historian to the whole truth is always contestable. We are constantly learning more, constantly adding more layers, separating fact from fiction again and again, in an attempt to get a better picture. Oral history is an acceptance of this reality. The telling of history can be done not just by experts but by the actors themselves, in their own voices. Voices 'tainted' by their own perceptions, and experiences, by hearsay

and prejudice. Because those who make history are motivated by these very imperfections. And quite often, understanding these help us to get a better understanding of the dynamism of social change, which, in turn, could hopefully help us to change things for the better.

It is in this background that my friend Neera Adarkar and I undertook, over a decade ago, the writing of an oral history of the textile mill precinct of Mumbai, called Girangaon, or Village of the Mills, called *One Hundred Years One Hundred Voices: The Millworkers of Girangaon: an Oral History* (Seagull, 2004; New Text 2016), *Katha Mumbaichaya Girangavachi* (Marathi, Mauj Prakashan)

Girangaon stretches over a thousand acres in the central part of the island city of Bombay. Today, the area has changed entirely except for the stray chimney, looking shabby and bewildered in the midst of the opulence of steel and chrome, buildings taller and more beautiful by far. Girangaon was once at the centre of the evolution of Bombay as a modern metropolis. The textile industry was one of the first modern industries in India and mill workers were among the pioneers of trade unions in the country. Girangaon was a stronghold of the Communist party and an important part of the history of Indian Independence. It is here that the party called the Shiv Sena took shape. The Bombay mafia was born here. The history of Girangaon can, in a sense, be called a history of Modern India.

The book traces this history and tells it in the words of the actors who fashioned that history. We wrote this book with the hope that the city of Mumbai should not forget its own history. We wanted to make sure that the role of the Mumbai textile workers in the history of India is not forgotten. Our voice is muted - and that of the people of Girangaon shines through with its stories of courage, of struggle, of passion, its hope and faith in the idea of India.

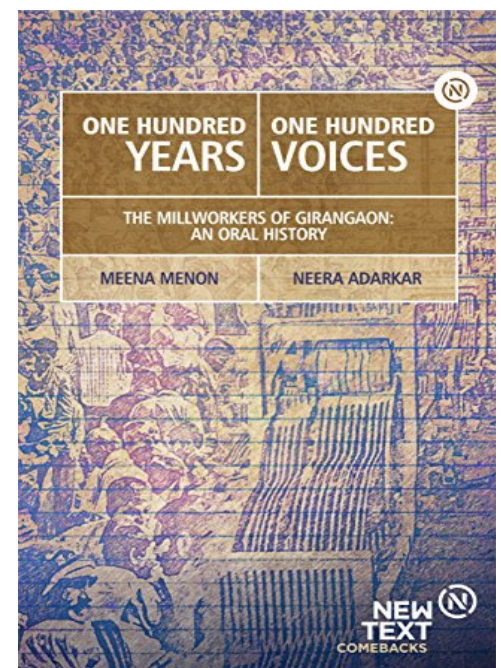


A public meeting of mill workers demanding housing at Maharashtra High School grounds, Mumbai.

The book has been well-received in general; people are still reading it, and it is now available in a Kindle edition too. Many have used the book; an exhibition in London, an excellent play in Hindi written by Ramu Ramnathan, directed by Sunil Shanbag, and many who have studied and researched Mumbai, and India.

Writing the book, doing the research, and interviewing the people of Girangaon, have been as educative and inspiring as participation in the life struggle of the textile workers to keep their jobs, and then for housing in lieu of these jobs.

While writing the history of the textile workers, and of Mumbai, our hope was to contribute a little bit to make sure that succeeding generations will develop it further, write in more layers, and get a better understanding of the past in order to create a better future.



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Business Histories that transform into social histories: Godrej Archives

is chief archivist, Godrej Archives

A gap in history:

In his prologue in the book '*India After Gandhi*', author Ramachandra Guha says that it seems that Indian history came to an end on 15th of August 1947. There is a growing body of literature on the social, cultural, economic, political impact of colonialism, but the history of independent India remains an unpaved territory. Historians are not really exploring this period.

Non-availability of records of contemporary India is also partially responsible for this lack of interest towards contemporary history. Records of the colonial period had found their ways to the National or State Archives as there was a proper mechanism established for the selection and preservation of historically important records of the government. However, this process was not followed rigorously after independence.

And when it comes to businesses, especially, their historical records were never the concern of the archiving world and their preservation was left to the discretion of the business families/business houses. There is ample literature available on individual businessmen in the form of biographies, memoirs of prominent businessmen or souvenir volumes of companies/firms, but the story of the businesses and products and how they shaped the Indian public history - that history hasn't come out. What we have is the economic aspect of history, but not business stories. But business histories do not exist in a vacuum. They shape social, cultural, political and economic values. And they make quite an impact on the way we

think. The larger aspect of business has not been studied - of people, processes and products.

IIMs and business histories:

The career of business history started in India around the 1960s when the IIM-Ahmedabad was started. They began a course in business history, following the model of Harvard Business History courses that followed a case study approach.



Vrunda Pathare interacting with former Godrej employees to understand the sports (Cricket) history of company.

That is how the business history curriculum was formed. Dr Dwijendra Tripathi was a pioneer in the way he collected business histories. After he retired, there was a lull.

Post-reform boost:

In the last 15-18 years, the Tata group have felt the need for an archive. In 2001, they started collecting all these documents around their history and opened up their archives. Godrej was the second to do so, beginning in 2006. In the last five years, there are other companies like Cipla, Dr. Reddy's and Bajaj that have begun to look at their histories and organizing their archives.

Godrej Archives:

The Godrej archives are located on the Godrej industrial Township in Vikhroli in Mumbai. The idea was first mooted in 1997 during the centenary year of the Godrej Group. The archives started in 2006. We have over 300 oral histories in English, Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Kannada and Marathi. We make only the edited transcriptions accessible to the visitors. It is open for whoever is interested, they just have to write an email and request for passes.

About 20 oral histories are also on display for visitors to listen to on headphones in the exhibition space at the Godrej Archives.

Uniqueness of oral histories:

We are a 121-year-old company. A lot of records have already been lost. The only real asset we have is the memory of the employees. In their oral histories, those who joined in the 1950s, talk about how it was like to manufacture the first ballot box for the first Indian elections in 1952. We only had photographs, there were no stories around it.

So oral histories are very important for us. One lady who was the first female employee in the Delhi branch joined

as a telephone operator and went on to become a store manager. When she had a child, she went to the government and found out about the rules and regulations of maternity benefits. She came back and informed the company, which wrote the first maternity policy for employees.

What was the organization culture then? What were the hierarchies and relationships? These kinds of intangible elements of history can only be unearthed through people's interviews. With stories of the aspirations and experiences of managers, vendors, distributors, business histories become more and more layered.

Exhibition report

Spaces and Memories: Oral History Exhibition by school students

Madhushree Dutta, Coordinator, Department of History, VidyaShilp Academy, Bangalore

Students of grade 10th along with twelve educators from Vidyashilp Academy (VSA) were engaged in a year long Oral History Project, where they explored various spaces and interviewed people from different walks of life to create an identity of "Self" vis-à-vis the community, under the guidance of Dr Indira Chowdhury, Founder-Director of the Centre for Public History, Bengaluru.

The Oral History group of VSA students shared their discoveries of various narratives through an exhibition, on 11th August, 2017, in their school premises, featuring six different themes about spaces, examining how personal narratives of the "Self" constitute "Identity" of individuals and communities, at large.

A 'walkumentary' explored the origin of Kaadu (jungle) Malleshwara, a place where wrestlers gathered to show



Students from other schools viewing the exhibition set up by VSA students.



A Visitor listening to the oral history interviews.

EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

The fluid oral histories in a digital exhibition at NCBS Archives

Venkat Srinivasan

Starting in February 2019, the Archives at the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) in Bangalore, India, is open to the public. The Archives hopes to grow to be a space for the history of contemporary biology in India. Its holdings include oral histories, photographs, official records, letters, and field notes.

Archives enable diverse stories. This aim guides every step of our work. But there is also the challenge - and opportunity - of using digital tools to connect the dots and contextualize different kinds of archival material.

This contextual underpinning is especially necessary for institutional history narratives where one has to step out of the examined object both spatially and temporally to make sense of it. As the protagonist, Grace Marks,

says in Margaret Atwood's 1996 book, *Alias Grace*, "When you are in the middle of a story, it isn't a story at all, but only a confusion, a dark roaring, a blindness (...). It is only afterwards that it becomes anything like a story when you're telling it to yourself or someone else."

Narrating institutional histories is very much about trying to understand the multiple layers and contexts. The quest is to find a way to bridge depth, breadth and meaning.

Thirteen Ways

At NCBS, we were faced with the task of putting together a digital exhibition of its history from newly sourced archival

material. But, instead of having a fixed narrative with a linear path, we decided to exploit the advantages of the digital platform.

their strength. The story of Hebbal reflected the narratives of dhobis of Dhobi ghat. The pathos of modernization echoed through the various stories of land encroachment of small time farmers and land owners of Jakkur. "Elaipakkanaidu", the original name of Yelahanka reflected the migration of weavers' community from Andhra Pradesh, who went on to establish the first weaving unit in the city. Folklores and myths brought alive the birth of Devanahalli's ancient monument, the Venugopala Temple. Last but not the least; the philosophy of Vidyashilp Academy's, "no text book approach", charted the growth of the educational institute.

At the end, what emerged were the stories of: human needs, aspirations, struggles, longings, determinations and resilience at the face of challenges, creating extraordinary stories of ordinary people.

The National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) digital exhibition is built around thirteen ways to reflect upon and assemble the history of the institution, which is based in Bangalore, India. The title, "13 Ways", pays homage to Wallace Stevens' poem, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird". The exhibition tries to bring to light multiple interpretations of NCBS, woven by the voices of over 70 storytellers. The material for the exhibition is curated from records collected to build the Centre's archive as well as others at the TIFR Archives and from publicly accessible records. The oral history excerpts, along with over 600 photographs, official

records, and letters, give a glimpse into the Centre's history and show connections with the present.

The institutional history of NCBS is presented like a traveller's exploration into a new land, with the findings spread across the (digital) pages. The exhibition - <http://archives.ncbs.res.in/exhibit/13ways/> -- is best imagined as a cross between a filofax and a traveller's notebook, where one can insert and remove chapters, photographs, oral history interviews and field notes. We expect this to be a continuous process, ensuring that the story does not get fixed in one point of view or in one moment in history.

We felt it was important to consciously steer clear of a single narrative. The exhibition is non-linear and is built on a basic idea that there are many ways of sizing up the history of a research institute.

It has seven themes: shaping an identity for research in the biological sciences, on institution building, on the idea of growth over the years, on research trajectories, on the role of education, on the effects of setting up a new biology centre on individuals, on research, and on other places. And finally, a theme on issues that are part of the discourse in society - gender, hierarchy, outreach - and NCBS happens to be a microcosm for these issues.

In each of the themes, we have picked out archival material - interviews, documents, photographs, lab notes - that speak to its ideas. We mesh oral histories with photographs, current journal articles, and marginalia in old manuscripts. These are expanded upon through 24 chapters within the themes. The written part in each chapter within a theme stands as the narrative that guides the visitor through the material, and filling gaps where necessary.

One Event: different voices, different versions

Besides the seven narrative themes, the "13 Ways" exhibition has six data

visualization widgets to sample the archival material in different ways. The aim is not to build more data visualization widgets. It is simply to see how existing visualization tools can be used in the world of archives and be used to thread narratives with them. The widgets are based on existing open source software widgets built for other purposes. We extract their value in storytelling, and also in bringing them together to develop various ways of looking at one topic. For instance, Peopleplex is a widget that shows up as a nodal network of oral history interview excerpts, based on tools developed by Christopher Manning. SpaceTour is a Google street view-like spatial tour with embedded stories through oral history interviews and archival documents using Pannellum.

This includes connections between versions of the same event from different voices, or between successive revisions of the same memory from an oral history interview to a transcript.

Stringing narratives together

Through interviews, people shared a variety of stories that are not documented anywhere else. The exhibition's filofax structure allows us to place the excerpts within themes and string together pliable narratives to contextualize these memories.

Here are a few samples:

Soon after his arrival at NCBS, Sumantra Chattarji, a neuroscientist, talks about being stressed about his lack of productivity on the new campus and starting to study chronic stress in the amygdala portion of the brain. This is paired with manuscript material. H. Mohan, a technology scientist, talks about cannibalism in the animal house. Mitradas Panicker, a retired scientist, explains how he figured out why the pregnant animals he was supposed to get from Hyderabad were not pregnant when they landed in Bangalore. These are paired with the narrative text on the website that is the glue between the various archival objects. T. Eswar, an

NCBS cafeteria staff member for the past 25 years, explains how the campus cafeterias handle scale and the quality control checks for each food item before it is served to a community member.

This is paired with archival images in a chapter on scaling and growth of a campus.

Our future work is in making a template from this exhibit so that the public can develop other narratives from the same archival material. In other words, we want to expand the filofax structure to other storytellers and allow pairing of oral history material with other archival data. Linked archival data opens the doors to a space for multiple narratives to emerge from oral history interviews and other archival documents.



T. Eswar, NCBS cafeteria staff member for the past 25 years, during his oral history interview at NCBS. September 2016.

Excerpted from the Mission/Vision document of the NCBS Archives and from Srinivasan, Venkat et al. "Thirteen ways of looking at institutional history: a model for digital exhibitions from science archives", International Journal for the History of Science, [S.I.], v. 21, p. 71-83, June 2018. ISSN 1980-7651. Available at: <<https://revistas.pucsp.br/circumhc/article/view/36633>>. Date accessed: 22 Jan 2019. doi:<https://doi.org/10.23925/19807651.2018v21;p71-83>.

MUSEUM PROJECT

The Neighborhood Museum: focusing on the local

Surajit Sarkar,
Centre for Community Knowledge,
Ambedkar University Delhi

History doesn't belong only to kings and queens, lords and rulers, the rich and the famous. The people make history. Without ordinary people, the nameless, and the faceless... there would be no history. However, their stories, their voices are hardly ever recorded or heard.

*-Text, introductory panel,
Neighbourhood Museum, 2012-13*

Emerging from the objective of creating a space in which the overlooked local can be displayed, the Neighbourhood Museum Programme had become a way in which multiple sources of oral narratives and stories from the city can be brought together. Telling the story

of the city from the bottom up, one neighbourhood at a time, the temporary 'Pop-Up' Neighbourhood Museums organised by the Centre for Community Knowledge at Ambedkar University Delhi built a story of the lived experiences of the city.

In-migration into Delhi, beginning from the Partition and continuing till today, expanded the city population from half a million to over 15 million today.

unprecedented expansion propelled people into unpredictable terrains, encouraging new modes of everyday social, cultural and political interactions. These museum spaces can be thought of as a public forum, where marginal,

subordinate or lesser-known voices were presented and heard.

Looking at details of everyday interactions and lived experiences of people in city neighbourhoods drew attention to what is not mentioned in the 'official' narratives of the city. The Museum project built a bridge between researchers and locals in order to make sense of the transformations and futures of their neighbourhood.

This made it possible to follow the 'little' consequences of 'critical events' like Partition, like the arrival of the community tandoor from west Punjab. A source of succour for the countless displaced on their arrival to Delhi, in



Left: Part of the Display at the Shadi-Khampur Neighbourhood Museum, 2013
Credit - CCK Archives

Right: Display wall at the Nizamuddin Neighbourhood Museum, 2015. Courtesy - CCK Archives

time, its popularity changed the cuisine of the city. A dish as ubiquitous as Butter Chicken emerged out of this collision between cultures.

The temporary 'pop-up' neighbourhood museum, locating itself within a city neighbourhood, provided local residents with an opportunity to understand this layer of lived experience, critical to understanding the interactions and their consequences for city making. Its embeddedness in the locality allowed the Neighbourhood Museums to highlight everyday interactions, challenging the idea that there can be a single, homogenous made-for-museum narrative whilst telling the stories of transformations of the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural city of Delhi.

Emerging from memories of neighbourhood life, locating and reaching the city in the heart of its residents - the Neighbourhood Museum allowed us to touch a personal map of memories, experiences and expectations that define residents' relationship with the surroundings. Senior citizens from Shadi-Khampur, a densely populated locality now in west-central Delhi, made it a point to put on display a range of agricultural implements from their attics, last used in the late 1930s.

Among them was a 'ginning' machine, a mysterious implement for most, old and young, until the time villagers revealed that most everyday wear was made by separating the fibres and the seed of the silk-cotton plant, and taking the fibres to be woven into cloth at Rehgarpora, a Muslim weavers village that was displaced at Partition.

The Neighbourhood Museum was not just about giving voice to, or listening to the unheard, but also about bringing multiple voices in to engage in conversation between and about



A Tonga used by Rustam Seth's family used to travel around town in the 1950s, Nizamuddin Neighbourhood Museum, 2015. Courtesy - CCK Archives



Interactive map for residents - Places I like/ dislike / fear / don't know - artist Henri Fanthome, Nizamuddin Neighbourhood Museum, 2015. Courtesy- CCK Archives

themselves. Public events and low-cost interactive installations in these exhibitions draw residents and visitors to define and articulate their relationship with the space they inhabit and the larger city surrounding them. Oral narratives collected in the participative, transparent and neighbourhood-focused way, all the Neighbourhood Museum process to make an original contribution to the

conversation on the role of museums in society building.

ORAL HISTORY EVENT

Public Memory and Oral History, Gauhati

Nandini Oza

OHAJ Annual Conference on Public Memory and Oral History was organized on the 13th and 14th of November 2017 by the Oral History Association of India <https://ohaindia.wordpress.com/> and the Department of History, Gauhati University, Assam. This conference was a significant gathering of esteemed historians, scholars, researchers and students of history where there was a free exchange of ideas as well as discussions on various issues concerning oral history, its significance and the challenges the discipline faces.

Professor Meeta Deka's presidential address emphasized how "oral history is the repository of those not in power". Professor Alessandro Portelli's keynote address focussed on how "oral history" "gains" significance with the increasing mistrust of official history. Oral history is respectful of people's ability to speak... and recognises the ability of people to be authors and creators."

Professor Shiela Bora, a senior historian who has taught at the University of Gauhati and who has taught women's history at Harvard University, talked of how little was known of Kanaklata Barua in spite of being one of the youngest martyrs of the freedom movement of India. Kanaklata fell to British bullets in the Quit India movement of 1942 while trying to hoist the tricolour at Gohpur police station in Assam. Professor Bora talked of the almost complete absence of written documents or archives concerning Kanaklata in spite of her being a very brave and a unique struggle. She narrated how it was the



Professor Alessandro Portelli giving his keynote address at OHAJ, Guwahati, 13 November 2017. Meeta Deka, President OHAJ (2016-2017) is also seen here.

medium of oral history that allowed her to reconstruct the account of Kanaklata's courageous life in absence of other sources. This account is now published by National Book Trust as part of its series on women pioneers of the country. Professor Indira Chowdhury, senior and founding member of OHAJ, presented her work of oral history furthering the history of partition of India and Pakistan (focusing on East Pakistan, now Bangladesh).. Professor Chowdhury explained how oral history was important in the reconstruction of not just the events but the impact of partition on people and communities as there is very little known about this momentous event in the country that impacted deeply the lives of a large number of people.

Professor Fleur D'Souza who was the head of the department of history, St. Xavier College, Mumbai, presented a paper titled 'Oral History as a pedagogical tool'. She narrated her own experience in getting students interested in the subject of history through the use of oral history as a tool, especially to explore topics like the Sindhi community in Mumbai and the Mumbai riots.

This is an edited extract from the blog site: <http://nandinikoza.blogspot.com/2018/01/insights-from-annual-conference-oral.html>



[L-R]: OHAJ Presidents: Meeta Deka (2016-2017); P.K. Srivastava (2013-2014); Indira Chowdhury(2014-2016); Surajit Sarkar (2017-2018) at OHAJ conference, Guwahati, November 2017.



ORAL HISTORY EVENT

Oral History Interview with consumer activist Dr Sakuntala Narasimhan

Kala Sunder

India passed the Consumer Protection Act way back in 1986, a triumphant culmination of a challenging consumer rights movement. One of the passionate consumer rights activists, since 1978, was Dr Sakuntala Narasimhan.

She was National Vice-President of Consumer Guidance Society of India, Mumbai, 1989-90 and Trustee, Consumer Education and Research Centre, Ahmedabad, 1994-2006 and won the Government of India National Award for Consumer Protection twice, in 1994 and 2000. She was a columnist on consumer affairs for Deccan Herald, 1982- 2009 and has published three books on consumer protection, all commissioned and published by CERC Ahmedabad in the 1990s: Children as Consumers, Advertisements: The Hidden Persuaders, which became a bestseller, and Safety in Household Electrical Appliances.

Kala Sunder conducted an oral history with her on June 26, 2018. Here is a short extract from the interview about how she began her battle for consumer rights in India.

You can read the full interview text here:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-179111407/episode-1-sakuntala-narasimhan-and-the-birth-of-indias-consumer-movement>

KS: How did you become a consumer activist? activist?

SN: I have been in the consumer protection movement for exactly 40 years now. And how I came into the movement is an interesting story.

I had just joined *Times of India* as one of the sub-editors at *Femina*. And the Consumer Guidance Society of India had its office just behind the Times of India office. And our editor then, Vimla Patil, was interested in the consumer movement, because it was something new. She was thinking of introducing a page every month in *Femina*. So when we got invitations for meetings and discussions at the Consumer Guidance Society of India, nobody wanted to go, because it wasn't attractive or glamorous enough. Everyone wanted to go and interview film stars or go to cover a fashion show. So they pushed me, and I was the junior-most, so I couldn't say no. I walked across to the Consumer Guidance Society of India office, attended meetings. And slowly, slowly I got very interested because this is when the group of men and women who were running the Consumer Guidance Society of India, CGSI, they call it, were very active in trying to get a lot of legislation passed. For example, there was no rule about MRP at that time. I am talking

about the 1970s. You never knew whether the bread loaf or medicine on the shelf was one month old or one year old or ten years old. They were working towards that. There were not enough laws to prevent unethical advertising. So they were trying to monitor that. And Use By date. All these things were not existing at that time. So every week they would have meetings and discussed all these things.

And when *Femina* started a consumer page, I was put in charge. I needed something to write about.

So I would come back and write about it. And CGSI, incidentally, happens to be the oldest consumer protection organization in India. It is something like 62 years old. And it was started by nine housewives. Just housewives. I have met three or four of them. They did lovely work. They put it on its feet, although the government didn't support much. They still operate from dilapidated barracks, one small, tiny room. It's called Hutment J - in Bombay, just behind Times of India building. And there wasn't much support from either the State government or the Union government, although we kept pushing for legislation. And this is how I got interested.

Incidentally, I also got to know and meet a very famous paediatrician named Dr R K Anand. He did pioneering studies on how multinational companies producing baby foods were pushing free supplies in all the maternity wards of hospitals and giving a tin as a gift to women who had just given birth, especially the low-income groups. And looking at the chubby picture of a fat, fair baby on the tin, they would all think that if I fed my child this powder instead of breast milk, it would also become chubby and healthy. And that was very unethical, but there was no law to stop it. Now we have a law saying that multinationals cannot distribute baby powder. Dr Anand did a study and found that more than a thousand children, newborn children, had died in Africa, and a few hundred had died in India among the lower income groups. . Because once they are discharged from the hospital, these women would go home, each tin would cost 150 - 200 rupees, and they didn't



have the money to feed the child on just the powder, so they would dilute it. Instead of two spoons of powder per bottle, they would use one. And also, the bottle had to be sterilized with boiling water, the powder had to be mixed with boiled water, and people in slums don't have boiled water or clean water. started getting water. So a lot of children started getting infections. Dying, in fact. And Dr Anand was horrified. So he called a big meeting. I was invited. I went to that meeting. I wrote about this. Following this, we took up, not just CGSI but many consumer groups around the country, we took up lobbying work to introduce a legislation saying that multinationals cannot distribute free samples and more importantly, in their advertisements, they have to say that mother's milk is the best. That line was not there before this legislation came. So women used to think that mother's milk is not good, as good as a bottle, powder milk. And if you don't feed breast milk, it dries up. It's a vicious circle. So this is how thousands of children were harmed. And Dr Anand was the one who exposed it.

So I got interested in issues like this. I had these two columns in *Deccan Herald* and I was also writing prolifically in *Hindu*, *Indian Express*, so many magazines and everything. And I was constantly looking for ideas.

During a visit to the US on a Fulbright scholarship, Dr Sakuntala Narasimhan met Dr Esther Peterson, consumer advisor to six American Presidents, who put her in touch with Ralph Nader's team.

SN: Ralph Nader is, of course, the world's pioneering consumer activist. He sued an auto company for putting safety as a lower priority than having fancy models. And everyone laughed at him and said, how can you sue a corporation, which has millions, and you are just a poor lawyer! He was an immigrant.

And he won his case! And since then, it has become mandatory to have airbags. Safety has been updated. So he has been an inspiration to most of us. And he has a team of very loyal

and very dedicated workers. One of them was Dr Sidney Wolfe, a medical practitioner. Maybe he is still there, I don't know. I remember I wrote to him asking about injectable contraceptives. This was being promoted in India in a big way as part of our Family Planning. And they would go to smaller towns and villages and get women to come, offer them 100 rupees, 200 rupees, whatever, some incentive, and inject them with this contraceptive saying, *Baccha nahin hoga abhi, do saal ke liye, teen saal ke liye*. None of them were told about the possible side effects or ill effects. And it did cause a lot of ill effects. So I wrote to Dr Sidney Wolfe and he promptly gave me all the information and said it is **not** okay, you should try to **stop** it. Because we don't advise it.

I wrote my column on that. So this is how it snowballed.





ORAL HISTORY EVENT

Oral History Interview with First Director of Indian Television: PV Krishnamoorthy

Indira Chowdhury

IC: Today I think we can focus on Doordarshan.

PVK: Television. Doordarshan came very much later. Television was part of All India Radio. In 1959 on 15th September, television was inaugurated by the President of India on the fifth floor of the Akashvani Bhavan. Although I became the first director of Indian Television, I was not there on the inaugural day. I was in Orissa at that time (Station Director of All India Radio), where I did a lot of experiments about forming radio listening clubs among farmers. The Canadians heard about it and gave me a fellowship. Half way through my trip, I get an instruction from the Colombo Plan people: "Mr. Krishnamoorthy you have been selected as the first Director of Television in India and they want you to go to the University of Florida. There is a group of people coming from India, you will join them."

That team had the Director of Education Delhi, Mr Bhatt and a producer for television called Narendra Kumar. So we had the advantage of jointly watching good programmes on television. We were learning together and we were discussing problems long before we came to India.

IC: What were the programmes you produced when you came back?

PVK: The school television was funded by the Ford Foundation and the social education through television was funded by UNESCO. I was surprised to find that the minimum laboratory equipment was not available even in some of the better schools in Delhi. So we decided we will mount experiments and show them on television. So we trained people for

television from the school system, which the UNESCO complimented us on. We got the British Council to help us with the teaching of English. That was a very serious lacuna in Indian schools.

I think, by and large, we broke new ground in what is called 'Indian television'. Well, it had its ups and downs. Sometimes, the television sets did not work, sometimes, the set was locked up in Principal's room! But this was an experiment and as an experiment, it was a great success. For the social education through television programme, we got people in *mohallas*

to gather around a set and discuss their problems. And we brought out a magazine to which they contributed. So there is a sense of belonging. The UNESCO really thought it was a great success.

IC: And in what language were they speaking?

PVK: Hindi. All these programs were in Hindi. English had no place at all except in school television. These two projects were well-documented and were an eye opener not only for us but for the international community.

I moved in and out of television, I was brought back to the headquarters to head the agricultural radio. Then I was in Calcutta with AIR. But Mrs. Gandhi had already selected me for Bombay Television but the studios were not ready. So I was posted to Madras. When Bombay was almost ready, I was shifted to Bombay Television. I was the first director.

IC: What were the programmes you

produced there?

PVK: We had a very popular programme with Tabassum called Phool Kile Hain Gulshan Gulshan. I did the signature tune for that. And Naushad came and congratulated me for that signature tune. Once C. Ramachandra, the music composer being interviewed by Tabassum on the famous song which Lata sang in front of Pundit Nehru Aye mere Watan ke logon - [While discussing this song], both of them started weeping - and it was all recorded. Marvellous programme! Tabassum was a very great personality.

We did a programme called Aye Anjaane. This was on the extras of the film industry - the vicissitudes, and the trials and tribulations of the poor artist - they are paid a pittance. We went and shot in hovels where they lived. I was threatened by the film industry at that time. I.S. Johar was the secretary. He rang me up and said "What is all this Mr. Krishnamoorthy? We thought you were a decent fellow." So, it was not a cake walk, Bombay Television.

IC: What about the "Satellite Instructional Television Experiment" or the "SITE Programme"?

PVK: The Indian Space Research Organisation asked for my services. So I was shifted from Bombay Television to Delhi on a promotion of Deputy Director General in charge of Television.

Mrs. Gandhi had said, SITE must succeed because the Americans think it will not succeed. See, that Satellite ATS-6 had done a bit of work in the Appalachians and in the Rocky Mountains, with limited success. Ultimately, it was decided to give it to India, but the Americans always



felt that we cannot do it, we were incapable of delivering the goods. So Mrs. Gandhi took it upon herself and she told Professor Satish Dhawan "This experiment has to succeed."

IC: What was the role of Yash Pal?

PVK: He was in charge of the whole thing - my leading light. My dealings were with him, Chitnis, Karnik and Kale. I understood their language and they paid ample credit to me. SITE was a success and that gave me my next job - Director General of Doordarshan.

IC: Which year was that?

PVK: 1976

IC: That was the year of Emergency. It was still on.

PVK: It was the height of Emergency.

IC: Were you nervous, taking over at that point of time?

PVK: You know, my life has always been a challenge, when we left Burma, with just our dhoti and our shirt. That gave us the guts to face anything in life. Nothing can be worse than walking into the unknown. And we started our lives

with a big question mark "What next?" So these pin pricks don't matter to me, I have faced life squarely.

IC: So tell me, how did the Emergency affect Indian television?

PVK: Thank god, thank god. I was in charge of SITE, I was in the villages of India, I didn't know what was happening in New Delhi.

IC: So, what did you hear of what was going on in Delhi?

PVK: No, whenever I came back to Delhi, they said 'He has been arrested.' "The BBC correspondent has been sent away." And we heard news and all that. I was not in charge of News and Current Affairs. It was clearly mentioned Mrs. Gandhi wants SITE to succeed, so whether I am in Delhi or in Timbuktu, nobody asked me.

IC: What about the lifting of the Emergency? How did that affect everyone?

PVK: I'll tell you, Mr. Advani became the Minister for I&B and called for a meeting of all the media heads. I remember one thing he said in that meeting. "I know gentlemen, you were asked to stand and you crawled" - something to that effect -

you went beyond what was expected of you, became more loyal than the king. I was the only media head who was not called to the Shah Commission. But the officer of the CBI came to my office and talked to me "Where were you at this time when bombing was on?" I was away in Madhya Pradesh. Where were you when ...? I was in Timbuktu. They were cross checking, as to what role I played during the Emergency. My family hardly saw me. Thank God, Satellite Instructional Television Experiment and the Emergency fell into the same socket. I can't say what I would have done if I had been in charge of News and Current Affairs; but my conscience tells me that I would have at least put my foot forward, not sheepishly or slavishly take the orders. I believe strongly, that this is the reason why they appointed an additional Director General.

Interviewed on: 15 May 2012

Transcribed by: Kaveri Murthy

PHOTO ESSAY

Stories of Resistance and Struggle from OHA 2018, Montreal

Piyusha Chatterjee

Community and university-based affiliates of the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling at Concordia University in Montreal or Tiohtià:ke, the unceded land on which the university is located, put together a showcase of oral history research-creation projects during the last Oral History Association Annual Meeting held from October 10, 2018, to October 14, 2018. The public-facing projects went beyond the conference rooms on to the streets and university foyers and into different parts of the city, providing a diverse experience of oral history as a methodology and creative practice. This short report provides only a little glimpse of the activities that unfolded over the four-day conference.

Broadly themed as "History Inhabits Each of Us", the exposition spoke well to the overarching conference theme of "Oral History in Challenging Times" as it brought together diverse sets of narratives about people's struggles, resistances and histories from the city and from different parts of the world. Many of the projects were collaborative initiatives between university-based researchers and artists, activists and community-based oral historians, and they broke down the usual boundaries between the researcher and the researched in representation. Audio and artist-led walks into Montreal neighbourhoods, performance pieces built around oral histories with communities in struggle, sound and art installations that documented people's memories and their voices, resistance stories and their multi-media representations were all part of the showcase that fore-fronted participatory research and their creative interpretation in the field of oral history.

One of the projects involved a live mural-making by indigenous artist Cedar Eve Peters from an artists' collective called Unceded Voices. The mural, painted during the four days of the conference in the university atrium, represented the emerging voices of indigenous peoples. Common spaces within the university, such as the foyer, staircase, the library became the venue for exhibits that documented the history and geography of Montreal in creative ways, talked of Quebec's student strikes since 2005, and recounted stories of immigrants in Montreal and experiences of conflict, displacement and the struggle of belonging among people displaced by war and other kinds of violence.



Leila Qashu's multimedia exhibit was titled "Digital Representations of Resistance: Participatory Video Expressions of Young Arsi Oromo Women's Challenges and Expressive Strategies for Change in Ethiopia". It explored the challenges young women face and their strategies—especially the use of expressive arts—for discussing, questioning, resisting, and changing cultural practices and affirming their rights.



Cedar Eve Peters working on the mural in the university atrium. The mural painting was part of a larger exhibit which involved video installations and a walk titled "Decolonial Street Art". It was organised by Ioana Radu, Aude Maltais-Landry, Laurence Desmarais and Unceded Voices. The photo below is from the walk that explored the murals in the neighbourhood of Saint Henri in Montreal. This was a project that aimed to promote the work of indigenous street artists (murals and wheatpaste and stencil makers) and recognise the importance of walls and structures as critical spaces to reclaim unceded indigenous land.

HISTORY INHABITS EACH OF US

WENDY ALLEN
 SHAHRZAD ARSHADI
 HOURIG ATTARIAN
 KHADIJA BAKER
 KUMRU BILICI
 FRED BURRILL
 CENTRE D'HISTOIRE DE MONTRÉAL
 AMANDA CHALUPA
 ERIC CRAVEN
 LAURENCE DESMARAIS
 EMANUELLE DUFOUR
 DONNA GABACCIA
 ARIANNA GARCIA-FIALDINI
 CYNTHIA HAMMOND
 NADIA HAUSFATHER
 AMINA JALABI
 SHAUNA JANSSEN
 LEA KABILJO
 NURIYE KILINC
 LAUREN LAFRAMBOISE
 LUCIE LEDERHENDLER
 THE LIVING HISTORY GROUP
 AUDE MALTAIS-LANDRY
 FLORENCIA MARCHETTI
 RUSHDIA MEHREEN
 ELIZABETH MILLER
 MARION MILLER
 MOUNIR NASRI
 JOYCE PILLARELLA
 POHANNA PYNE FEINBERG
 LEILA GASHU
 IOANA RADU
 NANCY REBELO
 ANNA SHEFTEL
 ASHA SIAD
 LUIS C. SOTELO
 JEN SPIEGEL
 TASHI COLLECTIVE
 UNCEDED VOICES
 KATHLEEN VAUGHAN
 DAVID WIDGINGTON
 STACEY ZEMBRZYCKI

Concordia University's Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling (COHDS) is proud to present a rich tapestry of research-creation projects for OHA 2018. These public projects engage with personal story, and our troubling times, in creative ways. Funded by Concordia University's Office of Research.



The "History Inhabits Us All" poster with the names of all the participants who contributed to the collaborative research-creation exhibition.



"It Is Only Sound That Remains" was a sound theatre performance done in complete darkness, exploring the life and death of Montreal-based photojournalist Ziba Kazemi who was allegedly killed by Iranian authorities in the summer of 2003. The performance piece was written, directed and narrated by Shahrzad Arshadi in collaboration with Moe Clark, Caroline Künzle and Nika Khanjani.