

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Shariq Khan is currently completing his MA in South Asian Studies from the University of Washington. He works primarily on Indo-Persian cultural and literary history. He completed his BA with a joint major in History and Asian Studies from Kenyon College, Ohio, which included a semester abroad studying Persian at SOAS, London. He lives in Lahore, Pakistan.

Christopher Diamond is a doctoral candidate in the Dept. of Asian Languages and Literature at the University of Washington in Seattle. He completed his BA in Hindi and Music at SOAS under Francesca Orsini and Richard Widdess. For his Masters' thesis at UW, he produced a study of Vidyapati's 15th century Avahaṭṭha work, the *Kīrttilatā*. He is currently a Fulbright-Nehru fellow, departing shortly for India to complete his doctoral dissertation work on the comparative memory of Vidyapati's vernacular works in Mithila, Bengal, and North India. His work accesses sources in Hindi, Bengali, Maithili, Sanskrit, and sometimes Persian.

Sander Hens is a PhD candidate with a grant from Ghent University's Special Research Fund (BOF). He obtained his MA in Indian Languages and Cultures (Sanskrit & Hindi) in 2014 from Ghent University, with a thesis on Nayaçandra Sūri's Sanskrit *Hammīramahākāvya* (ca.1402-1423), one of the first court poems about the heroic exploits and downfall of the Chauhan king Hammīra of Ranthambhor (r. 1283-1301). he is now continuing his close reading and contextualization of this **text** under the supervision of Prof. dr. Eva de Clercq. His project aims to investigate from both a literary and socio-political perspective how a new type of literary hero, namely the tragic-heroic historical warrior-king, was introduced into North-India's literary culture with the emergence of the so-called Rajput epic in the beginning of the fifteenth century.

Archana Kumar is Professor of English at Banaras Hindu University. Her research focuses on Folklore, Gender and Diaspora, and Migration. She has worked mainly on women's oral traditions in North India and authored/ edited four books and published twenty articles in reputed journals.

Raj Kumar is Professor at the Department of Hindi, Banaras Hindu University, where he is the coordinator of Innovative Programme in Translation Skills. He received his PhD from JNU in Delhi, where he studied with the legendary scholar and renowned literary critic, Prof. Namwar Singh. His areas of research are literary criticism, modern and early modern literatures. He has authored seven books and hundreds of articles in leading journals.

Françoise 'Nalini' Delvoye is Directeur d'Études in "History and Philology of Medieval and Mughal India (14th-18th c.)" at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris, since 2004. She teaches Indo-Persian literature on performing arts in the Sultanate and Mughal periods and Indic poetry sung in North Indian music. She is presently working on the patronage of performing arts in Indo-Persian and regional sources, and studying the historical and literary contribution of lyrics transmitted through oral and written tradition

Ayla Joncheere holds a PhD degree in Oriental Languages and Cultures (India) from Ghent University (2016). Her BOF-funded research project (2012 – 2016) was entitled *Kālbeliyās – Dancers, Gypsies or Snake Charmers: Staging of Authenticity and Dynamics of Identity*. She began her training in Kalbeliya dance at the age of twelve (2001), and spent considerable time touring in Europe with Rajasthani artists. Since 2006, she began traveling to India on a regular basis to work with Kalbeliya dancers and other artist communities in Rajasthan. She also holds a postgraduate in Cultural Management from Artevelde Hogeschool (2011). She currently teaches Hindi at the Indian Languages and Cultures educational program of Ghent University. She has been performing in multiple dance projects, and is the co-founder of the dance collective, MaGenta.

Saarthak Singh is PhD student at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, specializing in South Asian and Islamic art. His interests lie in medieval architecture, water management and settlement patterns in pre-Mughal central India.

Corbett Costello is a doctoral candidate in the Dept. of Asian Languages and Literature at the University of Washington in Seattle. He completed his BA in Sanskrit at Columbia University.

Eva De Clercq is Associate Professor in Indian languages and cultures at Ghent University (Belgium), where she teaches Sanskrit, Prakrit and Apabhraṃśa, among other subjects. Continuing the tradition of Jain studies at Ghent University, her research interests focus on Jain narrative literature, in particular the Jain *purāṇa* tradition in Sanskrit, Prakrit and Apabhraṃśa. Having worked on Svayambhūdeva's *Paiṃmacariu*, a Jain version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in Apabhraṃśa, for her doctoral research (defended in 2003), she is currently working on an English translation of this text to be published in the Murty Classical Library of India (vol. 1 to appear Jan. 2018). Aside from positions as a doctoral and postdoctoral fellow at UGent, she was also research associate with Francesca Orsini (SOAS, 2008), and Humboldt Postdoctoral Fellow with Heidrun Brückner at the University of Würzburg (2009-2010).

Heidi Pauwels is Professor in the Department of Asian Languages and Literature at the University of Washington in Seattle. She teaches Sanskrit and Modern and Old Hindi language and literature, and courses on Hinduism. Her publications include two monographs on sixteenth-century Krishna bhakti, and one comparing classical, medieval and contemporary film and television retellings of the stories of Krishna and Rama: *The Goddess as Role Model: Sṛtā and Rādhā in Scripture and on Screen* (New York: Oxford University Press 2008). She is editor of *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema* (Routledge 2007), *Patronage and Popularisation, Pilgrimage and Procession* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2009), and *Satire in the age of Early Modernity* (with Monika Horstmann; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2012). As a result of her Guggenheim project on Kishangarh, she has published *Cultural Exchange in Eighteenth-Century India: Poetry and Paintings from Kishangarh* (E.B. Verlag in Berlin 2015) and a new book *Mobilizing Krishna's World* is just about to come out from from Seattle's UW Press (2017).