

Dhan Kaur Sahota Presidential Chair of Sikh Studies
Inaugural Lecture in Sikh Studies

Co-Sponsored by the School of Social Sciences, the Department of Anthropology Colloquium Series, Religious Studies Program, Department of Global and International Studies, Department of Asian American Studies, UCI Sikh Students Association and UCI Jakara Movement Chapter

December 4th 2020 | 3-4:30 PM PST

“Exploring Logics of (Non)Violence in Sikh Thought”

Professor Arvind-Pal S. Mandair

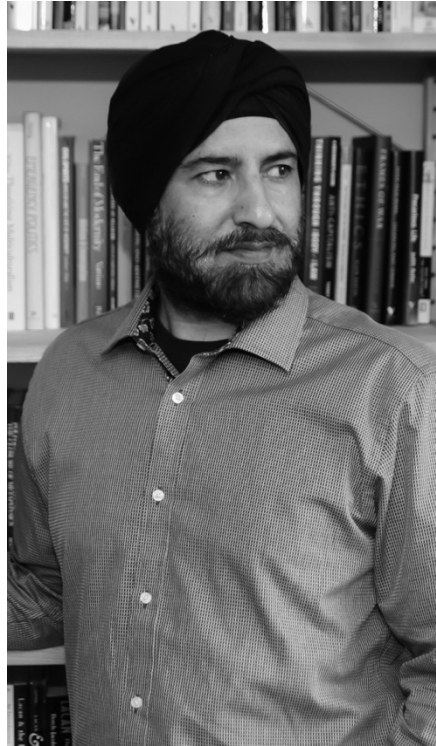
Sikh Studies shot to prominence in the 1980s due to a rising interest amongst scholars in the phenomenon of violence associated with Sikhs and Sikhism, encompassing both insurgent anti-state violence as well as state orchestrated violence against Sikhs in India. By the late 1990s, a body of literature had developed which framed Sikhs and Sikhism in relation to emerging architectures of secular security states and their governance of minorities. One of the cornerstones of this architecture were conventional typologies of violence (that is, a standard definition of *what violence is*, especially in relation to the category ‘religion’). Tracing these conventional typologies of violence to the liberal imaginary (broadly conceived), this lecture interrogates this normative understanding of violence which continues to be deployed in representations of Sikhism.

I argue that the purpose of such typologies, along with the dominant concept of violence they sustain, is to delegitimize and pacify resistance, irrespective of its particular form: non-violent, activist, alternative modes of thought; and ultimately to circumvent articulations of sovereign existence before the question has even arisen. My talk will draw on aspects of Sikh philosophy to explore an indigenous logic of (non-)violence, illustrating how it might resonate with some of the better known “critique[s] of violence” that circulate in contemporary political theory and political theology. The need to replace conventional typologies of violence with alternative models assumes greater urgency as minority communities (such as Sikhs) are no longer faced with secular security states, but with states that now fully embody more overt forms of religious nationalism.

Discussion and Q & A to be moderated by

Anneeth Kaur Hundle (Assistant Professor, Anthropology) & **Sherine Hamdy** (Associate Professor, Anthropology)

Zoom Webinar Registration [HERE](#)



Arvind-Pal S. Mandair teaches at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor in the department of Asian Languages and Cultures. He holds doctoral degrees in Chemistry and Philosophy/Religion. His earlier publications include: *Teachings of the Sikh Gurus* (with Christopher Shackle) Routledge: 2005; *Religion and the Specter of the West: Sikhism, India, Postcoloniality and the Politics of Translation* (Columbia: 2009); *Secularism & Religion-Making* (with Markus Dressler) (Oxford: 2011); *Sikhism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (Bloomsbury: 2013); and the encyclopedia volume *Sikhism* (Vol. 8 of the Encyclopedia of India Religions, Springer: 2017). He is founding editor of the journal *Sikh Formations: Religion, Culture & Theory*. His forthcoming books include: *Spiritual Warriors: Logics of (Non)Violence in the Sikh Tradition* (2021 forthcoming) and *Geophilosophical Encounters: Sikh Philosophy, Decolonial Praxis and Diasporic Logic* (Routledge: 2021/22); and *Sikh Philosophy* (Bloomsbury: 2021/22). He co-edits two new book series, *Routledge Critical Sikh Studies* (with Pal Ahluwalia) and *Routledge Studies in Translation and Religion* (with Hephzibah Israel). Details of these projects can be found at arvindpalmandair.com



Anneeth Kaur Hundle is Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Dhan Kaur Sahota Presidential Chair of Sikh Studies at UCI. To learn more about Sikh Studies at UCI, please visit:

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