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The Art of Public Mourning: An Introduction
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The Air India bombings remain a little-known, little-remembered event in Canadian public memory. Three hundred and twenty-nine passengers were killed by one bomb that detonated on Air India Flight 182 en route to Delhi from Montreal via Toronto on June 23, 1985. Another bomb targeting a second Air India flight the same day caused the deaths of two baggage handlers at the Narita International Airport in Japan. Two years later, writers Clark Blaise and Bharati Mukherjee observed, “the failure to acknowledge the victims of the crash as Canadians remains for most of the families the enduring political grief of Air India 182.”¹ Staggeringly, almost twenty-three years later, the Air India Victims’ Families Association (AIVFA) was still insisting that Canada “failed to incorporate this tragic event into its collective conscience and history.”² Feeling ignored, abandoned, and even made suspect by their government and many fellow Canadians, the relatives of the dead have struggled for decades in the face of enormous loss and grief to instill a widespread awareness of the events of June 23, 1985, and to bring about something resembling justice.

But what might it mean to claim the violent loss of so many lives as a loss specifically of and for Canada? Certainly, the lengthy disavowal of the bombings as an event of serious significance to Canada as a nation represents a clear injustice to those who were killed and to the families and friends forced to live on in the aftermath of their loss. And yet, critical questions must also be raised about the timing and strategy behind a renewed state interest in claiming the bombings as “a Canadian tragedy.” Following the September 11, 2001, attacks in the United States, the Canadian federal government has expended considerable resources to stake a claim to terror and to trauma by reframing the bombing of Air India Flight 182 as “the single worst act of terrorism in Canadian history.”³ Some notable attempts to do so include pronouncing June 23 as a National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism in 2005,⁴ and titling the Commission of Inquiry into the Investigation of the Bombing of Air India Flight 182 final report, *Air India Flight 182: A Canadian Tragedy*.⁵

Revising its initial representation of the Air India bombings as a foreign event, the government’s emphasis is now on reminding the Canadian public that this particular violence was “conceived in Canada, executed in Canada, by Canadian citizens, and its victims were themselves mostly citizens of Canada,” even as the suspected perpetrators are described as importing foreign “blood-feuds” from India.⁶ Consequently, the collection of scholarly essays commissioned for the commission of inquiry, its findings, and former Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s subsequent apology to the relatives of those killed in the bombings all seek to establish for the Canadian public the “facts” of the Air India narrative as a way of offering “closure to those who still grieve

for their loved ones.”⁷ The aim of these efforts would seem to produce, consolidate, and then marshal an official version of the Air India story as a story of Canada’s vulnerability to terrorism in order to bolster support for the state’s anti-terrorism policy initiatives. This marshalling is not without controversy given how anti-terrorism policies and laws are themselves implicated in perpetuating the very forms of systemic racism that underpin both the bombings and the Canadian government’s inadequate treatment of the victims’ families in its aftermath. It seems imperative, then, to create openings for conversations on legacies of the Air India bombings that are being glossed over, if not erased, by official forms of remembering.

Strategic reclamations of the bombings are made much more complex by engaging with the varied ways the event and its aftermath are memorialized in creative texts—in fiction, poetry, film, photography, dance, music, and visual art. Artistic and creative renderings of the bombings and their aftermath invite us to remember and grapple with the event quite differently than the strategic memorializing by the state. More specifically, these texts widen the historical record, challenging us to build connections between the events of June 23, 1985, and a host of other historical and ongoing events, policies, beliefs, and practices that demarcate subjects as insiders or outsiders, “us” or “them,” in national contexts. They also invite us to encounter the traumatic loss of so many lives and subsequent suffering and grief as forms of “difficult knowledge,” not so easily contained or given “closure” as official discourse might promise.⁸ While the state has begun, belatedly, to memorialize those who were killed on Flight 182, its efforts are strategically nationalist—noting the loss of “future unrecognized Canadian assets,” for example—eschewing encounters with the dead that might ask us to consider their complexity, their particularity, even “peculiarity,” and thus the incommensurability of their loss.⁹ *Remembering Air India: The Art of Public Mourning* generates a different kind of public record. It assembles an, archive of creative and scholarly responses to the Air India bombings, as well as legal testimony otherwise not easily accessed, with the intent of troubling the narrow delimiting of the “facts” as sanctioned by official sources.

Seeking to preserve and bring into wider circulation a number of marginalized voices and texts, our collection places emphasis on the traumatic losses experienced by family and friends and their impact on the wider South Asian community in the aftermath of the bombings. Over the past few decades, there have been a significant number of aesthetically based works by artists and writers who have represented these experiences, from Srinivas Krishna’s critically acclaimed feature length film, *Masala*,¹⁰ to Renée Sarojini Saklikar’s award-winning book of poetry, *children of air india*, and many in between. *Masala* centres on a struggling tough-guy protagonist named Krishna, whose immediate family was killed on a plane that he was also meant to board. Set in Toronto, the film incorporates elements of reality, fiction, and Bollywood camp to tell a tale of survivor guilt, diasporic subjectivity, and intercultural tensions. The filmmaker also uses parody to convey the hypocrisies of liberal multiculturalism and critique state posturings of benevolence, embodied in characters like a blundering Canadian minister of multiculturalism. Breaking from documentary or historiographic mode, this work accomplishes something valuable in reaching beyond “fact” to produce an account that is at once imaginative and resistant. Saklikar’s *children of air india*, a series of “exhibits” in poetic form, evokes legal process, evidence, and documentation intercepted by intimate snapshots of lives touched and abbreviated by the Air India bombings. Fragments and traces of these lives are made visible and then redacted through her text, creating a sense of the way in which memories themselves can be

felt as tangible and then not. The palimpsestic-style elegy Saklikar builds in *children of air india* takes a slightly different shape in her original contribution to this collection. In “air india, unsent / letters from the archive,” the poet addresses her own cousin, whose parents—Saklikair’s aunt and uncle—were killed in the bombings. Here the trope of unsent letters brings to mind both the unfulfilled potential of lives cut short and feelings of regret that often accompany loss. However, in their attempt to communicate the incommunicable, the insistence of the letters also speaks to resilience in the face of loss. While our collection does not endeavour to include or exhaustively review every creative account produced on the Air India bombings, it does revisit a number of important earlier works alongside such new ones, resulting in juxtapositions that we hope will enliven scholarly, popular, and official narratives of this history.

By generating conversations between artistic and scholarly works that offer alternative frames for attending to the Air India tragedy, this book refutes the characterization of artistic productions as less reliable than official accounts—a view expressed in the context of the commission of inquiry’s hearings. In his summary comments for the first report of the inquiry,¹¹ Commissioner John C. Major applauds the memorialization of those killed in the bombings through the establishment of public monuments, dedication of scholarships, sporting events, and the publication of memorial books by journalists and family members. He suggests, however, that “these must be distinguished from other books and films based loosely on the events of the tragedy,” as “the authors may have used artistic licence to develop stories which are not necessarily based on facts.”¹² While he goes on to insist that all of these texts and other memorial gestures “contribute in some way to keeping the memories alive,”¹³ we are interested in prying open this perceived need to warn the public not to confuse creative texts with the “facts” of the events. The assumption here, that facts somehow speak for themselves, that they function outside re-presentation, is a limited one. If the purported “facts” are self-evidently “objective” knowledge, then what is the impetus behind Commissioner Major’s call for such a distinction between memorialization practices? In contrast with Commissioner Major’s apparent unease with “artistic licence,” we see in artistic remembrance practices not only the enormous potential to offer new openings and alternatives to the Air India story that necessarily trouble and at times fracture the purported facticity (and thereby objectivity) of official discourse, but also an opportunity to call on the public to reflect on the traces of the past as they impinge on the present, to have a sustained debate about the continuing memorial insistence the Air India bombings and their aftermath make on Canadian public memory.

In this book we encourage an active, ongoing dialogue between official and artistic memorializations and between artists and scholars with the intent of questioning the dominance and recognition accorded to official frames of remembering. As philosopher and queer theorist Judith Butler reminds us, “the frame does not simply exhibit reality, but actively participates in a strategy of containment, selectively producing and enforcing what will count as reality.”¹⁴ For the contributors to this book, several of whom are family members of those killed in the Air India bombings and/or vocal participants in the juridical processes, in the media, and active in community organizing, the Air India story begins much earlier than June 23, 1985. The conflicts underpinning the bombings and their aftermath can arguably be traced back to an earlier history of British imperialism, to the Partition of British India, to ongoing-attempts at maintaining a white Canada, including anti-Asian riots in Vancouver and the turning back of the *Komagata Maru* from Vancouver’s Burrard Inlet, to Operation Blue Star in Amritsar, to anti-Sikh riots in

Delhi, and so on. Tracing the history of the Air India bombings to other events, experiences, narratives, and histories in this way reflects how remembrance—both personal and collective—plays an indispensable role in a historical accounting of the past. We also insist that while personal proximity to the losses of the Air India bombings must be privileged in such an accounting, it is important to broaden a sense of inheritance and responsibility to care for the impact of the bombings on our shared present and future.

The government's response to the Air India bombings reflects its assumptions about which injuries do and do not merit public concern. While the bombings are now being harnessed to safeguard the desires of Canadians to have "skies safe for travel,"¹⁵ the racial injuries repeatedly noted by the families in trial testimonies, interviews, and press reports are glossed over and not given recognition. Almost all of the contributors to this book demonstrate the urgency of engaging directly with the issue of racism in relation to the Air India story. Questions raised by sociologist Sherene Razack's expert witness testimony at the Air India inquiry continue to remain unanswered: Why did official agencies and the nation "not care as much as when far fewer Canadians lost their lives in the World Trade Center bombings? What can we say about successive federal governments that made no public space for inquiry into the bombings, could not bring themselves to even express condolences, and were not moved to commemorate the Canadian lives lost that day until more than twenty years after?"¹⁶ The official (re)framing of the Air India bombings as a terrorist attack over-shadows these questions and downplays the inadequacy of the Canadian state and public's response to the 1985 bombings and the marginalization of the Air India events in Canadian history. The exclusion of Razack's expert witness testimony from the official report of the commission of inquiry is a clear indication of how the state endeavours to deflect attention away from allegations of racism. We thought it was therefore crucial to reproduce her testimony (in the form of a report she submitted to the inquiry) here in this volume. Although hers is not a creative text, her testimony was treated with contempt and suspicion by lawyers representing the Crown during the inquiry, and then effectively disappeared from accessible public record by a government unwilling to entertain the possibility that racism played a role in its inadequate response to the bombings and to the families whose terrible grief was, from all reports, compounded by the abysmal (lack of) response from the Government of Canada, the nation into which many of the bereft had been born or acquired citizenship.

With contributions by artists, cultural critics, and scholars from a variety of theoretical perspectives and disciplinary approaches that address loss, grief, anger, and trauma, *Remembering Air India: The Art of Public Mourning* offers insights into how systemic racism and contemporary discourses on terrorism shape Canadian national imaginaries, and how our understanding of Canada's past is continually reframed through the present. The contributors interrogate how Air India indexes national and transnational histories of racial injustice that live on in the present and through its post-9/11 reframing by the Canadian state. These scholars and cultural producers challenge straightforward, linear conceptions of past, present, and future, exposing instead the enmeshments of past and present, and how these enmeshments shape the kinds of futures we are encouraged to imagine.

Ashwin Rao, the Canadian-trained Indian psychologist in Padma Viswanathan's novel, *The Ever After of Ashwin Rao*, bemoans the limited scholarship on Air India that contributes to the larger

amnesia by serving to confirm that Air India is marginal to the nation's history. Canada, Rao insists, not only "failed to prevent the bombing in the first place" and "failed, for eighteen years, to bring it to trial" but has also "failed to take the bombing up in scholarship."¹⁷ This relative silence, despite (or perhaps, in part, because of?) the striking number of scholars—from undergraduates to the professoriate—among those who were killed on Flight 182, drives Viswanathan's protagonist to initiate his own study of how victim families (including his own) have "coped up" in the aftermath of their losses. By initiating a dialogue between scholars and creative artists working on the remembrance of the bombing of Air India Flight 182, and bringing into circulation the marginalized works of several Canadian cultural producers, this book stems from our understanding of creative works as knowledge—as testimony, remembrance, and witness to Canada's racial past and present. Artistic works, in our view, offer creative modes of engagement that complement but also complicate and extend traditional historiographic accounts. The creative works collected here offer crucial contributions to knowledge about the bombings and their aftermath in and of themselves. By putting these works into conversation with related scholarship, we hope to demonstrate how they are instrumental to generating new and important insights about the events of June 23, 1985. The scholarly essays in this volume are not intended to inform readers about how to interpret the creative works; instead, they see in the creative works forms of knowledge about the Air India tragedy that remain under-acknowledged and under-utilized in official responses and remembrances of this event, and thus they aim to draw out the knowledge contributions of the creative works and further build upon the important insights these texts are making. In addition, through the pairing of scholarly and artistic materials, we hope to make the book more accessible to teachers, students, and to an engaged wider public.

This book also offers an archive of speech acts, such as Razack's testimony, and then Prime Minister Stephen Harper's apology to the Air India families offered at the twenty-fifth commemoration ceremony in Toronto; as well as artistic performances, such as Lata Pada's *bharatanatyam* dance performance, *Revealed by Fire*, that have not otherwise been preserved as a matter of public record or that are ephemeral in nature due to their form, as in the case of Pada's performance.¹⁸ Reproducing Razack's testimony and Prime Minister Harper's speech and generating scholarship on *Revealed by Fire* in the pages of this book help sustain and nurture memories of these events. The contributors to *Remembering Air India* argue for and demonstrate the political potential in remembering and memorializing the past "otherwise." We are indebted here to the work of memory scholar Roger Simon, who argues that "remembering otherwise" requires an engagement with those traces of the past that "arrive in the public realm making an unanticipated claim that may wound or better, instantiate a loss that haunts those to whom these claims are addressed."¹⁹ In an earlier work, Roger Simon, Sharon Rosenberg, and Claudia Eppert distinguish between remembrance as a strategic practice and remembrance as a difficult return.²⁰ While strategic approaches to remembrance (such as state reframings of the Air India bombings in a post-9/11 context discussed above) frequently aim to "bolster hegemonic, emergent, and, at times, insurgent nationalisms and ethnocultural identifications," a difficult return of memory requires us to reconsider "how to live with what cannot be redeemed."²¹ In its haste to marshal and consolidate a particular version of the past, a strategic remembrance practice eschews complexity in order to be consolatory. Remembering otherwise, as a practice of grappling with memory as a difficult return, requires a different orientation to the past; as Simon suggests, it includes "the production of a historical imaginary within which it is possible to rethink as

sensible and justifiable those practices which establish one people's exploitation, dominion, or indifference with regards to others."²² It is our hope that this volume contributes to the production of one such alternative "historical imaginary" for the Air India bombings, for a reconsideration of how this traumatic history "lives on" in the present seems urgent.

The Air India criminal trials, the commission of inquiry findings, and Prime Minister Harper's apology do not adequately recognize the effects of the Air India bombings and their aftermath on others beyond the immediate families and friends of those killed on Flight 182. This book aims to broaden our understanding of how and why we collectively inherit these effects, along with demonstrating the impact of the Air India events on successor generations who are faced with the legacies of racism, trauma, and loss that the events index.²³ Bringing artistic and scholarly pieces together suggests that the experiences they document are historically significant and shared, and in so doing, they make a plea for public mourning. Our hope is that this book will, therefore, generate debate around what constitutes meaningful forms of remembrance, reconciliation, or redress, as contributors raise questions about the ethics and politics of coming to terms with violent pasts and racial histories of community and national identity.

The book is organized around five thematic clusters. Each cluster consists of creative works and/or testimony or statements not already part of the permanent public record, and a scholarly essay accompanied by a brief commentary. The clusters explore various aspects of the process of remembering, including how state memory projects inhibit other possibilities of memorialization; how questions of facts, truth, and justice are contested and negotiated through artistic and scholarly creations; and how scholars and artists can collaborate to express social realities, build alliances, and trouble/resist state histories and strategic remembrance practices.

The first cluster, "Remembering in Relation," expands the historical timeline leading up to the events of June 23, 1985, by insisting that a more complex understanding of the bombings and their aftermath requires us to remember a largely forgotten (at least until recently) event in Canada's immigration history: the 1914 routing of the *Komagata Maru* from the Vancouver harbour. The 376 passengers aboard the *Komagata Maru*, mostly Sikh men who were subjects of British India, were detained aboard the ship upon their arrival due to an obscure immigration policy, the "continuous journey regulation," which denied entry to Canada for anyone who failed to arrive directly from their point of departure. After two months of being stranded in the harbour, the *Komagata Maru* was driven back out to sea by a Canadian Navy vessel.²⁴ The recurring presence of the *Komagata Maru* in several creative texts about the bombings, including Anita Rau Badami's novel, *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?*, Uma Parameswaran's poem "On the Shores of the Irish Sea," and Padma Viswanathan's novel, *The Ever After of Ashwin Rao*, invites us to (re)consider how Canadian immigration practices, both historical and contemporary, that demarcate brown bodies as particularly suspect "outsiders" or "foreigners" to the nation are as much a part of the history of the Air India bombings and their aftermath as the oft-cited partitioning of India or anti-Sikh violence in India in 1984. In this way, these creative texts offer us a richer, deeper, more complex sense of how the history of British imperialism is profoundly implicated in producing the clashes around race, religion, and belonging that underpin the bombing of Flight 182 than what we can discern from the official discourse of either India or Canada. As Rita Kaur Dhamoon suggests in her commentary, the contributors to this cluster "invoke the reader to remember their own connections to Air India and to the *Komagata Maru*

by foregrounding the politics of emotions, weaving in and out of love, anger, and grief—for and against the self, Others, and the nation.”²⁵

The second cluster, “A Nation Outside of History,” points to the power of the state to frame documents with an evidential purpose and its constitutive acts of exclusions, which can effectively limit the Canadian public’s knowledge of the Air India bombings and privilege the state version of the story.²⁶ This cluster fills a significant gap in the official archives and brings into public circulation a condemned piece from the Air India inquiry testimony: Dr. Sherene H. Razack’s expert witness report commissioned by a lawyer for the families of those killed in the bombings on whether or not systemic racism played a role in the pre-bombing threat assessment, as well as in the post-bombing response. Contributors Maya Seshia, Sherene Razack, and Deon Venter also direct attention to the suffering and grief caused by the government’s apathetic response to the families in the after-math of the tragedy, which the families testify became part of the trauma itself. Redressing this suffering has not been a priority for state officials. For instance, the commission of inquiry’s mandated terms of reference made no allowance for recommendations on this front, instead privileging issues of state securitization.²⁷ By constructing Canada as a (defendable) target of terrorism through post-9/11 reframings of the Air India bombings, the state conveniently sidesteps its own role as perpetrator of past and ongoing violences. Our contributors to this cluster remember and re-centre the ways Canada has been implicated in the Air India bombings saga, challenging a vision of the country as an innocent nation outside of history.

The focus of the third cluster, “The Political Apology,” is the apology offered by former Prime Minister Stephen Harper to the relatives of those killed in the Air India bombings, which adds to a litany of declarations of regret for past injustices in the last decade or so offered by the Government of Canada. A number of scholars have suggested that the current moment might be described as an “age of the apology,”²⁸ in which the “apology has become a form of political speech with increasing significance and power.”²⁹ While Harper’s apology to the Air India victim families raises concerns about intent and strategy, concerns that contributors Cassel Busse and Karen Sharma explore in more depth, it is clear that political apologies continue to matter. The symbolism of the gesture often does make a difference to recipients and it also enables the state to demonstrate (however nominally) that it registers the grievances of its minorities. The Air India apology was offered in a commemoration ceremony in Toronto addressed to Air India victim families and friends; it was at one time available on the Government of Canada’s website, but today only a small excerpt of the apology is archived there (for this reason, we have reprinted the full text of the apology in this volume).³⁰ It is notable that the apology was delivered before a gathering of grieving family and friends rather than in Parliament as an address to all Canadians. Evidently, the bombing of Air India Flight 182, although characterized in official discourse as “Canada’s 9/11,” in other words, a national tragedy, is still not conceptualized as a national loss that could then call for widespread national mourning.³¹ Thus, we are pleased to include the then prime minister’s speech that, in its acknowledgement of “institutional failings” for the Air India bombings and the treatment of the families thereafter, makes the former prime minister’s perspective part of the historical record, and, in this way, a more widely remembered and acknowledged part of the Air India story.

The fourth cluster, “Creative Archive,” focuses on Lata Pada’s remarkable *bharatanatyam* dance performance *Revealed by Fire*, which provides an alternative affective, political, and aesthetic frame for understanding the trauma of the Air India bombings. Here the body as archive replaces or diverts a notion of archive as strictly document collection or bureaucratic management of “the past.” Pada uses corporeal presence and agency (against the spectre of bodies absented by the tragedy) to both remember and express the visceral grief she experienced over the loss of her husband and two daughters who were killed in the bombings. The dance work also meditates on the transnational character and impact of the bombings, which sees grief strewn both “here” and “there” and in the liminal spaces between as Pada addresses the diasporic conditions within which most of those who were killed in the bombings lived, complicating reappropriations of the bombings as a “Canadian tragedy.” Elan Marchinko’s essay in this cluster attends especially to the potential for this dance work to foster a form of reparation beyond those of judicial-legal framings. She reads the detailed and nuanced choreographies of movement along with the work’s layered dramaturgy as contributing to its affective force and thereby its ability to provide an occasion for remembrance and witnessing that commentator Teresa Hubel, in turn, describes as *Revealed by Fire*’s capacity to invite audiences “into a personal relationship with an international tragedy.”³²

While official attempts at redress such as the Air India apology seek to acknowledge the past in order to move on, Bharati Mukherjee’s short story, “The Management of Grief,” Eisha Marjara’s docudrama, *Desperately Seeking Helen*, and Renee Sarojini Saklikar’s poem, “air india, unsent / letters from the archive,”³³ which form parts of the fifth cluster, “Personal Loss, Collective Grief,” illustrate how grief persists in and shapes the present for those who lost loved ones in the bombing of Air India Flight 182. These deeply personal pieces direct attention to how the impetus that grief be civilly displayed or, better still, sidestepped in multicultural Canada, functions as a mode of managing minorities and their grief, as Chandrima Chakraborty argues in her critical essay in this cluster. Remembering and mourning Air India as a date that is “documented and well known, effaced and forgotten. / One continuing gesture, happened, never happened,”³⁴ Marjara and Saklikar, in particular, open up their personal history of grief to public gaze. Situating the Air India tragedy within a long history of racial grief suggests it is this everyday grief of racialized subjects that is in need of being recovered, rather than the grief of Air India conceptualized as an odd or aberrant event (or series of events) in Canadian multiculturalism. Critiquing the state’s call to be “model mourners,” Chakraborty demonstrates how creative remembrances offer compelling understandings of melancholia as an engagement with loss that refuses closure. It is this potential for ongoing grief to foster collective mourning that, according to commentator Suvir Kaul, enables critical remembrance practices and, more importantly, demands action that can reshape the national present and future.³⁵

Unlike the Canadian state’s myriad attempts to secure the meaning of the past for the present through the lens of a post-9/11 discourse on terror, artistic remembrances of the Air India bombings and their aftermath insist on the dialectical relationship of the past and the present and the ongoingness of grief and mourning, which can potentially encourage the creation of other histories, other memories, and other remembering. In their attention to grief and loss, the scholarly and creative works collected here encourage us to recognize the trauma that remains, to witness that trauma, and to provide avenues for further public mourning.³⁶ At the same time, they also demonstrate how lingering grief and trauma trouble notions of abject victimhood—by

raising more widespread awareness of the events of June 23, 1985, and by enabling new alliances and community activism, which then puts pressure on the state to accept accountability for the injustices of the past and present. They insist on the necessity of recognizing the role of racism and of racial/imperialist histories in the aftermath and events of June 23, 1985, widening the historical record and the usual “timeline of events” through which the Air India story is too frequently recounted. We hope the conversations produced in this book through our concerted entwining of artistic, scholarly, and official voices will provoke other kinds of exchanges of knowledge and memories that continue the work of remembering Air India *otherwise*.

Notes

1. Clark Blaise and Bharati Mukherjee, *The Sorrow and the Terror: The Haunting Legacy of the Air India Tragedy* (Toronto: Viking, 1987), 203.
2. AIVFA, *Where Is Justice? AIVFA Final Written Submission, Commission of Inquiry into the Investigation of the Bombing of Air India Flight 182* (Ottawa, February 29, 2008), 59.
3. Prime Minister of Canada, Statement Delivered at the Commemoration Ceremony for the 25th Anniversary of the Air India Flight 182 Atrocity, June 23, 2010, accessed August 10, 2012, <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2010/06/23/statement-prime-minister-canada-commemoration-ceremony-25th-anniversary-air-india>.
4. Prime Minister of Canada, National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism, June 23, 2011, accessed August 10, 2012, <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2011/06/23/national-day-remembrance-victims-terrorism>.
5. The public inquiry into the Air India bombing investigation was announced on May 1, 2006, after then Prime Minister Stephen Harper took office, revising Bob Rae’s report that called for an administrative inquiry on November 23, 2005. The final report of the commission of inquiry was released in 2010. See Government of Canada, *Air India Flight 182: A Canadian Tragedy, Final Report Volumes 1-5* (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services, 2010).
6. Prime Minister of Canada, Commemoration Ceremony. Also, see, for example, the timeline provided in Annex C, Government of Canada, *The Families Remember: Commission of Inquiry into the Investigation of the Bombing of Air India Flight 182, Phase 1 Report* (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services, 2007). For an analysis of this shift, see Maya Seshia and Cassel Busse in this volume; Chandrima Chakraborty, “Remembering Air India Flight 182 in an Age of Terror,” in *South Asian Racialization and Belonging after 9/11: Masks of Threat*, ed. Aparajita De (Lanham, MD: Lexington Press, 2016), 1-20; Angela Failer, “Remembering the Air India Disaster: Memorial and Counter-Memorial,” *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 31 (2009): 150-176.
7. Prime Minister of Canada, Prime Minister Harper Announces Inquiry into Air India Bombing, May 1, 2006, accessed August 10, 2012, <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2006/05/01/prime-minister-harper-announces-inquiry-air-indiabombing-o>.

8. The concept of “difficult knowledge” is most commonly attributed to the work of educational theorist Deborah Britzman. Building on Britzman, Jessica A. Heybach suggests that difficult knowledge “demands a shattering of self—one’s lovely knowledge of the world—to make way for the construction of something not yet defined.” Jessica A. Heybach, “Learning to Feel What We See: Critical Aesthetics and ‘Difficult Knowledge’ in an Age of War,” *Critical Questions in Education* 3, no. 1 (2012): 25. See also Allee Pitt and Deborah Britzman, “Speculations on Qualities of Difficult Knowledge in Teaching and Learning: An Experiment in Psychoanalytic Research,” *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 16, no. 6 (2003): 755-776. See also Britzman’s *Lost Subjects, Contested Objects: Toward a Psychoanalytic Inquiry of Learning* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1998); Erica Lehrer, Cynthia E. Milton, and Monica Eileen Patterson, eds., *Curating Difficult Knowledge: Violent Pasts in Public Places* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Roger I. Simon, “A Shock to Thought: Curatorial Judgment and the Public Exhibition of ‘Difficult Knowledge,’” *Memory Studies* 4.4 (2011): 432-449; and Roger I. Simon and Angela Failler, “Curatorial Practice and Learning from Difficult Knowledge,” in *The Idea of a Human Rights Museum*, ed. Karen Busby, Adam Muller, and Andrew Woolford (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 165-179.
9. Ashwin Rao, the protagonist of Padma Viswanathan’s novel, *The Ever After of Ashwin Rao*, raises this concern with state and other official efforts to memorialize the children who died aboard the flight, in particular, as “lost assets” while eschewing their “peculiarity.” Padma Viswanathan, *The Ever After of Ashwin Rao* (Toronto: Random House Canada, 2014), 80.
10. *Masala*, directed by Srinivas Krishna (Toronto: Divani Films Productions, 1991), DVD.
11. This report was published in 2007. See Government of Canada, Families Remember.
12. *Ibid.*, 139.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (London: Verso Books, 2009), xiii.
15. Prime Minister of Canada, Commemoration Ceremony.
16. Sherene Razack, *The Impact of Systemic Racism on Canada’s Pre-Bombing Threat Assessment and Post-Bombing Response to the Air India Bombings* (report submitted to the Commission of Inquiry into the Investigation of the Bombing of Air India Flight 182, 2007), 24. Reprinted in this volume.
17. Viswanathan, *Ashwin Rao*, 7-8.
18. Lata Pada, *Revealed by Fire. A Woman’s Journey of Transformation*, directed and choreographed by Lata Pada, composition by Timothy Sullivan and R.A. Ramamani, visual design by Cylla von Tiedemann, dramaturgy by Judith Rudakoff (Mississauga, ON: Sampradaya Dance Creations, 2001), DVD.

19. Roger I. Simon, *Touch of the Past* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 4.
20. Roger I. Simon, Sharon Rosenberg, and Claudia Eppert, eds. *Between Hope and Despair: Pedagogy and the Remembrance of Historical Trauma* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000).
21. *Ibid.*, 3, 5.
22. Simon, *Touch of the Past*, 9.
23. For a detailed analysis, see Chandrima Chakraborty, "Official Apology, Creative Remembrances, and Management of the Air India Tragedy," *Studies in Canadian Literature* 40.1 (2015): 111-130.
24. For a more detailed history, see *Continuous Journey*, directed by Ali Kazimi (Toronto: Peripheral Visions Film and Video, Inc., 2005), DVD; Ali Kazimi, *Undesirables: White Canada and the Komagata Maru* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2011).
25. See Rita Kaur Dhamoon in this volume.
26. For scholarly discussions on the archive as an expression of governmental control of its subjects, a hegemonic instrument of the state, see Bernard S. Cohn, *An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987); Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2002); Antoinette Burton, *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing Home and History in Late Colonial India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Ann L. Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).
27. For further discussion, see Angela Failler, "'War-on-Terror' Frames of Remembrance: The 1985 Air India Bombings after 9/11," *TOPIA: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 27 (Spring 2012): 253-269; Angela Failler with artwork by Eisha Marjara, "'Remember Me Nought': The 1985 Air India Bombings and Cultural *Nachträglichkeit*," *Public: Art/Culture/Ideas* 42 (2010): 113-124; and Failler, "Remembering the Air India Disaster."
28. Roy L. Brooks, "The Age of Apology," in *When Sorry Isn't Enough: The Controversy over Apologies and Reparations for Human Injustice*, ed. Roy L. Brooks (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 3-11; Michael Cunningham, "Saying Sorry: The Politics of Apology," *Political Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (1999): 285-293.
29. Allan Luke, "The Material Effects of the Word: 'Stolen Children' and Public Discourse," *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 18, no. 3 (1997): 344.
30. See Prime Minister of Canada, Commemoration Ceremony. The small excerpt of the apology archived on the Government of Canada's website appears at <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?mthd=tp&crtr.page=77&nid=542319&crtr.tp1D=9800-ast> accessed January 25, 2017).

31. See Chakraborty, "Official Apology."
32. See Teresa Hubel in this volume.
33. Bharati Mukherjee, "The Management of Grief," in *The Middleman and Other Stories* (New York: Grove Press, 1988); Eisha Marjara, *Desperately Seeking Helen* (Montreal: National Film Board of Canada, 1999), DVD; see Renee Sarojini Saklikar in this volume.
34. See Saklikar in this volume.
35. See Suvir Kaul in this volume.
36. In the recent "History, Memory, Grief: A 30th Air India Anniversary Conference," held at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, in May 2016, that brought together for the first time scholars, artists, Air India family members, and the wider public to engage in conversation on the 1985 Air India tragedy and its aftermath, Air India family members who spoke in various panels repeatedly noted that they felt ignored by their government and their fellow citizens. Attendees witnessed the palpable grief of the families, thirty years after Flight 182 crashed off the coast of Ireland at Cork. The effect of these conversations on the wider public who attended the conference suggests how affect can travel between and among bodies to cultivate a public that feels a shared responsibility for the nation's past and its future. For videos of the conference panels, see <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzLUWMt2NZLQSPHYi5l7GZwgiyXeKg8Ui>.

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