



# Unheard Voices and Forms of Cultural Memory

## *Oral History and the Postcolonial Archives in India*

The National Oral History Association of New Zealand and Ngā Pātaka Kōrero o Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland Libraries invite you to a presentation and discussion with visiting oral historian Indira Chowdhury.



**Wednesday 25 July 2018**

**9.30am – 12.30pm**

**Level 3 Waitemata Room, Auckland Central City Library**

**Please register your attendance: [treasurernohanz@oralhistory.org.nz](mailto:treasurernohanz@oralhistory.org.nz)**

Find out more: phone 0210414427  
sue.berman@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

 Auckland Libraries  
 @Auckland\_Libs

**NOHANZ**

 **Auckland Council  
Libraries**  
Ngā Pātaka Kōrero o Tāmaki Makaurau

Staff will meet you by the lifts on the Ground Floor of the Library to swipe access to Level 3.

There is a nominal fee to help cover associated costs.

\$20 per person. Payment details available with registration.

**Email today to secure your place!**

treasuremohanz@oralhistory.org.nz

---

**Programme:**

9:30: Registration and light refreshments

10:00: Mihi - Welcome

10:15: Indira Chowdhury presents *Unheard Voices and Forms of Cultural Memory  
Oral History and the Postcolonial Archives in India*

11:15: Facilitated discussion

12:15: Close

**Abstract for presentation:**

This presentation draws on my attempts over the last decade and a half to create archives of different institutions and organisations in the context of oral history work undertaken in India. This presentation argues that the conceptual consequences of colonialism which defined Indians as being steeped in backward traditions and lacking in history need to be kept in mind when trying to assemble an archive of a formerly colonised people.

I argue that the insights gained from interacting with “unheard voices” also enable us to understand elite oral histories from Indian institutions. In what ways do new forms of historical representation incorporate older forms of cultural memory and oral traditions? This presentation will attempt to show how we might re-understand the idea of collecting an oral history archive and the critical ways in which we might interpret its contents within a postcolonial context.

**Brief Bio:**

Indira Chowdhury is Founder-Director of the Centre for Public History at the Srishti Institute of Art, Design, and Technology, Bengaluru. Formerly professor of English at Jadavpur University, Kolkata, she is also the founder of Archival Resources for Contemporary History (ARCH), Bengaluru, now known as ARCH@Srishti.



Indira has published extensively and is keenly interested in setting up archival resources for research from primary material – particularly oral history archives. She began the Urban History Documentation Project at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences and set up the Archives of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai (2002-2006) and has actively curated several exhibitions.

Indira is a founding member of the Oral History Association of India. She was President of the Oral History Association of India (2013-2016) and President of the International Oral History Association (2014-2016).