Dispossession, eviction and precarity are the leitmotif of neoliberalism. How is the global migrant the chosen protagonist today for showcasing this leitmotif through spectacular suffering? How is the embodied experience of dispossession and perishability to be understood? Where does agency and subjectivity reside when lives are rendered disposable and the fateful struggle to live could literally mean dying? Has history done a full circle with markets today trading in enslaved migrants or are we in the throes of a ‘hyperobject’—something beyond our ken? How does the migrant speak to create counter discourses against modernity and a counter allegorical episteme? What is the value, if any, of definitionally dismembering people who move into categories of refugees, smuggled, trafficked, economic migrants, etc? Whose interest does it serve to construct a hierarchy of migrants along a ladder of the more deserving and the less deserving?

The keynote presentation will grapple with the various frames which trap the lives of migrants, globally. It will examine the legal and policy gaps in the context of large and mixed movements of people in vulnerable situations and discuss how walls, fences and incarceration are deployed as tools of governance in response to the ‘migration crises.’ It will also reflect on the meaning of a rights based perspective on and approach to migration.

Dr. Sanghera’s presentation is a part of the Forgotten Corridors: Global Displacement & the Politics of Engagement CARFMS Conference. For complete conference information, please visit uvic.ca/capi.

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