



We are pleased to announce the next Friends of the Kern Institute lecture:

***Violence and the State: Perspectives from Ancient India***

**by Prof. dr. Upinder Singh, Ashoka University, Sonapat, India**

**Date:** Thursday, June 09, 2022

**Time:** 15.00h—16.30h

**Venue:** Leiden University, Matthias de Vrieshof 4, room 008A

The lecture will be followed by **drinks** in the basement of Matthias de Vrieshof **3**.

***Violence and the State: Perspectives from Ancient India***

Locating the intersections between the theory and practice of political violence involves identifying the ways in which violence was folded into the structures of state and society, and the multiple, changing discourses around its forms and manifestations. This talk will discuss the ideas revealed in three texts – the Mahābhārata, Arthasāstra and Kāmasūtra about three themes – the coercive power of the state; kingship and sexual violence; and violence against the state. The challenge is to uncover political violence in sources which sought to invisibilize it and transform it into something else. A focus on the structures, ideologies and impact of political violence not only provides insights into the history of political ideas and processes; it also allows us to think about continuities, transitions and disjunctures in early Indian history in a different way.



**Upinder Singh** is Professor of History at Ashoka University. Her interests range over various aspects of ancient Indian history and archaeology, the history of ideas, and India's connections with the wider world. She is the author of *Kings, Brāhmaṇas, and Temples in Orissa: An Epigraphic Study (AD 300–1147)* (1994); *Ancient Delhi* (1999); *The Discovery of Ancient India: Early Archaeologists and the Beginnings of Archaeology* (2004); *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the Twelfth Century* (2008); *The Idea of Ancient India: Essays on Religion, Politics, and Archaeology* (2016); and *Political Violence in Ancient India* (2017). She has edited *Delhi: Ancient History* (2006), *Rethinking Early Medieval India* (2011); co-edited *Ancient India: New Research* (2009), *Asian Encounters: Exploring Connected Histories* (2014), and *Buddhism in Asia: Revival and Reinvention* (2016). Her most recent books, both published in 2021, are *Ancient India: Culture of Contradictions* and *The World of India's First Archaeologist: Letters from Alexander Cunningham to J.D.M. Beglar*.