

In association with  
**SACHI, Society for Art & Cultural Heritage of India**

**Ambassador Venkatesan Ashok & Mrs. Usha Ashok**  
*are pleased to invite you to an engaging conversation*

## **Chai Why?** **The Making of the Indian "National Drink"**



Courtesy, Philip Lutgendorf. "Friends," No. 411 in a calendar from Empire Calendar Manufacturing Company, Calcutta; ca. 1940s. The Priya Paul Collection, New Delhi; Tasveer Ghar Home Gallery

This illustrated talk by distinguished scholar **Philip Lutgendorf** details the promotion and spread of tea-drinking in 20th century India. Drawing on both archival and field research, it focuses on the mass popularization of "chai" through innovations in marketing and manufacturing, as well as changes in eating habits and social networks, and gives special emphasis to the role played by advertising and large and small-scale commerce in transmitting the "tea habit" to Indians, both before and after Independence in 1947.

**Please join a special conversation evening over tea and refreshments hosted by Ambassador Ashok & Mrs. Usha Ashok**

**Wednesday**  
**April 12, 2017**

**5:00 p.m.**

3435 Jackson Street  
San Francisco

**By Invitation only**

For RSVP email [info@sachi.org](mailto:info@sachi.org)  
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Social practices such as tea drinking in India "that now appear to be as quintessentially Indian as rice and dal", spread through much of India only during the second half of the twentieth century.

"As the first mass marketed food product in South Asia, tea and its indigenized avatar chai", says Lutgendorf, is "not merely an energizing and comforting drink: it is a potent (*karak!*) signifier of many of the historical and social transformations of the past century: the spread of urbanization, mass transportation, capitalism, nationalism, and of changing lifestyles, caste practices, and gender roles."

**Philip Lutgendorf** is Professor of Hindi and Modern Indian Studies and has taught in the University of Iowa's Department of Asian and Slavic Languages and Literatures since 1985. His book on the performance of the Hindi Ramayana, *The Life of a Text* (University of California Press, 1991) won the A. K. Coomaraswamy Prize of the Association for Asian Studies. He received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2002-03 for his research on the popular Hindu "monkey-god" Hanuman, which appeared as *Hanuman's Tale, The Messages of a Divine Monkey* (Oxford University Press, 2007). His interests include epic performance traditions, folklore and popular culture, and mass media. He maintains a website devoted to popular Hindi cinema, a.k.a. "Bollywood" ([www.uiowa.edu/indiancinema/](http://www.uiowa.edu/indiancinema/)). Two volumes of his new translation of the *Ramcharitmanas* of Tulsidas for the Murty Classical Library of India have appeared as *The Epic of Ram* (Harvard University Press, 2016). He serves as President of the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS).



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