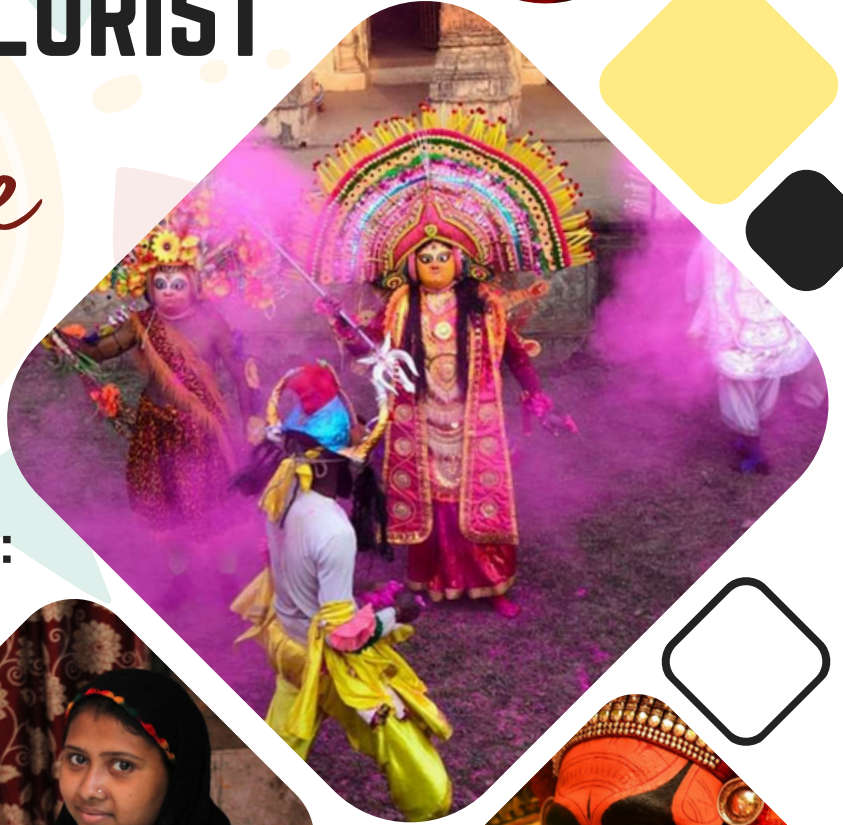


CENTRE FOR FOLKLORE STUDIES AND RESEARCH (CFSR)

1ST INTERNATIONAL YOUNG FOLKLORIST

Conference

Transitions and
Transformation in
South Asian Folklore:
Problems,
Perspectives, and
Prospects



ONLINE

MAR | 29,30 & 31 | 2024

Platform: Google Meet



**Transitions and Transformation in South Asian Folklore:
Problems, Perspectives, and Prospects
SCHEDULE (29th - 31st March 2024)**

DAY ONE

Friday, 29th March 2024

Joining Link: <https://meet.google.com/qgj-xzhk-peg>

TIME SLOT (IST)	EVENTS (DAY 1)	
10:15 AM - 10:25 AM	Welcome Address by Dr Sanjukta Naskar (Associate Professor, Janki Devi Memorial College, Delhi)	
10:25 AM - 10:35 AM	Introduction to the Conference by the Coordinators	
10:35 AM - 11:00 AM	Inaugural Address by the Chief Guest Prof. J. Bheemaiah (The Head of The Centre for Comparative Literature, School of Humanities, University of Hyderabad)	
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Special Keynote: <i>Folklore Today</i> by Prof. Pravina Shukla (Provost Professor Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology Indiana University, Bloomington, IN)	Chair: Dr Amit Singh (Assistant Professor, School of Undergraduate Studies, Ambedkar University, Delhi)
12:00 PM - 12:10 PM	Break	



12:10 PM - 01:25 PM	<p>Paper Presentation Session 1A: <i>Folk Consciousness and Practices</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploring Folklores in Search of an Answer to Climate Crisis: An analysis of Amitav Ghosh's select works By Bonosree Majhi (PhD Research Scholar, Department of English and Culture Studies; The University of Burdwan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Memari College) 2. Pattachitra: Redefining Eco-Consciousness through Scrolls and Songs by Suparna Mondal (English Department, University of Calcutta) 3. Crafting Tradition: Elephant Accoutrements and Artisans in Kerala by Sreeshma K. Venu (Independent Researcher) 4. “Role of Serpents in Indian Folk Rituals and Spiritual Performances” by Arun Kumar V, Umadevi N, and Dr Beena G (PhD Research Scholar, Reva University, Bangalore) 	<p>Chair:</p> <p>Aaleya Giri (Assistant Professor of English, University of Delhi)</p>
01:25 PM - 02:00 PM	Lunch Break	
02:00 PM - 03:15 PM	<p>Paper Presentation Session 1B: <i>Performance and/in Perspective</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Singing the Liminal: Exploring Performance and Devotional Songs in Jāgaraṇa Ritual by Komal Rajwansh (PhD Scholar, Ambedkar University Delhi) 2. Embarking on the Hero's Journey: “Akanandun” in Kashmiri Folklore by Insha Qayoom Shah (Research Scholar, Department of English, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, India) and Izhar-ul-Haq Wani (Assistant Professor, Kashmiri Government Degree College 	<p>Chair:</p> <p>Dr Nimeshika Venkatesan (Assistant Professor, Department of English, Sri Sivasubramaniya Nadar College of Engineering, Kalavakkam, Chennai , India.)</p>

	<p>Magam, Budgam, Jammu and Kashmir, India.)</p> <p>3. Telling of Tale(s): The Flux of Caste, Clan, and Performance in Making by Yashasvi Gaur (Former Research Scholar, Jadavpur University)</p> <p>4. Corporeal Gods: Politics of Power through Ritual in the Kullu Dussehra Festival by Gayatri Suri (Ph.D. Research Scholar, Panjab University, Chandigarh)</p>	
03:15 PM - 03:30 PM	Break	
03:30 PM - 04:45 PM	<p>Paper Presentation Session 1C: <i>Tracing Disappearing Cultures and Traditions</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Fading Folklore of Indian Courtesans by Shambhavi Ojha (Post-Graduation Student, Department of Anthropology, Pondicherry University) Tamlay: The Disappearing Ancient Wisdom of Ladakh by Mohd Ali Shabbir (Assistant Professor, Department of English. GDC Drass Kargil, UT Ladakh) Spirituality in Santali Indigenous Society: Nature, God, and Spirit by Rajib Baskey (Assistant Teacher, Chandra High School (H.S), Paschim Medinipur) Chakulia Panda: Unveiling the Cultural Icon in Odia Folklore by Ankita Panda. (Ph.D Research Scholar, Gangadhar Mehar University, Sambalpur) 	<p>Chair:</p> <p>Debolina Guha Thakurta (Assistant Professor, Department of English, Shri Shikshayatan College, Kolkata)</p>
04:45 PM - 05:00 PM	Break	
05:00 PM - 06:15 PM	<p>Panel Session: <i>Exclusive Inclusivity: Who Gets to Be the "Folk" in Folklore</i></p>	<p>Chair:</p> <p>Dr. C. Justin Selvaraj</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sangeeta Jawla, (Potter, Storyteller and PhD Research Scholar, Ambedkar University Delhi) 2. Garima Plawat, (PhD Research Scholar, Indiana University Bloomington) 3. Dr. Hemchandra Nameirakpam, (Assistant Professor, Sri Aurobindo College, University of Delhi) 	<p>(Assistant Professor and Head, Department of Fine Arts and Aesthetics School of Performing Arts Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai – 625021)</p> <p>Host:</p> <p>Bhumika Singh (PhD Research Scholar, Ambedkar University, Delhi)</p>
06:15 PM - 6:30 PM	Break	
06:30 PM - 08:00 PM	<p>Special Keynote: <i>Navigating Between the Global, Local, and Virtual in the Study of Folklore of South Asia and Beyond</i> by</p> <p>Prof Simon J. Bronner (Dean, College of General Studies, Distinguished Professor of Social Sciences University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) and</p> <p>Dr Semontee Mitra (Assistant Teaching Professor, Penn State University University Park)</p>	<p>Chair:</p> <p>Dr. Joly Puthussery, (Associate Professor and Head, Centre for Folk Culture Studies, University of Hyderabad)</p>

DAY TWO

Saturday, 30th March, 2024

Joining Link: <https://meet.google.com/tee-jtap-gqc>

TIME SLOT(IST)	EVENTS (DAY 2)	
10:30 AM - 11:45 AM	<p>Paper Presentation Session 2A: <i>Indigeneity, Rituals and Traditions</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Community Participation in the Rituals and Worship of Golu Devta: A Cultural Analysis in the Kumaon Region by Apurva Lohumi (Research Centre, PGGCG. Department of English, Panjab University, Chandigarh) Gods in Transition: A Study of Malakkari narratives of Kurichya community in Kerala by Anjana Ambali (PhD Research Scholar, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Kharagpur) Role of Drums and Drumming in Shamanic Rituals of Sikkim by Keshav Tolangi Sarki (Ph.D Scholar, Department of Music, Sikkim University) and Dr Samidha Vedabala (Assistant Professor, Department of Music, Sikkim University) Exploring the Symbiosis of Religion and Culture: An Autoethnographic Examination of Folk Bengali Muslim Wedding Songs and Rituals by Hasanuzzaman Ansari (Junior Research Fellow, Department of English, Modern European and Other Foreign Languages, Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna University, Srinagar, Uttarakhand.) 	<p>Chair:</p> <p>Pooja Negi (Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Delhi, Delhi)</p>
11:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Break	

12:00 PM - 01:15 PM	<p>Paper Presentation Session 2B: <i>Resistance in Folklore</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sautéing Resistance and Seasoning it with Humour– A Study on Bundeli Jyonār Gārī by Kriti Acharya (Ph.D Research Scholar, Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur) 2. Shaping a Mythico-Historical resistance: Mahishasura Martyrdom Day and the contestation of Brahmanical cultural hegemony by Pranoy Saha (Independent Researcher) 3. Dancing Stigma and Resistance: An Ethnography of Morality and Stigma of the Nachnis of Purulia by Sudatta Ghosh (PhD Scholar, Department of Sociology, South Asian University) 4. ‘Haunting Folktales, Colonial Spirits and Cinematic Witches’: Making of Modern Spectral Memories by Eliza (M.Phil. Research Scholar, Department of History, University of Delhi) 	<p>Chair:</p> <p>Dr. Milind Solanki, (Assistant Professor, Department of English Studies, Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar, Gujarat)</p>
01:15 PM - 01:55 PM	Lunch Break	

01:55 PM - 03:10 PM	<p>Paper Presentation Session 2C: Heritage, Tourism, and Material Culture</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Aipan Art of Kumaon: Past, Present and Future by Dr. Reetika Negi (PhD Linguistics, Independent Researcher) Who owns folk music? Exploring the Ownership of Assamese Folk Music by Anindita Borah (PhD Scholar, Special Centre for the Study of North East India, JNU) Balancing Tradition and Trend: Policy and Method Dynamics in Indian Folklore Promotion for Cultural Heritage Tourism by Pratibhas Chaudhury (Undergraduate Student, The Sanskrit College And University) Curating the 'Folk': National Museums and the Construction of Cultural Identity by Vijayashree C.S. (Doctoral Scholar, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru) 	<p>Chair:</p> <p>Dr. Fayyaz Ahmed H Ilkal (Assistant Professor and Local Head, Dept. of Studies and Research in English, Rani Channamma University, PG Centre, Torvi, Vijayapur, Karnataka- 586107)</p>
03:10 PM - 03:20 PM	Break	
03:20 PM - 04:55 PM	<p>Documentary Screening: A Serious Wedding & Discussion by Rajat Nayyar (Film Director & SSHRC Vanier Scholar, PhD Candidate, Theatre & Performance Studies, York University, MA Visual Anthropology, Tallinn University)</p>	<p>Host:</p> <p>Mir Masudul Hoque (PhD Research Scholar, Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University)</p>
04:55 PM - 05:00 PM	Break	

05:00 PM - 06:15 PM	<p>Panel Session on <i>Sounds of South Asia: exploring Ethnomusicology</i></p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mukesh Kulriya (PhD Research Scholar, The Department of Ethnomusicology at UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music) Pramantha Thakur (Neubauer Family Foundation Doctoral Research Fellow, Department of Music, University of Chicago) Dr. Hanif Miah, (Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Chittagong, Bangladesh) 	<p>Chair:</p> <p>Dr. Hashik Nadukkandiyil (Assistant Professor, Department of Cultural Studies, Tezpur University)</p> <p>Host: Dr. Md. Intaj Ali (Assistant Professor, Department of English, NSOU)</p>
06:15 PM - 06:30 PM	Break	
06:30 PM - 08:00 PM	<p>Artist in Conversation on <i>Exploring Folk Songs of South Asia</i></p> <p>Performer: Dipannita Acharya (Renowned Folk Musician)</p>	<p>Host:</p> <p>Mrittika Malakar (PhD Research Scholar, Department of Folklore, University of Kalyani)</p>

DAY THREE

Sunday, 31st March 2024

Joining Link: <https://meet.google.com/udi-crrv-zfj>

TIME SLOT (IST)	EVENTS (DAY 3)	
10:30 AM - 11:45 AM	<p>Paper Presentation Session 3A: <i>Gender and Women's Traditions</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Articulating Subjectivities: Women in/and Magahi folk songs by Shivam Kumar (Post-Graduation Student, University of Hyderabad) Exploring Performativity, Subject Creation and Resistance through the Narratives of Vrat Kathas by Prachi Mittal (M.A. English, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi) By, for, within unfunny women: An Analysis of marginalised Ritual Humour by Sweety Ruhel (Research scholar, Panjab University, Chandigarh) Femme Fatale and Divinization in the Yakshi Tales of Kerala With Reference to The Tale of Panayannarkavu Yakshi by Arundhathi A. (MA English and Cultural Studies, Christ University, Bannerghatta Road Campus, Bangalore) 	<p>Chair:</p> <p>Bidisha Chakraborty (Assistant Professor, Amity Institute of English Studies and Research, Amity University Jharkhand)</p>
11:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Break	
12:00 PM - 01:30 PM	<p>Round Table Discussion on <i>Protection and Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge</i></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Manas Kumar Ganguli (Librarian, Sonamukhi College, Sonamukhi, Bankura, West Bengal, Affiliated to Bankura University) 	<p>Chair:</p> <p>Md. Bakebillah (Assistant Professor, Department of Folklore, Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University, Bangladesh And</p>

	<p>2. Dr. Laina Rafianti (Department of Law on Information Technology and Intellectual Property, Faculty of Law, Universitas Padjadjaran, Bandung, Indonesia)</p> <p>3. Dr. Ali Ahammad Taher Hasan (Librarian, Kabi Nazrul College, Murarai, Birbhum, West Bengal, affiliated to Burdwan University)</p>	<p>Climate Change and Sustainable Development Programme, Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand)</p> <p>Host: Meghal Karki (PhD Research Scholar, Ambedkar University, Delhi)</p>
01:30 PM - 02:30 PM	Lunch Break	
02:30 PM - 03:30 PM	<p>Special Keynote: <i>Rethinking South Asian Folklore</i> by Prof T.S. Satyanath (Professor Emeritus, Department of Modern Indian Languages and Literature Studies, University of Delhi, India)</p>	<p>Chair: Dr.Dhurjjati Sarma (Assistant Professor, Department of MIL and Literary studies, Gauhati University, Guwahati)</p>
03:30 PM - 03:40 PM	Break	
03:40 PM - 04:55 PM	<p>Paper Presentation Session 3B: <i>Digital Folklore: Transitions and Prospects</i></p> <p>1. Upon Thinking about Southist Syrian Christian Folklore in the Digital Age by Ann Susan Aleyas (PhD scholar at the Department of English, Jamia Millia Islamia and Assistant Professor, Department of English in Jesus and Mary College)</p>	<p>Chair: Dr. Barnashree Khasnobis (Assistant Professor, Dept. of English, Kristu Jayanti College, Bengaluru)</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Rhythmic resonance: Haryanvi Ragni in the era of social media by Vaishali Bidhuri (PhD candidate, Jamia Millia Islamia) 3. Maithili Folksongs in a New Bottle by Pallavi Singh (PhD Scholar, Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar) 4. Reinventing Tradition: Exploring digital transitions of Manipuri Phungawari on YouTube by Sylvia Sagolsem, Fellow, Center for Advanced Internet Studies (CAIS), Bochum, Germany 	
04:55 PM - 05:00 PM	Break	
05:00 PM - 06:15 PM	<p>Paper Presentation Session 3C: <i>Transformation and Beyond: Folklore Today</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Beyond Literal Meaning: Indirect Speech Acts in Northeast India Folklore by Sorinchon Rimai (Ph.D. Research Scholar, The English and Foreign Language University, Hyderabad) 2. Myth or Folktale?: Politics and Problematics of Translating Indigenous Oral Narratives by Florence Laldinpuii & Haidamteu Zeme N, (Doctoral Scholar and Teaching Assistant, Indian Institute of Technology Delhi) 3. Fairy Tales as a Pedagogical Tool for Critical Analysis in Slow Learners by Reema Jose, Assistant Professor, Dr BMN College of Home Science Autonomous, Matunga, Mumbai 4. Transformation of the Simcheong Narrative: Korean Gramophone Drama <Modern Simcheong-Jeon> by Yeonsu Choi (PhD Research Scholar, Seoul National University) 	<p>Chair:</p> <p>Mekhala Chattopadhyay, (Assistant Professor of English, Govt Kaktiya P.G College, Jagdalpur, Bastar, Chhattisgarh)</p>
06:15 PM - 06:30 PM	Break	

06:30 PM - 07:15 PM	Valedictory Address by Prof Nandini Sahu (Professor of English and Former Director, School of Foreign Languages, IGNOU)
07:15 PM - 07:30 PM	Vote of Thanks by Dr. Md. Intaj Ali (Assistant Professor, Department of English, NSOU)

Abstract Book

1ST INTERNATIONAL YOUNG FOLKLORIST CONFERENCE 2024 **Transitions and Transformation in South Asian Folklore: Problems, Perspectives, and Prospects** (29th - 31st March 2024)

Keynote Address(s):

Folklore Today

by **Prof. Pravina Shukla**, Provost Professor Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology Indiana University, Bloomington, IN

The Folklore Institute, which originated in the 1920s at Indiana University, attained departmental status in 1962 and remains an esteemed institution for folklore studies globally. Drawing upon her extensive teaching experience, Shukla aims to illuminate the methods, theories, and practices of contemporary folklore studies in the United States and offer reflections on the current state of folkloristics as an academic discipline.

Navigating Between the Global, Local, and Virtual in the Study of Folklore of South Asia and Beyond

by

Prof Simon J. Bronner, Dean, College of General Studies, Distinguished Professor of Social Sciences University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and

Dr Semontee Mitra, Assistant Teaching Professor, Penn State University, University Park

This presentation examines continuities and disparities between the use of South Asian folklore in theorizing tradition and culture--past, present, and future. During the late nineteenth century when folklore studies were spreading in Europe during a period of European imperialism and “slow” capitalism, many theories of global culture were informed by the folk literature and colonization of South Asia. In the post-colonial era in South Asia, attention moved toward questions of indigeneity

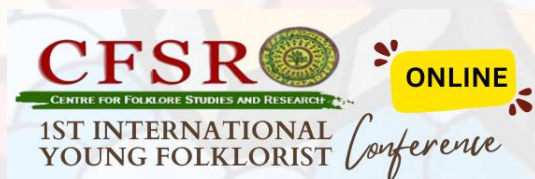


and localism in the shadow of growing economic and cultural massification/globalism related to “fast” capitalism. Fast capitalism was often tied to the growth of instantaneous digital communication and rapid transportation that fueled diasporization, and ironically, heritagization, of South Asia. Our presentation sorts through the approaches used by folklorists to navigate between global, local, and virtual registers of culture, particularly as the scale of social migrations and transnationalism increase. Previewing our project on *The World of Tradition: A Global Perspective on Folklore and Ethnology* (<https://www.openbookpublishers.com/books/10.11647/obp.0368>), we assess ways that attention to practice, place, and cognition inform incipient transformations of research and analysis of new genres, cultural processes, and social patterns—potentially again fueled by the experience of South Asian groups.

Rethinking South Asian Folklore

By **T. S. Satyanath**, Professor Emeritus, Department of Modern Indian languages and Literary Studies, University of Delhi, Delhi 110007

Taking a look at the history of folklore studies in South Asia, this presentation attempts to undertake a rethinking of certain theoretical and methodological issues. Folklore studies in India inherited several conceptual and theoretical problems from the European and American models that they followed. In brief, mutually exclusive binary oppositions, totalizing taxonomy, and overgeneralization through structuralist and formalistic approaches are some of the conspicuous problems that folklore Studies in India had to negotiate. Use of a binary opposition between ‘elite’ and ‘folk’ created a rupture in the long-standing overlapping relationship between vernacular Indian ‘literary’ and ‘folk’ traditions. Folklore studies also essentially remained taxonomic on the one hand and structuralist on the other hand for a long time resulting in the extensive exploration of formalistic epistemology, while social epistemology (caste, gender, tribe, etc.) remained largely unexplored. Unlike the monolingual and homogenous communities, where formalistic epistemology essentialize in homogenization, the study of social epistemology is very essential in studying multilingual and diverse communities like South Asia. Early folklore studies emerged within the context of the emergence of nation-states that not only restricted the study of folklore transnationally but also prevented comparative studies of folklore. Within the background of issues raised here, this presentation undertakes a conceptual and methodological rethinking of the study of South Asian folklore.



Panel Session 1:

Exclusive Inclusivity: Who Gets to Be the “Folk” in Folklore

Panelists:

Sangeeta Jawla, Potter, Storyteller and PhD Research Scholar, Ambedkar University Delhi

Garima Plawat, PhD Research Scholar, Indiana University Bloomington

Dr. Hemchandra Nameirakpam, Assistant Professor, Sri Aurobindo College, University of Delhi

This panel delves into the intricate dynamics of inclusivity within folklore, examining the complexities of representation and ownership from ancient tales to modern interpretations. It explores the importance of uplifting marginalized voices, navigating the nuances of cultural appropriation, and unravelling the layered power dynamics that shape narratives. With the objective of dispelling misconceptions and fostering understanding, the discussion seeks to spark transformative change in storytelling environments through insightful analysis. The conversation navigates the fine line between preserving tradition and embracing evolution, shedding light on voices often sidelined in conventional folklore. Through engaging dialogue and thought-provoking perspectives, it aims to challenge entrenched ideas of authenticity and authority in storytelling. By amplifying a diverse array of viewpoints and celebrating the rich tapestry of cultural diversity, it aspires to chart a course towards a more inclusive and equitable folklore landscape.

Panel Session 2

Sounds of South Asia: Exploring Ethnomusicology

Panelists:

Mukesh Kulriya, PhD Research Scholar, The Department of Ethnomusicology at UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music

Pramantha Thakur, Neubauer Family Foundation Doctoral Research Fellow, Department of Music, University of Chicago

Dr. Hanif Miah, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Chittagong, Bangladesh

The panel delves comprehensively into the intricate landscape of South Asian music, investigating its nuanced relationships with both ethnomusicology and folklore on both a global scale and within regional contexts. Commencing with introductory remarks, the session illuminates the symbiotic nature of ethnomusicology and folklore, elucidating their pivotal roles in the preservation, interpretation, and contextualization of musical traditions worldwide. Leveraging expertise in the



realm of popular religion and music traditions in Rajasthan, one panelist provides profound insights into the distinctive confluence of spirituality, culture, and music within this locale. Subsequently, the discourse expands to encompass an examination of the diverse array of regional folk songs in Bangladesh through a comparative lens, thereby spotlighting the multifaceted tapestry of musical expressions prevalent across various communities and terrains. Employing interdisciplinary perspectives, the panelists undertake an analysis of the socio-cultural significance, historical underpinnings, and contemporary manifestations of South Asian musical traditions, underscoring their pivotal role in identity formation, community cohesion, and transcending geographical boundaries.

Round Table Discussion

Protection and Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge

Dr. Manas Kumar Ganguli, Librarian, Sonamukhi College, Sonamukhi, Bankura, West Bengal, Affiliated to Bankura University

Dr. Laina Rafianti, Department of Law on Information Technology and Intellectual Property, Faculty of Law, Universitas Padjadjaran, Bandung, Indonesia

Dr. Ali Ahammad Taher Hasan, Librarian, Kabi Nazrul College, Murarai, Birbhum, West Bengal, affiliated to Burdwan University

The Round Table Discussion convenes to address the critical importance of safeguarding Indigenous Cultural Heritage (ICH) and Traditional Knowledge (TK) in maintaining cultural identity, fostering sustainable development, and enhancing economic growth. Participants underscore the inadequacies of existing intellectual property frameworks in effectively protecting these invaluable assets, often resulting in their commercial exploitation without fair benefits for Indigenous communities. Challenges such as the lack of international consensus, legal complexities, and issues surrounding ownership and recognition are thoroughly examined. Discussions also highlight ongoing efforts, including exploring sui generis protection regimes, improving benefit-sharing mechanisms, and promoting information justice. Noteworthy successes such as the establishment of the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library and legislative advancements are acknowledged, though the imperative for vigilant monitoring is emphasized. The Round Table concludes with a resounding call for comprehensive strategies, stressing the necessity of international cooperation and tailored approaches to ensure equitable outcomes for Indigenous communities in preserving their cultural heritage and knowledge.



Session 1A: Folk Consciousness and Practices

Bonosree Majhi

PhD Research Scholar, Department of English and Culture Studies, University of Burdwan &
Assistant Professor, Department of English, Memari College

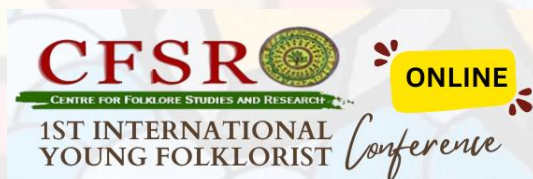
Exploring Folklores in Search of an Answer to Climate Crisis: An Analysis of Amitav Ghosh's Select Works

An impactful and well recognized literary voice, Amitav Ghosh who has brought South-Asia to the centre of narrative, successfully weaves myth, legend and folklore of the region into the texture of his works. His recent works dwell extensively on the climate crisis resulting in the collapse of habitat, migration of environmental refugees, changing demography, volatile socio-economic scenarios and political upheavals as the planet goes through inevitable changes. Amitav Ghosh has employed folklores in his works to refer to a past where a meaningful communication between the human and the non-human leading to a sustainable relationship with the nature was not just imaginable but palpable and mundane. This paper seeks to explore Ghosh's works in which folklores operate as the reservoir of ancient wisdom that acknowledges the importance of coexistence and sustainability. The eco-consciousness of folklores possesses the key to understanding the challenges of present day climate crisis in order to adapt and survive in a future that appears uncertain and intimidating.

The paper shall analyze the texts *The Hungry Tide*, *The Gun Island*, and *The Junglenama*. *The Hungry Tide* and *The Junglenama* go back to the folklores associated with Bon Bibi of Sundarban in Bengal. *The Gun Island* explores another folklore which is very popular in rural Bengali through rituals and performances and well known to urban intellectuals through Mangalkavya. Manasa Devi, the demi-goddess who could communicate and control the snakes, has remained famous for her vicious battle with an affluent merchant Chand Sadagar to obtain worship and oblation. Ghosh focuses on the parts of the folklores where Manasa Devi and Bon Bibi appear to be conduits between the human and the non-human, who are endowed with the power to facilitate their interaction, influence their relationship and resolve any probable conflict. They act as the mediators who awaken the human beings, entranced by the material dimension of their existence, to their responsibilities as agents of nature. An eco-critical study of these folklores shall establish them as being capable of guiding humanity through planetary crises.

Keywords: *Climate Crisis, Folklore, Eco-consciousness, Environmental Refugee, Sustainability.*

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Suparna Mondal

P.G. Student, English Department, University of Calcutta

Pattachitra: Redefining Eco-Consciousness through Scrolls and Songs

Throughout history, folk art has played a critical role in strengthening man’s relationship with nature and has gradually become the most powerful means of preserving the environment. In the minds of folk artists, environment and biodiversity are not the “other” but rather one of them. This paper is an attempt to reanalyse one of those traditional art forms closely associated with eco-consciousness, known as Pattachitra, which combines classic and folk elements in a unique way with a strong focus on the folk element. Pattachitra is a traditional cloth-based scroll painting, primarily practiced in the eastern Indian states of Odisha, West Bengal, and parts of Bangladesh. This storytelling art form is rooted in captivating narratives, known for its intricate details and depiction of mythical and folkloric tales such as Manasamangal. This paper examines how Pattachitra encapsulates not only mythological and folkloric narratives but also contemporary themes, notably the climate crisis. By focusing on the use of natural ingredients such as grains, weeds, flowers, fruits, and vegetables in creating colours and pigments, this paper also explores the deep-rooted connection between this art form and nature.

Pattachitra artisans, known as Patuyas, have portrayed natural disasters, such as hurricanes, tsunamis, and even the recent Coronavirus outbreak on canvas along with sociological, political, and mythical messages. Moreover, the paper elucidates how music (pat-er-gaan) is also used to raise awareness about such catastrophes thereby portraying Pattachitra not only as an art form but also as a dynamic medium for fostering eco-consciousness and societal reflection. However, the scope of this paper is limited to one major folk art form but the arguments made in this paper pertain to the multifaceted role of folk art in reshaping human relationship with nature, advocating for sustainability, and nurturing a deeper understanding of our place within the natural world.

Keywords: Folk art, Pattachitra, Nature, Eco-Consciousness, Music

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Sreeshma K. Venu

Independent Researcher

Crafting Tradition: Elephant Accoutrements and Artisans in Kerala

The culture of Kerala has an inextricable relationship with elephants, featured abundantly in folklore and proverbs. Rooted in the culture of Kerala, such as temple festivals, processions, social ceremonies, and day-to-day life, elephants play a significant part in this south-Indian state. Specifically in central Kerala, adorned elephants are an inevitable part of temple festivals. The major fineries used in adorning elephants are frontlets, silken parasols, fly-whisks made of yak tails, and peacock feather fans. The research seeks to delve into the world of elephant accoutrements used in Kerala's festivals, and the artisans linked to the craft of making the accoutrements. Uncovering the role of these adornments in religious rituals and processions, and the associated symbolism and tradition help in understanding the profound significance of elephant accoutrements within Kerala's culture. The research also looks into artisanal practices through an exploration of materials, techniques, and craftsmanship of artisans, highlighting the cultural heritage of this practice. Another objective that the paper aims to achieve is to examine the challenges faced by artisans in the contemporary world, and the perspective of the young generation towards these traditional crafts. The research employs qualitative methodology incorporating data collection from various sources such as newspaper articles, scholarly articles, YouTube interviews with artisans, and websites. Thus, the research offers a comprehensive picture of the significance and legacy of elephant accoutrements in Kerala, shedding light on its artistic peculiarities, cultural significance, artisanal practices, and challenges, and underlines the necessity of safeguarding indigenous cultural heritage in the contemporary world.

Keywords: *artisanal practices, craftsmanship, cultural heritage, elephant accoutrements, Kerala tradition.*

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Arun Kumar V, Umadevi N, and Dr Beena G

Reva University, Bangalore

Role of Serpents in Indian Folk Rituals and Spiritual Performances

The relation between humans and serpents is upheld historically through oral narratives, beliefs, customs, and myths. In different folklore across religions and regions, serpents are attributed with spiritual status and are given cultural roles. The serpent in the garden of Eden in Christian myth, the serpent rope used to churn the ocean of milk to extract elixir by Gods and Asuras in Hindu mythology, and the association of Asclepian with healing powers in Greek mythology, highlight the role and position of serpents in human civilization. These prominent roles asserted to serpents across cultures might be the rationale for modern day serpent worship. This paper attempts to identify serpents as material and customary lore shaped by Indian folklore and explores the regional variations in serpent worship. The veneration of gods like Nagaraja in the north, Manasa in the northeast, and the worship of living snakes in the south, uncovers the intricate narratives and beliefs surrounding serpent deities. The rituals are significant in exploring serpent worship as material lore, focusing on temples, idols, and sacred groves dedicated to serpent gods. The study elucidates the material manifestations of serpent worship in the prominent temples like Mannarasala Sree Nagaraja Temple and Aadimoolam Vetticode Sree Nagarajaswami Temple.

The paper also unravels the Naga Dosha(m) rituals and Naga Panchami celebrations by elucidating their significance. This comprehensive study aims to understand the intricate layers of serpent lore to comprehend the complex relationship between humans and serpents in Indian folklore. The objective is to analyze the cultural narratives and beliefs that shape societal attitudes and behaviors towards serpents that potentially influence conservation efforts and human-wildlife interrelations.

Keywords: *Rituals, Tradition, Folklore, Serpent worship, Indian folklore, Customary lore, Conservation.*



Session 1B: *Performance and/in Perspective(s)*

Komal Rajwansh

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Singing the Liminal: Exploring Performance and Devotional Songs in Jāgaraṇa Ritual

Jāgaraṇa is a popular Hindu ritual that includes worship and night vigil where the devotees gather at a place to sing devotional songs, hymns, and prayers. Mata ka Jagaratā is specific form of Jāgaraṇa ceremony dedicated to the worship of the Mother Goddess in Hinduism. Performance is an integral part of this sacramental event which serves a dual purpose. People dressed as gods and goddesses perform on various devotional songs; firstly, to engage the devotees and, secondly, to create an ambience where people can enter the state of liminality. Victor Turner describes liminality as a temporary suspension of normal societal roles, norms and, hierarchies which leads to a sense of community and equality among the participants. For Turner liminality is a state which corresponds to the feeling of *communitas*. *Communitas* is also a sense of camaraderie and togetherness experienced by the participants in a ritual that transcends the boundaries of social hierarchy. During the performance, the devotees dance along with the performers and the celebration provides a space for liberation to the women and people from the castes that are below in *varnashrama*. However, after the completion of the event the previous social order is restored. In addition to this, devotional songs are customised to elevate the level of involvement of the participants. These songs are composed as per the nature of audience as one can find Radha being called the “Jatti of Punjab” in one song to immerse the audience belonging to that region and community. Such modifications can enhance the level of liminality experienced by people. Therefore, this paper will explore the role of Jāgaraṇa as a ritual that provides room for suspending the established social order and constructing an alternative zone where people can step into the state of liminality and experience *communitas* through performance. Additionally, it examines how the modification of devotional songs tailored to specific audience enhances liminality experienced during the ritual.

Keywords: *Jāgaraṇa, performance, devotional songs, liminality and, communitas*

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Insha Qayoom Shah

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Izhar-ul-Haq Wani

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Embarking on the Hero's Journey : "Akanandun" in Kashmiri Folklore

Folklores form a significant part of oral narratives that are passed down from one generation to another, constituting an integral element of communal cultural consciousness. They developed as a prominent means of uniting communities by acting as a shared repository of stories that were generally accepted by all members of society. Therefore, folklores serve as a means to comprehend the culture, norms, and ideas that are widespread within a specific society. Kashmir, situated on the Indian subcontinent and surrounded by the Himalayan mountains, is renowned for its captivating tales, legends, and folklores. These indigenous narratives are integral to the cultural past of Kashmir and also serve as valuable sources of inspiration for writers, poets, and artists. The study will analyse the Kashmiri folklore "Aknandun" in relation to the theoretical concept of the heroic journey as proposed by American writer Joseph Campbell. The article will emphasise the universal themes of personal growth, self-discovery, and the cyclical nature of transformation in narrative and mythology by establishing a correlation between the spiritual journey shown in "Akanandun" and Campbell's concept of a Hero's Journey.

Keywords: *Hero, Folklore, Kashmiri, Culture, Literature*

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Yashasvi Gaur

Former Research Scholar, Jadavpur University

Telling of Tale(s): The Flux of Caste, Clan, and Performance in Making

The chief categorisation of bat and/or vat lores in Rajasthan is split into multiple sub-categories. The genres of panegyric poetry, dohas, genealogies (vanshawali), tales, and epics. Among many storytelling forms in the Thar, half of them are associated with myths and folklore about deities. There is a certain poise and style in which it is done, this has been carried down from generations. It is community-specific and sometimes region-specific as well. These folk deities exist in an alternate form of devotional structure.



As opposed to the popular Hindu gods derived from the epics like Ramayan, Mahabharat, Bhagvat Puran and others these deities are a form of local appropriation. ‘How then do these performances/narratives that we would talk about predetermine or shape the local identities of the performers and receptors’?

The genealogical and praise accounts of the Rajput community were done by the Charan community. Nonetheless, several other accounts came into being reverberating the stereotypical Rajputness through folk deities like Pabuji, Tejaji, Pir Ramdev and others. The complex narratives of these oral epics are difficult to understand from a linear perspective. There are several elements of narrative reverberations between these oral epics and brahminical epics. Apart from these echoes we also find a twisted and rather apparent portrayal of how the bat/vat narratives employed the class, caste, and clan power relations vis-a-vis memory, orality, and consistent glorification. The changing power structures between Rajputs, British, and Mughals seamlessly intermingled with these oral narratives. The research would look to explore trajectories of understanding the existence of folk deities and their representative oral epics. Is it a depiction of the faith practised by the marginalised communities? Can we then say that folk deities linger on the subversive grounds of appropriation? This work would try to identify and explore the relationship between gender, caste, and class, by studying the course of identity, language, and historicization vis-a-vis storytelling (in its various forms). This would be done through qualitative analysis combined with ethnographical research. The genres of performance both in the dimension of spiritual and secular would be looked at through personal experiences, observations, and interviews.

Keywords: *lore, storytelling, myths, folk-deities, identity*

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Gayatri Suri

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Corporeal Gods: Politics of Power through Ritual in the Kullu Dussehra Festival

When Michel Foucault says “the body becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjected body”, Judith Butler explains that he is not referring to two separate bodies. Rather, it is the same body being, at once, subjected and productive. The International Dussehra Festival of Kullu is one that heavily depends on the subjection and productiveness of the body to carry out an annual ritual.



The festival dates back to the 17th century when Raja Jagat Singh ruled over the Kullu kingdom. His bringing of the Lord Raghunath idol from Ayodhya is celebrated each year with the arrival of more than 200 deities from nearby provinces. These deities arrive, on the shoulders of the devotee or devaloo, to pay their respects to Lord Raghunath each year. Another devotee is the chosen gur, whose job is to transmit messages of the deity to the rest of the villagers.

Three main bodies are indispensable in carrying out this tradition: the body of the gur, the body of the deity, and the body of the devaloo. If the body is to be taken as the site where power both “activates and acts upon”, then it becomes crucial to analyze how these three bodies are enmeshed in the ‘nexus’ of power of the religious institution. This paper attempts to analyze how power is exerted on and through the bodies of the gur, the devaloo, and the deities to re-enforce religious beliefs in the Kullu Dussehra festival.

Keywords: *Kullu Dussehra, Body, Folklore, Power, Ritual, Michel Foucault*

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Session 1C: *Tracing Disappearing Cultures and Traditions*

Shambhavi Ojha

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The Fading Folklore of Indian Courtesans

The paper tries to present a case study on the impact of the Indian courtesans in proliferating the folk culture through folklores. It discusses the functions of art and also the role of the folklores in national integration. The paper also finds an elaborate mention of the fading art of the famous courtesans of India and their unsung stories. The author has tried to trace the history of the courtesan culture in India from the mention of Ganikā in kamasutra to the present day representation of the courtesans in cinemas. The ideological differences and similarities of status and roles of Ganikā, Tawaifs and Nautch girls are compared and analysed. Their important role as folklore presenters in their contemporary eras, role in economy, policy making, freedom struggle and cultural gratification has been keenly observed by the author and given a structural representation through diagrams in the paper. The author tries to throw some light on the liminality period of the courtesans and their folklore through a timeline representation in the paper. The paper discusses the rights of courtesans in claiming the status of folklore presenting groups; the author also mentions about the resistance faced by courtesans and the social stigmatisation of their status in the society. In conclusion the author shares her individual insights on bringing forward the courtesan culture folklore along with the ways to construct a space for the courtesan culture to alleviate their status in the society; for the courtesans to be able to claim their social identity.

Keywords: *National Integration, Courtesans of India, Courtesan Folklore, liminality, Rights and Resistance*

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Mohd Ali Shabbir

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Tamlay: The Disappearing Ancient Wisdom of Ladakh

Ladakh: flanked by the mighty western Himalayas in the South and the gigantic Karakoram ranges in the north side is a world-famous tourist destination. Though arid, the region is surrounded by strikingly beautiful landscapes, unique flora and fauna, and is home to an amalgamation of distinct races such as Tibet-o-Mongols, Dards, and Mons of the Aryan stock. The majority of the population belongs to Tibet-o-Dard stock speaking the Tibetan language with slight variations; Shina and Kyango



an Indo-Persian languages spoken by Dards in Drass, Shingo and the lower Indus valleys like Hanu, Garkon, Darchiks, Batalik, Chulichan, Sharchay, Muzber and few of the villages on the Pakistan side. Inhospitable geography, dry climate and freezing winters do justice to an old Ladakhi saying: “Only best of friends and worst of foes would dare to visit Ladakh.”

Despite the unfriendly demographic, the people of Ladakh have inhabited this cold desert for hundreds of years. They not only lived but evolved their indigenous knowledge of survival which was always in harmony with nature. The place offers an idiosyncratic culture and civilization which has been passed from generation to generation.

The paper shall delve deep into the ancient wisdom of Ladakh with a particular focus on the sayings and proverbs of our forefathers (ata-apo *tamlay*) which are otherwise becoming obsolete from our daily conversations. These beautiful and time-tested pieces of folk literature are very important in understanding Ladakh’s diverse society and rich history. Many proverbs also have a historical context which shall further enlighten us about the past, and their present relevance. Hundreds of these precious pieces of history are lost forever to modern life, but many are still yearning to be heard and preserved for future generations. The paper will be a modest attempt to revive and re-live the oral history of Ladakh before it becomes obsolete.

Keywords: *Ladakh, Oral History, Proverb, Culture, Modernization*

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Rajib Baskey

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Spirituality in Santali Indigenous Society: Nature, God and Spirit

Three types of spiritual characteristics can be observed in the social life of Santals, one of the oldest castes and tribal groups in India. On the one hand, according to Santali Mythology, this universe and the living world were created by an almighty creator. They believe that man was born in water from a pair of "drake and duck". On the other hand, they believe that their main deities reside in this nature. Basically, they worship Trees, Mountains, Rocks and preserve these elements of nature as God resides within them. Besides this, they worship the Sun and the Moon as their main deities. The Santals mainly worship under the trees. According to Santali Mythology, the Santals first worshiped various deities like Marang Buru, Jaher Ayo, Morre Ko, Turui Ko under the trees. Since then their main protector deities are the said Gods. Socially, the Santals worship at the ‘Jaher’ as a group for the well-being of society and all people. Domestically each of the Santal clans worships separate deities for the well-being of the family. The Santals worship and render service to the deities through dance, song and hymns (binti, bakher) in various spheres of life. Santals believe in worshipping living gods. During worship they call the deities to the place of worship and can also talk to them. Santals consider



themselves as the children of God. And after death their souls are worshiped along with the deities. After death the Santals believe that the soul resides in the house and the dead body merges with the various elements of nature. So they believe that the soul does not die. During the funeral ceremony, the Santals can communicate with the spirits of dead people in a special way. Thus the Santal tribal people have been living with a multi-dimensional outlook and beliefs since ancient times.

Keywords: Santal, Indigenous, nature worshipper, living God, immortal spirit

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Ankita Panda

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Chakulia Panda: Unveiling the Cultural Icon in Odia Folklore

Traditional oral narratives of Odisha encompass a diverse range of mediums through which folklore is transmitted through generations. Nath yogis, Palakaras, Chakulia Pandas, and Daskathia players have all played pivotal roles within Odia folk culture. Through their folk songs, they have served as custodians of our society's rich cultural heritage, capturing the attention of the populace and contributing significantly to Odia folk literature's enrichment. Among them, the figure of Chakulia Panda holds a significant place in Odia folklore, embodying a rich tapestry of cultural values, wisdom, and wit. He stands as a popular character who is known for his distinct appearance, traits, and cultural significance. The paper explores the multifaceted significance of the figure of Chakulia Panda within Odia folklore, delving into his portrayal as a cunning trickster, a wise mediator, and a guardian of tradition. This figure is often depicted as a wandering storyteller, street performer, or an itinerant mendicant. Through an analysis of various folk tales and narratives, the paper elucidates the role of Chakulia Panda in imparting moral lessons, fostering community cohesion, and preserving cultural heritage. By examining the enduring popularity and relevance of Chakulia Panda across generations, this paper underscores his legacy as a cherished icon in Odia folklore, enriching the cultural fabric of Odisha and captivating the audiences with his timeless tales. From his origins to his portrayal in various folktales, Chakulia Panda continues to be an intriguing figure in Odia culture. He holds significant importance in shaping the cultural identity of Odisha, and his influence resonates deeply within the hearts and minds of its people. Through his lasting appeal and relevance, Chakulia Panda continues to entertain and educate generations of Odias, reinforcing their connection to their roots and collective identity.

Keywords: Odia folklore, Chakulia Panda, Legacy, Figuration, Cultural identity.



Session 2A: *Indigeneity, Rituals and Traditions*

Apurva Lohumi

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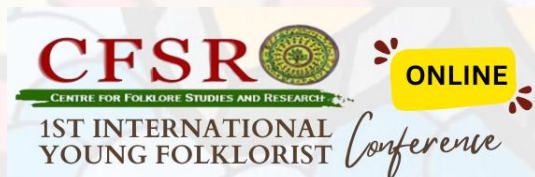
Community Participation in the Rituals and Worship of Golu Devta: A Cultural Analysis in the Kumaon Region

This paper examines the role of community participation in the rituals and worship of Golu Devta, a revered deity in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, India. Golu Devta is known for his swift justice and is believed to fulfill the wishes of his devotees, who write their petitions on paper and tie them to the branches of a sacred tree near his temple. The legend of Golu Devta is deeply ingrained in the cultural and religious practices of the Kumaoni people, and community participation plays a crucial role in the performance of rituals associated with the deity. The study utilizes Performance Theory to analyze the ways in which community members engage with the legend of Golu Devta through rituals, storytelling, and other forms of cultural expression. It explores how community participation shapes the meaning and significance of the legend, creating a sense of belonging and identity among the Kumaoni people.

Through fieldwork and interviews conducted in the Kumaon region, this research examines the various forms of community participation in the worship of Golu Devta, including the organization of festivals, the construction of temples, and the performance of rituals. It also considers the impact of modernization and globalization on these traditional practices, highlighting the ways in which the Kumaoni people are adapting their cultural traditions to contemporary realities. Overall, this paper contributes to our understanding of how community participation contributes to the preservation and adaptation of folklore and religious traditions in a rapidly changing world, shedding light on the enduring significance of Golu Devta in the cultural landscape of the Kumaon region.

Keywords: *Golu Devta, Community Participation, Kumaon region, Rituals, Worship, Deity, Cultural Practices, Religious Traditions, Folklore, Uttarakhand.*

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Anjana Ambali

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Gods in Transition: A Study of Malakkari narratives of Kurichya community in Kerala

From Brown and Milton to A K Ramanujan and R K Narayan, folklorists across the globe have established the importance of folklore in preserving the ethos and worldviews of any community. Many communities, especially the ones undergoing major transformation in terms of culture and life style are desperately trying to find ways to preserve their folklore. In Adivasi communities, such transformation has been happening due to many reasons like Sanskritization, cultural hyphenation, assimilation, necessity for global and media outreach etc. This paper would introduce to the readers the folklore of Kurichya Adivasi community in Kerala, with particular focus on a ritualistic performance called Kumbhappattu, in order to examine the how the myths associated with a deity called Malakkari have changed over time.

Kumbhappattu (Song for Kumbham) is the ritualistic performance of Kurichya, where three performers would beat drums and sing stories about Malakkari deity in front of the Kumbham (bamboo). The performance would last for almost an entire day and is one of the most crucial parts of the Kurichya religious festivals. The transformations that happened to Kumbhappattu narrative over the time have led to a reshaping of the religious culture of the community itself. Apart from examining the evolution of Malakkari myths through the orature of Kumbhappattu, the possible reasons for the same would be analysed along the lines of cultural hyphenation and performance spatiality. This paper would also investigate how the commercial pressures and media exoticization have negatively affected the preservation process of these narratives, thereby posing serious concerns like loss of originality and sacrality. The oral narrative of Kumbhappattu along with other oral stories, documented and translated by the researcher as part of her ethnographic study in the community, would act as the primary sources for the paper.

Keywords: *Adivasi, folklore, transformation, performance, preservation*

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Role of Drums and Drumming in Shamanic Rituals of Sikkim

Shamanic rituals constitute a significant aspect of cultural and spiritual practices in various indigenous communities worldwide. Among these practices, the role of drums and drumming holds particular importance, serving as vehicles for communication with spirits, healing, and transformation. This research aims to delve into the specific context of Sikkim, a region rich in cultural diversity and traditional beliefs, to examine the role of drums and drumming in shamanic rituals.

Various drumming patterns have been differentiated from the ceremonial practices in Sikkim. The Jhaankri drummers, with their rapid and rhythmic beats, induce trance-like states, allowing the shaman to communicate with the spirit world. Each drumming pattern serves as a coded language, conveying messages to spirits and deities, and shaping the flow of energy within the ceremonial space.

Keywords: Shamanic rituals, Drumming practices, Shamanic rituals, Shamanism

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Hasanuzzaman Ansari

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Exploring the Symbiosis of Religion and Culture:

An Autoethnographic Examination of Folk Bengali Muslim Wedding Songs and Rituals

Cultural fluidity, akin to a primitive form of acculturation, is a recurring theme in folk culture studies, highlighting the nuanced process of integrating multiple cultural influences. It involves navigating through social, psychological, and cultural shifts, striking a balance between diverse cultural elements while adapting to the prevailing norms of society. Malda, often known as the gateway to North Bengal, stands as an embodiment of an illustrious repository of cultural heritage and deeply ingrained traditional ethos. Positioned amidst state and international borders, this district serves as a bustling



crossroads where an array of cultures, cuisines, and rituals intersect, manifesting a captivating tableau of cultural dynamism. American historian Richard M. Eaton argues that a major demographic shift in the frontier of Bengal, marked by a significant rise in the Muslim populace, catalysing the evolution of a syncretic socio-religious entity recognized as Bengali Muslims. Despite the ostensibly prohibitive stance of Islamic jurisprudence towards singing, the pervasive influence of Bengali culture has engendered a distinct phenomenon wherein the denizens of rural Bengal engage in the performance of various folk wedding songs with specific rituals, commonly referred to as *Muslim biyer geet*. This research endeavours to delve into the intricate fabric of the cultural practices of the Jolha Muslim community of Malda, focusing particularly on their folk wedding songs, through the lens of autoethnography. By employing a meticulously crafted autoethnographic approach, this study seeks to unravel the nuanced interplay between religion and culture within the context of Bengali Muslim wedding traditions, shedding light on the underlying socio-cultural dynamics and offering valuable insights into the multifaceted tapestry of Bengal's cultural landscape.

Keywords: *Bengali Muslims Folk Wedding Songs, Autoethnography, Cultural fluidity, Socio-Religious Syncretism, Cultural Dynamism*

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Session 2B: *Resistance in Folklore*

Kriti Acharya

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Sautéing Resistance and Seasoning it with Humour – A Study on Bundeli Jyonār Gārī

Bundeli Jyonār Gārī Gīts are humorous songs about food, reserved especially for the guests attending a traditional Bundeli wedding. Women from the bride’s family sing these ritualistic songs when the food is served to the groom’s family during the Mandapa ceremony. These playful songs are conversational and facilitate friendly exchanges between new relatives. This paper attempts to understand how these songs mobilize resistance against dominant power structures through nuanced sexual expressiveness and ritual humour. The relationship between food and music during Bundeli wedding celebrations will be explored to understand the impact of modernization on Bundeli culture, including the substitution of Pangats with buffets, regional delicacies with non-native cuisines, and the overall transition of wedding feasts from a community-centric social activity to an individual-centric display of material wealth. This study will analyse songs collected during fieldwork in Sagar district of Madhya Pradesh in 2022 and 2023. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and ‘reciprocal ethnography’; was practised to develop a relationship of working dialogue with Bundeli individuals, particularly women above 30 years of age, to re-interpret and re-examine the discourse on Jyonār Gīts and their significance in the Bundeli society.

Keywords: *Folklore, ritual studies, oral traditions, gender studies, food studies, ethnography.*

Pranoy Saha

Independent Researcher

Shaping a Mythico-Historical resistance:

Mahishasura Martyrdom Day and the contestation of Brahmanical cultural hegemony

This paper critically examines the contested narratives surrounding the celebration of Durga Puja and the emergence of alternative traditions such as Mahishasura Martyrdom Day within Dalit-Bahujan-Adivasi (DBA) communities in India. This proliferating tradition dilutes the boundaries between history, mythology, and folklore. Hence it calls for a closer look at how these gatherings and the discourse they



generate, make use of alternative reading of dominant history in re-shaping folklore, cultural identities and resistance movements. By situating these traditions within the framework of anti-caste movements, the paper highlights their role in challenging dominant Brahmanical narratives and reclaiming marginalised histories. Through performative analysis of the traditional Bengali form of poetry known as ‘Kobi Gaan’; it explores how myth, history, and folklore intersect to shape collective memory and political agency among DBA communities in these gatherings. The paper also raises questions about the implications of these gatherings for radical politics and explores their potential to challenge entrenched power structures that control the historical narrative.

Methodologically, the paper employs a participant-observant approach, as the author has attended the yearly Mahishasura Martyrdom Day gathering at two different venues in West Bengal for the last two years. This approach allows for a detailed and a self-reflective account of the nature and content of these events, illustrating how they awaken consciousness against dominant narratives and reverse stigmatised cultural identities. Additionally, an auto-ethnographic reflection offers insights into the affective dimensions along with the material aspects of these events. Through the analysis of these aspects of the Mahishasura Martyrdom Day gatherings, this paper aims to demonstrate the cultural and political significance of these alternative narratives and movements of cultural resistance in shaping a more inclusive and a truly decolonized Indian society.

Keywords: *cultural resistance, marginalised histories, collective memory, anti-caste movements, decoloniality*

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Sudatta Ghosh

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Dancing Stigma and Resistance: An Ethnography of Morality and Stigma of the Nachnis of Purulia

This paper aims to understand how notions of morality associated with marginalized and gendered dancing bodies, like the Nachnis of Purulia who live in the eastern part of India, have translated into how they are perceived in their private and public spheres. The Nachnis hail from the tawaifs or court dancers who erstwhile performed for the zamindars or rich landowners of Bengal. They identify with caste groups such as Mahato, Kalindi, and Bauri and surnames belonging to the Bhumi tribe, such as Sardar and Singh Sardar. Through the study of the everyday lives of Nachnis, this project has attempted to understand how female dancing bodies like Nachnis negotiate, contest, challenge, and reproduce the stigma that arises from their sex-gender-caste intersectionality and how they establish agency through embodied acts of resistance against stigma and whether daily acts of resistance contribute to a discourse of decolonization of the dancing body. Some of the related questions I shall attempt to answer in the paper are: how



layered stigma is, how it evolves over time and across identities that lie at the intersection of sex, gender, and caste, how stigma occupies multiple spaces, and how the study of stigma in the lives of female dancing bodies like the Nachnis is necessary to further the discourse of a feminist and decolonial historiography and address gaps in contemporary research on the folk in South Asia. I conducted ethnographic research of the Nachnis by following these female dancing bodies in sites of performance and in everyday contexts to contribute to the existing scholarship on decolonizing sex, gender, and caste intersection and folk studies. The ethnography comprises archival research, participant observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, structured interviews, and focus-group discussions. Using these methods, the project aims to contribute to the larger feminist discourse and that of folk performance and culture in India.

Keywords: *Dance, Stigma, Resistance, Folk, Decolonial*

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Eliza

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‘Haunting Folktales, Colonial Spirits and Cinematic Witches’: Making of Modern Spectral Memories

‘Witches are those that “eat” men, you will never see them except when you are alone.’ In Punjab, a woman expert in witchcraft is called a dain.’ On October 3, 2023, Times of India, reported that a man in Kalahandi District killed a woman on the ground of him suspecting her as a witch who practiced black magic.

My Story starts with a colonial documentation of witches in the Santhal Pargana, then moves further to a different geographical location like Punjab but witnesses the same story with different vocabulary and ends with the contemporary cases of Brutality on the basis of an age-old belief which passes from generations to generation in the form of folklore in India. Pierre Nora emphasize on the idea of Memory sites and argues the importance of the different forms of media in over representation of facts and how through mediation and remediation by adaptation in shows, movies, monuments, museums a narrative is kept alive. My Paper aims to trace the transition from orality in South Asian folklores surrounding witchcraft, supernatural beings, Black Magic, Ghosts, Jinn etc. into literary form during the colonial period with special reference to the Indian Subcontinent. I would also weave the story of different forms of Media in over-representing these Folklores and keeping them alive in the memory of People in contemporary times through Social Media and Mass Media. Thereby, My Paper would bring into light the study of these folklores through the lens of Gender, Caste, Memory, Resistance and Mass Media.

Keywords: *Witch-Craft, Colonial Knowledge Production, Folklore Resistance, Memory, Mass Media.*



Session 2C: *Heritage, Tourism and Material Culture*

Dr. Reetika Negi

PhD Linguistics, Independent Researcher

Aipan Art of Kumaon: Past, Present and Future

This paper aims to look at the current status of a traditional ritualistic art form of Kumaon, aipan, which in recent years has seen tremendous revival and transformation. This paper primarily explores the transformative journey of aipan from a ritual practice reserved for special occasions to an expanding folk art form with a GI tag. This paper explores the ritualistic intricacies and changing performative aspects of this art as it navigates an increasingly digitalized world; raising questions pertaining to issues of women's identity and authentic performance of the art form. While the full credit for this revival, no doubt, goes to the talented women of the region, social media and internet has boosted this revival, as it opened up the local women to the possibilities of networking, entrepreneurship, and marketing of local products to a larger consumer base. This eventually bringing us to the issue of intellectual property rights and protection of traditional knowledge systems and practices, because as the increasing commercialization and commodification of the art form threatens to reduce it to simply patterns and motifs.

Keywords: aipan, Kumaon, folk art, heritage management, intellectual property rights.

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Anindita Borah

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Who Owns Folk Music? Exploring the Cultural Ownership of Assamese Folk Music

Folk music is an integral part of cultural identity and heritage in many regions around the world. It is often seen as a reflection of the history, traditions, customs, and norms of a particular community. However, the question of who owns folk music and who has the right to use and adapt it is a complex and contentious issue. With the rise of globalization and digital media, traditional folk music has become more accessible to a wider audience, leading to concerns about cultural appropriation and exploitation. Moreover, scholars argued that the commercialization and commodification of folk music



have led to the dilution of its original essence and meaning. This research article aims to explore the complexities of cultural ownership and identity in the context of folk music in Assam. The objectives of this paper- a) to understand the concept of cultural ownership and its implications in the context of folk music, b) to explore how the concept of cultural ownership intersects with issues of identity and representation in folk music, c) to analyse the impact of globalization and digital technology on the ownership and distribution of folk music. This research is based on interviews with musicians, scholars, and community members involved in the arena of folk music in Assam, to gather insights on their perspectives on cultural ownership and identity. Additionally, a review of existing literature in the area of folk music, cultural ownership, and globalization is conducted to provide a theoretical framework for the research.

Keywords: *Folk Music, Cultural Ownership and Identity, Cultural Appropriation*

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Pratibhas Chaudhury

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Balancing Tradition and Trend: Policy and Method Dynamics in Indian Folklore Promotion for Cultural Heritage Tourism

Cultural Heritage Tourism in South Asian countries intertwines deeply with the cultivation of folklore, yet the methodologies employed, and the challenges faced remain underexplored. This paper delves into the complex relationship between cultural heritage tourism and folklore promotion, shedding light on the nuanced dynamics at play. The research underscores the rich fabric of folklore traditions silently transmitted across generations in South Asia. However, the absence of structured mechanisms for preservation leaves these traditions vulnerable. Despite government efforts to promote folk culture, the efficacy of their policies is subject to scrutiny. The advent of digital media further complicates matters, as it has become both a tool for heritage trail establishment and a conduit for foreign influences, potentially diluting ethnic folk culture into ‘Fakelore’.

The Paper investigates critical questions surrounding the amalgamation of modern cultural trends with folklore. Through a thorough analysis of practices across South Asian countries, this paper raises concerns regarding administrative approaches to folklorist in contemporary contexts. It addresses repercussions of unscrutinized and less-moral commercial policies on folk culture promotion and its representation in cultural heritage tourism. Employing a multi-faceted analytical lens, this research



scrutinizes existing knowledge and identifies exigencies within the field. It aims to fill gaps in understanding by delineating the rationale behind investigating this topic and outlining the research goals.

Keywords: *Commercial Policies, Digital Media Influence, Folklore Commodification, Community Awareness, Ethical Concerns*

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Vijayashree C.S.

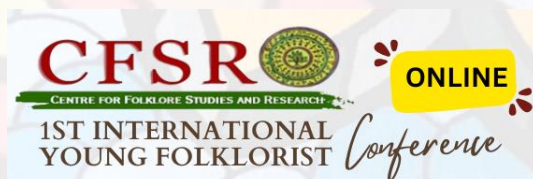
Doctoral Scholar, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru

Curating the ‘Folk’: National Museums and the Construction of Cultural Identity

The pantheistic Bhutaradhane tradition of spirit worship in the Tulunadu region of coastal Karnataka, where various kinds of spirits, ancestors, heroes, totems and animals are venerated, is known for its dramatic ritual, visual, and material elements. The unique metal masks and wooden sculptures that are an integral part of the Bhuta ritual have traversed to other sites and contexts, where they are endowed with new meanings and values. Notably, Bhuta masks and sculptures have a prominent presence in museums across the country, where their artistic qualities are highlighted and are generally classified as ‘folk’ objects. The category of folk has a long history in India, one that is closely associated with colonialism and the disciplines of anthropology and folklore studies. Within the discipline of art history in India, which draws on predominantly Western aesthetic paradigms, folk art is understood as a collective tradition that has operated outside the parameters of canonical art conventions.

In this paper, I examine the discursive formation of the category of ‘folk’ and flag the various debates around it. By foregrounding the arguments that critical look at ‘folk’ as an academic construct, I will challenge the categorization of the Bhuta masks and sculptures as ‘folk’ in pedagogic and museum spaces. To this end, I draw on the ethnographic research I conducted in two national museums in India to problematize the staging of Bhuta masks and sculptures as folk objects. I demonstrate that the concepts and narratives of folk are not just abstract categories but also fundamentally determine the exhibitions and perceptions in the museum settings. Furthermore, I argue that museums often construct the notion of ethnicity by lodging together the varied cultures under a homogenous rubric of folk and tribal art, thus failing to acknowledge the inherent heterogeneity and multifaceted nature of cultural expressions.

Keywords: *Bhutaradhane; folk art; museum interpretations; cultural heterogeneity; ethnography*



Session 3A: Gender and Women's Traditions

Shivam Kumar

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Articulating Subjectivities: Women in/and Magahi folk songs

Folk songs are the lived anthropological records of communities. 'Loka' the Sanskrit equivalent of the term, refers to a performative worldly sphere where the vernacular is enmeshed within the realm of heteroglossia. In the same manner, Magahi Folk songs are the gateway to understanding the lives of the people of Southern Bihar, where migration to cities for better prospects is a widespread phenomenon. Through varieties of folk songs like Chaita, Faag, Birha, Vivah, and Bhakti geet, women articulate their agony of separation and longing for the return of their husbands. Therefore, it is essential to engage with these songs as they embody a womanhood that is otherwise inaccessible.

This study takes its theoretical notion of folk in folklore from Allen Dundes' The Meaning of Folklore. The paper presents readings of Magahi Lokgeet ke Vrihad Sangrah- an anthology of Magahi folk songs written by Dr Ram Prasad Singh and some other folk songs collected by the author. The songs are studied as a socio-cultural response to the problems and responsibilities of Magahi women induced by migration to understand: 1. How do women from the Magahi community articulate their subjectivities and their lived experiences? 2. How do larger socio-cultural and political events shape their experiences? 3. Alongside, the paper shall also study, how 'folk' in folklore adapted and evolved within the larger socio-cultural and political milieu by the influence of modernity and globalization, with the purview of women's relation to migration that has also changed over the years.

This study forms a part of the author's M.A. Dissertation, which will be expanded further along with the ethnographical research.

Keywords: *Magahi, Folksongs, Folklore, Geet, Migration, Women Subjectivities, Bihar.*

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Prachi Mittal

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Exploring Performativity, Subject Creation and Resistance through the Narratives of Vrat Kathas

Indian folklore is an intriguing mosaic of numerous cultures, customs, myths, and tales that have been passed down through the ages, primarily through oral tradition. The study investigates one of the subsets of this oral storytelling tradition, that is, the “vrat kathas”. Vrat kathas, which are essentially a narrative, describe the relevance of fasts and corresponding performative rituals which must be undertaken and performed for their successful completion.

The focus of this study is placed on contemporary Hindu Baniya women, so as to understand if the performance of culturally embedded vrat kathas becomes an act of subject creation that affirms and reiterates popular gender-based consciousness like subordination of daughters/wives to fathers/husbands/brothers, values of auspiciousness and “saubhagya” associated with their marital status and motherhood, their responsibility towards family’s welfare as a whole, etc. The study explores Butler’s theory of performativity to understand the production of gender, for example, when married or single women of diverse ages come together to participate in the performative conditions of vrat kathas that inform their collective morality, as well as individual social behaviors. The study also attempts to explore how these vrat kathas allow space for women’s resistance to challenge the popular understanding in which these women have been socialized and conditioned.

This study employed the use of primary data collection methods of participant observation and interviews. These interviews were semi-structured and open-ended, and were primarily conducted with Baniya women, located in Delhi, who have been both the narrators and listeners of these vrat kathas. The respondents were selected primarily on the basis of the purposive sampling technique. The Hindu Baniya community has been the focus of this study because being a member of the community myself, I am able to derive an entry point in exploring how vrat kathas are preserved and taken forward among Baniyas despite modern influences, as this community negotiates its way into the post-enlightenment world.

Keywords: Narratives, Vrat-kathas, Baniya women, Performativity, Gender

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Sweetly Ruhel

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By, for, within unfunny women: An Analysis of marginalised Ritual Humour

Humour is known to all cultures (Apte, 1985) and women are considered less funny. This research article looks into the humorous performance of women who collectively gather to celebrate the wedding ceremony in Haryana, a north Indian state near New Delhi. Given the cultural context of patriarchal Haryanvi society, Women are the subalterns whose social and cultural locations are determined according to patriarchal norms. Therefore, they find less representation as individuals. The inferior position of women in the community propagates stereotypes and slangs associated with them that significantly contribute to the folk performances of what is known as ragani and swang, performed in public by males in Haryana. On the other hand khodiyaaan is a less discussed ritual performance celebrates the sexual humour created and performed by women for themselves in private. On such occasions, women cross dresses as males and use caricatures to mock the masculinity.

The objective of this paper is to analyse whether humour in this solitary ritual that is sexual in nature, includes mockery, seems full of misandry liberates the performer and audience by laughing at it, thus upsetting the status quo (as a subversive humour) or affirms their belief in the hegemonic structure and inequalities of the society (as a disparagement humour). These cultural rituals had a format similar to carnivals, and the performance contains the elements of carnivalesque (Bakhtin, 1984). This Paper is based on my observations in the region and other sources available in media and I am using the “theory of carnivalesque” to put forward my arguments.

Keywords: *Performance, Indian, Marginalised, Humour, Women, folk, Ritual.*

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Femme Fatale and Divinization in the Yakshi Tales of Kerala With Reference to The Tale of Panayannarkavu Yakshi

The femme fatal archetype which is present in the narratives, folklores, and myths of many cultures often portray the dangers of uncontrolled female sexuality. This archetype is explored in the context of Kerala with reference to the legend of Panayannarkavu Yakshi who is represented as a malevolent spirit who is a nymphomaniac. Yakshis are represented in the context of Kerala, as beautiful female



spirits who are full of vengeance who seduces men and drinks their blood. The paper explores the concept of apotheosis in the Yakshi tale, the divinization of the Yakshi figure to make her a calm and comprehensible figure and the interplay of religion and patriarchy in the process. The many versions of the tale and the impact of them on people's psyche is analysed and the inherent politics deciphered. The various rituals associated with Yakshi worship and their relationship with the sociocultural context are examined. The collective unconscious and the shadow figure in these tales are looked at. The paper makes use of E.B Tylor's cultural evolutionary theory to look at the development of religious beliefs and incorporates it in the worship of Yakshi figure. References to the Yakshi cult in popular culture is also explored in the paper.

Keywords: *Yakshi, Femme Fatale, Apotheosis, Archetype, Collective Unconscious*

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Session 3B: *Digital Folklore: Transitions and Prospects*

Ann Susan Aleyas

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Upon Thinking about Southist Syrian Christian Folklore in the Digital Age

The proposed paper intends to study folklore in the digital age with a specific focus on the creation, circulation, and consumption patterns of Knanaya Christian (or Southist Syrian Christian) folklore in the twenty-first century. Knanaya Christians are an ethnically distinct and endogamous collective of Syrian Christians in Kerala who trace their ancestry to a fourth-century migration and settlement of a set of Syriac-speaking Christians to the coasts of Malabar (ancient Kerala). While the community has preserved a wide corpus of folklore, which includes folk songs, legends, and performative dances, through oral and written modalities to date, the transmission of these forms into the digital media has engendered new modes and strategies of vernacular narrativization and engagement, and has not been studied yet.

Apart from reflecting on the definitional challenges that digitality brings to the conceptualization and functions of traditional folklore on the internet, this paper is specifically interested in thinking about the use and circulation of various Southist-specific digital taxonomies such as hashtags and internet lingo (such as #royalblood, #345, #kna etc) which create new communicative habits and in the process steadily acquire the status of conventionalized discourse through traditionalization over the iterative and rhizomatic networks of the internet. Therefore, some of the questions the proposed paper will seek to respond to are as follows: How does one think of alternate modes of affective affordances and collectivization of traditional folk communities on the internet? How does digitality liquidate traditional enclaves of collective memory and inscribe new public memory archives?

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Vaishali Bidhuri

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Rhythmic resonance: Haryanvi Ragni in the era of social media

In the era of growing impact of social media, there has been a tremendous change in the presentation of folk songs. In the contemporary cultural landscape of Haryana, live performances of traditional art forms, such as Ragni, persist as significant expression of local identity and heritage. However, an observable trend is the concurrent dissemination of these performances through social media platforms, thereby expanding their audience and reach beyond immediate physical boundary. Given the traditional resistance to change, this paper explores the impact and implications of social media on the traditional folk performance of Ragni, and how these trends influence the form and content of Ragni. Emphasizing the crucial role of audience proximity, it aims to discern how changes in the spatial dynamics influence the interactive dynamics between performers and the audience within the folklore performance context. It will explore changes in audience proximity between live and online performances, as well as variations in feedback mechanisms, to discern evolving dynamics in audience-performer interaction within the folklore performance milieu. This study will employ mixed method methodology, integrating quantitative and qualitative analyses alongside observational studies and comparative analyses. Quantitative survey and content analysis will capture audience demographics, feedback preferences, involves systematically examining the form (e.g., performance style, duration, presentation format), while qualitative interviews will delve into audience perception and engagement with live and online Ragni performance, getting insights into their attitudes towards the integration of Ragni with social media and how performers adapt their art form for social media platforms. Observational studies will document audience behavior and interaction dynamics in live settings and online platforms, facilitating comparative analyses to discern variations in performance styles, audience participation, presentation aesthetics and feedback mechanisms, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of evolving dynamics of traditional folk forms in the digital age.

Keywords: *Haryanvi Ragni, folk music, social media, performance, entertainment*

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Pallavi Singh

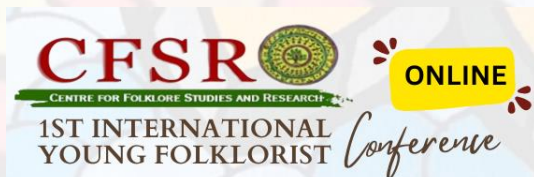
PhD Scholar, Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar

Maithili Folksongs in a New Bottle

With the presence of social media, especially YouTube, folksongs have transmuted to adapt to the changing needs. This is not to say that folksongs, as their earlier traditional version, do not exist. They exist but are mainly confined to villages and are less ubiquitous than once. The rich repertoire of these songs once catered to every situational and ritualistic need. However, the displacement of the various rituals related to the folksong compromises their *raison d'être*. Nevertheless, this paper is not a lament. It is about a gain that demands the reorientation of our understanding of the folksongs. The transmutation is by no means an unfavourable development. With the help of social media platforms, the folksongs are now part of the town folk and, in some instances, city folk rituals. However, such a change has added many dimensions to a complicated subject. Folksongs are not gone. They have become more accessible. However, this accessibility needs examination. The age-old parameters of assessing the role of folksong in the culture and society lose much of their teeth when taken out from the ritualistic and traditional space. For instance, the folksongs on these platforms are once removed from their age-old function. They are now products for consumption. They are the means through which the folksingers present themselves in the market. They are the means to showcase a singer's ability. Such added dimension problematises our expectations and understanding of the folksongs. This paper will endeavour to analyse the role and impact of Maithili folksongs that have trickled onto the social media platform. Has this new status of being a product brought about any changes in their interpretations? What is the impact of this transformation on their traditional function? In a nutshell, this paper problematises the present understanding of folksong performances.

Keywords: *Maithili Folksongs, Consumerism, Ritual, Performance, YouTube Performances*

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Sylvia Sagolsem

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Reinventing Tradition: Exploring digital transitions of Manipuri Phungawari on YouTube

The notion that folklore is predominantly “face-to-face communication” (Dan Ben- Amos 1971), and is “orally transmitted” (Bascom 1953) posits certain classic characterisations that bears correlation with techno-skeptic anxieties about folkloric traditions as perishable and possibly under duress within the contemporary digital-technological ecosystem. However, folklore and its various genres are also characterised by its innate adaptability. As digital media technologies increasingly interact and intersect with our existing sociocultural experiences, our traditional folklore and its various forms and modes, continue to interact and evolve alongside. Hence, it is quite relevant and particularly imperative to observe and examine such emergent folkloric adaptations and remediations within our contemporary digital media landscape.

With this scope and objective in mind, this paper will attempt to locate Manipuri folklore as a tradition in transition, from a traditional oral culture to becoming a part of an evolving digital culture. For this purpose, I will be looking at various emerging materialities of traditional Manipuri folk narrative form, the Phungawari (Meitei Manipuri folktales) as user-generated content across participatory digital media platforms such as YouTube. As such, this paper will take select case studies from YouTube to examine this interplay between traditional folklore and digital media technologies, embodying newer modes of storytelling, dissemination of traditional knowledges and remediation of traditional folklore, within a fast-evolving and indispensable digital culture.

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■ Session 3C: *Transformation and Beyond: Folklore Today* ■

Sorinchon Rimai

Ph.D. Research Scholar, The English and Foreign Language University, Hyderabad

Beyond Literal Meaning: Indirect Speech Acts in Northeast India Folklore

Indirect speech acts are a common feature in folktales. It may be used by tricksters or competitors to achieve one's goal, deceive or outsmart. It involves ambiguity and word play to display prowess of mind and a sense of quick wit. Indirect speech acts are performances of cultural norms, values, and social dynamics within the context of the tales. This paper seeks to investigate the indirect speech acts/performances through the rules of John Searle's Indirect Speech Acts and attempting to solve the problem of meaning that comes up in the analysing of context by drawing upon Ludwig Wittgenstein's notion of language as a series of interconnected games, which he termed as Language Games. This paper argues for Wittgenstein's language game theory and its usability as framework for analysing the role of indirect speech in folk narratives, thus shedding light on how language and its conventions shape narrative meanings within the text.

By outlining Wittgenstein's language game theory and emphasizing its relevance in understanding the multifaceted nature of language and communication, it serves as a supplementary solution to problems that are inevitable in the analysing of Indirect speech acts. Through a close examination of folktales from selected but diverse cultural backgrounds of Northeast India, the paper identifies patterns of indirect speech act performances and explores their significance within the narratives of the folktales. Through textual analysis and theoretical inquiry, this study hopes to contribute to our understanding of the intricate relationship between language and culture; and contribute to further critical studies of folklore from Northeast India.

Keywords: folklore, Indirect Speech acts, Searle, Wittgenstein, language

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Florence Laldinpui; Haidamteu Zeme N

Doctoral Scholars and Teaching Assistant

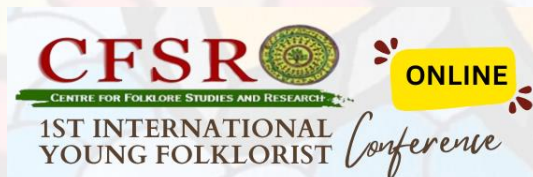
Indian Institute of Technology Delhi

Myth or Folktale?: Politics and Problematics of Translating Indigenous Oral Narratives

How might one identify and speak of ‘folklore’ of a society predominated by orality? How might one classify, translate, and publish oral narratives in the absence of a standard framework and methodology? Such problems recounted by indigenous communities with oral traditions are shared by the communities of northeast India. In the academic vigor to circulate the ‘lores’ of the ‘tribal’ communities, translations from the ‘vernacular’ to global languages as English expose oral traditions to commercialization, exoticization, misrepresentation, and other vulnerabilities. Despite the growth of printed collections and anthologies of ‘folktales’, academic attempts to question the methods and frameworks behind their identification and classification are fraught with ambiguities. What qualifies as a ‘myth’ in the absence of its clear-cut definition by the people? On what grounds are ‘stories’ selected for translation? A study of the oral narratives of India’s northeast reveals the nuanced understanding of myths, folktales, memoirs, and legends among the scholars who use them interchangeably or collect “traditional stories” (Pachau 2013) and publish them under different ‘categories’ or genres. By intertextually analyzing contemporary publications by folklorists in the region— especially from Mizoram and Nagaland, this paper emphasizes the need to confront the methodological flaw and limitations of applying Western or European frameworks for the ‘non-West’. In doing so, it additionally seeks to engage with questions such as, ‘who defines a ‘folktale’?’, ‘is there a vernacular equivalent for ‘folk’?’, ‘what does folklore mean for “pre-literate” societies?’. Taking certain factors such as colonialism, evangelism, the standardization of a script, and print culture into account, this paper will simultaneously cross-examine the politics of orality, textuality, translation, and publication. By arguing against the discursive practice of legitimizing textual over oral forms, and the hegemony of European models of folklore, it aims to provide a way forward for folklorists and ultimately contribute to folkloristics, indigenous epistemology, and the study of South Asian folklore.

Keywords: *oral tradition, indigenous folklore, translation, publication, folkloristics.*

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Reema Jose

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Fairy Tales as a Pedagogical Tool for Critical Analysis in Slow Learners

Folklore encompasses a wide range of traditional stories, customs, and beliefs passed down orally through generations within a culture or community. Fairy tales, with their magical elements and moral lessons, are a subset of this larger body of folklore. Feminist retellings of fairy tales often reinterpret traditional stories to challenge gender stereotypes, empower female characters, and explore themes of agency and equality. These retellings may give voice to previously marginalised characters, offer alternative perspectives, or subvert traditional narratives to promote feminist ideals. Some examples are "The Bloody Chamber" by Angela Carter, "The Princess Saves Herself in this One" by Amanda Lovelace, and "Cinder" by Marissa Meyer. By engaging first year undergraduate students of Dr BMN College of Home Science in critically analysing traditional folktales and fairy tales, it enabled them to understand the rationale behind character decisions taken by the author and how social norms formed their collective consciousness. Post sessions, the students were tasked with finding and retelling an Indian folktale that they have come across in their childhood. The students were able to create retellings with minor or previously sidelined characters emerging to the forefront. The result revealed a significant change in their outlook towards traditional themes in folktales and fairytales where the female character is almost always the underdog and portrayed as the victim that needs rescue. The paper explores teaching learning strategies for slow learners in critical analysis thereby providing alternative perspectives to traditional folktales and fairy tales from the subcontinent of India.

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Yeonsu Choi

Seoul National University

Transformation of the Simcheong Narrative:**Korean Gramophone Drama <Modern Simcheong-Jeon>**

The Simcheong narrative is rooted in the traditional long-form Korean performing art of Pansori and tells of the sacrifice of a faithful daughter to open the eyes of her blind father. The introduction of the gramophone to Korea in the 1930s allowed for new ways to enjoy traditional narratives. This advancement led to a shift in the presentation of the Simcheong narrative, transforming it into short-form dramas recorded on gramophone. This process resulted in a transformation of pansori into plays, giving rise to a genre known as 'gramophone dramas'. Since standard-play (or SP) records were



commercial products, they were highly sensitive to the tastes of the consumer public. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how these works were remediated within the cultural context of the time.

The record <Modern Simcheong-Jeon> is a great example that allows us to identify how traditional narratives were received and transmitted in those times 1930s. This was released in 1935, and classified as the ‘man-guk’ genre. Man-guk, a branch of comedy expresses worldly affairs in a satirical and humorous way, evoking laughter while created in the form of a play. Accordingly, the <Modern Simcheong-Jeon>’s sense of comic is formed through the depiction of the socio-cultural context prevalent when SP records were distributed. For instance, Within the work, various elements such as the occupations of Shimcheong and her blind father reflect the transformation that occurred during the early modern period. Furthermore, the dialogue among characters, it also depicts the conflict between filial piety and chastity, revealing the tumultuous societal norms of the time.

Consequently, contemporaneousness profoundly influences how gramophone dramas based on Simcheong narrative embody the primary sense of beauty in the work. This influence, in turn, leads to various aspects of the remediation of the Simcheong narrative.

Keywords: *Simcheong narrative, Korean gramophone drama, transformation, 1930s, sociocultural context.*

Coordinators:

Mrittika Malakar

Ph.D. in Folklore, University of Kalyani

Mrittika Malakar, a dedicated scholar and artist, immerses herself in Bengal's folk music. With a post-graduation degree in English Literature, she is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Folklore at the University of Kalyani, focusing on Bengal's rich folk music tradition. Awarded a National Scholarship for Young Artists, she actively engages in researching and performing folk songs. Mrittika is also actively involved with Lalan Academy for the preservation of folk culture and serves as an executive member of the Centre for Folklore Studies and Research. Embracing modern technology, she has completed courses in Ethnomusicology and Digital Archive, demonstrating her commitment to safeguarding Bengal's folk music legacy. Presently, she serves as a State Aided College Teacher in the Department of English at P.N. Das College, Palta, West Bengal. Her research articles have found places in various books and journals, and she has edited *Bangabhumi and Lokasangskriti*. Additionally, she shares her insights in talks, seminars, and conferences. Mrittika also manages folk.in, a website dedicated to digitally archiving folk elements of Bengal.

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Mir Masudul Hoque

PhD Scholar, Department of English. Aligarh Muslim University

Mir Masudul Hoque, a PhD student at the Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University, is an early career researcher with a keen interest in Ethnomusicology, Folklore Studies, English Literature, and Environmental Humanities. His ongoing project focuses on the ecological consciousness of the Bauls of Bengal, while he also delves into related ideas, participating in summer schools, conferences, and workshops. He has also completed an IKS internship with the Ministry of Education, India. He has contributed to various journals and serves as an executive member of the Centre for Folklore Studies and Research. Outside academia, he is passionate about music-making and traveling.

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Meghal Karki

PhD Scholar, Ambedkar University, Delhi

Meghal Karki is a doctoral candidate in English at the School of Letters, Ambedkar University, Delhi, and is working on the emotions and atmospheres of Kumaoni Holi folk songs and baithaks, with a particular focus on gender and performance. An alumnus of Jamia Millia Islamia and University of Delhi, she has a keen interest in folklore, cultural heritage, affect theory, spatial studies, cultural



studies, literary theory and postcolonial literatures, and is a novice Angela Carter aficionado. She has been awarded the prestigious Meenakshi Mukherjee Memorial Prize, instituted by the Indian Association for Commonwealth Literatures and Language Studies (IACLALS) for her paper on street art. She has been presenting her research papers at regional, national and international conferences since her undergraduate degree, and has presented her work at 14 conferences.

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Bhumika Singh is a PhD scholar in English at the School of Letters, Ambedkar University Delhi. The area of research for her thesis focuses on the Mask tradition in Majuli, particularly the ritual and marginalities involved in the Mukha Bhaona performances. She completed her post-graduation in English at Ambedkar University Delhi and graduated from the University of Delhi. She identifies herself as a folklorist, and is keenly interested in South-Asian literature, Cultural studies, traditional Indian art forms, and writing prose & poetry. Currently, she is working at the Indira Gandhi National Centre of the Arts (IGNCA), Janpath, under the Ministry of Culture, as a Project Assistant in the Publication Unit. In the year 2023, she presented her research paper at a prestigious international conference organised by the American Folklore Society, the 2023 Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon. She has presented her research work at various conferences across India and abroad and has actively participated in organising conferences at Ambedkar University, Delhi.

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(Pipelines Division); Pursuing MA in Folklore and Culture Studies





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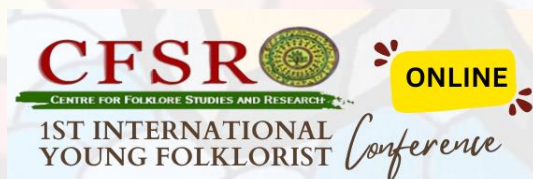
Centre for Folklore Studies and Research (CFSR) commenced its journey in September 2023, with a range of impactful initiatives and activities:

1. **Folklore Studies Network:** Boasting over 60 members worldwide, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange in the field of folklore studies.
2. **Online Courses:**
 - **"Introduction to Ethnomusicology: Music, Culture, and Society"** (7th January - 29th February 2024) Coordinated by Mekhala Chattopadhyay and Mir Masudul Hoque.
 - **"The Expressive Canvas: An Introduction to Performance Studies"** (10th April to 31st May) Coordinated by Bidisha Chakraborty and Kuntalika Jharimune.

1. **Young Folklorist Conference on Transitions and Transformation in South Asian Folklore: Problems, Perspectives, and Prospects:**

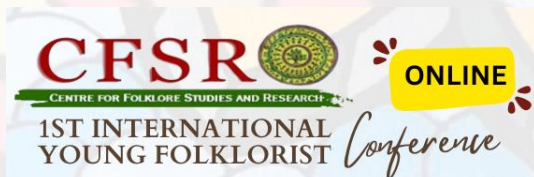
Spearheaded by:

- Mrittika Malakar, PhD Research Scholar, University of Kalyani
 - Mir Masudul Hoque, PhD Research Scholar, Aligarh Muslim University
 - Meghal Karki, PhD Research Scholar, Ambedkar University, Delhi
 - Bhumika Singh, PhD Research Scholar, Ambedkar University, Delhi
2. **Monthly Reading and Discussion Forum:** To facilitate regular gatherings for participants to engage in collective reading and discussions, fostering intellectual exchange and critical thinking
 3. **Young Folklorist's Talk Series** Moderated by Spandita Das, PhD Research Scholar, IIT Delhi provides a platform for emerging scholars to share their research and engage in discourse within the field of folklore studies.



4. **Monthly Lecture Series** features regular talks on various topics on Folklore and Cultural Studies, moderated By Sanjukta Naskar, Associate Professor, Janki Devi Memorial College, Delhi and Rusha Bose, JOA(HR) at Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (Pipelines Division); Pursuing MA in Folklore and Culture Studies, IGNOU.
5. **CFSR Library on Folklore:** Houses an extensive collection of over 5000 books, enriching research and learning opportunities.
6. **Workshops with Folk Artists:** Engaging with diverse traditional artists such as Patua, Jari, and Alkap artists, nurturing cultural exchange and preservation.
7. **Regional Level Conferences:** Organized collaboratively, such as the Conference on "Preserving Cultural Heritage: Empowering Folk Artists for a Sustainable Future," coordinated by Mrityika Malakar.
8. **Collaboration with Folk Festivals:** Contributed to the success of events like the Rarh Festival held on March 8th, 9th, and 10th, 2024.
9. **Folk Digital Archive:** Curating and archiving resources to document various festivals and preserve cultural heritage digitally.
10. **Workshops at School Level:** Instilling folk values into the education system by integrating them into primary and high school curricula.

These initiatives collectively reflect the dedication of CFSR to the study, preservation, and promotion of folklore, fostering a rich tapestry of cultural understanding and appreciation.



**TRANSITIONS AND TRANSFORMATION
IN SOUTH ASIAN FOLKLORE:
PROBLEMS, PERSPECTIVES, AND
PROSPECTS**

CFSR
CENTRE FOR FOLKLORE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

Organises
**1ST INTERNATIONAL
YOUNG FOLKLORIST**

Panel Session **ONLINE**

**SOUNDS OF SOUTH ASIA: EXPLORING
ETHNOMUSICOLOGY**

30th March 2024 | 05:00 PM - 06:15 PM (IST)

DR. HANIE MIAH
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY,
UNIVERSITY OF CHITTAGONG,
BANGLADESH

**PRAMANTHA
THAKUR**
RESEARCH FELLOW,
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC,
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI,
COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

MUKESH KURIYA
PHD RESEARCH SCHOLAR,
DEPARTMENT OF
ETHNOMUSICOLOGY,
HEBBERLEY SCHOOL OF
MUSIC

SESSION CHAIRED BY
DR. HASHIK MADUKANDIL
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF
CULTURAL STUDIES, TIZPR UNIVERSITY

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March 29, 2024
06:30-07:30 PM IST | 08:00-09:00 AM EST

Keynote Address **ONLINE**
On

**Navigating Between the
Global, Local, and Virtual in
the Study of Folklore
of South Asia and
Beyond**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
PROF. SIMON J BRONNER
Dean, College of General Studies
Distinguished Professor of
Social Sciences
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

DR. SEMONTEE MITRA
Assistant Teaching
Professor
Penn State University

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Keynote Address **ONLINE**
On

**"Folklore
Today"**

Friday, March 29,
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 IST
12:30 a.m. - 1:30am EST

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
DR. PRAVINA SHUKLA
Provost Professor Department
of Folklore and
Cultural Studies, Indiana
Bloomington, IN

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Keynote Address **ONLINE**
On

**"Transitions and
Transformation in
South Asian Folklore: Pro
blems, Perspectives, and
Prospects"**

PROF. T.S. SATYANATH
Professor Emeritus,
Department of Modern Indian Languages and
Literature Studies

31 MARCH
2.30-3.30 P.M.

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Panel Session **ONLINE**

**EXCLUSIVE INCLUSIVITY: WHO GETS
TO BE THE "FOLK" IN FOLKLORE**

29th March 2024 | 05:00 PM - 06:15 PM (IST)

**DR. HEMCHANDRA
NAMEIRAKRAM**
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY,
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

GARIMA PLAWAT
PHD RESEARCH SCHOLAR,
INDIANA UNIVERSITY,
BLOOMINGTON

SANGEETA JAWLA
POSTER SESSION FELLOW,
PHD RESEARCH SCHOLAR,
INDIANA UNIVERSITY,
BLOOMINGTON

SESSION CHAIRED BY
DR. C. JUSTIN SELVARAJ
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AND HEAD,
DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS AND AESTHETICS,
SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS, MAHARAJA
KRISHNAJI UNIVERSITY, MADURAI - 625001

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YOUNG FOLKLORIST**

Valedictory
Address
by

Friday, March 31,
p.m. - 7:00 p.m. IST

KEYNOTE ADDRESS
NANDINI SAHU
Professor of English and
Director, School of
Languages, IGNOU

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Chief
Guest

Friday
March 29,
10:35 AM - 11:00
AM

INAUGURAL ADDRESS
PROF. J. BHEEMAIHAH
The Head of The Centre for
Folklore Studies and Research

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**TRANSITIONS AND
TRANSFORMATION
IN SOUTH ASIAN FOLKLORE:
PROBLEMS, PERSPECTIVES, AND
PROSPECTS**

ARTIST IN CONVERSATION
Exploring Folk
Songs of South Asia

Dipannita Acharya
(Renowned Folk Musician)

Hosted by
Mrittika Malakar
(Musician, PhD Research Scholar,
Departments of Folklore, University
of Kalyani)

30th March 2024
06:30 PM - 08:00 PM IST

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YOUNG FOLKLORIST**

Roundtable
Session **ONLINE**

**"PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE
AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE"**

31 March, 2024 | 12 PM - 01:30 PM IST
1:30 AM - 3:00 AM EST

**DR. MANAS KUMAR
GANGULI**
LIBRARIAN, SONARBUKH
COLLEGE, SONARBUKH
BANARSI, WEST BENGAL
APPARTENING TO BANARSI
UNIVERSITY

**DR. LAINA
DAFANTI**
DEPARTMENT OF LAW ON
PROFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
AND INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY, FACULTY OF LAW,
UNIVERSITAS PADJADJARAN,
BANDUNG, INDONESIA

**DR. ALI AHAMMAD
TAMER HASAN**
LIBRARIAN, KARI NASSRU
COLLEGE, MARSA MATRUH,
WEST BENGAL APPARTENING TO
RIFDWAH UNIVERSITY

Moderation
MR. BAKSHI
Assistant Professor, Department of Folklore,
Department of Folklore,
Kangladesh End
Development Programme, Asian Institute of
Technology, Thailand

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**30 MARCH
31 2024**

**CENTRE FOR FOLKLORE STUDIES
AND RESEARCH
INITIATES**

**1ST YOUNG FOLKLORIST
CONFERENCE**

Online

COORDINATORS

Mrittika Malakar
Mir Masudul Haque
Bhumika Singh
Meghal Karki

**COMING
SOON**

Contact for more Information

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YOUNG FOLKLORIST**

Documentary Screening
A SERIOUS WEDDING
& Discussion

03:20 PM - 04:55 PM IST

Documentary
Screening
of
A SERIOUS WEDDING
AN EXPERIMENTAL FILM BY RAJAT NAYYAR

Hosted by
Mir Masudul Haque
PhD Candidate, Department of
English, Aligarh Muslim University

Rajat Nayyar
Film Director & SSHRC
Vanier Scholar, PhD
Candidate, Theatre &
Performance Studies, York
University, MA Visual
Anthropology, Tallinn
University

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PROF. T.S. SATYANATH
Professor Emeritus,
Department of Modern Indian
Languages and Literature
Studies

DR. SEMONTEE MITRA
Assistant Teaching
Professor
Penn State University

**EXTENDED date for
Abstract Submission**
09.03.2024

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