

# CALL FOR PAPERS

Department of History, Assam University, Diphu Campus

## NATIONAL SEMINAR

On

***Problems and Prospects of Oral History and Traditions in Northeast India***

**(27-28, February, 2019)**

Abstract Submission(250-300 words)	10, February, 2019
Last Date for Full Paper Submission	20, February, 2019
Seminar Dates	27-28, February, 2019
Mail ID for Submission of Abstract	conferenceaudc@gmail.com
Venue	Assam University, Diphu Campus

## CONCEPT NOTE

The discovery of present living traditions of tribes or any ethnic communities is not an accidental affair and it has evolved through several forces in the past. Therefore, an understanding of changing conditions of traditions at present will certainly lead to the study of their past. But, reconstruction of past is a very difficult task, accurately because they have had no written records by themselves. Whatever limited sources are available, they are written by 'others' such as colonial ethnographers and Indian scholars who are influenced by the 'Meta Narratives' of colonialism' with different interests and compulsions. Though, these writings are mostly divorced from the objective and subjective conditions of 'Meta Narratives'.

Of late, the scholars from India questioned the Western academia of not allowing the colonized to speak for them. As a result, these scholars have initiated to theorize the cultural importance of folk communities of India especially in the case of northeast India. The folklorist, Jawaharlal Handoo (2006) questioned the traditional paradigm of history writing, which he called the 'Place Paradigm'. It is not only obscured the real story, but also perpetuated the dangerous ideology of power politics. He advocated the oral word as against the hegemony of the written word. The voice of the vast majority of marginal communities hardly found any space in the discourse of history writings. As a result, historical writings have become mouthpiece of elites. Thus, oral history provide an opportunity as alternative histories of the people who, being excluded and vanquished, are often not able to document their story but may have cultivated and preserved living oral traditions. As a result, oral history plays a vital role in exploring historical past of the ethnic communities and helping it to rewrite their history based on their living traditions. Though oral history is a complex and multi-vocal field in which multiple perspectives, ideologies, and narratives create a mixture of unexplored voices that reveals the intricate ideas of the past in form of oral narratives and traditions.

On the other hand, oral history is not folklore, gossip and rumor, but it is the 'historical discourse' translates from the ideas and perspective of the people. Since the 1980s, oral history has become as 'methodology of the ethnic communities' in order to liberate it from colonial and other hegemonic writings. In many societies, history has replaced oral traditions, similarly the most of the ethnic community in northeast India dispossessed by any written records and documents. Due to these reasons living oral traditions has become vital source of information for studying about cultural history of the ethnic communities. Oral historian, Paul Thomson (1978) argues that "the discovery of oral history by historian... is not only a discovery but recovery. It gives a future no longer tied to the cultural significance of paper documents..." Thus, oral traditions of the community are not a passive depository of facts, but an active process of creation and attribution of historical meanings to the past. Recently, the scholars from

northeast India also consider the same view that oral history can enhance scholars in reconstruction of the history of the ethnic communities through the studying various living oral traditions.

Firstly, this seminar will look into the problems and prospects of oral history and its relevance for the construction of history of northeast in today's context. Secondly, it will critically discuss how the concepts of oral traditions have appropriately been used in different historical contexts and how it has changed the course of history of northeast India. Thirdly, this seminar will study oral history as discourse to explore the diverse ways in which the past shapes the present perceptions and focus on a wide range of questions relating to the history, migration and identity formations. Fourthly, this seminar is not only to explore historical past but also the role of plural narratives of the ethnic communities that influence in shaping their history, migration and contesting itself in diverse forms of ideas by taking up oral history as discourse.

### **Subthemes:**

- Conceptualizing Oral History
- Oral Literature and Oral Traditions
- Oral History and Historical Documents
- Verbal and Non-Verbal Narratives
- Oral History and Cultural Past
- Oral and Written Traditions
- Oral based Traditions: Jokes, Riddles, Proverbs, Gossip & Rumors, Ballad & Epic Poetry
- Oral based Narratives: Legends, Myths and Tales
- Knowledge based Traditions: Beliefs and Indigenous Knowledge
- Oral Traditions in Documentaries, Films and Advertisements
- Representation of Oral Traditions
- Social Folk Customs and Material Culture
- Gender and Folklore
- Oral History as Alternative History
- Meta Narratives in Historical Discourse
- Oral History, Literature and Marginal Communities
- Migrational Memories and Identity Formation
- Any other related topics

<p><b>Guidelines for Abstract</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The abstract should not exceed 250-300 words.</li> <li>▪ It should include title of the abstract, the author's name, designation, institutional affiliation, mailing address, E-mail ID and contact number</li> <li>▪ Authors are requested to send the abstract through E-mail: <b>conferenceaucd@gmail.com</b> latest by <b>10, February 2019.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Guidelines for full Paper</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Write the paper keeping in view of the publication immediately after the seminar.</li> <li>▪ The full version of papers should be submitted in soft copy latest by <b>20, February 2019.</b></li> <li>▪ The length of full paper including tables, diagrams, illustrations, references, etc. should be between to 6000 to 8000 words.</li> <li>▪ The full paper should be in English and typed in MS-Word in Times New Roman with font size 12 and 1.5 spaced.</li> <li>▪ References and Notes should be arranged as Footnote in Oxford Referencing Style.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hotel Accommodation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The organizing committee will arrange hotel accommodation for selected outstation paper presenters while considering the distance of the participant/availability of hotel rooms.</li> </ul>

<b>Traveling Allowance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travel Allowance will not be reimbursed to the paper presenters due to lack of sufficient fund. You are kindly requested to arrange it on your own.</li> </ul>
<b>Publication of Papers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The seminar will bring out the edited Volume with high quality by reputed publishers after completion of seminar.</li> </ul>
<b>Seminar Registration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teachers/Faculty/ any other Academicians- Rs.1000</li> <li>▪ Students/Research Scholars-Rs.750</li> <li>▪ You will be informed through E-Mail about mode of payment of registration fee after acceptance of abstract</li> </ul>
<b>About the Department of History, Assam University, Diphu Campus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Department of History was started on the opening of the Diphu Campus of Assam University (Central University) in 2007. The Department offers M.A, M.Phil &amp; PhD courses. The programs are being designed to provide students with both basic historical theory and a rigorous grounding in historical method. The combination of theory with training in historical method reflects the Department's dedication that students and scholars should be encouraged to deal with critical thinking about the past and present.</li> <li>▪ The Department is small enough to offer close attention to students' specific needs but large enough to function as an intellectual research community. The Department offers a range of inter-disciplinary courses to meet the needs and interests of students with differing levels of learning in the life.</li> <li>▪ The Department regularly organizes seminars, symposiums, workshops etc. At present the Department is having five faculty members.</li> </ul>
<b>Seminar Organizing Committee</b>	<p><b>Chief Patron:</b> Vice Chancellor, Assam University, Silchar  <b>Patron:</b> Pro-Vice Chancellor, Assam University, Diphu Campus  <b>Chairman:</b> Dr Paul B. Chonzik, Head, Dept. of History, Diphu Campus  <b>Seminar Coordinator:</b> Dr. Vulli Dhanaraju, Dept. of History, AUDC  <b>Members:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dr. Tahir Hussain Ansari, Assistant Professor, Dept. of History, AUDC</li> <li>2. Dr. Mahua Bhattacharjee, Assistant Professor, Dept. of History, AUDC</li> <li>3. Dr. Tarun Dutta, Assistant Professor, Dept. of History, AUDC</li> </ol>
<b>Contact Person</b>	<p><b>Dr. Vulli Dhanaraju</b>  Seminar Coordinator, Department of History, Assam University (A Central University), Diphu Campus, Diphu, Karbi Anglong, Assam-782462, E-Mail: <a href="mailto:conferenceaudc@gmail.com">conferenceaudc@gmail.com</a></p>