



A Two-day National Conference

on

*Reading Narratives/Storying Humanity:
Society and Culture in South and Southeast Asia*
March 17-18, 2023

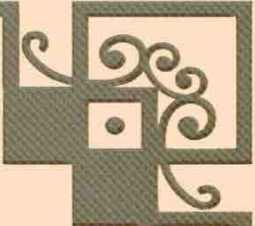
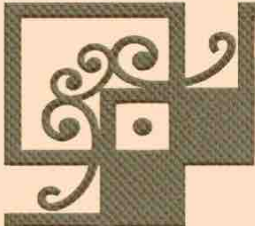


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ICSSR-NERC, Shillong
Organised by
Department of English
Assam University, Silchar

CONCEPT NOTE:

In their attempt to analyse and theorise particular societies and cultures, narratives have become the focal point of investigation in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Studying narratives, analyzing them, assessing their manifest content and decoding their latent content seem to have become the primary tools of cultural studies in the recent past. The narratives, the stories, vary greatly in terms of form and content – they might be works of literature, or other forms of cultural artifacts with a tale attached or they might be oral in form or folk in origin or they might be historical in nature or sociological/political in intent – but the fact remains that these stories constitute what we usually refer to as society or culture.

Narratives circulate in society as a part of the superstructure influencing discourses of identity, culture and politics of a population. Narratives influence policies, predetermine actions at the individual and social level, narratives feed into biases or challenge the same, narratives help in maintaining status quo, and narratives win elections and bring change and progress. Of course, there is no one singular narrative in circulation at any one moment in a particular population. Ever since the world took a postmodern turn, as Jean-François Lyotard would put it, grand narratives in all forms and shapes are treated with suspicion and challenged on a regular basis. At any point of time, there are multiple narratives that are in circulation in a society. These narratives emanate from the social, economic and political realities of the society, and in their turn, influence and manipulate these material realities. Cultural theorists would categorise these 'stories' into three boxes: those that are dominant, and have become hegemonies that privilege and support the ruling dispensation, and help maintaining status quo; those that are residual, and have been hegemonic in the past, and yet hold that nostalgia; those that are emergent, and challenge the current hegemony, call for change and aspire to become the hegemonies of the future. These stories, these narratives that facilitate and support these discourses in consolidation constitute the reality that we experience and participate in.

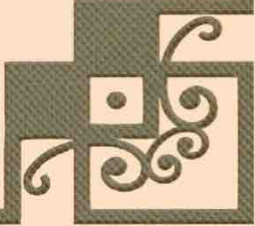
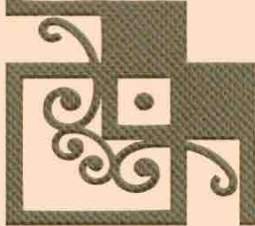


The conference intends to be a neutral, objective, open and free space where we can come together to discuss these narratives, analyse them, decode them, interpret them to find out their ideological roots. Stories from South and Southeast Asia are of importance to the global community at this present moment in history, not only because there are so many emerging economies in the region but also because these emerging economies are participating as equal partners in determining the global narrative at this point of time. South and Southeast Asia are strategically important because of the partially bipolar globe with China and the USA competing for domination, and because of the strategic location, both politically and geographically, of the countries of South and Southeast Asia that can influence the future course that humanity will take in the 21st century. Under these circumstances, it is crucial that we closely study the narratives that are in circulation in South and Southeast Asia, be it literary, or historical, or political, or sociological in origin. Interpreting these narratives can provide a roadmap, not only for the future of the region, but also for the future of the story of humanity across the globe.

We are interested in inviting papers from diverse fields that tell stories and interpret the same with respect to their local, global, political, economic, historical and literary relevance in the scheme of things.

Possible themes on which submission of abstracts is sought include, but are not limited to, the following:

Narratives and Counter-narratives in Political Discourse
Narratives of Social Formations and Transformations
Myths, Legends, Histories
Narratives of Nationalism, Globalisation and Ethnicity
Narratives of Race and Religion
Human Rights Narratives
Ecological, Environmental and Climate Change Narratives
Narratives of Gender and Sexuality
Narratives of Violence
Narratives of Dispossession and Exile
Narratives from Popular Culture
Fantasy & Science Fiction Narratives
Folk and Oral Narratives
Narratives in Literature and Other Art Forms



ORGANISING COMMITTEE:

Prof. Anindya Syam Choudhury (Chairperson)

Prof. Saugata Kumar Nath (Co-ordinator)

Shri Anindya Sen (Jt. Co-ordinator)

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ABSTRACT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Abstract template:

TITLE OF THE PROPOSAL

F. Author* and S. Author†

Department of English

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Assam University, Silchar-788011, Assam

* Email: f.author@aus.ac.in

- Kindly copy and use the above MS Word template for your abstract preparation and submission. Use the Times New Roman font everywhere.
- The **title** (of **not more than 10 words**) should be in **12pt bold**; the name(s) of author(s) should be in **11pt bold**; the affiliation(s) should be in 11pt italic.
- In case of there being two authors, the corresponding author should be indicated by a "*" and the email address should be given (please remove the hyperlink). Until here the document should be centred.
- Leave a line between the title and the author affiliation, and another before the abstract body.
- The **abstract body** (one paragraph, 12pt, left and right aligned) should be **500 words or less**.
- The abstract must be followed by at least **05 keywords**.
- **Biographical information** of the author(s) in the third person must be included at the end. The **maximum number of words is 60**.

Font: Times New Roman; Font size: 10; Spacing: Single space; Alignment: left and right aligned

Sample: Dr. Smith is a professor of Language Acquisition Research at the University of Hawaii.

He holds a PhD in Swahili. He is the author of Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About

Swahili and previously taught at the University of California.

Deadlines

Abstract submission deadline: **03 March 2023**

Proposal acceptance notification: **06 March 2023**

Last date for Registration and the submission of Registration Fees: **10 March 2023**

Registration Fees:

Presenters other than Research Scholars: Rs. 1500/-

Research Scholars: 1000/-

The Registration Fee includes lunch and refreshments for the days of the conference, conference kit and certificate of participation. The outstation participants will be offered help in finding hotel accommodation, if they so desire.

Kindly send in your abstract as an email attachment to **narratives.aus@gmail.com** mentioning in the subject line "Abstract Submission".