

## GENERIC ELECTIVES (GE-2): History and Culture: Representations in Texts, Objects and Performance Histories

### Credit distribution, Eligibility and Pre-requisites of the Course

Course title & Code	Credits	Credit distribution of the course			Eligibility criteria	Pre-requisite of the course
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical/ Practice		
<b>History and Culture: Representations in Texts, Objects and Performance Histories</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup> Pass</b>	<b>NIL</b>

### Learning Objectives

This course aims to explore culture through its intangible and tangible attributes that are discussed in four themes including traditions of kingship and courtly culture; inter-cultural perceptions of ‘other’ religious communities and gender; performing ritual devotions through recitation of songs and processions; and exploring performance of narrative traditions using inanimate objects like, masks, puppets and cloth/paper scrolls. The themes are representations from oral and manuscript cultures from India. Specialized essays have been attached to every theme with the purpose of explaining the meaning, form, and context of these representations from the past. The readings represent ethnic and spatial (across geographical space and time) range and draw on diverse methodologies.

Further, this module seeks to explore the continuity of cultural patterns, iconic representations, and styles of performance into our present times. For example, the iconic raja (king) of the premodern times continues to perform royal ritual and sacrificial ceremonies, into contemporary times when India is a republic. The court jester of the past lingers on into the present as represented by Hajari Bhand. The complex nature of inter-cultural discourse between the Hindus and Muslims continues into the present and we know that neither community represents monolithic form. What shall we make of these multifaceted representations? How do performative traditions evolve over time? In absence of kingly patrons who will patronize the bhand, temple priest, picture showman with his scrolls? What kind of changes have evolved in the narrative traditions? The pedagogy of interdisciplinary approach is thus inbuilt into the structure of this course. Readings and audio-visual material have been knitted into themes to encourage active participation and discussion in the classroom. It will be impossible to claim any ‘comprehensive’ treatment of India’s culture over the duration of one semester. We may, however, be introduced to some significant vignettes of the whole.

### Learning outcomes

The Learning Outcomes of this course are as follows:

- Identify complex nature of kingship in medieval times through the case study of Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagara.

- Understand the nature of interaction between the two dominant communities in the past. The paradigm of ‘clash of civilizations’ appears to be an exaggerated view.
- Appreciate the complex nature of religious communities in the past, when neither the Hindu nor Muslims represented monolithic identities.
- Read the intricate nature of interactions between men and women and the fact that identities were differently expressed than in the colonial times.
- Understand how culture is communicated through narrative strategies and performative acts.
- Appreciate that textuality and performativity are not binary opposites and are mutually interactive.
- Develop analytical skills that are necessary for students of literature, sociology, anthropology, religion, psychology, political science and South Asian studies.

## SYLLABUS OF GE-2

<b>Unit I:</b> Kings, bhands & politicians	(16 Hours)
<b>Unit II:</b> Perceiving cultures & Negotiating identities	(16 Hours)
<b>Unit III:</b> Performing Devotion: Rituals, songs & processions	(16 Hours)
<b>Unit IV:</b> Storytelling with objects: Masks, puppets & scrolls	(12 Hours)

**Practical component (if any) - NIL**

### Essential/recommended readings

**Unit I:** Kingship is identified as a key component of India’s civilizational ethos. In the years following Indian Independence, kingdoms were dissolved, but this did not provoke the disappearance of kings: royal rituals continued to be celebrated as members of the royal families became politicians; and court jesters linger on as buffoons.

- David Dean Shulman, *The King and the Clown in South Indian Myth & Poetry*, Princeton University Press, 1985, Excerpt from Chapter 4, “The Kingdom of Clowns: Brahmins, Jesters & Magicians”, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985, pp. 152-213, available in Meenakshi Khanna, ed., *The Cultural History of Medieval India*, New Delhi: Social Science Press, 2012 (2007), pp. 3-24.
- डेवड िीन शलु मन, "मसखरों का राज्य: ब्राह्मण, मसखरेऔर जािगरू ", मध्यकालीन भारत का साांस्कृ ततक इततहास, संपावित, मीनाक्षी
- खन्ना, अनुर् ाि उमाशंकर शमाा ऋर्व, नयी विल्ली: ओररण्टल ब्लैकसर्् ान, 2007, पष्ठ 3-25.
- John Emigh and Ulrike Emigh, “Hajari Bhand of Rajasthan: A Joker in the Deck”, in *The Drama Review: TDR*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Spring, 1986), pp. 101-130.

**Unit II:** This rubric draws on four essays based on multilingual textual sources such as inscriptions, poetic texts, chronicles and travellers accounts composed during 8th to 19th centuries. The scholars have problematised issues relating to cultural perceptions and identities of religion and gender. Contrary to popular view that an encounter between the Hindus and Muslims perpetuated clashes, the authors of these essays present a complex understanding of identities that were not perceived as monolithic. These readings will clarify the methodological approaches used by historians to unravel narratives from the past in the quest for explaining the present.

- Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, “Images of Raiders and Rulers” in B. D. Chattopadhyaya, ed., *Representing the Other: Sanskrit Sources and the Muslims, Eighth to Fourteenth Century*, New Delhi: Manohar, 1998, pp. 101-125
- बज्रु लाल चट्टोपाध्याय, “आक्रामकों और शासकों की छर्वयां”, मध्यकालीन भारत का सांस्कृतिक इततहास, संपावित, मीनाक्षी खन्ना,
- अनुरा ि उमाशंकर शमाा ' ऋर्व', नयी विल्ली: ओररण्टल ब्लैकस् ान, 2007, पष्ठ 107-133
- R. M. Eaton “Multiple Lenses: Differing Perspectives of Fifteenth Century Calicut”, R. M. Eaton ed., *Essays on Islam and Indian History*, New Delhi: OUP, 2002, pp. 76-93
- Carla Petievich, “Gender politics and the Urdu ghazal: Exploratory observations on Rekhta versus Rekhti”, in *The Indian Economic & Social History Review*, vol. 38(3), 223–248
- कालापेवतएर्वच, “वलंग की राजनीवत तथा डि ूगज़ल : रेखता बनाम रखती का खोजपरक अलोकन “, मध्यकालीन भारत का
- सांस्कृतिक इततहास, संपावित, मीनाक्षी खन्ना, अनुरा ि उमाशंकर शमाा ' ऋर्व', नयी विल्ली: ओररण्टल ब्लैकस् ान, 2007,
- पष्ठ 154-184
- Jenny Nilsson, “The Sense of a Lady’: An Exploration of Transvestite Roles in Kathakali and their Relation to Keralan Gender Constructions”, in *The Cambridge Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (2004), pp. 1-40

**Unit III.** The acts of devotion, whether these are observed in private spaces or in public sphere, formulate expressions of religious identities. Many rituals, like the recitation of songs dedicated to Siva or and the procession of icons in the temple at Madurai; lamentation over the martyrdom of Husain and parading of the replica of his tomb shrine during Muharram, developed during medieval times. Political patronage was necessary for such devotional acts in the past as well as in the present.

- R. Champakalakshmi, “Patikam Pātuvār: Ritual Singing as a Means of Communication in Early Medieval South India”, *Studies in History*, 10(2) (1994), pp. 199–215
- राधा चंपकलक्ष्मी, “पाटीकम्पटुआर : आरवर्भक मध्यकालीन िवक्षण र ारत मेंसंर ाि-माध्यम के रूप मेंधावमाक गायन”, मध्यकालीन
- भारत का सांस्कृतिक इततहास, संपावित, मीनाक्षी खन्ना, अनुरा ि उमाशंकर शमाा ' ऋर्व', नयी विल्ली:ओररण्टल ब्लैकस् ान, 2007, पष्ठ 50-75
- Khalsa, Nirinjan Kaur. “Renegotiating Orthopraxy in the Presence of The Bani Guru.” *Sikh Formations* 10, no. 3 (2014): 313–34
- J.R.I. Cole, *Roots of North Indian Shi`ism in Iran and Iraq: Religion and State in Awadh, 1722-1859*, Berkley: University of California Press, 1988, Chapter 4, “Popular Shi`ism”, pp. 92-119.
- जे. आर. आई. कोल "लोकप्रचवलत वशया धमा", मध्यकालीन भारत का सांस्कृतिक इततहास, संपावित, मीनाक्षी खन्ना, अनुरा ि
- उमाशंकर शमाा'ऋर्व', नयी विल्ली:ओररण्टल ब्लैकस् ान, 2007, पष्ठ 76-104.

- Selva J. Raj, “Public display, communal devotion: Procession at a South Indian Catholic festival”, in Jacobsen, K.A. (Ed.) *South Asian Religions on Display: Religious Processions in South Asia and in the Diaspora* (1st ed.), Routledge, pp. 77-91

**Unit IV.** In the three narrative traditions discussed in this rubric the human agency (Purusha) exists in specific kind of relation with inanimate objects used in performance. These objects have meanings embedded in the social and political contexts of various cultural traditions and express processes by which notions of ‘self’/ ‘selves’ are constructed & reconstructed.

**a) Masks:**

- Vishalakshi Nigam Chandra and Veronica Chishi, “Tradition of Story Telling in India through Masks” in *Akhyan Celebration of Masks, Puppets and Picture Showmen Traditions of India*, New Delhi: IGNCA, 2010, pp. 28-33.
- John Emigh, "Crisis and Contestation in the Prahlada Nataka of Ganjam", in Hermann Kulke, ed., *Imaging Orissa*, Prafulla Publication, 2013.

**b) Puppets:**

- Dhurjjati Sarma and Ahanthem Homen Singh, “Storytelling and Puppet Traditions of India” in *Akhyan Celebration of Masks, Puppets and Picture Showmen Traditions of India*, New Delhi: IGNCA, 2010, pp. 34-41.
- Niels Roed Sorensen, “Tolu Bommalu Kattu: Shadow Theater Re: Andhra Pradesh”, *Journal of South Asian Literature*, Vol. 10, No. 2/4, THEATRE IN INDIA (Winter, Spring, Summer 1975), pp. 1-19.
- For illustrations <https://www.sahapedia.org/tag/shadow-puppetry>

**c) Scrolls:**

- Jyotindra Jain, “Indian Picture Showmen: Tradition and Transformation” in *Akhyan Celebration of Masks, Puppets and Picture Showmen Traditions of India*, New Delhi: IGNCA, 2010, pp. 14-27.
- Elizabeth Wickett, “The epic of Pabuji ki par in performance”, *World Oral Literature Project. Voices of Vanishing Worlds, Occasional Paper 3*, Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 2010, pp. 1-27.
- Short documentary [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4EiAdeKi\\_E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4EiAdeKi_E)

**Suggestive readings -**

- Bradford Clark, “Putul Yatra: A Celebration of Indian Puppetry”, in *Asian Theatre Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Autumn, 2005), pp. 334-347.
- Erika Fischer-Lichte, “Culture as Performance” *Modern Austrian Literature*, Vol. 42, No. 3, Special Issue: Performance (2009), pp. 1-10.
- James G. Lochtefeld, “The Construction of the Kumbha Mela”, in *South Asian Popular Culture*, 2004, Vol. 2:2, PP. 103-126.5
- John D. Smith, *The Epic of Pābūjī. A study, transcription and translation, second revised edition available electronically at <http://bombay.indology.info/pabuji/statement.html>*
- Karan Singh, “Structural Peripheries and Ideological Underpinnings: Performative Narration in Par of Pabuji”, in *Dialogue: A Journal Devoted to Literary Appreciation*, Vol. XII, No. 1, June 2016, pp. 35-45.
- Karine Schomer, “The "Ālhā" Epic in Contemporary Performance”, *The World of Music* Vol. 32, No. 2, India (1990), pp. 58-80.

- Kathy Foley & Dadi Pudumjee, “India” in World Encyclopedia of Puppetry Arts called “WEPA” or “EMAM” for Encyclopédie Mondiale des Arts de la Marionnette, a project of International Unima
- Available in English <https://wepa.unima.org/en/india/>
- Available in Hindi at <https://wepa.unima.org/en/india/>
- Marc Katz, Banaras Muharram and the Coals of Karbala. Written, produced, and narrated by Marc J. Katz. DVD, color, 70 minutes; 2004.
- Meenakshi Khanna, Cultural History of Medieval India, Introduction, New Delhi: Social Science Press, 2007, pp. ix-xxxiv.
- “र वमू का”, मध्यकालीन भारत का सांस्कृतिक इतिहास, संपादित, मीनाक्षी खन्ना, अनुराग उमाशंकर शर्मा 'ऋर्व', नयी दिल्ली:
- ओरएण्टल ब्लैकस्त्रान, 2007, पृष्ठ ix-xxxiv.
- Pabitra Sarkar, “Jatra: The Popular Traditional Theatre of Bengal”, in Journal of South
- Asian Literature, Vol. 10, No. 2/4, THEATRE IN INDIA (Winter, Spring, Summer 1975), pp. 87-107.
- Regula Burckhardt Qureshi, “Sufism and the Globalization of Sacred Music.” In Philip V.
- Bohlman edited, The Cambridge History of World Music, 584–605. The Cambridge
- History of Music. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Richard. M. Eaton, “The Articulation of Islamic Space in the Medieval Deccan”, reprinted in Cultural History of Medieval India, ed., Meenakshi Khanna, New Delhi: Social Science Press, 2007, pp. 126-141.
- रचडाईटन, “मध्यकालीन विक्रम मेइस्लावमक स्थान की अर्वाच्यर्व”, मध्यकालीन भारत का सांस्कृतिक इतिहास, संपादित, मीनाक्षी
- खन्ना, अनुराग उमाशंकर शर्मा 'ऋर्व', नयी दिल्ली: ओरएण्टल ब्लैकस्त्रान, 2007, पृष्ठ 134-151.
- Sreekala Sivasankaran, “Akhyana: Masks, Puppets and Picture Showmen Traditions of India - An Introduction” in Akhyana Celebration of Masks, Puppets and Picture Showmen Traditions of India, New Delhi: IGNCA, 2010, pp. 8-11.

**Note: Examination scheme and mode shall be as prescribed by the Examination Branch, University of Delhi, from time to time.**