



Department of Cultural Studies

Duwarah, Mayuri Bordoloi, Shankar Das, Koustabh Jyoti Goswami and Shyamoshree Borah. The photography part was accomplished by Koustabh Jyoti Goswami and Shyamoshree Borah. We sincerely acknowledge and appreciate the sincere rendering of assigned responsibilities by all these staff members of the Centre towards successful completion of the workshop



Photo 1: Inauguration of the workshop



Photo 2: Wancho craftsmen at work



Photo 3: Rabha craftsmen at work



Photo 4: Craftsmen from Jorhat



Photo 5: Craftsmen from Chamaguri Sattrra



Photo 6: Craftsmen from Natun Kamalabari Sattrra



Department of Cultural Studies



Photo 7: Craftsmen from Auniati Sattra



Photo 8: A Bodo craftsman at work



Photo 9: Some finished crafts in display



Photo 10: Visitors appreciating the crafts



Photo 11: Prof. M. K. Choudhury, Vice Chancellor of TU at the workshop



Photo 12: Prof. S. K. Chaudhuri, Director of the IGRMS addressing in the valedictory session

Dr. Parasmoni Dutta
Assistant Professor, Department of Cultural Studies
Deputy Coordinator, CPEPA

Date: 22 March 2017

Prof. D. P. Nath
Chief Coordinator, CPEPA
Head, Department of Cultural Studies
Head,
Department of Cultural Studies
Tezpur University

The Bodo community of Assam is the largest group among the plain tribes of Assam. The Bodos have age-old cultural legacy which is still visible in their expressive cultural forms of present times, such as, various forms of Bodo performing arts as well as weaving and making of diverse handicraft products.

In this workshop, the artists are trying to create some of their domestic articles like *Dun* (bamboo basket), *Chandri* (sieve), *Songrai*, *Abhijanga* (vegetable basket), *Jekhai khubai* (fishing Implement), etc.

Participating craftsmen in this workshop:

Wancho wood-carving:

W. Wangsaha
Meilam Wangsu
Jonei Wangnaw

Rabha mask-making:

Mukul Rabha
Nripen Rabha
Bijoy Rabha

Mask-making (Majuli):

Hem Chandra Goswami
Horen Goswami
Ananta Kalita

Basket-making (Majuli):

Biren Saikia
Jadumoni Borah
Lakhyajit Saikia
Niran Kotoky
Lakhiram Boruah

Basket-making (Jorhat):

Bikash Boruah
Basanta Boruah

Bodo Craft:

Joyshad Narzary
Ram Narzary
Merga Narzary

Organized by:



UGC Centre with Potential for Excellence in Particular Areas (CPEPA)
on
Cultural Memory in North-East India: A Research and Documentation
Programme on Textual and Visual Narratives
Department of Cultural Studies
Tezpur University
Napaam, India - 784028
www.tezu.ernet.in



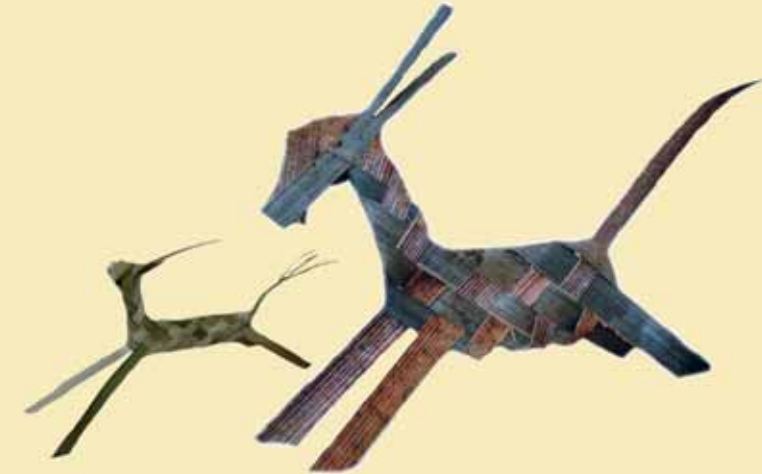
Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya
(An Autonomous Organization
of the Ministry of Culture
Government of India)
Via Depo Square, Above Tribal Museum
Shymala Hills, Bhopal
Madhya Pradesh 462013
www.igrms.gov.in


**Head,
Department of Cultural Studies
Tezpur University**

Workshop on Craft Practices of North-East India

From 02 to 16 March, 2017

At Chandraprabha Saikiani Hall, Tezpur University



Introduction:

Traditional craft practices are an essential element of the cultural heritage of a region or country. Craft practices in North East India are based on the natural resources such as bamboo, cane, wood, reed so on and so forth. Bamboo is probably the most important material used by the local ethnic groups to meet their everyday need. Basketry is the most common craft practices in the rural areas for the production of an array of implements, receptacles and household objects. Wood is another material used in local craft work for the manufacture of tools, implements, household objects, masks and musical instruments, etc. Besides, various other organic materials, minerals and metals are frequently used by the local people for production of articles of their day to day use.

Traditional craft based on local resources have gradually become out of fashion with the advent of the new and mechanized technologies. As a matter of fact, many a traditional crafts have become peripheral activity in the villages of North East India. Preservation and promotion of these crafts tradition have become an important issue of national significance.

The objective of the present workshop is to promote and preserve traditional crafts of the region for the posterity.

Mask making tradition of Assam:



Mask making tradition of Assam is mainly concentrated in Satras of the Majuli Island. These masks are essential paraphernalia of the *Bhaona* or *Ankia Nat* (one act play) performances based on the epic stories. The masks represent epic characters such as *Ravana*, *Bivishana*, *Bakasur*, *Narasimha*, demons and buffoons. These masks are skilfully made by craftsman on a bamboo frame covered with a cotton fabric soaked in clay and other organic materials. Painting of the characters is done by applying herbal and mineral paints such as *hengul* and *haithal* as per attributes specified in the *Shilpa Shastra*. Some of the masks made here are of life size covering the entire body of the performer.

In this workshop national award winning master craftsman Sri Hemchandra Goswami and his disciples are presenting mask making skill and artistic acumen as in vogue in Majuli, Assam.

Basket making tradition:



North-East India is known as a region of bamboo culture. Basketry is one of the craft traditions, which is continuing from time immemorial, carried forward by the craftsman in their collective memory.

The skill of the craftsman could be seen in the quality of finished products of household requirement – be it a storing basket, winnowing fan, fishing basket, receptacle, rain shield, sitting mat, stool, etc. Preparation of the bamboo strips, precision in weaving, accurate counting and technique of floating of the strips etc. results in beauty of shape, fine texture and structural ornamentation – rendering it to an object of art.

Some of our finest basket makers from Assam and Arunachal Pradesh are taking part in this workshop to demonstrate their age-old skills in the craft.

Wood carving tradition of the Wanchos:



The wood carving of the Wancho's of Arunachal Pradesh, which was once associated with cult of synergy, is gradually on the wane due to lack of social impetus. There is no *Morung* (bachelor's dormitory) and there is no cult of head-hunting. The absence of these institutions resulted in the degeneration of the art of woodcarving in this region. Yet some the old samples of art work reveal great skill of the craftsman. Free-standing wooden images and some sort of relief works portraying common village-life activities in are shown in a realistic framework. Women carrying water tubes in a basket, man in dancing posture, old man sitting on a stool so on and so forth are usual themes depicted in sculptural art. These are meticulously drawn with all the details of the human body in right proportion. The very skill of the master carver could be noticed in the perfect representation of human or animal figure with lively demeanour.

Mask making tradition among the Rabhas:



Mask making tradition among the Rabha community of Assam is connected with the ritualistic and performing art called *Bharigan*. In *Bharigan* performance epic stories are presented by the performer wearing masks. Appropriate masks representing epic characters made of wood skilfully are carved by the expert craftsman. A piece of solid *gomari* wood is selected and the outline of the character is drawn on the surface by pencil. Carving is done initially by using a *dao* and then by a chisel- first from the front side to cut out the facial details of the character with eyes, nose, ears and headgear. And then it is hollowed out from the back side so as to fit on the face of the dancer. After completion of the work local paints are applied to highlight the required facial features. Generally, *Bharigan* masks are heavy but well equipped for manipulation.

Craftmanship of the Bodos:

