

2022 Conference, University of Leeds, 7 – 8 July (In collaboration with LAHRI and Cultural Institute)

Concept Note:

This conference is part of the Arts and Humanities Research Council project ‘The Other from Within: Indian Anthropologists and the Birth of the Nation’. Over the two days, we will contribute to some larger research themes through more specialised panels. The larger themes of the project trace the development of anthropology as an academic discipline in India and as an instrument of state formation across the transition to independence, ca. 1900 to 1970. Historians of India and other postcolonial contexts have been increasingly interested in the intellectual bases for state formation and social policy, as unique projects of the Global South. Rather than simply looking at anthropology as an outgrowth of colonial ideas, we will explore the many circulations, networks and movements of ideas, intellectuals, and their practices, in forming distinctive academic fields. We see this as a vital means of tracing out the distinctive intellectual and ideological underpinnings of the state idea, independently and autonomously from the West. The conference has three broad themes: Profiles, Ideas, and Institutions (Museums).

In this conference, we will interrogate these larger themes by looking at the profile of Indian ethnographers and social scientists and their interventions in specific areas of physical anthropology and its support in state institutions. In terms of ideas, the conference will consider how early understandings of concepts such as race, caste, untouchability and gender shaped anthropological research and knowledge in colonial and postcolonial India. The conference’s interest in institutions attempts to interrogate the site of the museum and the practice of curation. In the latter area, we will examine the evolving idea of co-curation as it applies to erstwhile marginal Indian citizens, and draw some comparisons between Indian and European approaches to restitution or repatriation, both historically and in contemporary times.

Day 1 is via Zoom. Although Day 2 (8th July) has in-person panels, they will be accessible via Zoom as well. Each paper is 15-20 minutes.

Registration is free but please register at this Eventbrite link so that we have an estimate of attendees.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/373177553107>

DAY 1: 7th July

Panel 1 title: Museums, Exhibitions, and the Problem of Representation [ONLINE]
10:30-13:00hrs [BST]

Zoom

link: <https://universityofleeds.zoom.us/j/81122694973?pwd=bVpYUW9hZjNLYjJjWnptSnhuSGFnZz09>

- **Heritage and Representation: Mizo material culture in the ethnographic museum and beyond**
Cindy Zothanpuii Tlau Research Scholar Visual Studies at the School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)
- **“A museum to the Naga nation”: Towards a Narrative of the Postcolonial House Museum in South Asia”**
Akshaya Tankha (Art historian of modern and contemporary South Asia)
- **Re-engaging with Naga Art and Culture in Museum Spaces: A Case Study of the Verrier Elwin Collection of the National Museum, Delhi**
Abira Bhattacharya (Assistant Curator (Anthropology) National Museum, Janpath, Delhi)
- **Bridging the Gap between Museum and Communities: An Approach to Building Cohesive Relations**
N. Shakmacha Singh (Museum Associate, Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS), Bhopal also known as the National Museum of Mankind)
- **Collecting South Asia at the Hunterian Museum – The View from World Cultures**
Andy Mills (Curator for Archaeology & World Cultures at the Hunterian, University of Glasgow)

Panel 2 Title: Race, Numbers and Bodies in Indian anthropology [ONLINE]
14:00-16:00 hrs (BST)

Zoom

link: <https://universityofleeds.zoom.us/j/81122694973?pwd=bVpYUW9hZjNLYjJlWnptSnhuSGFnZz09>

- **The Exclusion of Caste Enumeration from the 1951 Census of India**
Dwaipayan Sen - Independent Historian
- **JB Chatterjea's Medico-Genetic Anthropology: Race, Tropical Medicine and the Making of a Postcolonial Tradition**
Projit Bihari Mukharji - University of Pennsylvania
- **"The Bad Stock": Nazi Eugenics and the Growth of Anthropology in Delhi**
Hoda Bandeh-Ahmadi - University of Michigan

8th July – Location: Clothworkers North Building LT (G.12)

Panel 3 Title: Caste, Untouchability and Governmental Anthropology [IN PERSON] 11:00-12:30 hrs (BST)

Venue: Clothworkers North Building LT (Cinema) (2.31)

Zoom

link: <https://universityofleeds.zoom.us/j/81122694973?pwd=bVpYUW9hZjNLYjJlWnptSnhuSGFnZz09>

- **H. H. Risley on Caste, Race and Hierarchy**
Chris Fuller - London School of Economics
- **Anthropology, Space and Community in Early Post-Independence India**
William Gould - University of Leeds
- **Ambedkar, Anthropology and the Question of Untouchability**
Jesus Chairez Garza - University of Manchester
- **Roy's Anthropology: An Ever-changing Discipline**
Sangeeta Dasgupta - Jawaharlal Nehru University

Panel 4 Title: Re-imagining Museums: Decolonial practices and future possibilities [IN PERSON]

14:00-16:00 hrs (BST)

Venue: Clothworkers North Building LT (Cinema) (2.31)

Zoom

link: <https://universityofleeds.zoom.us/j/81122694973?pwd=bVpYUW9hZjNLYjJlWnptSnhuSGFnZz09>

- **Decolonial practices and their application in African museums: Community museums as an alternative**
Njabulo Chipangura (Curator of Living Cultures, University of Manchester Museum)
- **Post-Colonial (Anthropological) Museums in India: Representation, Co-production and Concerns-**
- **Sarit K Chaudhuri Professor & Dean, FSS, Dept of Anthropology Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh, India**
- **Relevance and responsibility: Ethnographic Museum collections in India-**
- **Arunima Bhattacharya Postdoctoral Research Assistant, University of Leeds**
- **Practice in the hands of others: Locating, Re-imagining and Co-producing Information to Change the Museum Narrative-**
Giovanna Vitelli Head of Collections and Curatorial at The Hunterian, Glasgow
- **Curating Discomfort-**
Zandra Yeaman Curator of Discomfort, University of Glasgow

In-Person Talk: 16:30-18:00 hrs (BST) – Location - Clothworkers North Building LT (Cinema) (2.31)

Zoom

link: <https://universityofleeds.zoom.us/j/81122694973?pwd=bVpYUW9hZjNLYjJlWnptSnhuSGFnZz09>

"Disturbing images: community-led filming during the pandemic"

Alice Tilche - Lecturer in Anthropology and Museum Studies

Dakxin Bajrange - Filmmaker, Nomad Films