



Oral History
Association
of India

Department of Journalism
and Mass Communication



Ninth Annual Conference
of the Oral History Association of India

2024

Mountain History

At the Intersection of
Memory, Politics
and Identity

13 | 14 | 15
March, 2024

Call for papers!

Abstract submissions
by 26th November, 2023

Mountain History: At the Intersection of Memory, Politics and Identity

organized by

Oral History Association of India

in association with

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, North-Eastern Hill University

And The North East India Archive and Sasakawa Peace Foundation

March 13-15, 2024

India's regional histories and cultures offer ample material for scholarship in domains related to social science and liberal arts. Oral traditions, embedded in regions and landscapes, are intrinsically linked to the folklore and practices of Tribal and Indigenous communities. Socio-cultural and political histories of the Aravallis, Vindhya, Satpura, Eastern and Western Ghats, which count for the most mountainous region, however, seem to be inadequately studied when compared to the Himalayan Mountains. Each of these mountains in India is characterized by high altitude, steep slope, and rugged features. Mountain ecosystems contain a series of climatically very different zones within short distances and elevations; such changes make mountains an extremely heterogeneous ecosystem of the country. This heterogeneity, in turn, influences the spatial distribution, growth, physiology, habitat, cultures and life cycles of plants, animals, and human beings. Mountain ecosystems also harbour a wide range of significant natural resources and play a critical role in the ecological, economic processes of our country.

The mountain ranges as a region are filled with underexplored customs, traditions, and practices. The recent scholarship has shed much light on the geographies, geology, histories, religions, and culture of the Himalayan mountain regions from an in-depth socio-anthropological perspective. Yet there is insufficient engagement with historical, conceptual, or methodological issues which make studying mountain societies so different. Similarly, far more research and debate is needed to understand mountain specificities in light of the recent 'environmental' turn in the discipline of history in our current age, the Anthropocene. Past and ongoing development projects around the mountain regions have triggered protests from the local communities. The protest against these exploitative projects and struggles have also entered into the corpus of oral narratives from these regions.

The conference focuses on the intersections of mountain studies, social and cultural histories, indigeneity and politics through oral histories. The conference encourages questioning of the categories like 'tribal' and 'indigenous', and unpacking the diverse narratives of and on mountains. Further it will also explore how these constructions are often displaced in larger political articulations of state and administration. Such displaced voices provide alternative and counter narratives that showcase the interplay between polity, identity, memory, and indigeneity.

These narratives will enable us to understand how mountain histories from the framework of orality, memory and lived-in experience can challenge the dominant narratives imposed by the political constructions of the modern state. These multiple narratives can also contribute effectively to contest impositions of the historical state and provide space for collective struggle against the monolithic historical imagination and creating awareness about the diverse historiographies of the mountain ecosystems. While doing so, the conference also will reflect on areas (but not limited to) such as:

Sub-themes

Mountains as Spaces and Habitat
Cultures and Communities of the Mountains
Mountain Ecosystem
Folklore and Storytelling
Mountains as Frontiers
Mountain Life-Worlds
Mountain Religions and Sacred Landscapes
Pastoralism and Trade
Modernity in the Mountains
Mountain and Political Movement
States, Institutions, and Infrastructure in the Mountains
Mountain Families
Mountain Nostalgia

VENUE

North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong

TIMELINE

- Abstract submissions by 26th November
- Selection Notification by 11th December

PRESENTATION TYPE

- Oral presentation
- Poster presentation
- Mixed Media presentation
- Performance

ABSTRACT PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

MAX 250 words

Abstract should include the following:

- Name of the author
- Designation and Institutional Affiliation
- Contact details
- Title of the paper
- Abstract
- Keywords

FORMAT

- The format for abstract submissions is .doc or .PDF. Scanned PDF files are not accepted.
- The file name should be the presenting author's name as Lastname_Firstname.doc (or .docx) and Lastname_Firstname.pdf
- Margins: Normal
- Font: CALIBRI, size 14 for the Title, size 12 for all other texts.
- Spacing: single line spacing along the document.

Please send the files as attachments (and not as email body text) to oralhistoryindia@gmail.com