

International Conference
on
MUSEUM SPACES AS
PEOPLE'S HISTORIES
AND COMMUNITY VOICES

15th - 16th
September
2023



Organised by

Centre for Museology and Conservation
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Department of History and Indian Culture
University of Rajasthan, Jaipur



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About the Conference



In the early twentieth century, Museums transformed from being mere “cabinets of curios” to vehicles of communication. Although artefacts of culture had claimed both space and curatorial attention in Museum exhibits, Museum collections remained the enterprise of monarchs or modern governments in the sense that the state became the sole deciding factor. Many times, this has led to an unyielding influence of the state that seemed to govern museum spaces. In India, the colonial enterprise searched for the exotic and antique while the maharajas sought to sustain royal grandeur. As a result, museums had a heavy tilt to showcase the antiquities belonging to a distant past or objects that were a symbol of royal power and prestige.

In India, the institution of a museum was initially a colonial initiative as an ideological imposition to establish Indian identity through the colonial view of India's past. There were individual collectors but their activities were not included in museum spaces. There had been collections of note in the Indian society - the collections of Sarfoji in Tanjore, the treasure troves of Mughal princes, the *bhandaras* of Jaina monasteries, and occasional collections of aristocracy or merchants. However, the early museums were at the initiative of state institutions guided by colonial ideas about the Indian past. There were rare efforts to use the colonial knowledge of showcasing artefacts while retaining the Indian voice. One such initiative was the Jaipur Exhibition of 1883 at the initiative and patronage of Sawai Madho Singh II which is said to have lifted the “oriental gaze” by presenting the arts and crafts as Indians wanted to be seen. Though the exhibition was organized by the nobility, it marked the future of Indian museology by freeing itself from the colonial tropes of “strange and exotic.”

The notion of a museum has now come a long way. From being *vastu sangrahalaya* or merely a collection of objects, museums are now repositories or vehicles of new knowledge about the biography of the environments and cultures. The old *wunderkammer* or chamber of curiosities are now seen as centres of learning while catering to aesthetic enjoyment. The contours of museums have changed – both in terms of what the museum stands for and what are its functions. The appeal is no longer to colonial authority but to a public being made aware of and seeking to articulate its identity. The identity has to reflect a society constituted of many cultures each seeking visibility. It is not only a recognition of our culture but also of the many other cultures with which we have an interface.

The future of the museum requires us to think again about the museum as an institution. It is not enough that objects are displayed and exhibitions curated. We have to think about how this is done and why it is done the way it is. Is it not pertinent that now museum spaces cede space to community voices and museum studies give credence to people's stories? What are the ways to make museum spaces more collaborative, egalitarian, and truly representative? It is sometimes said that museums should make the invisible, visible. Perhaps, it is also time for the museums to make visible, notable and marginal, mainstream. The conference shall deliberate upon the ways, challenges, and implications for incorporating and understanding people and communities and explore beyond the state-influenced paradigm of museums.

cabinets
curios



MUSEUM SPACES AS PEOPLE'S HISTORIES AND COMMUNITY VOICES

Call for Papers

We invite research papers on the following sub-themes:

- Promoting Indigenous Voices in Museum Spaces
- Curatorial Choices and Community Voices
- Interface and Contexts of Culture in Museums
- History and Development of Museums
- Evolution of Functions of Museums
- Regional Museums
- Community Museums
- Cultures of Communities
- Memory and Museums
- Representation of Folk Culture

The sub-themes are only suggestive in nature and papers adhering to the main theme shall be given due consideration.

Submission Details

Kindly send your abstracts (250-300 word limit, font type: Times New Roman, font size: 12 in English and Devlys 010 in Hindi font Size 14) to be submitted by 30th August 2023. The abstract should have a title for the presentation along with the name, email id, postal address and institutional affiliation of the presenter and should be mailed as an email attachment to conference.dhic@gmail.com. Complete papers should not be more than 4500 words to be considered for publication in the proceedings.

Accommodation

Accommodation will be arranged on request for the delegates in the University Guest House on payment basis. The delegates who wish to avail accommodation facility are requested to send the requisition for the same by August 30, 2023.

Registration

Faculty Members : Rs. 2000/-
Research Scholars & Students : Rs. 1500/-

Registration Google Form Link :

<https://forms.gle/jxeTXnsjF8U9TMcy6>

Account Details

The payment can be transferred online through NEFT/RTGS/IMPS.

Details of the bank account are given below:

Name of Account : CONVENER CONFERENCE CENTRE FOR
MUSEOLOGY & CONSERVATION UOR JAIPUR

Bank Name : ICICI BANK

Account Number : 674701702614

IFSC Code : ICIC0006747

UPI Id : 9413845645@icici



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