INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
on Maharashtra: Culture and Society - ICMCS
8th to 10th January, 2016
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad

THEME: Place and Space in Maharashtra

CALL FOR PAPERS

The 16th International Conference on Maharashtra: Culture and Society (ICMCS) will be held at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University-Aurangabad from 8th to 10th January, 2016. The theme of the conference will be the formation, practices, and delineation of Places and Spaces in Maharashtra. The multidimensional approach required to study spaces and places provides a very broad scope for the conference. The conference will encourage the use of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches from the social sciences, the humanities, and the natural sciences.

What is the difference between Place and Space? Place, which is concrete, historical, tangible, and discrete, is more of a geographical-environmental concept. By contrast, Space is abstract, imagined, and elastic. Space and place are closely related, because concrete, geographically given places are constructed as spaces with meanings (natural, political, religious, semiotic, commercial, capitalist, migratory etc.), and cultural ideas of space and spatiality are necessarily anchored to geographical surroundings. In today's shrinking world, globalization has only heightened the significance of geography, and the need to study location/place.

The space/place dynamics in the region of Maharashtra provide an array of historical and contemporary themes for our conference. Within the five major sub-regions of Maharashtra (Konkan, Western Maharashtra, Khandesh, Marathwada and Vidarbha), migrant cultures have been silent users of dominant spaces, and have created niche cultural spaces within them, by asserting local, global, transnational, migratory, religious, semiotic, connected, public or private identities. Trans-local spaces within Maharashtra have connected regional identities with international spatial peripheries. Historically Maharashtra has been a crossroads of cultural and geographical connections for religions, warriors, commercial entrepreneurs, artisans, and artists. Buddhists, Jains, Shaktas, Naths, Varkaris, Sikhs, Shiites, and Sufis from the days of the Satvahanas, Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas, and Yadavas to the Sultanates have generated sacred spaces here. Political mobilization, interreligious connections, and power struggles have only furthered the creation of shared sacred spaces and places of heritage. The cosmos of shared spaces remains essential to the social weave of rural and town cultures of Maharashtra. The political boundaries of the region have also changed with time, with many diverse literary representations of space and place from the medieval period to the present.

Modernization and urbanization, along with the redrawing of state boundaries post-1947, have raised fresh concerns about migration and encroachment in various Maharashtrian cities, but have also prompted the creation of trans-local cultural spaces. Corporate exploitation and encroachment have faced resistance from indigenous populations, resulting in spatial-political strife and linguistic, discursive, and literary change. In addition to the study of such developments, it is also important to examine cultural concepts of space/place which have been used across the different regions of Maharashtra and have been modeled, modified, conceptualized, and re-conceptualized by different groups or individuals.
We invite scholars from the social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences, as well as interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research areas, to contribute paper proposals related to the above theme for the ICMCS-2016. Examples of topics that could be addressed include:

1) Scholarly overviews of how Maharashtra is constituted as an administrative-political unit
2) Maharashtra, or places within it, as viewed in historical memory
3) Linguistic-cultural phenomena related to the spaces and places of Maharashtra
4) Socio-political hegemonic projects and oppositional movements related to spaces and places within Maharashtra
5) Case studies of particular places and spaces related to or around and within Maharashtra (What meanings do they have for different stakeholders? How have the places, and people’s attachments to them, changed over time?)

You are requested to develop a 150- to 200-word research paper proposal (abstract) on the above theme of conference. Please submit the abstract, along with a recent, brief CV (biodata) to maharashtraconference2016@gmail.com, and binasengar21@gmail.com by 15 October 2015.

Last Date for submission of Abstract: 15th October 2015
Finalization of Abstracts and Paper Presenters: 30th October 2015

CONFERENCE ADVISORS

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