



South Asian Studies Initiative in Collaboration with Department of East Asian Languages & Literatures present

## WARI LEEBA : CUSTOMARY LAWS AND PERFORMANCE OF THE HINDU EPICS AMONG THE MEITEIS OF MANIPUR, NE INDIA

A talk by Dr. Sadananda Singh Mayanglambam, Manipur University, India

### Experience Epic Hindu Storytelling Performance at Ohio State

Wari Leeba is a narrative form of storytelling that has been a living tradition over the past few centuries in Manipur, North East India. The literal meaning of Wari Leeba is story telling but it is distinguished from the normal tale-telling practice. It is usually a formal public performance devoted to the Hindu epics, the Mahabharata or the Ramayana and other religious tales in parts or the entire texts as may be desired by the audience. Generally such storytelling has multidimensional objectives. It contains important and practical knowledge, and age-old wisdom, philosophical and religious ideas from the classical Hindu scriptures, and secular epic poems. Generally, Wari Leeba involves a single performer who integrates character dialogue, rhythmic narration, various dramatic techniques, humour, and exaggeration to bring to life stories and characters in a form of popular entertainment. The performer extends his repertoire by using a pillow that is placed by the side of the performer, left or right, which for the sake of emphasis he will beat many times while narrating his story. Wari Leeba has many stylistic parallels in East Asia and South East Asia, thus making this a truly transnational event.

#### Program Date and Venue

**Tuesday December 2, 4:00 pm-5:15 PM**  
**Room 080, Derby Hall N Oval Mall**  
**Columbus OH 43210**

04:00 – Welcome Remarks by Prof. Mark Bender

04:05 – Lecture and performance by  
 Dr. Singh Mayanglambam

04:45 – Q and A Session

#### About the speaker

DR. SADANANDA SINGH MAYANGLAMBAM, IS ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MANIPURI AND ASSISTANT COORDINATOR OF INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE CELL (IQAC) AT NAOREM BIRAHARI COLLEGE IN MANIPUR, INDIA. HE RECEIVED HIS M.A. AND PH.D. IN MANIPURI FROM MANIPUR UNIVERSITY, INDIA. DR. MAYANGLAMBAM'S RESEARCH INCLUDES EPICS IN FOLK PERFORMATIVE TRADITION AMONG THE MEITEIS OF MANIPUR. ALONG WITH HIS ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP, PROF. MAYANGLAMBAM CARRIES ON THE TRADITIONAL PRACTICE OF WARI LEEBA PERFORMANCE ART. HE HAS PUBLISHED AND PERFORMED INTERNATIONALLY AND IS AT PRESENT THE A B LORD FELLOW IN ORAL TRADITION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI, COLUMBIA, MO.

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