

CURRICULUM VITAE

Dr. Meenaxi Barkataki-Ruscheweyh

Date of Birth: 30th July 1965

Place of Birth: New-Delhi, India

Nationality: Indian

Gender: Female

Marital Status: Married, with a son (born Nov. 1987)

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Present status: Research Fellow,
Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology
Vrije Universiteit (VU), Amsterdam (from 30.11.2015)

Positions held in the past: Research Fellow in DOBES-project¹ 86257/85549
Academy of Sciences, Göttingen
(1 Dec. 2008 – 30 Nov. 2012)

Research Fellow, DFG Project Te 24213-1
Mathematisches Institut, Uni.Würzburg.
(Nov. 2003 – March 2005)

Head, Department of Mathematics
(Dec. 1998-Jan.2000) & (Jan. 2001-Feb. 2003)
Associate Professor (Jan. 1999-April 2004)
Assistant Professor (Sept. 1995- Jan. 1999)
Department of Mathematics
Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati

¹ From 1 Dec 2011 in a VW-Foundation funded DOBES-Project titled: “A *Multifaceted Study of Tangsa – a Network of Linguistic Varieties in North East India*”, which is an extension of an earlier project titled: “*The Traditional Songs and Poetry of Upper Assam – a Multifaceted Linguistic and Ethnographic Documentation of the Tangsa, Tai Phake and Singpho Communities in Margherita, Northeast India,*” which ended on 30 Nov 2011. DOBES stands for ‘Documentation of Endangered Languages’ in English translation (see <http://www.mpi.nl/DOBES>).

Reader, (August 1994-Sept. 1995)
Part-time Lecturer (Dec. 1992-Aug. 1994)
Department of Mathematics, Gauhati University

Assistant Professor, Mathematical Sciences Division,
Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology,
Guwahati (Feb. 1993 to August 1994)

Academic degrees:
(most recent first)

Ph.D. (in Social Sciences)² in Nov. 2015
VU University, Amsterdam

Magister Artium (M.A.)³ in 2008, [with Cultural Studies
(major); English Literature & Indology (subsidiaries)]
University of Würzburg, Germany

D.Phil. (in Mathematics)⁴ in 1992
University of Oxford, U.K.

M.Sc. Mathematics (first class first) 1986 (held in 1988);
B.A. (with Distinction) 1987 (at Handique Girls
College, Guwahati);
B.Sc. major in Mathematics (first class first) 1984
(at Cotton College, Guwahati);
all from Gauhati University, India

Conferences/Workshops/Seminars (non-mathematical)

Organised:

1. Conference: *Performing Identity: Ethnicity and Ethno-nationalism in the South-east Asian Borderland region of North-east India*. University of Göttingen. 15–17 December, 2011. Was the main organiser of the conference and also presented a paper.⁵
2. Seminar: *Diversities and Connections: Reconsidering Ethnic Boundaries in Northeast India*. 6–7 Feb. 2014. NMML, New Delhi. Co-organised the seminar, along with Philippe Ramirez and Tanka Subba.
3. Conference Panel: *Understanding contemporary religious reform movements among ethnic communities in India*. Panel at the Indian Anthropological Congress, 2014 at Dibrugarh University, 21–23 February, 2014. Panel organiser, along with Sarit Kr. Chaudhuri (also presented a paper).
4. Conference Panel: *Alternative ways of understanding ethnicity in Northeast India*. Panel at the conference titled *Reframing India's Northeast: People, Power and Perspectives*. 24–26th Nov. 2016. Sikkim University, Gangtok. Panel organiser along with Erik de Maaker (also presented a paper).
5. Conference Panel: *Looking beyond ethnicity in South/Southeast Asian Borderlands*. Panel at the 5th Conference of the Asian Borderlands Research Network titled *Dynamic*

² Title of Ph.D. Dissertation: *Performing Ethnicity to Resist Marginalisation: The Tangsa in Assam*.

³ Title of MA Dissertation: *Problematising Assamese Identity*

⁴ Title of D.Phil. Dissertation: *Amalgamated Free Products and Inverse Limits of Wreath Products of Groups*.

⁵ Title: 'From Ritual to Performance: the transformation of a Tangsa Festival in Assam, North-east India'.

Borderlands: Livelihoods, Communities and Flows, at Kathmandu, Nepal, 12–14th Dec. 2016. Panel organiser along with Ellen Bal (also presented a paper).

Conferences Attended / Workshops Participated (non-mathematical)

6. International workshop on Fieldwork, Documentation and Archival theory, 18th Feb.-16th March, 2008, Regional Resources Centre, Udipi;
7. Indian Folklore Congress, 9-11 Dec. 2010 at Kohima, Nagaland (presented a paper).
8. Sixth International Conference, North-east India Linguistics Society, 31 Jan – 2 Feb 2011, at Tezpur University (presented a paper,⁶ authored jointly with Stephen Morey).
9. *Telling Identities: Individuals and Communities in Folk Narratives*. Interim Conference of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research (ISFNR), Feb. 22-25. 2011. Shillong (wrote a review article).
10. *Ethnicity, Ethno-nationality and culture: Explorations into identity formation in north-east India*. Seminar organised by the ICHR, NE Regional Centre. March 11-12. 2011 (presented a paper).
11. Annual Conference 2011 of the British Forum for EthnoMusicology, 7-10 April 2011, University College, Falmouth, Cornwall, UK (authored a paper⁷ jointly with Juergen Schoepf, who presented it).
12. DGV Annual Conference 2011. *Wa(h)re „Kultur“?* Vienna, 14-17 September, 2011.
13. Finnish Anthropology Conference 2011. *Dynamic Anthropology: Tensions between Theory and Practice* University of Helsinki. 5-7 October, 2011 (presented a paper⁸).
14. *Connections, Corridors and Communities*. 3rd Conference of the Asian Borderlands Research Network at the NUS, Singapore. 11-13 October 2012. Presented a paper.⁹
15. *Frontier India and the North-east*. Conference at NMML, New Delhi Feb 1-2, 2013 (was a panel discussant).
16. *Genres of Belief from a Folkloristic Perspective*. Symposium. Feb 4-5, 2013. University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya, at Guwahati. (Chaired a session and gave a plenary talk¹⁰) followed by a Fieldwork programme (6-10 Feb.) at Raid Maiong (Meghalaya) and Mayong (Assam), concluding with an International workshop at NEHU, Shillong on Feb 11-12, 2013.
17. *Language Documentation: Past-Present-Future*. DOBES-Concluding Conference. Volkswagen Stiftung. Herrenhausen, Hannover (Germany) 5-7 June 2013.
18. *Negotiating Ethnicity: Politics and Display of Cultural Identities in Northeast India*. 4-6 July 2013. Vienna. Presented a paper.¹¹
19. IUAES 2013: *Evolving humanity, emerging worlds*. University of Manchester, 5-10 August 2013. Presented papers in two different panels.¹²

⁶ Title: ‘The Wihu-song of the Tangsa (Naga): poetry and linguistic forms, meaning and the transformation to a symbol of identity’.

⁷ Title: ‘Videography, a spectrum of its uses and functions between Tangsa Hakhun people and their ethnographers’; I did not attend this conference.

⁸ Title: “Performing Identity: the transformation of a Tangsa festival in Assam, north-east India” in the session titled ‘Dynamic Perspectives in Identity Politics’.

⁹ Title: ‘Performing Indigeneity to showcase ‘unity in diversity’: a close look at the Dehing-Patkai Festival in Assam’.

¹⁰ Title: ‘How to get the genie back into the bottle: Healing as a strategy to propagate Rangfraism among the Tangsa in north-east India’.

¹¹ Title: “Our old culture is our new religion; our new religion is our new culture”: the link between institutionalising traditional belief systems and reinventing cultural identity – a case study of Rangfraism amongst the Tangsa in north-east India.

20. *Frontier Frictions: Cultural Encounters, Exchange, and Emergence in Asian Uplands*. 14-15 Nov. 2013. Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/Saale. Presented a paper.¹³
21. *Religion as Resource: Local and Global Discourses*. Summer School Workshop. Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies. Univ. Tübingen, 18-20 July 2014. Presented a paper.¹⁴
22. *"Indigenous Ontologies: Reassessing Human and Non-Human Relations"* The Second International MEWSC Symposium. University of Tartu. July 29–30, 2014. Presented a paper.¹⁵
23. EASA 2014 Tallinn: *Collaboration, Intimacy & Revolution*. 31st July to 3rd August. 2014. University of Tallinn. Presented a paper¹⁶ in Panel P073: *Religious Intimacy: Collaboration, Collusion and Collision in Ritual Communication*.
24. *Reimagining India's North East: Narratives, Networks and Negotiations*. 4-6 February 2015. Centre for North East Studies and Policy Research, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Presented a paper.¹⁷
25. *Cultural Studies: Global and Local Perspectives*. 7-9 February 2015. Department of Cultural Studies, Tezpur University. Presented a paper.¹⁸
26. *CASCA 2015: Landscapes of Knowledge. Panel: Streamlining Complexity in India, China and Southeast Asia: Delights and hazards of writing for a broad audience*. Département d'anthropologie, Université Laval (Québec). 13-16 May 2015. Presented a paper.¹⁹
27. ICHR and Sahitya Akademi sponsored seminar titled *Doing Oral History: Memory, Folklore and Tradition*. Centre for Tribal Studies, Assam University Diphu Campus. Diphu, Karbi Anglong, Assa, 11-12th Nov. 2016. Presented a plenary talk.²⁰
28. *Reframing India's Northeast: People, Power and Perspectives*. 24-26th Nov. 2016. Sikkim University, Gangtok. Presented a paper.²¹
29. *Dynamic Borderlands: Livelihoods, Communities and Flows*. 5th Conference of the Asian Borderlands Research Network, at Kathmandu, Nepal, 12-14th Dec. 2016. Presented a paper.²²

Invited talks:

1. Invited symposium talk²³ at the Phonogrammarchiv in Vienna in 29 June 2010.

¹²Paper titled "Reinventing the 'authentic' to stake claims of ethnicity and belonging: the case of the trans-Patkai Tangsa people of north-east India" in Panel G09: Belonging, heritage and the predicament of authenticity: anthropological encounters and dilemmas;

Another paper titled "Rangfraism amongst the Tangsa in Northeast India : old wine in new bottles or a step closer to Hinduism" in Panel GO7: Tribal situation in India's North-east -- emerging issues and ongoing anthropological attention .

¹³ Title: The Best of all Worlds. Rangfraism - the new religion of the Tangsa community in north-east India.'

¹⁴ Title: Rangfraism amongst the Tangsa in Northeast India: recasting traditional practices to bolster pan-Tangsa identity.

¹⁵ Title: The dynamics between spirituality and politics in a newly reformed indigenous religion – Rangfraism amongst the Tangsa in Northeast India.

¹⁶ Same as in the previous footnote.

¹⁷ Title: Tangsa for a day: can small ethnic groups survive in Assam?

¹⁸ Title: Should Ethnography be part of Cultural Studies at Tezpur University? A case of putting the cart before the horse.

¹⁹ Title: On reconciling the wish to be modern with the need to be "tribal" in the 'Seven Sister States' of Northeast India.

²⁰ Title: Oral History and Memory in relation to my Tangsa world.

²¹ Title: 'Kassa' vs culture: The imperative of performing ethnicity among the Tangsa in Assam.

²² Title: Land and the usurping neighbour: Survival of small tribal communities in Assam.

2. Invited symposium talk at the Ambedkar University, Delhi, March 15. 2011.
3. Two invited talks at the University of Tartu, Estonia on 10th and 12th Oct. 2011, one on festivals and one on religion of the Tangsa in north-east India.
4. Invited symposium talk at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, on the 20th March 2014 titled “Tangsa for a day: can small ethnic groups survive in Assam?”

Publications (in Anthropology):

Books:

1. Special Volume of *Asian Ethnology* titled, ‘*Performing Identity: Politics and Culture in Northeast India and Beyond.*’ Edited jointly with Andrea Lauser, Volume 72, Number 2. 2013.
2. The second revised and enlarged edition of the *Historical Dictionary of the Peoples of the Southeast Asian Massif* (Scarecrow, 2006). Co-edited with Jean Michaud and Margaret Swain. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield. 2016.
3. *Dancing to the State: Ethnic Compulsions of the Tangsa in Northeast India.* OUP. In process, due to appear in April 2017.
4. *Geographies of Difference : Explorations in Northeast Indian Studies.* Edited jointly with Mélanie Vandenhelsken & B.G. Karlsson. Routledge. In process, due to appear in 2017.

Research papers (in refereed journals and edited volumes):

1. with S.D. Morey. 2013. ‘Wihu song of the Pangwa Tangsa: poetry and linguistic forms, meaning and the transformation to a symbol of identity.’ In G. Hyslop, S. Morey and M. Post (eds.) *North East Indian Linguistics, Volume 5.* Delhi: Cambridge University Press, India. 280–303.
2. with Andrea Lauser. 2013. ‘Editors’ Introduction.’ Special Volume titled ‘*Performing Identity: Politics and Culture in Northeast India and Beyond.*’ *Asian Ethnology*, Volume 72, Number 2. 189–197.
3. 2013. ‘Performing Identity: the transformation of a Tangsa festival in Assam, Northeast India.’ *Asian Ethnology*, Volume 72, Number 2. 241–258.
4. 2015. ‘Best of all Worlds -- Rangfraism: The New Institutionalized Religion of the Tangsa community in Northeast India.’ In Greg Alles, Lidia Guzy, Uwe Skoda, Ülo Valk (eds) Special issue of the *International Quarterly for Asian Studies/ Internationales Asienforum* titled *Contemporary Indigeneity and Religion in India*, Volume 46 (2015), No. 1-2, 149–167.
5. 2016. ‘I[t] will never be the same again.’ In Q. Marak (ed.) *Doing Autoethnography.* New-Delhi: Serials, 324–347.

Reviews: 2012. ‘ISFNR Review: Shillong Lives up to its Reputation’, *ISFNR Newsletter*, No 6, Feb 2012. 14 --16. for the ISFNR conference in Shillong Feb. 2011.

Selected articles of general interest: 1. ‘Eating *Cham* and Drinking *Phelap* with the Tangsas’ in *Food Trail: Discovering the Food Culture of Northeast India.* 32 – 36. 2012. Ed. Aiyushman Dutta. Guwahati: Northeast Zone Cultural Centre & Assam Book Hive.

²³ Title: A Hakhun Tangsa Festival in Assam, India: a stage for presenting a new multi-faceted identity; Talk organised under the series ‘Feldforschung in Theorie und Praxis’.

2. 'Birth rites amongst some Tangsa groups' in *Asomor bivinya jonogusthir jonmo samporkio bishash aro anyonyo*. 98 -- 104. 2013. Ed. Hemanta Kr. Saikia and Dibyalata Dutta. Nagaon: Folk Cultural Research Centre of North-east India.

Research guidance in mathematics: Have supervised a few M.Sc. theses and one Ph.D. in Mathematics while working at IIT Guwahati.

Some fellowships and scholarships in mathematics: Commonwealth Fellowship for Post doctoral research at University of Leeds, U.K. in 2000;
Foreign and Commonwealth Office Scholarship for Doctoral Research at the University of Oxford, U.K. 1989-1992;
K.S.Krishnan Fellowship for Doctoral Studies by the Department of Atomic Energy, Govt. of India in 1988;

Mathematical publications: Have authored one book,²⁴ 15 research papers and several popular articles on mathematics.

General publications: Have authored a travelogue (published in Assamese translation), book of translations *Winners All* of short-stories, and over two hundred articles and stories (published in newspapers and magazines in India); have translated many stories and poems from Assamese into English.

Other Interests: Founding member of the North-east Writers' Forum (a society dedicated to promoting writers writing in English and to supporting translations into English from the other languages of north-east India);

Founding Trustee of the Mathematics Education Trust of Assam (a trust dedicated to improving standards of mathematics education in Assam);

Trustee of the Munin Barkotoki Memorial Trust (a trust which supports and encourages new and young writers writing in Assamese).

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²⁴ *Notes on Infinite Permutation Groups*. Bhattacharjee, M., Möller, R.G., Macpherson, D., Neumann, P.M. 1998, Lecture Notes in Mathematics, Vol. 1698. Springer.