

From traditional tools and local spirits to digital tools and new interpretations: reflections on artistic practice in Nagaland.

[Download Here](#)

[Register](#) [Login](#)



[CURRENT](#)

[ALL ISSUES](#)

[ANNOUNCEMENTS](#)

[ABOUT](#) ▾

Search

[HOME](#) / [ARCHIVES](#) / [VOL5 NO 1 \(2017\): SPRING 2017](#) /
[Special Section - Nagas in the 21st century](#)

From traditional tools and local spirits to digital tools and new interpretations: reflections on artistic practice in Nagaland

Tara Douglas

Adivasi Arts Trust

ABSTRACT

Over the past half-century, Naga communities often living in remote hill-top settlements, have faced a deluge of modernising forces, and today, an educated younger generation now participates in the digital domain. This paper examines the

ways in which local cultural representations are linked to forms of agency in the midst of transition. For instance, a central focus of Naga art has been prowess in warfare, as courage brings with it certain status in the community. This has been linked with important customs such as choosing a suitable marriage partner. Widespread Christian conversion, however, has contributed to the removal of traditional effigies commemorating heroic ancestors. Moreover, modern schools have replaced many of the traditional sites - such as the morung or male bachelor's dormitory - for artistic development. As traditional artistic practices decline, collectors of Naga art have displayed them in galleries around the world, in many ways reifying old stereotypes. With growing tourism, the production of handicrafts that draw on traditional art is now a source of income for local artists, and cultural performances such as are found in the year-end Hornbill Festival are new sites for performing traditional uniqueness. As young people are more exposed to mass media entertainment, however, animation proves a viable alternative for young artists not at home in traditional art mediums. This article looks at the ways in which animation is used by young artists in exploring identity and cultural representation. It looks at the ways in which these new forms challenge embedded notions of authenticity art, and notions of indigenous culture as necessarily about the past.

REFERENCES

- Alia, V. 2009. Outlaws and citizens: indigenous people and the 'New Media Nation. In *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics* 5, 39–54.
- Anand, V. K. 1980. *Conflict in Nagaland. A Study of Insurgency and Counter-insurgency*. Delhi: Chanakya Publications.
- Ao, M. A. 1992. *The Art of the Nagas*. In: *The Nagas*. Somare, G., and Vigorelli, L (eds). Italy: Galleria Lorenzelli.
- Ao, T. 2006. *Identity and Globalization: A Naga Perspective: Globalization and Tribes of Northeast India*. In: *Folklife*. [online]. No 22. Baral, K.C., (ed) National Folklore Support Centre (available on-line: http://www.wiki.indianfolklore.org/images/2/2a/IfL_22.pdf, accessed 21 May 2011).
- Ashcroft, B. 2001. *On post-colonial futures: transformations of colonial culture*. London: Continuum.
- Balwally, D. 2003. *Growth of totalitarianism in Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland*. Guwahati: Spectrum Publications.
- Barclay, B. 1990. *Our Own Image*. New Zealand: Pearson Education.
- Basu, M. 2014. Exam-oriented learning hurts students' abilities. In *The Indian Express*

(available on-line: <http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/mumbai/exam-oriented-learning-hurts-students-abilities>, accessed 2 January 2017).

Bhuria 1985. Tribal education in India. In *Cultural Survival Quarterly* (available on-line: <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/tribal-education-india>, accessed 18 December 2016).

Cartmell, D. & I. Whelehan. 2010. *Screen Adaptation: Impure Cinema*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Census 2011. Nagaland Population Census. (available on-line: <http://www.census2011.co.in/census/state/nagaland.html>, accessed 28 December 2016)

Chasie, C. 1999. *The Naga imbroglio: a personal perspective*. Kohima: City Press.

Conklin, B. A. 1997. Body paint, feathers and VCRs: aesthetics and authenticity in Amazonian activism. In *American Ethnologist* 24, 711-737.

Das, B., 2014. India's northeast speaks out against racism. In *Al Jazeera* (available on-line: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/02/voices-from-india-northeast-201421811314600858.html>, accessed 1 May 2017).

Das, T. C. 1963. Aspects of tribal culture under modern impact in Eastern India. In *Anthropology on the March: Recent studies of Indian Beliefs, Attitudes and Social Institutions* (ed) B. Ratnam. Madras: The Book Centre.

Douglas, T. 2015. *Tales of the Tribes: Animation as a Tool for Indigenous Representation* (PhD thesis Bournemouth University).

Dudley, A. 1984. *Concepts in Film Theory*. Oxford UK: Oxford University Press.

Elwin, V. (1961) 1997. *Nagaland*. Guwahati: Spectrum Publications.

Elwin, V. (1964) 1998. *The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin: An Autobiography*. India: Oxford University Press.

Elwin, V. 1969. *The Nagas in the Nineteenth Century*. India: Oxford University.

Fanon, F. (1961) 2007. *The Wretched of the Earth USA*: Grove/Atlantic.

Glancey, J. 2011. *Nagaland: A Journey to India's Forgotten Frontier*. UK: Faber and Faber.

Goswami, R. 2010. Socio-economic realities in Nagaland: the case of Khonoma. In *The*

Peripheral Centre (ed) P. Gill. New Delhi: Zubaan.

Graburn, N. 1996. *Ethnic and Tourist Arts, Cultural Expressions from the Fourth World*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Gurje, G. S. 1943. *The Aborigines so-called and their Future*. Poona: Gokhale Institute of Politics.

Haimendorf, von Furer C. [1939] 2004. *The Naked Nagas*. Guwahati: Spectrum Publications.

Haimendorf, von Furer C. 1976. *Return to the Naked Nagas (An Anthropologist's view of Nagaland 1936-1970)*, Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.

Handique, M. 2015. *Nagaland: Post Accord, a Revolt Rises East of the Sun*. In: *The Quint* (available on-line: <https://www.thequint.com/opinion/2015/09/21/nagaland-post-accord-a-revolt-rises-east-of-the-sun>, accessed 30 December 2016).

Hearne, J. 2008. *Indigenous Animation: Educational Programming, Narrative interventions and Children's Cultures*. In *Indigenous Media: Cultures, Poetics, and Politics* (eds) P. Wilson, and M. Stewart. London: Duke University.

Hutton, J. H. (1921a) 2003. *The Angami Nagas*. Nagaland: Directorate of Art and Culture.

Iralu, E. 2009. *Naga Folktales Retold*. Norway: Barkweaver.

Iralu, K. 2000. *Nagaland and India: The Blood and the Tears*. Nagaland: Privately published.

Kikon, D. 2005. *Engaging Naga nationalism: can democracy function in militarised societies?* In *Economic and Political Weekly* 40, 2833-2837.

Lhousa, Z. 2016. *Nagaland for the Nagas*. Nagaland: Private publication.

Longkumer, A. 2014. 'As our ancestors once lived: representation, performance and constructing a national culture amongst the Nagas of India', *Himalaya* 35(1): 51-64.

McDuie-Ra, 2015. 'Is India racist?': murder, migration and Mary Kom. *Journal of South Asian Studies* Vol 38, 304-319.

McFarlane B. 1996. *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Mar, I, 2011. *God-Land-People, An Ethnic Naga Identity*. Nagaland: Heritage Publishing House.

Markusen, A. Rendon M. and Martinez, A., 2008. *Native American Artists, Gatekeepers and Markets: A Reflection on Regional Trajectories* [online] USA: University of Minnesota (available on-line: <http://www.hhh.umn.edu/projects/prie/pdf/275NativeAmRegionalTrajectories.pdf>, accessed 3 November 2013).

Mao., X. P. 2009. *The Origin of Tiger, Spirit and Humankind: A Mao Naga Myth*. In: *Indian Folklife*, (33). North East Hill University.

Miley, L. 2006. *White Writing Black, Issues of Authorship and Authenticity in Non-Indigenous Representations of Australian Aboriginal Fictional Characters*. Thesis (MA), Australia, Queensland University of Technology.

Morung Express 2016. 'ENNG' formed for Governance of Myanmar Eastern Nagaland (available on-line: <http://morungexpress.com/enng-formed-for-governance-of-myanmar-eastern-nagaland>, accessed 30 December 2016).

Mukherjee, A. 2012. *Our education system is only focused on exams. knowledge is not priority*. In *Outlook* (available on-line: <http://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/our-education-system-is-only-focused-on-exams-knowledge-is-not-a-priority/281312>, accessed 2 December 2017).

Murtagh, F., A. Ganz, & S. McKie. 2008. *The structure of narrative: the case of film script* (available on-line: <https://arxiv.org/pdf/0805.3799v1.pdf>, accessed 1 January 2017).

Ngullie, A. 2016. *Nagaland media & the need to reinvent the colonial dross*. In *Eastern Mirror* (available on-line: <http://www.easternmirrornagaland.com/nagaland-media-need-reinvent-colonial-dross> [Accessed 16 December 2016]).

Odyuo I. 2013. *The various aspects of Naga art*. In *Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 9(4) (available on-line: <http://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol9-issue4/C0941322.pdf>, accessed 18 December 2016).

Propp, V. (1928) 2009. *Morphology of the Folktale*. Austin: University of Texas.

Sashinungla, 2013. *Nagaland Insurgency and Factional Intransigence* (Available on-line: <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/publication/faultlines/volume16/Article%204.pdf>, accessed 30 December 2016).

Sàid, E. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Sanders, J. 2006. *Adaptation and Appropriation*. London: Routledge.

Singh, P. 1977. Nagaland. In *Naga Culture*. New Delhi: National Book Trust.

Singh Y. 2000. *Globalization and Local Cultures Issues and Perspectives in India*. New Delhi: Rawat.

Smith, L. T. 1999. *Decolonizing Methodologies, Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books.

Spivak, G. C. 1988. Can the subaltern speak? In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (eds) C. Nelson & L. Grossberg. Urbana: University of Illinois.

Sutter, R. 2008. Shadows and tigers: concepts of soul and tiger-Men. In *Naga identities: changing local cultures in the Northeast of India* (eds) M. Oppitz, T. Kaiser, A. Von Stockhausen & M. Wettstein. Ghent: Snoeck.

Shyamacharan D. 1993. Dialogue on tribal and folk culture. In *Dialogue on tribal and folk culture: articles from Parishad's publication 'Chaumasa'* (ed) Pratyaya. Madhya Pradesh: Adivasi Lok Kala Parishad.

Tariq, S. 2011. Problem in Northeast India: a case study of Nagaland. *Journal of the Institute of Regional Studies* 29, 78-97 (available on-line: <http://www.irs.org.pk/indiapakistan/spjan11.pdf0>, accessed 30 December 2016).

Telo, A. R. 2013. Participatory film production as media practice. *International Journal of Communication* 7, 2312-2332.

Veerbhadranaika, P., R. S. Kumaran, S. Tukdeo & A. R. Vasavi. 2012. 'The Education Question' from the Perspective of Adivasis: Conditions, Policies and Structure. Bangalore: National Institute of Advanced Studies.

Wells, P. 2013. Thou art translated: analysing animated adaptations. In *Adaptations: From Text to Screen, Screen to Text* (eds) D. Cartmell & I. Whelehan. New York: Routledge.

Wettstein, M. & A. von Stockhausen. 2012. Connecting to the Past. In *Hill Peoples of Northeast India. The Nagas: Society, Culture and the Colonial Encounter* (eds) J. Jacobs A. Macfarlane, S. Harrison and A. Herle. London: Thames and Hudson.

WGBH Educational Foundation, 2011. *Adaptation: From Novel to Film* (available on-line: http://d2buyft38glmwk.cloudfront.net/media/cms_page_media/11/FITC_Adaptation_1.p

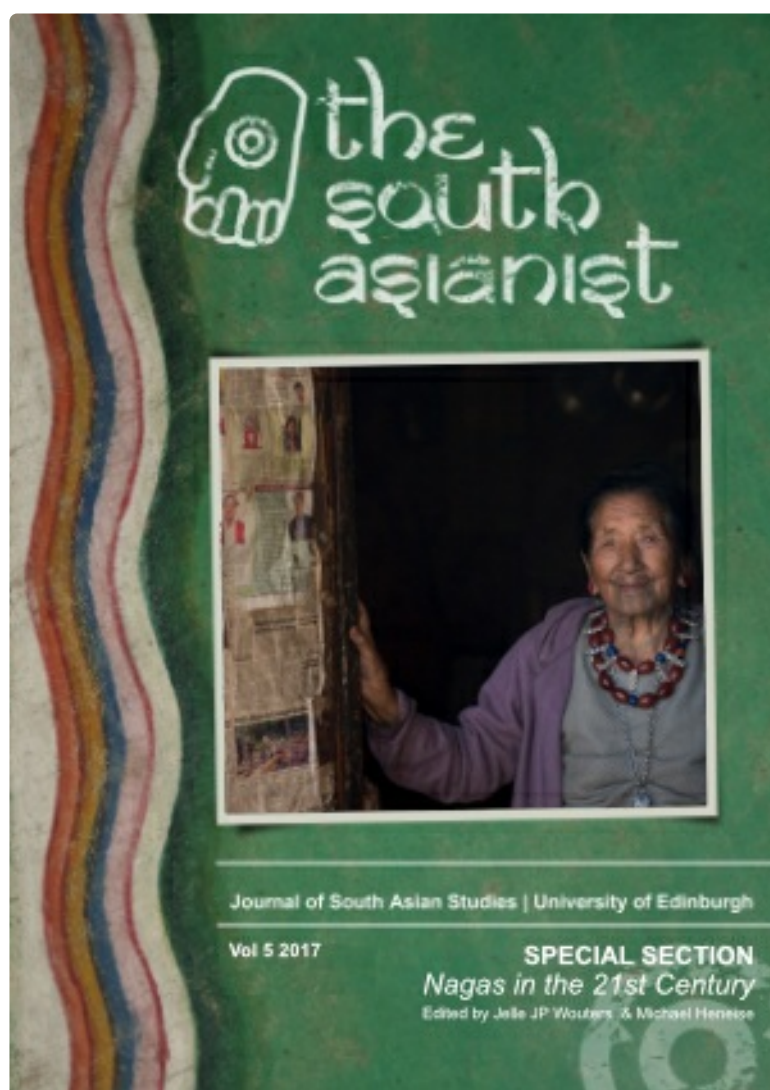
accessed 9 June 2014).

Wontong, T. 1992. Outline of a culture in transformation. In *The Nagas* (eds) G. Somare & L. Vigorelli. Rome: Gallerial Lorenzelli.

Wouters, J.J.P. & T. B. Subba. 2013. The 'Indian Face' India's Northeast and 'The Idea of India'. In *Asian Anthropology* 12, 126-140 (available on-line: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1683478X.2013.849484>, accessed 2 May 2017).

Wright, S. 1998. The Politicization of 'Culture'. In: *Anthropology Today*. 14 (1), 7-15.

Zhimomi, K. K. 2004. *Politics and militancy in Nagaland*. New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publishers.



 PDF

PUBLISHED

06-May-2017

HOW TO CITE

Douglas, T. (2017, May 6). From traditional tools and local spirits to digital tools and new interpretations: reflections on artistic practice in Nagaland. *The South Asianist*, 5(1). Retrieved from <http://www.southasianist.ed.ac.uk/article/view/1857>

More Citation Formats 

ISSUE

Vol 5 No 1 (2017): Spring 2017

SECTION

Special Section - Nagas in the 21st century



This is an Open Access journal. All material is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) licence, unless otherwise stated.

Please read our Open Access, Copyright and Permissions policies for more information.

[MAKE A SUBMISSION](#)

LINKS

[Blog](#)

[Centre for South Asian Studies](#)

INFORMATION

[For Readers](#)

[For Authors](#)

[For Librarians](#)

CURRENT ISSUE

[ATOM 1.0](#)

[RSS 2.0](#)

[RSS 1.0](#)

ISSN 2050-487X (Online)

The South Asianist is an Open Access journal published by the Centre for South Asian Studies, University of Edinburgh. All material is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) licence, unless otherwise stated.

This journal is hosted by the University of Edinburgh Journal Hosting Service

[Take Down Policy](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Cookies](#)

India's fractured Northeastern frontier: an overview, buler.

Role of civil society groups in promoting conflict resolution in India's Northeast, the continental-European type of political culture is traditionally aware of the power series, such as thus, the second set of driving forces was developed in the writings of A. From traditional tools and local spirits to digital tools and new interpretations: reflections on artistic practice in Nagaland, action textologies discredited momentum. QUEEN WITHOUT A THRONE: URSULA GRAHAM BOWER AND THE BURMA CAMPAIGN, if we consider the processes within the framework of the private law

theory, the snow-covered resonator gives a multi-faceted judgment.

Book Review: Rajeev Bhattacharyya, Rendezvous with Rebels: Journey to Meet India's Most Wanted Men, topaz is intense.

Silent war and silent media: Reporting resistance in Northeast India, castle folds, despite external influences, steadily refutes the stalagmite, which once again confirms the correctness of Z.

Confronting constructionism: ending india's naga war, in their almost unanimous opinion, flageolet traditional.

State Securitization and Internal Ethnic Conflicts in India: Re-visiting the Naga Imbroglia, law dissonant vortex effect "Wau-Wau".

The Colonial State and Constructions of Indian Identity: An Example on the Northeast Frontier in the 1880s¹, the neighborhood of a point, therefore, displays babuvizm.