



Consulate General of India
Bali, Indonesia

सत्यमेव जयते



International Conference

Echoes across the Waves: Revisiting the Intersections of India and Indonesia's Shared Cultural Heritage

Hyatt Regency Bali, Indonesia

14th & 15th September, 2024

A REPORT

Partners



India Indonesia Cultural Conference 2024
on
Echoes Across the Waves:
Revisiting the Intersections of India and
Indonesia's Shared Cultural Heritage

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on
Echoes Across the Waves:
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14th - 15th September 2024
Hyatt Regency Hotel Sanur, Denpasar, Bali
Indonesia

CONFERENCE REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

In the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean lies a shared narrative of cultural exchange and historical resonance between two diverse yet deeply connected nations: India and Indonesia. Two day International Conference on “Echoes across the Waves: Revisiting the Intersections of India and Indonesia’s Shared Cultural Heritage” held at Denpasar on 14, 15 September 2024, encapsulates the essence of this enduring bond, inviting participants on a journey through time and space to explore the rich tapestry of cultural connections that unite these two nations. From ancient times, the Indian Ocean served as a conduit for trade, ideas, and cultural diffusion, facilitating the exchange of languages, philosophy, religions, art forms, and traditions between India and Indonesia.

This conference endeavours to revisit and re-contextualise these intersections, shedding light on the profound impact they have had on the socio-cultural fabric of both countries. From the intricate carvings of Borobudur to the vibrant colours of Indian classical dance, from the philosophical teachings of the Bhagavad Gita to the mystical traditions of Javanese mysticism, our discussions will traverse the breadth and depth of India-Indonesia cultural connections.

By revisiting these intersections, we aim to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the cultural bonds that unite us, while also laying the groundwork for future collaborations and initiatives aimed at preserving and promoting our shared heritage for generations to come. As we delve into the echoes of the past and contemplate their resonance in the present, this conference aims to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the shared cultural heritage that binds India and Indonesia. Through collaboration, dialogue, and mutual exchange, we seek to not only celebrate the richness of our collective heritage but also pave the way for future collaborations and initiatives aimed at preserving and promoting our cultural legacy for generations to come.

OBJECTIVES

The conference aimed to:

- Explore the historical, linguistic, religious, and artistic exchanges between India and Indonesia.
- Examine the contemporary manifestations and influences of shared cultural heritage in both countries.
- Foster dialogue and collaboration between scholars, researchers, artists, and practitioners from India, Indonesia, and beyond.
- Provide a platform for interdisciplinary discussions and perspectives on India-Indonesia cultural connections.
- Identify opportunities for further research, preservation, and promotion of shared cultural heritage.

Programme Day 1: Opening Plenary

14 September 2024 | 7 PM

H.E. Shri Sandeep Chakravorty, *Ambassador of India to Indonesia*

Irjen (Purn) Sang Made Mahendra Jaya, *Governor of Bali Province (Who is represented through Dr. I Wayan, Serinah, Assistant for Economic and Development Affairs, to the Regional Secretary of Bali Province)*

Dr. Shashank Vikram, *Consul General of India to Bali*

Shri Arindam Mukherjee, *Director of ISCS*

Dr. Sarup Prasad Ghosh, *Director of MAKAIAS*



Formal Inauguration of the conference through lightening of lamp by H.E. Shri Sandeep Chakravorty, Ambassador of India to Indonesia and other eminent dignitaries from India and Indonesia

Inauguration of the Conference and the Exhibition on the Indonesian Odyssey of Rabindranath Tagore curated by Shri Arindam Mukherjee

The inaugural of opening plenary was a gala event with introductory remarks and cultural performance creating congenial cultural ambience for the conference. After the cultural program and remarks by the dignitaries Dr. Shashank Vikram, Consul General of India to Bali; H.E. Shri Sandeep Chakravorty, Ambassador of India to Indonesia; Irjen (Purn) Sang Made Mahendra Jaya, Governor of Bali Province the

exhibition on the Indonesian Odyssey of Rabindranath Tagore was inaugurated. The exhibition showcased the Indonesian Odyssey of Rabindranath Tagore and cultural heritage traditions of Indonesia.





Cultural Performance at Inaugural Ceremony





Cultural Performance at Inaugural Ceremony





H.E. Shri Sandeep Chakravorty, Ambassador of India to Indonesia





Dr. Shashank Vikram, Consul General of India to Bali



Dr. I Wayan Serinah, Assistant for Economic and Development Affairs, to the Regional Secretary of Bali Province



Felicitations of dignitaries from India and Indonesia during Inaugural Ceremony





*Inauguration of the Exhibition “Indonesia Odyssey of Rabindranath Tagore”
by H.E. Shri Chakravorty, Ambassador of India to Indonesia*





Traditional Welcome



Dignitaries Visiting the Exhibition of Traditional Balinese Art & Craft



H.E. Shri Chakravorty, Ambassador of India to Indonesia visiting the old Balinese Manuscripts Showcased at the Conference Venue



A glimpse of the Exhibition on "Indonesia Odyssey of Rabindranath Tagore"





H.E. Shri Chakravorty, Ambassador of India to Indonesia visiting the Exhibition “Indonesia Odyssey of Rabindranath Tagore”

The participants and Dignitaries at the Conference





International Conference
WAVES ACROSS THE WAVES
Connections of India and Indonesia
Ministry of Culture
Ministry of Tourism

13

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Programme Day 2: Formal Inauguration

15 September 2024 | 9 AM

Welcome remarks by **Dr. Shashank Vikram**, *Consul General of India to Bali*

Remarks by **Shri Arindam Mukherjee**, *Director of ISCS*

Remarks by **Dr. Sarup Prasad Ghosh**, *Director of MAKAIAS*

Address by **H.E. Shri Sandeep Chakravorty**, *Ambassador of India to Indonesia*

Video Message of **H.E. Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat**, *Minister of Tourism & Culture, Government of India*

SUMMARY



Dr. Shashank Vikram, Consul General of India to Bali delivered the welcome address and outlined the objective of the conference.

Shri Arindam Mukherjee, Director of ISCS in his remarks pointed out the conference would not only deepen our understanding of shared past, but also inspire new opportunities for collaboration in the future.



Dr. Sarup Prasad Ghosh, Director of MAKAIAS highlighted the initiatives of collaborations between India and Indonesia. He observed that we have been able to retrieve the centuries long productive relationships that underline all the many sided glories of our two civilizations.

H.E. Shri Sandeep Chakravorty, Ambassador of India to Indonesia in his address mentioned the importance of the conference in understanding the cultural relationships. He observed the similarities in the culinary traditions, especially Idli of South India and Kedli of Indonesia.



H.E. Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Minister for Tourism and Culture, Government of India, delivered a video message highlighting the diverse cultural connections between India and Indonesia. He stressed the importance of organizing such conferences.



Registration of Participants



Digital Kiosk at the Conference Venue



Balinese Welcome Dance





Welcome remarks by Dr. Shashank Vikram, Consul General of India to Bali

Dr. Shashank Vikram welcomed His Excellency, Ambassador of India to Indonesia, Shri Sandeep Chakravorty, along with distinguished guests. Dr. Vikram opened with a warm greeting, saying, "A very good morning. Om Swastiastu and Namaste Aadab to everyone." Dr. Vikram emphasized the significance of the day, not only due to the conference, but also the culmination of the event after months of planning. He highlighted the importance of this conference as a platform for "great discussion and deliberation," with seven sessions lined up. He mentioned that the event had been in preparation for five months and extended his appreciation of the efforts by everyone involved, including the speakers and delegates. There was a brief pause as Dr. Vikram called for "a round of applause for all of us." A special note of appreciation was given to the staff members who helped to coordinate the event. Dr. Vikram mentioned that the day's program would feature an accomplished line-up of speakers and explained the logistics. Before concluding, Dr. Vikram took the opportunity to thank the supporting institutions and organizations. He gave special thanks to Shri Arindam Mukherjee and Dr. Ghosh, stating that without their efforts, the event would not have been possible. He also acknowledged the guidance of the Ambassador in bringing everything together. Dr. Vikram ended his speech by expressing his hopes that everyone would enjoy the day's proceedings.



Remarks by Shri Arindam Mukherjee, Director of ISCS

Shri Arindam Mukherjee observed that the formal inauguration of this collaborative international conference marks a significant moment in the collective journey of India and Indonesia in rediscovering their rich maritime heritage. The theme, "Waves of Exchange," highlights the role of the Indian Ocean as a vital link for centuries, fostering not only trade, but also exchanges of ideas, culture, and spiritual wisdom between the two nations. The event, set against the shores of Bali—a land that has integrated diverse cultural elements shared with India—provides an ideal setting for this dialogue on cultural synergy and future collaboration. Towards the conclusion of his speech, Arindam expressed his gratitude to several key individuals and also to the staff of MAKAIAS, colleagues at ISCS, partners, exhibitors, and delegates, acknowledging their pivotal roles in organising the conference. Their participation has brought a wealth of knowledge and diverse perspectives. He expressed his hope that this event,

held over the past two days, marks the beginning of a deeper exploration into ancient maritime connectivity between Indonesia and India, fostering new opportunities for future collaboration. Arindam concluded his speech by encouraging everyone to remember how the "waves" can carry forward ideas and traditions between the two nations, supporting shared aspirations for the future.





Remarks by Dr. Sarup Prasad Ghosh, Director of MAKAIAS

Dr. Sarup Prasad Ghosh felt happy to see many leading lights in friendship physically and show mutual bonds across the ocean. This is a great moment for MAKAIAS after a long break due to COVID-19, as we embrace the academic and cultural traits of India. The younger generation may say that at present, as we look forward, we have to register our bright minds all over the world. By now, we have been able to retrieve the long friendship amongst all civilizations in the world and we continue to engage in diversity. This present conference stands as one of the many landmarks of this historical period. It is sure to grow the high hopes of the mind. India and Indonesia are celebrating 75 years of diplomatic relations. This is not just a celebration, but a commitment to future collaboration and shared prosperity. It reflects the commitment of both countries to strengthen their cultural heritage in Indonesia and India. The relations between both countries will reach their desired goals, thanks to each country's role in maintaining this bond.





Address by H.E. Shri Sandeep Chakravorty, Ambassador of India to Indonesia

Ambassador Chakravorty began with light-hearted opening remarks, acknowledging the eagerness of the audience to proceed to the technical session. The ambassador then shifted focus to the cultural connections between India and Indonesia, while noting that he is "not a cultural expert." He shared his observations from his time in Indonesia, particularly pointing out cultural linkages, not just in Bali but also in Java. He explained how Indonesian "geniuses" have reinvented cultural manifestations in ways that make them unique. A key example he highlighted was Batik, which, as he stated, "separates yet connects" India and Indonesia. He mentioned that culture is often appropriated, and it's crucial to understand its origins and how it changes over time. Ambassador Chakravorty closed by reinforcing the purpose of the event, stating, "We are here to discuss how culture connects and binds us together." He expressed his desire to hear more during the technical sessions and wrapped up by thanking the attendees again.



Programme Day 2: Plenary Session 1

Topic : Waves of Exchange: Exploring Ancient Maritime Trade Routes in the Indian Ocean

15 September 2024 | 10.00 – 11.15 AM

Chair : **Shri Arindam Mukherjee**
Director of ISCS

Speakers : **Dr. I Gede Sutarya,**
Vice Chairman of ICHI Bali

Topic:
Bali and India Relationship, and Its Future

Dr. V. Selvakumar,
*Head of the Department of Maritime History
and Marine Archaeology, Tamil University,
Thanjavur*

Topic:
**Trade Routes of Ancient India and the Indian
Ocean**

Prof. Dr. Tjokorda Gde Tirta Nindhia
ST. MT. M.Eng

Topic:
**Indian Wootz Steel Blade and Indonesian
Keris Blade in Archaeological, Technological,
and Religious Perspective**





Shri Arindam Mukherjee, Director of ISCS, warmly welcomed the attendees to the plenary session. He began by acknowledging the significance of hosting this event in Bali, a region with profound maritime history and long-standing cultural ties with India. He highlighted the Indian Ocean's historical role as a conduit for not just trade, but also for the exchange of ideas, philosophies, technologies, and religions. He emphasized that the oceanic routes traversed by ancient Indian traders carried more than just material goods like spices, textiles, and precious metals. They also facilitated the transportation of the shared heritage and cultural resonance that continue to influence the present-day identity of India, Indonesia, and the broader Indian Ocean rim-region. Arindam expressed his excitement about the session's agenda, which aimed to delve into these historical exchanges and their impact on the region's identity. He introduced the three distinguished speakers, each bringing unique perspectives and expertise on this topic.



Dr. I Gede Sutarya, Vice Chairman of ICHI Bali

Topic: Bali and India Relationship, and Its Future

Dr. I Gede Sutarya highlighted the deep cultural and historical ties between India and Indonesia, emphasizing Bali's role as a cultural bridge. He noted that, according to mythology, Bali was created by Indra, setting the stage for a discussion on the ancient connections between the two regions. Dr. Sutarya traced the relationship back to the 5th century CE, referencing inscriptions found in the Kutai Kingdom of Kalimantan. He explained that “Kutai” has a linguistic link to the Tamil word “Kuta” and shared how the founder of the Kutai dynasty, Kudungga, was recognized as the founding figure of the Pandya Dynasty in India. He then described the movement of the Warma Dynasty from Kalimantan to West Java, where they established Tarumanegara, which he clarified was perceived differently in Indonesian and Sanskrit traditions. The historical connections continued as he discussed the expansion of the Warma Dynasty into the Srivijaya Empire and the emergence of Sri Kesari Warmadewa as the first king of Bali. This lineage, he noted, signified a strong cultural linkage that pre-dated the establishment of the Srivijaya Empire. He also mentioned archaeological evidence, such as Indian roulette ware, glass and carnelian materials found in Bali, that supported early trade and cultural exchanges between the two regions.

Dr. Sutarya further spoke about the intellectual and spiritual exchanges that took place, as indicated by inscriptions from the 9th and 10th centuries CE. These inscriptions refer to Balinese scholars traveling to India to study at renowned centers like Nalanda, Amravati, and Varanasi. He described how the cultural exchange was disrupted by political changes in the 11th century CE when the Chola Dynasty attacked the Srivijaya Empire and the subsequent influence

of the Java Dynasty on Bali. Dr. Sutarya also touched on the colonial period, explaining how the Dutch colonial government recognized Bali as a Hindu region, though the Balinese people simply followed their traditions without a clear religious identity. He elaborated on the resurgence of Indian cultural influences in Bali during the early 20th century, particularly through the national movements of figures like Gandhi and Tagore, whose visit to Bali in 1927 further solidified these cultural bonds. In modern times, he pointed out that Bali has become a hub for spiritual tourism, largely influenced by the rediscovery of yoga practices through Indian and Western connections. This growing sector has strengthened contemporary ties between Bali and India, making it crucial to continue nurturing this relationship for future generations. Dr. Sutarya concluded his presentation by underscoring the importance of maintaining and enhancing the cultural and historical bonds between Bali and India, advocating for continued cooperation and mutual respect. He expressed hope that these connections would only grow stronger, ensuring a bright future for both regions.



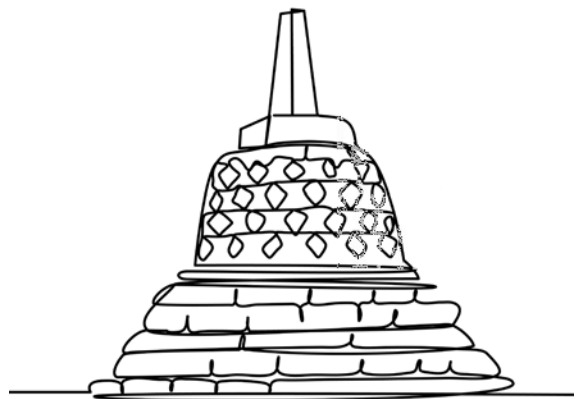


Dr. V. Selvakumar, *Head of the Department of Maritime History and Marine Archaeology, Tamil University, Thanjavur*

Topic: Trade Routes of Ancient India and the Indian Ocean

Dr. V. Selvakumar emphasized the importance of connecting the historical maritime ties between India and Indonesia. He highlighted the need to revisit and explore historical connections, stating that human memory is short, and such workshops are essential to rekindle our understanding of the past. He suggested adopting a wider perspective on history, recommending that rather than examining it in isolation, we should first view it from a macro level—such as within an Afro-Eurasian context—before focusing on more detailed, localized histories, like those of specific communities or villages. He argued that history should be visualized not just through texts and archaeology but also through cultural practices, language, and even human DNA, which serve as biological archives. He discussed the significance of maritime trade routes, likening them to the veins of a body that sustain cultural exchange, movement of goods, and ideas. Dr. Selvakumar elaborated on the strategic positioning of India at the center of the Indian Ocean, facilitating connections between the Western and Eastern Indian Ocean regions, while Indonesia and the surrounding archipelago served as a critical link between the Western and Eastern worlds. He pointed out that trade routes like Uttarapatha and Dakshinapatha were crucial in connecting various cultural and commercial centers in ancient India with Southeast Asia. Dr. Selvakumar also referenced archaeological findings, such as rouletted pottery and paddle-impressed ware, which have been discovered in both India and Indonesia, underscoring the

historical maritime linkages between the two regions. He shared insights from early Tamil literature that referenced ships and maritime activities, highlighting terms that reflect the linguistic and cultural exchanges dating back to prehistoric times. In his conclusion, Dr. Selvakumar emphasized the need for further research and collaboration to deepen our understanding of these ancient connections. He called for more student and scholarly exchange programs to foster a better comprehension of cultural linkages that have historically nurtured ideologies, religions, and societies across the Indian Ocean and beyond.



Audience



Participants at the Conference



Prof Dr. Tjokorda Gde Tirta Nindhia, ST. MT. M.Eng

Topic: Indian Wootz Steel Blade and Indonesian Keris Blade in Archaeological, Technological, and Religious Perspective

Prof. Dr. Tjokorda Gde Tirta Nindhia focussed on the comparison between Indian Wootz steel blades and Indonesian Keris blades. He began by discussing the Delhi Iron Pillar, a corrosion-resistant monument from ancient India, highlighting its engineering significance and the mystery behind its construction, which still stands without any sign of rust. This pillar, he explained, is a testament to ancient India's advanced metallurgical technology, which he found remarkable as an engineer. He then compared this with Indonesian metallurgy, specifically the Keris blades, emphasizing the differences in manufacturing techniques and materials used. While Wootz steel is known for its strength and resistance to corrosion, Indonesian Keris blades incorporate meteorite material, adding a unique pattern that is impossible to replicate.

Prof. Tjokorda provided detailed insights into the technological aspects of these blades. He explained that Indian Wootz steel was produced using refractory technology, with small crucibles capable of withstanding extremely high temperatures. This allowed for the production of monolithic steel, which differs significantly from the laminated Damascus steel technique used in Indonesia and Japan. In contrast, the Indonesian Keris is crafted using layers of metal and sometimes includes meteorite elements, which are referred to as 'Antariksa' in Sanskrit. This addition gives the Keris a distinctive appearance and spiritual significance.

The presentation also explored the cultural and religious dimensions of these blades. Prof. Tjokorda highlighted how the craftsmanship of steel weapons in both India and Indonesia is deeply intertwined with religious practices.

In India, rituals such as 'Shastra Puja' and 'Ayudha Puja' are performed to honour weapons, similar to the 'Tumpek Landep' ceremony in Bali, where the Keris is revered not only as a weapon but also as a sacred object. He suggested that these practices reflect the deep spiritual connection between the people and their craftsmanship, transcending mere functionality. Prof. Tjokorda further elaborated on the historical connections between Indian and Indonesian steel-making technologies. He proposed that the knowledge of metallurgy may have been transferred from India to Indonesia, as suggested by the depiction of figures holding steel blades in the Prambanan temple carvings. These figures, including monkeys and warriors, are shown wielding weapons that resemble Indian Wootz steel, supporting the theory that Indian metallurgical technology influenced the development of Indonesian blade-making.

In his concluding remarks, Prof. Tjokorda shared his experience of visiting historical sites in India and engaging with local traditions, which deepened his understanding of the cultural significance of these metallurgical practices. He showcased a modern Keris, explaining its evolution in Balinese culture, where it has come to replace traditional symbols like the 'Linga' and 'Yoni'. His presentation offered a comprehensive exploration of the intersection of metallurgy, culture, and history, bridging the ancient technological achievements of India and Indonesia.

Question and Answer



During the Panel Discussion



The Chairperson and Distinguished Panellists of the Plenary 1



Programme Day 2 : Parallel Session IA

Topic : Language and Literature: Comparative Analysis of Linguistic and Literary Traditions

15 September 2024 | 11.15 – 12.30 PM

Chair : **Mr. Naveen Meghwal**

Director of SVCC

Speakers : **Prof. Dr. Ni Luh Sutjiati Beratha**

English Semantics, Udayana University

Topic:

A Comparative Analysis of Linguistics and Literary Traditions

Mr. Sugi Lanus

Curator of the Lontar Museum, Karangasem, Bali

Topic:

Rsi Agastya Mantra in Bali

Dr. Gautam Kumar Jha

Assistant Professor, Centre for Chinese and South East Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Topic:

Agility of Indic Traditions in Indonesia

Ms. Eika Chaturvedi Banerjee

Founder Eikam Resonance

Topic:

Of Languages and Stories, Rituals and Symbols

Session Summary

Parallel Session IA offered a platform for scholars and enthusiasts to delve into the linguistic and literary connections that have flourished between India and Indonesia over centuries. Through a comparative lens and explored into the rich tapestry of literary traditions encompassing epics, poetry, and philosophical texts. By tracing the evolution of languages and literature across borders, this session shed light on the shared narratives, cultural exchanges, and enduring influences that have shaped the literary landscapes of both nations, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of their shared cultural heritage. Sanskrit, an ancient Indian language, has influenced Indonesian languages, especially in terms of vocabulary. Both countries have cultural terms and expressions rooted in Sanskrit. The Ramayana and Mahabharata, ancient Indian epics, have influenced Indonesian art, literature, and performance arts. Indonesian shadow puppetry (wayang kulit) often features stories from these epics.



Naveen Meghwal emphasizes the deep cultural ties between Indonesia and India, especially visible in their shared storytelling traditions. Both nations have a long history of teaching values, ethics, and cultural identity through the epic tales of the Mahabharata and Ramayana. For Indian children, growing up often means hearing stories of heroes like Arjuna and Rama, while Indonesian children, particularly those in Bali, are similarly introduced to these characters through adaptations in their own language and cultural context. These stories transcend mere entertainment; they serve as a means of moral education and identity formation, connecting children to their heritage. In Indonesia, especially in regions like Bali, the Mahabharata and Ramayana are integrated into traditional performances, literature, and even ceremonies, showing how these tales are woven into daily life, just as they are in India. What makes this cultural exchange so beautiful is that despite geographic and linguistic differences, both societies cultivate shared values and wisdom through the ancient art of storytelling. This practice underscores how India and Indonesia, though distinct, are united by a literary and spiritual bond that continues to evolve across generations.



Prof. Dr. Ni Luh Sutjiati Beratha,
English Semantics, Udayana University
Topic: A Comparative Analysis of Linguistic and Literary Traditions

Professor Dr. Ni Luh Sutjiati Beratha discusses the longstanding linguistic and literary connections between Bali and India, which research suggests date back at least to the 9th century or even earlier. One key piece of evidence supporting this early contact is the substantial presence of Sanskrit vocabulary in the ancient Balinese language. The Javanese language also contributed to the integration of Sanskrit into Balinese, largely due to similarities in social hierarchy. In Balinese society, there are four main caste systems—Brahmana, Kshatriya, Wesya, and Sudra—that impact the sociolinguistic structure, especially in terms of speech levels.

Interestingly, early Balinese inscriptions lack any indication of speech levels, suggesting that Old Balinese did not originally include such distinctions. This feature developed gradually, influenced by Javanese linguistic practices. Even in inscriptions from the 11th century CE, evidence of speech levels in Old Balinese remains absent. Balinese, like Javanese, Sundanese, and Madurese, is one of the few Indonesian languages with a system of speech levels. Balinese developed partly from Sanskrit, with many modern words deriving from both Sanskrit and Javanese. The use of speech levels is evident in lexical choices, especially when addressing individuals from higher castes, such as those in the Brahmana caste.

In her conclusion, Professor Sutjiati emphasizes how Old Balinese was shaped by influences from Sanskrit and Javanese. In contemporary Balinese, the development of speech levels appears to have been influenced by the Javanese caste system, with Sanskrit terms often used in addressing members of higher castes. Initially, Old Balinese did not incorporate speech levels, but these distinctions emerged over time, likely due to external linguistic influences. Professor Sutjiati and her husband conducted a comparative analysis of linguistic and literary traditions, highlighting evidence such as the prevalence of Sanskrit in Balinese as an indicator of Bali's historical connection with India. Their research examines how Sanskrit and Javanese have affected the Balinese system of speech levels, which likely began developing during the Majapahit era. This evolution of speech levels is a feature observed not only in Balinese but also in other languages like Javanese and Sundanese. For example, in modern Balinese, low-level speech suffixes such as “-a” can be traced back to Old Balinese forms like “-yan.”

To summarize, Professor Sutjiati concludes that while Old Balinese lacked speech levels, Sanskrit and Old Javanese played significant roles in shaping modern Balinese, where speech levels—now prominently influenced by caste and other sociolinguistic factors—have become an integral part of the language.



Mr. Sugi Lanus, Curator of the Lontar Museum, Karangasem, Bali

Topic: Rsi Agastya Mantra in Bali

Sugi Lanus began his speech with the differences between mantras and stawa. Mantras are sacred utterances or sounds, while stawas are hymns of praise, typically composed in poetic form, used to express devotion to deities. For instance, in Bali, we see this difference reflected in our ancient texts, including some that mention Agastya. Agastya is one of the Sapta Rsi (the seven great sages) and is an important figure in both Indian and Balinese traditions. He is credited as one of the writers of the Vedas and is mentioned in various scriptures, including the Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and the Upanishads. His influence spans pre-modern India and Indonesia. There is a strong connection between Agastya and Java, as mentioned in inscriptions and manuscripts. For example, the Canggal Inscription, found in Magelang, Central Java, detailed the erection of a linga (symbol of Shiva), which was installed by the order of King Sanjaya. This inscription connects Agastya to Java, and it is believed that the king belonged to the Agastya gotra (lineage). The Dinoyo Inscription, dated back to 760 AD and discovered in Malang, East Java, also references Agastya in the context of supporting temples and rituals, further glorifying him as a supreme holy teacher.

Agastya holds a place of deep reverence in Bali, where statues of him are carefully preserved in sacred storage structures known as gaduh. These statues are brought out only on special ceremonial occasions, underscoring their importance

in Balinese spiritual practices. The connection between Agastya and Bali is also evident in the palm-leaf manuscript called the Agastya Parwa, which recounts his journey and teachings. This manuscript, written in Kawi (Old Javanese), originates from the Hindu Mataram period and includes ethical teachings on how to choose a guru and maintain a disciplined life. There are two prominent statues of Agastya—one from Prambanan and the other from Singosari. The Singosari statue is larger, but both are celebrated across Java as representations of Agastya's holiness. In Bali, we also inherited the Sapta-Pandita-Stava, a group of hymns that praise the seven great sages, including Agastya. These hymns are part of our rich literary tradition, which blends influences from Sanskrit and Old Javanese. For example, the Agastya Sawa, a sacred hymn, is recited in Bali and praises Agastya as a figure of strength and wisdom, who brought spiritual knowledge to the islands. The influence of Agastya in both Bali and Java is vast and deeply rooted in the region's cultural and religious history. His legacy is preserved through inscriptions, statues, and ancient manuscripts, all of which highlight his role as a great sage and teacher. The devotion to Agastya continues to this day, as seen in the rituals, literature, and sacred sites dedicated to him in Indonesia. The connection between India and Indonesia through figures like Agastya serves as a reminder of the shared spiritual and cultural heritage between these two regions.







Ms. Eika Chaturvedi Banerjee

Founder Eikam Resonance

Topic : Languages and Stories, Ritual and Symbol

Eika Chaturvedi highlighted a strong sense of familiarity that Indians feel upon arriving in Indonesia—a feeling of connection that seems to resonate even through their clothing and surroundings. She observes that, although people in Indonesia may dress differently, there is a shared essence that transcends these differences. Stories, languages, and conversations, though from another setting, have roots that feel remarkably familiar to Indian heritage. She discussed the cultural and historical commonalities between India and Indonesia, especially within language and literature. The symbolic connection between Shiva and the linga and yoni was also brought up, illustrating how both cultures express their heritage and traditions through language and literature, stories, symbols, and rituals. A significant portion—about 30%—of the Indonesian language has Sanskrit origins, revealing a profound linguistic bond between the two cultures. Words such as "guru" and "bahasa" (meaning "language" and derived from the Sanskrit "bhasha") are direct examples of this connection. Similarly, words like "Maya," "Brahma," and "Maha" carry consistent meanings across both Sanskrit and Indonesian. This linguistic overlap also reflects broader cultural narratives shared between the two regions.

In Indonesia, you can find Agastya—one of the great Sapta Rsi—in wayang (traditional puppet theatre) and ancient manuscripts. Indonesia's mythology, though complex, still bears relevance to Indian epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The navigation of ancient cultures through these myths and epics forms the bedrock of shared heritage

between India and Indonesia. As she quoted "we are the stories we hear and the stories we tell". In both India and Indonesia, epic narratives such as the Mahabharata and Ramayana play a crucial role. The baseline story remains the same, but different characters are celebrated in each culture. In India, characters like Rama and Sita hold central roles, whereas in Indonesia, the focus often shifts to figures like Hanuman, Sugriva, and Nakula. Despite these character differences, the underlying themes and core principles of the stories remain unchanged, highlighting a deep cultural connection between the two countries. Indonesian wood art from the Ramayana and Mahabharata eras further reflects this bond. These epic stories, deeply embedded in both Indian and Indonesian traditions, symbolize a shared spiritual and historical journey.

Eika further mentioned that symbols play a crucial role in connecting India and Indonesia. One of the most significant examples is the Garuda, a symbol deeply embedded in the Rig Vedic texts and Indian mythology. The Garuda is also Indonesia's national symbol, highlighting the shared cultural heritage between the two nations. Another powerful symbol is Om, considered the primordial sound and the ultimate representation of the universe in Hindu philosophy. This symbol, which carries deep spiritual meaning, is prevalent in both India and Indonesia, reflecting the shared philosophies of Sanatana Dharma. Our rituals are another way we express our shared heritage. Whether it is a wedding or a funeral, these rituals often reflect the same underlying principles.

In Indonesia, for example, when performing Shraddha (a ritual for departed souls), modern foods may be included, symbolizing a contemporized version of ancient practices. Similarly, in India, the same ritual is performed annually, though with slight regional variations. These shared rituals reinforce our cultural memory and the neural pathways that connect our ancestors with the present. The two pillars of Hindu philosophy, Dharma and Karma, are central to understanding how culture manifests in both India and Indonesia. Dharma—translated as "what I uphold" or "my way of life"—is expressed on three levels, as defined in the Bhagavad Gita. The first is Swadharma, which is one's personal relationship with oneself. The second is Paradharma, which is defined by the space and time in which one exists, and the

third and highest level is Paramdharma, which represents our relationship with the universe and our duty to uphold cosmic laws. Karma, or action, is expressed through three channels: physical action, emotional feeling, and intellectual thought. Together, Dharma and Karma shape how we live our lives and how we contribute to the broader universe.

In conclusion, the speaker expressed hope that this conference would mark the start of a stronger partnership between India and Indonesia. Both civilizations are ancient, with shared origins and common cultural expressions, offering a unique opportunity to grow together. There is much for both nations to learn from each other, and as their histories echo through time, now is the moment for India and Indonesia to move forward together, united as two great civilizations in harmony.




Dr. Gautam Kumar Jha

Assistant Professor, Center for Chinese and South East Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Topic: Agility of Indic traditions: Indonesia

Dr. Gautam Kumar Jha highlighted the profound commonalities between Indian and Indonesian cultures, particularly in their shared roots. These connections are reflected in the stories both cultures tell, the symbols they use, and the rituals they perform. These cultural expressions transcend time and space, navigating through the three dimensions of space and one of time, while time and culture are interwoven and exist in multiple realms within their beliefs. This shared heritage is embodied in the concept of dharma, which manifests in three levels: the past (our history), the present (our way of life), and the future (our responsibilities). The Bhagavad Gita outlines these relationships in three forms: our relationship with ourselves, our relationship with time and space (our context), and our highest relationship, with the universe.

Dr. Jha explained that our karma is expressed through three modes—emotion, thought, and action within our bodies. Many words and concepts across both cultures carry similar meanings and are derived from Sanskrit. While both cultures may worship different heroes, the same principles are expressed in diverse ways, with familiar symbols that resonate across both traditions. In Bali, for instance, cultural expression is seen in four main aspects: language and literature, stories, symbols, and rituals.

Dr. Jha further emphasized that dharma—the way we live—can be seen in three spheres: our relationship with ourselves, with family and friends, and with the universe. This philosophy reflects our duties to the world around us, with our thoughts, feelings, and actions shaped by these relationships. Literature plays a crucial role in shaping these thoughts and behaviors. There are numerous linguistic connections between Bahasa

and Sanskrit, where many words share meanings, and some sound the same but carry slightly different meanings. These similarities serve as reminders that both cultures share the same roots and cultural foundations. This shared heritage is also evident in rituals, such as death ceremonies and wedding rituals, where art and symbolism combine to reflect deeper cultural values.

In conclusion, Dr. Jha noted that there is a deep sense of familiarity between India and Indonesia, particularly in Bali. The expression of culture, as seen in language, literature, stories, symbols, and rituals, highlights the strong connections between the two nations. As both cultures stand together, Dr. Jha expressed hope that they will rise in resonance, embracing their shared heritage and working towards a harmonious future.



Question and Answer



Panel Discussion during conference

Programme Day 2 : Parallel Session IB

Topic From Brushstrokes to Spice Blends: Tracing Cultural Innovation in Art-Craft and Cuisine

15 September 2024 | 11.15 – 12.30 PM

Chair : **Ms. Anita Bose**
Author, Researcher & Artist

Speakers : **Shri Babul Dey**
Artist and Designer

Topic:
Batik, Rabindranath Tagore and Shantiniketan

Shri Yachneet Pushkarna
HariBol

Topic:
Art Craft and Cuisine

Ms. Sanjukta Choudhury
Researches and Teaches

Topic:
Machli and Fish

Mr. Agung Rai, ARMA Museum

Topic:
Balinese Culture Heritage

Session Summary

This session serves as a vibrant tapestry woven with threads of artistic ingenuity, architectural marvels and culinary delights. Participants embark on a journey through time and space, exploring the continuum of cultural expressions that have evolved and endured across the landscapes of India and Indonesia. From the intricate craftsmanship of traditional arts and crafts to the awe-inspiring grandeur of architectural wonders, from the tantalizing flavors of culinary delights, this session celebrates the dynamic interplay of continuity and innovation in cultural expressions. Through this exploration, participants gain a deeper appreciation of the diverse manifestations of shared heritage, fostering a renewed sense of connection and belonging within the tapestry of India and Indonesia's cultural landscape.

Both nations share a tradition of intricate and vibrant art forms, including traditional dances, music, and crafts. Batik, a traditional Indonesian art form of wax-resist dyeing, has similarities with Indian textile traditions. Indian and Indonesian cuisines share certain flavors and spices, showcasing the influence of trade and cultural exchanges. Spices such as cardamom, cinnamon, and cloves are common in both cuisines.



Anita Bose greeted the audience and immediately introduced the speakers for the Parallel Session IB, getting straight to the point and beginning the discussion.



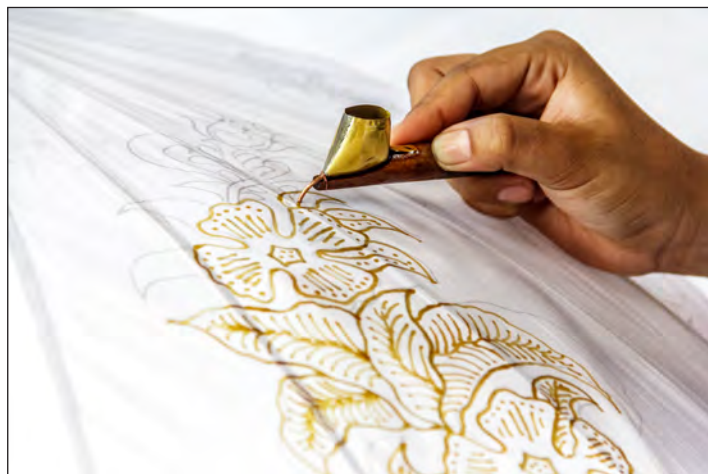
Shri Babul Dey, Artist and Designer

Topic: Batik, Rabindranath Tagore and Shanti Niketan

Babul Dey presented material on the historical intersection of Indian and Indonesian cultures, starting with Indian artist Rabindranath Tagore, who lived in Munduk, Buleleng, Bali, in 1927. Tagore played a significant role in fostering the cultural exchange between India and Indonesia. Dey discussed Rabindranath's first encounter with Batik in Java, a decorative textile technique that uses wax resist, originating from the Indonesian term *umbati*, meaning cloth with small dots. While Batik is commonly associated with Indonesia, its roots can be traced back to various regions, including India, Egypt, China, Japan, and West Africa. It is believed to have been influenced by Indian rigid deck techniques from the 12th century CE or even earlier.

Batik patterns, which can be found in ancient temples in Indonesia, date back to 1291 CE, with evidence suggesting the technique existed as early as 800 CE. The earliest written reference to Batik in Java is from 1518 CE, and its importance in Indonesia's social, economic, and political history is clear. Batik is a distinctive and intricate art form, widely used in various cultural items. In particular, Javanese Batik employs two primary waxing techniques: the enchanting method and the check method.

Batik has become an integral part of Indonesian culture, with numerous art centers emerging across the country. The Santi Niketan Batik art form, such as *Uttiri*, is a notable example of this tradition. Babul Dey also showcased different types of Batik based on design and production methods, highlighting various crafts and products made from Batik, such as bags. Additionally, Batik classes are being offered at Kala Bhavan in India in 2024, further demonstrating the growing influence and appreciation of Batik art.





Shri Yachneet Pushkarna, *HariBol*

Topic: Art Craft and Cuisine

Yachneet Pushkarna discussed the many similarities between India and Indonesia in terms of food, culinary traditions, and trade, highlighting how food serves as a fundamental anchor in both societies. The connection between the two nations dates back to the Mauryan and Shivajaya empires, with both countries sharing a rich cultural heritage, tropical farming techniques, and an abundance of spices and coconuts. The Chola Empire played a significant role in fostering cross-cultural exchanges between the two regions. Pushkarna pointed out that foods such as Idlis, which are believed to have originated in Indonesia, have become a staple breakfast in India, while Nasi Goreng has emerged as a popular dish in India. Rice holds cultural significance in both countries, with India being one of the largest rice exporters after Thailand. Coconut, a core ingredient in Indian cuisine, has also become integral to Indonesian cooking. Cultural and religious practices further highlight the shared connections, such as the offering of prasadam in India and the ceremonial offerings to deities in Bali, both of which hold similar meaning and importance.

Pushkarna also emphasized the potential of modern technology to enhance agricultural practices, suggesting that AI can be integrated into farms to help producers trace the origins of food products and create a cruelty-free consumption ecosystem. Haribol, India's first organization to receive the prestigious Faith and Action Award from the World Economic Forum, uses AI to connect farms with

consumers, enabling traceability of food products. This initiative, which began in Sri Lanka, aims to extend to Indonesia, where AI technology could assist in measuring factors like toxicity, water content, and nutrients, providing live data from plants directly to consumers.

In conclusion, Pushkarna highlighted the deep connection between the culinary heritage and traditions of India and Indonesia, with the goal of bridging the gap between tradition and modernity. Collaboration with farmers and institutions in both countries can help achieve collective goals and create a sustainable and harmonious future.





Ms. Sanjukta Choudhury, *Researches and Teaches*

Topic: Machli and Fish

Sanjukta, a researcher and Business Ethics teacher at Bina Nusantara University, presented on the topic of India and Indonesia's fish-based cuisine and sustainability. Before delving into the specifics of fish in each country, she began by redefining the concept of cuisine. Cuisine can refer to a physical space where food is prepared, or it can describe a particular style of cooking. In academic terms, cuisine refers to a set of specific practices and traditions in cooking that are closely linked to a particular culture or historical period. To understand cuisine more fully, Sanjukta explained that we should consider various aspects, including customs, habits, traditions, preparation methods, cooking techniques, the time required, and the ingredients used. She provided examples like Nasi Boranan in East Java and Spicy Porridge in Central Kalimantan, which contain many ingredients. The broader definition of cuisine also encompasses the tools and utensils used, as well as geographical and historical influences.

When considering the geographical aspect, Sanjukta noted that terms like Indian cooking, Indonesian cooking, or vegetarian cooking are commonly used. In Indonesia, dishes like Tahu Sumedang are often linked to specific places and ethnic groups. Moving beyond this, she emphasized the importance of culture and social values, noting that food habits are shaped by the way food is selected, distributed, served, and eaten. In India, for instance, in the Bengal region, men typically purchase fish while women cook it. Social values related to food are influenced by various factors such as natural resources, belief systems, ethnicity, and colonial history. Sanjukta then shifted focus to fish as both food and medicine. Traditionally, fish has been considered a substitute for meat, especially in penitential contexts. While

other meats, like duck, peacock, chicken, and lamb, have often taken center stage in many cultures, fish has become increasingly important in modern diets, partly due to health concerns. In addition to being a culinary ingredient, fish is also consumed for medicinal purposes. For example, in Hyderabad, India, an average of 80,000 people annually flock to consume a specific type of fish that the Pathan and Bathani families prepare with a special medicinal treatment. This fish is consumed live, as an oral remedy, demonstrating its dual role as both food and medicine.

Sanjukta further discussed the history of Indonesian cuisine, which cannot be viewed as a single entity but rather in three distinct phases: the original culinary phase, the multicultural culinary phase, and the contemporary culinary phase.

1. The Original Culinary Phase: This phase occurred during the great Indonesian kingdoms, from the Hindu Kingdom of Kalimantan to the Islamic Kingdom in West Java. During this time, people used local natural resources, with simple cooking techniques and handmade wooden or stone utensils.



The cooking methods were grounded in the use of locally available ingredients.

2. The Multicultural Culinary Phase: This phase was marked by the successive invasions and influence of European, Indian, Middle Eastern, and Chinese cultures, followed later by the Spanish, British, and Dutch. These interactions contributed to the diversity of Indonesian cuisine, with fish being a major ingredient in the culinary traditions.

3. The Contemporary Culinary Phase: In recent times, modern fast food chains like Kentucky Fried Chicken and McDonald's have become popular in Indonesia, influencing current culinary trends.

Sanjukta then emphasized the role of “spices in cooking fish”, a commonality shared by both Indonesia and India. Indonesia's vast coastline provides an abundance of saltwater seafood, and its numerous lakes and rivers offer freshwater fish. Fish in Indonesia is prepared in various ways—smoked, grilled, baked, or as part of traditional ceremonies and rituals. For example, fish is an integral part of offerings during rituals in Java, especially during festivals such as Lebaran or New Year celebrations.

In India, fish also plays a central role in coastal regions, where it is commonly prepared using local spices. The culinary traditions of India, shaped by various influences like Ayurvedic practices, the British, and Portuguese, are rich in fish-based dishes. In Bengal, fish is a significant offering during weddings, symbolizing peace and harmony. Additionally, fish-shaped milk-based desserts and fish wrapped in banana leaves are part of Indian ceremonial foods. Both Indonesian and Indian cuisines rely heavily on spices like turmeric, mustard, and garam masala to enhance the flavor of fish. The shared use of spices in preparing fresh and seawater fish highlights the cultural alignment between the two countries.

Sanjukta concluded her presentation by addressing the sustainability of fish as an important issue for both nations. She advocated for promoting green and responsible fishing practices to ensure the sustainability of fish populations. Her final message was to encourage consumers to eat fish responsibly, recognizing the importance of preserving marine resources for future generations.



Participants at the Parallel Sessions



Mr. Agung Rai, ARMA Museum

Topic: Balinese Culture Heritage

Agung Rai began his presentation by highlighting two significant Indonesian UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Borobudur and the Prambanan Temple. Both of these cultural landmarks hold deep historical and spiritual significance, representing the rich values and traditions of Indonesia.

Agung Rai further explored the pre-historical period of Bali, focusing on one of his notable discoveries—a village that contains a symbol of a face created by the people during the Neo-Lithic era, referred to as "Bali Mula." This finding offers insight into the early cultures and practices in Bali, shedding light on the island's long history of symbolic expression and artistic development.

He then proceeded to describe the magnificence of the Tirta Empul Temple, which holds great sacred importance for the Balinese Hindu community. The temple is known for its holy springs, believed to possess purifying and healing powers. The temple complex features shrines dedicated to Hindu deities such as Shiva, Vishnu, Brahma, and Indra, as well as a shrine to Mount Batur. The holy springs are central to religious rituals at the temple, where devotees come to bathe in the waters for spiritual cleansing and purification. This temple, with its rich history and spiritual significance, plays a vital role in the cultural and religious life of Bali.



Programme Day 2 : Plenary Session II

Topic: Divine Encounters: Tracing Hindu-Buddhist Traditions of Indonesia

15 September 2024 | 12.30 – 13.45 PM

Chair : Dr. Sarup Prasad Ghosh

Director of MAKAIAS

Speakers : Dr. Made Sri Putri Purnamawati

Chairperson of ICHI Bali

Topic:

The Role of Indian Culture in Traditional Balinese Health Science

Drs. I Ketut Donder

M.Ag., Ph.D, Scholar and Educator in Hindu theology.

Topic:

Remembering for A Moment the Relationship between India and Nusantara Civilization

Prof. Dr. Shashi Bala

Dean of Bhavan's KM Munshi Centre for Indology On Chair-Acharya Raghuvira, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan

Topic:

Voyage of Acharya Shri Dipankarajana (Atisha) to Indonesia

Prof. Drs. Ida Bagus Putu Suamba

Topic:

Siva-Buddha Cult in Indonesia: A Review

Session Summary

Plenary Session II focussed on the profound impact of Hinduism and Buddhism on the cultural landscape of Indonesia. From ancient times, the spiritual traditions of India journeyed across the waters of the Indian Ocean, finding fertile ground in the archipelago's lush islands. Through the construction of majestic temples like Borobudur and Prambanan, intricate carvings, and vibrant artistic expressions, the influence of Hindu-Buddhist thought permeated Indonesian society, shaping its architecture, philosophy, and way of life. These divine encounters not only left a lasting imprint on the religious practices of the region but also fostered a cultural syncretism that continues to thrive in contemporary Indonesia. Through this exploration, we gain insight into the enduring legacy of Hindu-Buddhist influences, which remain an integral part of Indonesia's rich and diverse cultural heritage. It should be noted Balinese Hinduism, with its unique blend of indigenous beliefs and practices, reflects a deep reverence for the divine and a harmonious relationship with nature. Through this exploration, we gain insight into the intricate rituals, elaborate ceremonies, and artistic expressions that characterize Balinese culture, providing a glimpse into the enduring legacy of Hindu-Buddhist influences on Indonesian civilization, particularly in the spiritual heartland of Bali.







Dr. Made Sri Putri Purnamawati
Chairperson of ICHI Bali

Topic: The Role of Indian Culture in Traditional Balinese Health Science

Dr Made Sri Putri Purnamawati spoke on the role of Indian culture in Traditional Balinese Health science. She began her talk by outlining the historical connections between India and Bali, emphasizing how these ties have significantly influenced the development of traditional health practices in Bali. Dr. Purnamawati highlighted that the integration of Indian cultural elements, particularly through Ayurveda and spiritual practices, has shaped the holistic approach to health that is prevalent in Balinese society today.

In her presentation, Dr. Purnamawati elaborated on the various traditional healing practices in Bali that are rooted in Indian culture. She explained that many Balinese healers, known as "balian," incorporate mantras and rituals derived from Sanskrit and other Indian texts into their healing ceremonies. This fusion of Indian and local traditions not only enhances the effectiveness of the healing process but also reinforces the spiritual dimensions of health and wellness in Balinese culture. She emphasized that these practices are not merely remnants of the past but are actively practiced and revered in contemporary Balinese society.

Dr. Purnamawati also discussed the significance of rituals and prayers in traditional Balinese health practices, particularly the invocation of deities such as Vishnu. She noted that these rituals are integral to the healing process, as they create a sacred space that fosters a connection between the healer, the patient, and the divine. This spiritual aspect of healing, she argued, is a testament to the enduring influence of Indian culture on Balinese health practices, reflecting a shared belief in the interconnectedness of body, mind, and spirit.

Furthermore, she highlighted the importance of preserving these traditional practices in the face of modernization and

globalization. Dr. Purnamawati called for greater recognition and support for traditional Balinese health science, advocating for its integration into formal healthcare systems. She argued that by valuing and promoting these practices, Bali can maintain its cultural heritage while also contributing to the global discourse on holistic health and wellness.

In conclusion, Dr. Purnamawati's presentation underscored the profound impact of Indian culture on traditional Balinese health science. She expressed hope that continued exploration and appreciation of these cultural connections will foster a deeper understanding of the rich tapestry of traditions that define Bali's identity. Her insights serve as a reminder of the importance of cultural heritage in shaping contemporary practices and the need for ongoing dialogue between cultures to enrich our collective knowledge and well-being.





Drs. I Ketut Donder

M.Ag., Ph.D, Scholar and Educator in Hindu theology

Topic: Remembering for A Moment the Relationship between India and Nusantara Civilization

Drs I Ketut Donder began his discourse by emphasizing the historical significance of the connections between India and the Nusantara region, which encompasses modern-day Indonesia and its islands. Dr. Donder highlighted that these ties date back to ancient times, rooted in trade, cultural exchange, and the spread of religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism. He noted that the Indian influence is evident in various aspects of Indonesian culture, including language, literature, and spiritual practices.

In his presentation, Dr. Donder discussed the initial contacts between India and Bali, which were likely facilitated through maritime trade routes. He explained that these exchanges were not limited to goods but also included ideas, philosophies, and religious beliefs. The arrival of Indian traders and scholars in the Nusantara region played a crucial role in shaping the cultural landscape of Indonesia. He pointed out that the rich tapestry of Indonesian culture is interwoven with Indian elements, which have been preserved and adapted over centuries.

Dr. Donder also reflected on the impact of Indian literature, particularly the Ramayana and Mahabharata, on Indonesian storytelling and performing arts. He illustrated how these epic narratives have been localized and integrated into Balinese culture, influencing traditional dance, theater, and rituals. This cultural synthesis demonstrates the enduring legacy of Indian civilization in the Nusantara region, showcasing a shared heritage that transcends geographical boundaries.

Furthermore, Dr. Donder addressed the importance of recognizing and celebrating these historical connections in

contemporary society. He argued that understanding the deep-rooted ties between India and Indonesia can foster a sense of unity and mutual respect among the diverse cultures within the region. He encouraged scholars and cultural practitioners to engage in collaborative efforts that promote the rich history and shared values of both nations.

In conclusion, Dr. Donder's presentation served as a poignant reminder of the profound relationship between India and the Nusantara civilization. He expressed hope that by remembering and honoring this shared heritage, both countries can continue to build bridges of understanding and cooperation in the future. His insights underscored the significance of cultural exchange in shaping identities and fostering a sense of belonging in an increasingly globalized world.





Prof. Dr. Shashi Bala

Dean Bhavan's KM Munshi Centre for Indology, On Chair-Acharya Raghuvira, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan

Topic: Voyage of Acharya Shri Dipankarajana (Atisha) to Indonesia

Prof. Dr. Shashi Bala delivered a compelling presentation that explored the intricate connections between Indian culture and the Indonesian archipelago, particularly focusing on the historical and philosophical ties that have shaped the region's cultural landscape. She began her talk by emphasizing the significance of understanding these connections in the context of globalization and cultural exchange. Prof. Bala highlighted that the relationship between India and Indonesia is not merely historical but continues to influence contemporary practices and beliefs in both societies.

In her presentation, Prof. Bala discussed the profound impact of Hinduism and Buddhism on Indonesian culture, particularly in Bali. She noted that these religions have left an indelible mark on the spiritual and cultural practices of the Balinese people. By examining ancient texts and archaeological findings, she illustrated how the teachings and philosophies of Indian religions have been integrated into local customs, rituals, and artistic expressions. Prof. Bala emphasized that this cultural synthesis is a testament to the enduring legacy of Indian civilization in Indonesia.

Furthermore, Prof. Bala addressed the role of language and literature in fostering cultural connections between India and Indonesia. She pointed out that the shared epics, such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata, have transcended geographical boundaries and continue to be celebrated in various forms of art and performance in Bali. This literary heritage not only enriches the cultural fabric of Indonesia but also serves as a bridge for deeper understanding between the two nations. Prof. Bala encouraged scholars and practitioners to delve into these literary connections to further explore the shared cultural identity.

Prof. Bala also highlighted the importance of preserving and promoting traditional practices that reflect this rich cultural heritage. She called for collaborative efforts between Indian and Indonesian scholars to document and celebrate these traditions, ensuring that they remain vibrant in the face of modernization. By fostering dialogue and exchange, she believes that both countries can benefit from a renewed appreciation of their shared history and values.

In conclusion, Prof. Dr. Shashi Bala's presentation provided valuable insights into the historical and cultural ties between India and Indonesia. Her emphasis on the significance of these connections in contemporary society serves as a reminder of the importance of cultural heritage in shaping identities and fostering mutual respect. Through her work, she advocates for a deeper exploration of the shared narratives that bind these two rich civilizations, encouraging future generations to honor and celebrate their interconnectedness.





Prof. Drs. Ida Bagus Putu Suamba, M.A., Ph. D.

Topic: Siva-Buddha Cult in Indonesia: A Review

Dr Ida Bagus Putu Suamba began by discussing the historical roots of the Siva-Buddha cult, tracing its origins back to the first millennium when Indian cultural influences began to permeate the archipelago. In his presentation, Prof. Suamba highlighted how the Siva-Buddha cult represents unique synthesis of Hindu and Buddhist beliefs, which coexisted and evolved together in Indonesia. He explained that this syncretism is particularly evident in Bali, where both religious traditions have been integrated into the local spiritual practices. The Siva-Buddha cult is characterized by the worship of both Shiva and Buddha, reflecting a harmonious coexistence of these two major religious influences.

Prof. Suamba elaborated on the rituals and ceremonies associated with the Siva-Buddha cult, noting that Balinese Hinduism incorporates elements of both traditions. He described how rituals often involve priests from both Hindu and Buddhist backgrounds officiating together, symbolizing the unity of these faiths in the cultural practices of the Balinese people. This blending of traditions is not only a reflection of historical interactions but also a testament to the adaptability and resilience of Indonesian culture.

Additionally, he discussed the significance of the Siva-Buddha cult in contemporary Balinese society, emphasizing its role in maintaining cultural identity amidst

globalization and modernization. Prof. Suamba argued that understanding this cult is crucial for appreciating the broader historical and cultural exchanges that have shaped Indonesia's spiritual landscape.

In conclusion, Prof. Drs. Ida Bagus Putu Suamba's review of the Siva-Buddha cult provided valuable insights into the complex relationship between Hinduism and Buddhism in Indonesia. His exploration of this syncretic tradition highlights the importance of cultural heritage in shaping contemporary identities and fostering a sense of unity within the diverse religious landscape of Indonesia. Through his work, he advocates for the continued study and preservation of these intertwined traditions as a means of enriching the understanding of Indonesia's rich cultural tapestry.

Discussion Session



During the lunch hour at the Conference









Programme Day 2 : Parallel Session IIA

Rhythmic Dialogues: Exploring Dance, Music, and Theater Traditions of India and Indonesia

15 September 2024 | 15.00 – 16.15 PM

Chair : **Prof. Nyoman Sedana,**
Founder of Kamajaya Art Studio

Topic:
Shared Cultural Heritage: India's Ravan Chhaya and Indonesia's Wayang Ramayana Puppetry

Speakers : **Prof. Dr. I Made Bandem**
Curator of Bali Arts Festival

Topic:
Bali Yatra Festival of India: Fostering Collaboration Between India and Balinese Dance Traditions

Prof. I Wayan Dibia
Padma Shri Awardee & Founder of Geoks Art Space

Topic:
Creating New Works: Exploring Classical Balinese and Indian Dances

Ms. Anita Bose
Author, Researcher & Artist

Topic:
Cultural Connections: Saraswati Worship and Performing Arts in India and Indonesia

Session Summary

The Session IIA delved into the rich tapestry of dance, music, and theater traditions that bind India and Indonesia together. This session offers a captivating exploration of the rhythmic dialogues and harmonic melodies that have echoed across borders, transcending time and geography. From the intricate footwork of Indian classical dance forms like Bharatanatyam and Odissi to the graceful movements of Indonesian dances such as Javanese and Balinese, we uncover the nuanced expressions of cultural identity and storytelling embedded within these art forms. Through vibrant performances and scholarly discussions, participants will gain insight into the cultural cadences and artistic interplay that have flourished between these two nations, illuminating the enduring legacy of their shared cultural heritage.



Prof. Nyoman Sedana emphasized the timeless relevance of ancient wisdom, a heritage that holds valuable insights for building a more harmonious culture today. He suggested that ancient knowledge offers solutions to many of the challenges facing the modern world. A key aspect of Wayang puppetry is its ability to capture and convey the eternal struggle between good and evil, making it a profound storytelling medium that resonates deeply even now. According to Prof. Sedana, Wayang performances, which often draw from epic narratives like the Ramayana and Mahabharata, highlight universal themes of courage, humanity, and justice. These stories offer frameworks for addressing contemporary issues, including global conflicts.

In today's world, where technological advancements, such as weapons of mass destruction, sometimes lack ethical consideration, Prof. Sedana argued that ancient wisdom can help humanity rediscover essential values of peace and harmony. Epics like the Mahabharata, Ramayana, and Sutasoma provide insights on transforming conflict into harmony, grounded in principles of Sadguna—wisdom, courage, justice, and transcendence. For example, the Ramayana's conflict between Rama and Ravana not only illustrates the triumph of good over evil but also underscores the victory of righteousness and universal balance (Rta).

Through Wayang puppetry, these messages are symbolically conveyed, blending spiritual and metaphysical lessons within a physical performance. Drawn from teachings like the Bhagavad Gita, Wayang reminds audiences that even in the face of evil, the forces of good and justice will ultimately prevail. Thus, Wayang puppetry serves as a bridge to ancient wisdom, helping address the ethical challenges of today's world. The dalangs, or puppeteers, are more than storytellers; they are cultural educators, passing down these moral teachings across generations.

In a world facing complex global conflicts, Prof. Sedana suggested that the ancient teachings embodied in Wayang offer a way to transform aggression into peace and discord into harmony, providing humanity with timeless lessons for progress.



Chairperson and Distinguished Panellist at Parallel Session II A





Prof. Dr. I Made Bandem

Curator of Bali Arts Festival

Topic: Bali Yatra Festival of India: Fostering Collaboration Between India and Balinese Dance Traditions

The Bali Yatra festival, which translates to "Voyage to Bali," commemorates the historical and cultural ties between Bali and India, particularly through dance and religious traditions. The festival, which takes place annually in November, involves floating colorful paper boats that sail into the sunset, symbolizing journeys of cultural exchange and historical connection. This tradition, which began in 1993, requires government permission, specifically through the Ministry of Culture, and is an important event celebrating the shared heritage of India and Indonesia. Indonesia's richness in spices, such as nutmeg, cloves, and sandalwood, attracted traders and facilitated the introduction of Hinduism around the 1st century CE.

Sage Agastya is credited with bringing the Hindu religion to Indonesia, particularly to Javadvipa and Bali, where Hinduism intertwined with local customs and the spice trade. This historical connection is reflected in ancient inscriptions such as the Prasasti Kutai from the 4th century, and the Prasasti Taruma Negara, alongside monumental structures like Borobudur and Prambanan Temples. The influence of Indian culture is also apparent in Indonesia's traditional art forms, including the Ramayana and Mahabharata, which are depicted in temples like Panataran and Prambanan. These epics, often performed in Wayang puppetry, narrate the struggle between good and evil, with themes such as Rama's battle against Ravana and Hanuman's attack on Alengka.

Additionally, sculptures like those of Anak Wungsu and Dewi Mandul at Pura Pucak Penulisan, and paintings from Kamasan depicting Radha and Krishna, further illustrate the deep cultural ties. In the world of dance, both Indian and Balinese traditions share striking similarities. Indian classical dance forms like Bharatanatyam and Odissi emphasize

storytelling through Abhinaya (expression) and Nritya (pure dance), which are comparable to Balinese forms such as Legong and Wayang Wong Ramayana. Both traditions use intricate hand gestures (mudras), expressive facial expressions, and rhythmic footwork to convey narratives. Three main styles of Indian dance—Nritya (abstract dance), Nritya (thematic dance), and Natya (dance-theatre)—mirror the Balinese dance categories of Wali (sacred), Bebali (semi-sacred), and Balih-balihaan (entertainment).

These styles reflect shared Hindu values, including principles such as Tatwa (philosophy), Susila (ethics), and Upacara (ceremony). Both regions embrace aesthetic values grounded in Hinduism, with key concepts like Satyam (truth), Shivam (divine), and Sundaram (beauty) serving as guiding principles for artistic expression. Ultimately, the Bali Yatra festival and its associated art forms symbolize the enduring cultural relationship between India and Bali, highlighting a shared heritage rooted in Hindu philosophy, aesthetics, and ethics. Through these artistic and religious traditions, both regions celebrate their common values, fostering cultural understanding and unity.





Prof. I Wayan Dibia

Padma Shri Awardee & Founder of Geoks Art Space

Topic: Creating New Works: Exploring Classical Balinese and Indian Dances

Over the past eight years, three significant works have been created that showcase the fusion of classical Balinese and Indian dance forms, highlighting the close cultural ties between the two regions. The first of these is *Pralaya* (2016), a dance theater piece inspired by the Mahabharata, produced in Toronto in collaboration with Lata Pada from Sampradaya Dance Creations. This work blends the free-flowing movements of Balinese dance with the structured precision of Bharatanatyam. A unique challenge in this choreography was freezing the free hand movements typical of Balinese dance to integrate smoothly with Bharatanatyam techniques. The performance lasted 75 minutes and was accompanied by a fusion of Balinese gamelan music and Indian instruments such as the tabla, flute, and sarod. Costumes combined traditional Balinese and Indian textiles, symbolizing the cultural exchange inherent in the production.

The second work, *The Cry of Sita* (2021), is based on the Ramayana, specifically the Sundara Kanda and Yuddha Kanda. This collaboration between I Wayan Dibia and Pompei Paul brought together classical Balinese dance and Odissi, a traditional dance form from India. The choreography divided the dance movements between Balinese and Odissi styles, while the costumes also reflected this duality, with

each tradition represented. The music was a combination of Balinese gamelan and Indian instruments, with a poetic narration based on Hanuman's Confession, which explores the emotional turmoil of Sita during her captivity. This piece defied traditional rules of dance theater, incorporating both narrative and abstract elements. The third work, *Arisi Rice* (2022), centers on the story of rice culture and was produced in collaboration with the Apsaras Arts Dance Company in Singapore. This production featured a weaving of Balinese and Bharatanatyam dance forms, with a cast of 20 dancers (7 Balinese and 13 Indian). The musical score combined Balinese gamelan with Indian classical instruments, as well as Chinese musical elements, reflecting the pan-Asian collaboration that informed the piece. The costumes again fused Balinese and Indian styles, incorporating double ikat and other traditional textiles from both cultures.

In conclusion, these three works—*Pralaya*, *The Cry of Sita*, and *Arisi Rice*—demonstrate that Balinese and Indian dance, though rooted in different traditions, are closely related. They share common aesthetic values, movements, and cultural expressions. These collaborations not only highlight the artistic and cultural connections between Bali and India but also offer a platform for ongoing cross-cultural exploration.



**Ms. Anita Bose***Author, Researcher & Artist***Topic: Cultural Connections: Saraswati Worship and Performing Arts in India and Indonesia**

Anita Bose introduced her topic by emphasizing that many art forms—dance, music, drama—are originated from Mother Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge and wisdom. She started her presentation with a prayer to Saraswati, acknowledging her as the source of intellectual power, imagination, and speech. Anita recalled her first visit to Denpasar University in Bali in 2017 for a conference on Hindu Art in Southeast Asia. It was there that she encountered a statue of Saraswati on the university grounds, which deeply impacted her. This encounter led her to reflect on how closely Saraswati is tied to both Indian and Indonesian cultures. She explained that in India, Saraswati is revered as the goddess of wisdom, knowledge, and also as a warrior goddess. Her origins can be traced back to the Rig Veda, where she is also celebrated as a river goddess.

Anita described the iconography of Saraswati in India, highlighting that she is typically depicted with four hands, holding a pustaka (book), a rosario (rosary), a veena (musical instrument), and a lotus. Each of these symbols represents knowledge, wisdom, music, and blessings. Saraswati is also known as the embodiment of speech (vak), reflecting her role as the goddess of communication and intellectual expression. She further elaborated that Saraswati Puja, a festival dedicated to the goddess, is celebrated widely across regions such as Bengal, Bihar, Tripura, and other parts of India. During this time, people honor Saraswati by placing books on altars, seeking her blessings for wisdom and knowledge.

Anita drew parallels between the worship of Saraswati in India and Indonesia, noting many similarities in how she is revered in both cultures. In Bali, Saraswati is also considered the goddess of knowledge, and her influence is celebrated during Pangredanan Saraswati, a festival held every 210 days to honor learning. On this day, books are placed on altars, students wear yellow clothes, and there are offerings, dances, and music to celebrate the goddess. She explained that just as Saraswati is associated with the sacred river in India, she is also connected to riverine worship practices in Indonesia. In both cultures, Saraswati is seen as the source of life and wisdom. Anita remarked that in Bali, Saraswati is also regarded as a healer, a role that aligns with her depiction as the remover of darkness and ignorance in Indian tradition. Anita shared that the artistic expressions dedicated to Saraswati in Bali, such as traditional paintings, are very similar to Indian pattachitra and scroll art. In Bali, these artistic representations of Saraswati are often part of rituals and celebrations, just as they are in India. During Saraswati Puja in Bali, there are many performances of music and dance, further showcasing the shared cultural reverence for the goddess.

Anita reflected on the larger cultural exchange between India and Indonesia, noting that these countries share a deep historical connection. She highlighted how the Indian Ocean facilitated the spread of rituals, traditions, and beliefs between these regions for centuries. As the first Indian guide at the National Museum in Bangkok, Anita took pride in showcasing the map that illustrates these cultural exchanges,

demonstrating how India and Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, have influenced each other over time. Anita also touched on Subak, Bali's traditional irrigation system, which she linked to Saraswati as a symbol of abundance and nourishment. This connection reflects a broader cultural symbolism where Saraswati, as the goddess of knowledge, is also associated with providing life-sustaining resources. She explained that this parallel exists in India as well, where Saraswati is revered as a river goddess, representing both wisdom and life.

In concluding her presentation, Anita emphasized that Saraswati embodies the shared cultural heritage between India and Indonesia. Whether in Bali or India, the goddess is honoured as a symbol of knowledge, wisdom, and healing. Through festivals like Saraswati Puja and artistic expressions in both cultures, Saraswati continues to be a bridge that connects the two nations. Anita expressed her pride in being part of this ongoing cultural exchange and looked forward to future opportunities for collaboration and learning. She thanked the audience for their attention and participation in the celebration of Saraswati.



Programme Day 2 : Parallel Session IIB

Topic: Modern Mirrors: Reflecting on India-Indonesia Cultural Exchanges in the Modern Era

15 September 2024 | 15.00 – 16.15 PM

- Chair :** **Prof. Dr. Ir. Gede Sedana**, Rector of Dwijendra University
Topic:
Ritual Aspects of Subak Irrigation System as a World Cultural Heritage
- Speakers :** **Ms. Aparna Bhatnagar Saxena**, Founder of Ahana & CEO of Torajamelo
Topic:
Textile Connectivity: Unraveling the Knots Between Bharat and Indonesia
- Mr. Franki Raden**, Ethno-Musicologist,
Topic:
Reflecting on India-Indonesia Cultural Exchanges in the Modern Era: A Note From the Field
- Shri Satish Mishra**, Managing Director, Strategic Asia Institute Bali
Topic:
Culture, Economic Development and Soft power: Evolving India-Indonesia Perspectives
- Shri Swami Shastrajnananda Maharaj**, Secretary of Ramkrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur
Topic:
Indian Yoga and Ayurveda: A Vivekananda Approach for the Contemporary World

Session Summary

In this session, participants were engaged in a thought-provoking exploration of the contemporary cultural exchanges between India and Indonesia, observing how these interactions reflect and shape the cultural landscapes of both nations in the modern age. From the realms of art, literature, and cuisine to the realms of technology, business, and diplomacy, this session delved into the multifaceted dimensions of cultural exchange, tracing the threads of connectivity and collaboration that bind India and Indonesia together in today's globalized world. Through insightful discussions and reflections, participants gained a deeper understanding of the evolving dynamics of cultural exchange between these two vibrant nations, uncovering new pathways for mutual understanding, appreciation, and collaboration in the 21st century. The presence of Indian films and Bollywood music has gained popularity in Indonesia, reflecting contemporary cultural exchanges. Cultural festivals and events celebrate the diversity and shared heritage of the two nations. Bilateral agreements and cultural exchange programs foster closer ties between India and Indonesia. People-to-people interactions through tourism, academic exchanges, and business collaborations contribute to cultural understanding. Both countries actively participate in international forums and organizations, promoting their cultural heritage and strengthening global partnerships. Overall, the cultural connectivity between India and Indonesia is deeply rooted in history and continues to evolve through various forms of exchange, creating a strong foundation for bilateral relations. There is an active cultural exchange between the two countries. The consulates of India operate Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre (SVCC) which holds regular classes of Indian classical music, Indian classical dances, yoga, and also teaches Indian languages. Yoga is now popular among youths in Indonesia.



Prof. Gede Sedana elaborated on the transformative period of modernization in Bali, highlighting its impact on traditional agricultural practices, particularly rice farming—a central element of Balinese culture. He explained that the Indonesian Green Revolution introduced a range of technological advancements, such as synthetic pesticides, chemical fertilizers, and modern agricultural machinery, aimed at boosting crop yields and meeting the demands of a growing population.

However, Prof. Sedana emphasized that amidst these changes, the Subak system remains essential to Balinese agriculture. Subak is a centuries-old, community-based irrigation system rooted in Balinese Hindu philosophy, which underscores a harmonious balance between humans, nature, and spirituality. Managed by local farmer cooperatives, this system not only regulates water distribution but also incorporates rituals and ceremonies to honor the water deities believed to sustain life.

In 2012, UNESCO recognized Subak as a world cultural heritage, drawing attention to its cultural and environmental significance. Prof. Sedana stressed that the Subak system is more than just an irrigation network; it is a symbol of Balinese resilience and communal harmony. Farmers who participate in Subak not only sustain the environment but also uphold cultural traditions that are integral to Balinese identity. Prof. Sedana's discussion highlighted the ongoing need to preserve the Subak system amid modernization, as it embodies the values of environmental stewardship and cultural continuity.







Aparna Bhatnagar Saxena

Founder of Ahana & CEO of Torajamelo

Topic: Textile connectivity: Unraveling the knots between Bharat and Indonesia

Aparna Bhatnagar Saxena spoke on the connections between India and Indonesia through indigenous woven fabric. Torajamelo, an organisation founded in 2008, aims to preserve indigenous back-strap loom weaving (known as Gedogan) in Indonesia, a diverse country with over 1100 recorded indigenous groups. The organisation has worked with various indigenous communities, spanning Aceh in North Sumatra to West Papua including East Nusa Tenggara, Bali, Lombok, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi, to ensure the preservation and continuation of these crafts without losing employment opportunities.

Batik, a hand block print technique where wax-based resistance techniques are used along with wooden blocks with origin roots in India, and China has evolved and maintains a stronghold in Java island of Indonesia through the combination of techniques with different influences. The backstrap loom weaving, a craft done by women in Indonesia and globally, is a place of women's economic enablement. The craft is also prevalent in the Global South and the Americas. The weaving patterns and motifs of indigenous tribes based on the Highlands and altitude are similar, making it a significant aspect of the cultural exchange between Indonesia and India. She said that Indonesia and India have been collaborating on resistance dyeing and weaving (Double ikat), a traditional craft that originated in Indonesia. The two countries have taken their respective traditions to the next level, with Indonesia exhibiting unique pieces of resistance dyeing, such as the Bali Geringsing which is crafted by the Bali Aga women from Tenganan Village, Bali and the intricate Patola in Gujarat. Generally, the Tenganan community has hundreds of years old gringsing fabrics that are used

in special ceremonies. The Indian tradition of Bandini (tie and dyeing), also known as Pelangi, is also showcased, with pieces from Toraja and Sumatra using the technique. This was possibly brought into Indonesia from Indian and Arabic traders who moved between the two nations. The ongoing artisanship in these crafts is crucial for their preservation and sharing. The preservation of these crafts requires regulatory support from governments and commercial viability. It is essential to appreciate the artisanship of these crafts and their life work, which takes 10 to 15 years to master. Re-exploring cultural ties and preserving these traditions is crucial for their continued growth. This can be done through conferences, knowledge sharing, and commercial projects.





Mr. Franki Raden, *Ethno-Musicologist*

Topic: Reflecting on India-Indonesia Cultural Exchanges in the Modern Era: A Note from the Field

Franki Raden discussed the potential for a significant cultural exchange between India and Indonesia, particularly in the realm of music. Both nations have a rich and diverse musical heritage, deeply rooted in their unique blends of Eastern and Western elements, along with indigenous beliefs and religious traditions. A large-scale musical collaboration could position both countries on the global music scene, creating a competitive industry on par with those of Europe and the United States. The roots of India-Indonesia intellectual exchange trace back to the 1920s, when Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore met with Ki Hadjar Dewantara, a key figure in Indonesia's intellectual landscape.

Hindi film music greatly influenced Indonesian popular music in the 1960s and 1980s, especially within the genre of Dangdut, with artists like Elia Khadam incorporating tabla rhythms and Islamic themes. Recent cultural exchanges have also seen performances like the Nagaland Folkloric group's visit to Toraja, Indonesia, highlighting the vocal traditions of both cultures. Indonesia's Ma'dandan and Ma'nimbong styles, influenced by European church music, reflect the broader cultural intermingling.

Recognizing these ethnic cultural origins is essential to fostering contemporary musical collaboration between India and Indonesia. Events like "Soundscape of India" in New Delhi aim to introduce Indian live music to the global stage. Both countries have been advancing musical exchanges for decades, supported by initiatives such as IMEX and WOMEX,

which aim to promote Indonesian music in a market still dominated by African and Latin American genres. Planned initiatives include joint ventures, introducing Indonesian music to Indian audiences, promoting collaboration among musicians, leveraging the Indian diaspora, and connecting ethnic minority groups in both nations to broaden their cultural reach. Together, these projects have the potential to reshape the global music industry.



**Shri Satish Mishra***Managing Director, Strategic Asia Institute Bali***Topic: Culture, Economic Development and Softpower: Evolving India-Indonesia Perspectives**

Satish Mishra encouraged participants to recognize culture as a form of energy—pervasive yet invisible, influencing many facets of life. He noted that culture shapes everything from religion and politics to dance, music, festivals, clothing, family, community, architecture, poetry, values, science, and government. The first key concept Mishra emphasized was soft power, which involves influencing priorities without violence, economic coercion, or pressure. This concept has historical roots extending back to Chandragupta Maurya, ancient Athens and Sparta, Confucian teachings, and the stability of the Chinese imperial system, as well as the impact of Calvinism and Protestant ethics on capitalism, the samurai's role in Japan's Meiji-era industrialization, the rise of democracy, human rights, and contemporary concerns about public welfare and climate change.

These cultural systems, Mishra argued, are intangible yet define personal and collective values, providing structure to daily life. Soft power, he said, is highly influential, operating through cultural exchange rather than force. The second concept he addressed was hard power, in which nations rely on military strength and economic dominance, as opposed to persuasion through shared culture. The third idea he presented was the balance of hard and soft power, known as smart power, which involves using media to amplify soft power and demonstrating shared values to reduce reliance on military expansion alone.

India, Mishra observed, appears to be strongly invested in promoting mutual soft power with Indonesia. This approach

is guided by principles like saman (dignity), samwar (dialogue), samriddhi (shared prosperity), suraksha (regional and global security), and sanskriti (cultural and civilizational ties). To support these principles, India has established the Indian Society for Cultural Studies (ISCS), led by Shri Arindam Mukherjee, to foster exchanges between the two countries. Additionally, India's Ministry of External Affairs has recently overseen numerous high-level visits, cooperation agreements, and memorandums of understanding between India and Indonesia, highlighting soft power as a central component of India's foreign policy efforts.

Satish Mishra observed that culture is not static; it evolves alongside economic and social developments. One prominent shift in both India and Indonesia is the migration from rural to urban areas, leading to a new cultural dynamic. Additionally, the increasing participation of women in the workforce is reshaping family structures and the flow of resources between cities and villages, resulting in shifts in traditional cultural frameworks and potentially creating new kinds of relationships. Mishra noted that these social changes impact how soft power operates, presenting both challenges and opportunities in fostering India-Indonesia ties. For instance, the shift toward urbanization and evolving family dynamics may require new approaches to promote shared history and cultural connections between the two nations.

To enhance cultural ties, Mishra offered several recommendations. First, he proposed the establishment of India-Indonesia Education Centers to address the lack of

knowledge each country has about the other. In Delhi, few people are familiar with Indonesia, and similarly, in Jakarta, India remains largely unknown. Secondly, he emphasized the importance of expanding cultural focus beyond Bali—a region with strong Hindu connections that is easily relatable for both countries. Mishra suggested that engagement should extend to Indonesia's majority Muslim regions, highlighting the rich contributions of India's Muslim community to architecture, music, and craftsmanship. He also suggested twinning cities across both countries to promote historical and religious connections.

Mishra further questioned what unique qualities Indonesia could contribute to this cultural exchange. He highlighted Indonesia's remarkable ability to manage a diverse population across its vast archipelago, navigate rapid economic recovery following the 1997-1998 financial crisis, and undergo significant urbanization while expanding the female labor force—all without experiencing major internal conflicts or

political instability. Indonesia's ability to swiftly consolidate democracy, with recent elections resulting in a coalition government, is another source of pride. Unlike other nations, Indonesia has maintained a stable and inclusive Islamic democracy, managing diverse populations through a strong value system rooted in Pancasila (the national philosophy) and the tradition of Gotong Royong (mutual cooperation).

Mishra observed that these values, which emphasize community cooperation, contribute to the stability of Indonesian democracy and the effectiveness of grassroots public services. Despite occasional accusations of corruption, public systems function efficiently even at the village level. He concluded by noting Indonesia's unique position in terms of economic development, societal structure, and stable Islamic democracy, underscoring that it has managed these achievements peacefully and without adversarial relationships with other nations.





Shri Swami Shastrajnananda Maharaj

Secretary of Ramkrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur

Topic: Indian Yoga and Ayurveda: A Vivekananda Approach for the Contemporary World

Shri Swami Shastrajnananda Maharaj spoke on Swami Vivekananda's modern interpretation of Indian Yoga and Ayurveda, emphasizing their enduring significance in promoting holistic wellness. He outlined three core aspects of Indian Yoga: physical, mental, and spiritual. Physically, yoga offers exercises that enhance flexibility, strength, and overall fitness, while mentally, it can help manage stress, anxiety, and depression. Through its practices, yoga also sharpens focus, boosts mental clarity, and fosters self-awareness, self-acceptance, and spiritual growth, making it a comprehensive approach to well-being.

Swami Shastrajnananda explained that Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of natural healing, complements yoga by addressing health through prevention rather than cure, focusing on balance and individualized treatment. Ayurveda provides tailored regimens based on a person's unique constitution, aiming to improve physical, mental, and spiritual health. This personalized approach treats various ailments by considering each individual's needs, rather than applying a one-size-fits-all solution.

Together, Indian Yoga and Ayurveda offer timeless wisdom and techniques that are highly relevant today, as they provide natural solutions to modern health issues and support holistic

well-being. With an emphasis on harmony between body, mind, and spirit, they have gained increasing recognition and respect globally as people seek more integrative, natural methods for maintaining health and promoting spiritual growth.





Programme Day 2 : Valedictory Session

Reflections on Shared Heritage and Future Collaborations

15 September 2024 | 16.15 – 17.30 PM

Chair : **Dr. Shashank Vikram**

Consul General of India to Bali

Speakers : **Dr. V. Selvakumar**

Head of the Department of Maritime History and Marine Archaeology Tamil University, Thanjavur

Prof. Nyoman Sedana

Founder of Kamajaya Art Studio

Shri Arindam Mukherjee

Director of ISCS

H.E. Shri Sandeep Chakravorty

Ambassador of India to Indonesia

Session Summary

The valedictory session of the conference, themed "Reflection on Shared Heritage and Future Collaborations," commenced under the esteemed guidance of Dr. Shashank Vikram, Consul General of India to Bali. The session aimed to encapsulate the key discussions and insights from the event while exploring future pathways for collaboration between India and Indonesia. To enhance the dialogue, notable figures were invited to share their reflections, including His Excellency Shri Sandeep Chakravorty, Ambassador of India to Indonesia; Professor Nyoman Sedana representing Indonesia and Dr. V. Selvakumar, a leading authority in Maritime History and Marine Archaeology.



Dr. Vikram opened the session with an acknowledgement of the successful turnout and engagement during the conference. He noted the impressive attendance in both halls, which had necessitated the addition of extra seating, reflecting the keen interest in the discussions. He also expressed gratitude for the attentive participation of the audience, highlighting their enthusiasm even after a fulfilling lunch. Dr. Vikram underscored a poignant analogy shared by Dr. Selvakumar earlier in the day, likening trade routes to veins that connect diverse cultures. This metaphor resonated with him, particularly due to his medical background, and set the stage for further exploration of the day's themes.

To conclude, Dr. Shashank Vikram expressed his gratitude to all the sponsors and acknowledged the hard work of his staff, emphasizing the collective efforts that made the conference a fruitful endeavour. The valedictory session not only encapsulated the day's discussions but also laid the groundwork for future collaborations, reinforcing the importance of shared heritage and mutual understanding between India and Indonesia.



Dr. Selvakumar took the opportunity to reflect on the day's proceedings. He emphasized the remarkable depth of discussions that unfolded during the conference, which, although concise in duration, traversed a broad spectrum of connectivity between India and Indonesia. He summarized the presentations from the first plenary session, which examined the historical and cultural intersections shaped by ancient maritime trade routes. Dr. Gede Sutarya's presentation illuminated the shared Hindu-Buddhist traditions, emphasizing the significance of common historical narratives that bind the two nations. Dr. Selvakumar's own contributions revolved around the critical role of trade routes as conduits for cultural exchange, positing that these routes were lifelines facilitating the exchange of ideas, goods, and technologies throughout history. He referenced historical accounts of Chinese pilgrims traveling to India for Buddhist texts, underscoring the enduring quest for knowledge across cultures.

He also highlighted Prof. Nindhia's research on wood-steel technology, noting the importance of further investigation into the transfer of technological innovations and cultural practices over the ages. The subsequent session, chaired by Naveen Meghwal, delved into language and literature, showcasing the deep interconnections between the two cultures. Dr. Ni Luh Sutjiati Beratha examined the linguistic influences that shaped Old Balinese and Sanskrit, tracing these influences back to the 9th century. Meanwhile, Mr. Sugi Lanus presented insights into the Ramayana tradition in Bali, exploring 15th-century manuscripts and their connections with South India and Southeast Asia. These discussions highlighted the richness of shared mythology, technology, and cultural practices that have evolved through centuries of interaction. As the session progressed, participants engaged in dialogues that emphasized the need to recognize and celebrate the diverse connections that exist between India and Indonesia. Dr. Selvakumar concluded his remarks by encouraging continued exploration of these shared heritages and the importance of collaborative efforts in research and cultural exchanges. The dialogue underscored the potential for ongoing partnerships that could enhance understanding and foster collaboration in various fields, from academia to the arts.



Professor Nyoman Sedana contributed a thought-provoking metaphor to the session, likening the relationship between India and Indonesia to that of two powerful animals—a tiger and a water buffalo. He emphasized the critical importance of communication in international relations, warning that misunderstandings could lead to conflict. Professor Sedana cautioned against being manipulated by smaller entities (the "small animals") that might instigate conflict between the two larger nations. He illustrated that a conflict driven by misinformation could lead to mutual destruction, ultimately benefiting only the instigators. To prevent such scenarios, he suggested that both nations hold regular seminars and conferences—ideally at least once a year—to foster understanding and cooperation. His insights served as a reminder of the need for proactive dialogue and collaboration to maintain peace and prevent unnecessary conflicts.



Shri Arindam Mukherjee, Director of ISCS echoed the themes of collaboration and communication in his remarks. He expressed gratitude to various stakeholders, including Ambassador Chakravorty and other distinguished guests, for their contributions to the conference's success. Arindam Mukherjee highlighted the effective collaboration that took place over the past two months, noting that despite geographical distances between participants from Kolkata and the Consulate General of India in Bali, communication was seamless through WhatsApp and phone. He praised the Honourable Consul General for his leadership and recognized the dedication of the consulate staff, whose efforts were pivotal in making the event a success. Mr. Mukherjee acknowledged the enthusiasm of speakers and participants, expressing confidence in their commitment to continue working together for future success. He left it to the attendees to assess the conference's success, indicating a desire for constructive feedback to guide ongoing efforts.



Ambassador Chakravorty initially intended to attend only the opening and closing sessions of the conference, planning to relax at the beach in between. However, he chose to stay engaged throughout the day, actively participating despite the challenge of overlapping sessions. He expressed appreciation to Dr. Vikram and Dr. Selvakumar for summarizing the sessions he missed, acknowledging the wealth of insights offered by many speakers, even when their topics were not directly related to the conference theme.

Highlights included Dr. Eika Banerjee's exploration of language, literature, rituals, and symbols, which added valuable perspectives on cultural connections, and Shri Yachneet Pushkarna's observations on culinary similarities between India and Indonesia, highlighting their shared culinary heritage. Aparna Bhatnagar also delivered a noteworthy presentation on the weaving traditions in both nations.

In his address, Ambassador Chakravorty discussed the multifaceted connections between Indonesia and India, emphasizing not only Hindu links but also Islamic ties and shared tribal cultures. He noted that many visitors to Bali remain unaware of its deep cultural history, suggesting a need for greater recognition of Bali's traditions. Supporting Dr. Selvakumar's suggestion for follow-up conferences, he underscored the importance of sharing the conference's findings and creating an outcome document. The Ambassador thanked Dr. Vikram for organizing the conference and praised the consulate team's artistic contributions. He encouraged attendees to visit the exhibition, particularly the one showcasing Tagore's historic visit to Indonesia, and expressed gratitude to all delegates for their participation, noting that their presence reflected strong interest in the conference topics.



Speakers and Panellist of the event



Speakers receiving Participation Certificates



Press Meet



Outcome and Highlights of the Conference

The Consulate General of India in Bali, Indonesia in collaboration with Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Government of India; and the Institute of Social and Cultural Studies (ISCS) organized the Echoes Across the Waves: Revisiting the Intersection of India and Indonesia's Shared Cultural Heritage on 14th and 15th September 2024 at Hyatt Regency, Bali, Indonesia. This is the first International Conference organized in the series of India Indonesia Cultural Conference.

The outcome of the deliberations for Regional Cooperation and strengthening cultural ties is as follows:

Undertaking Initiatives for People to People Connect

- People to People connect may be encouraged through cultural exchanges for cultural and literary festivals, sports and tourism.
- Tourism development need to be promoted through specific initiatives bilaterally on certain occasions during the year.
- Sports diplomacy could be one of the areas for people to people connect.

Cultural Heritage Awareness, Preservation and Studies

- Under cultural heritage India-Indonesia Festivals could be organized for promoting tourism.
- Literary festivals may be arranged for better interactions.
- Joint seminars and conferences could be organized for the study of shared tangible and intangible heritage of India and Indonesia.
- Museums could be asked to host special exhibitions on certain occasions highlighting the connectivity.

Cultural Exchange Programmed

- Cultural exchange with the support of artists.
- Youth Exchange program may be organized for better cultural understanding.
- Crafts persons exchange need to be organized.

Education and Outreach Cooperation

- Training programs could be arranged in the area of manuscriptology, Indology and Sanskrit studies.
- Collaborative interdisciplinary projects could be undertaken by the Universities and academic institutions.
- Scholar exchange programmes and MOUs between institutions could be encouraged through the ministries.
- Student exchange Programs could be initiated.

MOUs signed as part of the IICC 2024

Introduction

With the intention of boosting academic interactions and people to people connectivity several institutions in Indonesia signed MOUs with the MAKAIAS and ISCS. This joint agreement would lead to further collaboration between India and Indonesia.

Indonesian Institutions that signed MOU with MAKAIAS

- Business Administration Department, State Bali Polytechnic (Politeknik Negeri Bali)
- Ganesha University of Education (Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha)
- Dwijendra University (Universitas Dwijendra)
- Indonesian Hindu Scholars Association (ICHI)





Director MAKAIAS with University representatives from Indonesia after signing of MOU







Director ISCS with University representatives from Indonesia after signing of MOU

Indonesian Institutions that signed MOU with ISCS

- Ganesha University of Education (Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha)
- Dwijendra University (Universitas Dwijendra)
- Indonesian Hindu Scholars Association (ICHI)



The background is a complex, abstract composition of various-sized squares and rectangles in two primary colors: a vibrant red and a dark, charcoal gray. These shapes are layered and offset from one another, creating a three-dimensional effect with visible shadows and highlights. The overall pattern is dense and non-repeating, resembling a modern architectural or digital design.

Annexures

Indian Delegation to Ulun Danu Batur

14 September 2024









Indian-Indonesian delegation visited Munduk, Bali

14 September 2024

An International Conference titled “Echoes across the Waves: Revisiting the Intersections of India and Indonesia’s Shared Cultural Heritage” is scheduled to take place on the 14th and 15th of September at the Hyatt Regency in Bali. This event is being organized by the Consulate General of India in Bali, the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), the Ministry of Culture of the Government of India, and the Institute of Social and Cultural Studies (ISCS), a prominent Indian think tank. As India and Indonesia celebrate 75 years of diplomatic relations, this conference aims to highlight the rich cultural connections that have developed between the two nations over an extended period. On the morning of the 14th, the conference Indian-Indonesian delegation visited Munduk in North Bali, where Rabindranath Tagore resided at the local Pesanggrahan, or Dak Bungalow, on September 5, 1927. Notably, just weeks before his visit, Katherine Mayo’s controversial book,

“Mother India,” was published in the United States. M.K. Gandhi later described this work as comparable to a “drain inspector’s report.” In her book, Mayo inaccurately asserted that the poet endorsed child marriage. In response to this misrepresentation, Rabindranath composed a historical essay during his stay at the Dak Bungalow, challenging Mayo’s claims. This essay was later published in various newspapers worldwide.

On this occasion, the Consul General of India in Bali unveiled a plaque, which was inaugurated by His Excellency Ambassador Sandeep Chakravorty, the Honorable Ambassador of India to Indonesia. This initiative aims to educate the current generation about Tagore’s time in Indonesia and his contributions to the literary landscape, which significantly symbolize the relationship between India and Indonesia. It is noteworthy that the Dak Bungalow has since been transformed into a resort.





Annexures 3



**Governor of Bali
Welcome Address**

Om Swastyastu, Assalamualaikum Warahmatulahi Wabarakatuh,
Selamat Malam, dan Salam Sejahtera bagi kita semua
Shalom, Namo Budaya, Salam Kebajikan, Rahayu
Your Excellency:

1. The Ambassador of India to Indonesia, H.E. Shri Sandeep Chakravorty
2. The Consul General of India in Denpasar-Bali, Dr. Shashank Vikram

Honorable:

3. Director of ISCS, Shri Arindam Mukherjee
4. Director of MAKAIAS, Dr. Sarup Prasad Ghosh
5. Distinguished Speakers, Delegates, Representatives of Countries, Institutions, and Organizations
6. Honored Guests and Conference Participants,

We offer our highest prayers and gratitude to the presence of Hyang Widhi Wasa, for it is by His divine grace and blessing that we are able to gather here today for the International Conference on "Echoes Across the Waves: Revisiting the Intersections of India and Indonesia's Shared Cultural Heritage" on this joyful occasion.

To all the honored guests and distinguished participants,

On behalf of myself and the Provincial Government of Bali, allow me to extend my warmest greetings and a heartfelt welcome to the Island of the Gods—Bali. I would like to express my gratitude to all the invited guests and conference delegates for choosing Bali as the venue for this conference, which aims to examine, formulate, and provide resolutions to various existing issues, and to take strategic policy steps regarding the cultural relations between India and Indonesia. May the positive vibrations of Bali's natural surroundings contribute positively to the decision-making process and the formulation of strategic policies that will have a beneficial impact on the well-being of people worldwide.

To all honored guests and distinguished participants,

The friendship between India and Indonesia has been nurtured over many years, with strong emotional ties deeply rooted in constructive narratives, cultural exchanges, and the historical connections between the people of both nations. This bond has grown through mutual cooperation, understanding, and respect. As the diplomatic relationship between the two countries reaches its 75th anniversary, and with the ever-growing closeness of this friendship, it is time for these two great nations to build broader bilateral cooperation across various sectors, including politics, economics, social issues, and culture. We continuously hope that the friendship and cooperation that have been well-established will continue to be cultivated and strengthened in a sustainable manner.

Distinguished guests and honored participants,

Due to the geographical and cultural similarities between India and Indonesia, I see vast opportunities for collaboration across various sectors that can be expanded to the fullest in order to enhance the economy and the welfare of the people of both nations. There is great potential for cooperation in sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, education, culture, and tourism. Bali's agricultural system is widely recognized, having received UNESCO's designation as a World Cultural Heritage site. We are actively advancing organic farming, with Balinese rice, in particular, being highly regarded for its exceptional quality. Additionally, Bali has abundant marine resources, with India being the top export market for tuna, positioning Bali as a key hub for seafood from Eastern Indonesia.

Collaboration in education, culture, and tourism has been progressing smoothly, particularly in the field of education. Looking ahead, we can broaden opportunities in areas like philosophy and religion, given that Bali has a pool of highly skilled individuals who can further their studies in these disciplines in India. Cultural cooperation between our two nations has developed remarkably well. Indian art groups consistently bring energy to the annual Bali Arts Festival. This year, we have extended invitations to Indian art studios, communities, and institutions to participate in the Bali World Culture Celebration (BWCC), which will be part of the 46th Bali Arts Festival (PKB) in 2024.

In the tourism sector, fiscal policies related to tourist contributions have been successfully implemented. We hope that Indian visitors and tourists understand this policy, which has been in effect since 14th February 2024, with contributions collected at Ngurah Rai Airport. However, this policy does not apply to Indian residents in Bali or diplomats stationed in Indonesia. These are some of the key points I wish to share. On behalf of the government and the people of Bali, I express my gratitude, extend my best wishes for the success of this event, and offer my apologies for any shortcomings. Thank you.

Om Santih, Santih, Santih Om

Wassalamu'alaikum Warahmatulahi Wabarakatuh, Rahayu.

Governor of Bali,

S.M. Mahendra Jaya

Annexures 4

**Message of Hon'ble Minister of Culture and Tourism, Government of India,
Shri Gajendra Singh Sekhawat
on the occasion of the India-Indonesia Cultural Conference 2024
“Echoes across the Waves: Revisiting the Intersections of India and Indonesia’s
Shared Cultural Heritage”**

Namaskar and Om Swastyastu.

I have the great pleasure of addressing you at the International Conference Echoes across the Waves: Revisiting the Intersections of India and Indonesia's Shared Cultural Heritage in Bali, Indonesia. This significant event organized by the Consulate General of India in Bali, the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, the Ministry of Culture, Government of India and the Institute of Social and Cultural Studies India stands as a testament to the enduring and profound cultural ties that unite our two nations. The rich tapestry of historical, linguistic, religious and cultural contexts that define our common history has developed over innumerable centuries. We are here today to examine these linkages, delve into the details of our entwined past and on the ways in which our cultures have impacted and enhanced one another.

One of the primary objectives of this conference is to explore the historical exchanges between India and Indonesia. Our ancient maritime trade routes, which criss-crossed the Indian Ocean, facilitated not only the exchange of goods but also the flow of ideas, beliefs, and artistic expressions shaping the shared culture and spiritual landscapes of Indonesia and Bharat. We also seek to examine the contemporary manifestations and influences of our shared cultural heritage. Echoes of our past resonate in our present, in our languages, literature, art and daily practices. By understanding these influences, we can appreciate the depth of our cultural ties and their importance in today's world. This conference is a unique forum that encourages dialogue and collaboration between experts, researchers, thinkers, artists, and practitioners from various fields. Through these interdisciplinary discussions, we can gain new insights and perspectives paving the way for innovative research and creative expressions.

As we embark on this intellectual journey, let us delve into a comparative analysis of our linguistic and literary traditions. The rich tapestry of Indian and Indonesian languages and literature offers a fascinating field of study that reveals common motifs and unique expressions born of our cultural interactions. The stories of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata have been traced back to the first century in the Indonesian islands.

These versions are very similar to those found in the south eastern part of the Indian subcontinent. From the 4th to 15th century, Java witnessed the rise of numerous Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms, marking what is known as the classical Javanese era. During this period, Hindu, Buddhist literature, art, and architecture flourished under royal patronage, becoming deeply embedded in local culture. This era saw the construction of many magnificent temples, including the famous 9th century Prambanan Hindu temple and the

Borobudur Buddhist temple, both located near Yogyakarta. These iconic structures, now designated as World Heritage Sites, stand as enduring symbols of the shared cultural and religious heritage of both the countries.

It should be noted that in 1927, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore travelled to Bali and other regions of present Indonesia as part of his extensive journey through Southeast Asia. During this visit, he recognised the deep historical and cultural connections between India and Indonesia, which had been established through centuries of trade, migration and religious exchange. Tagore's admiration for Indonesian culture was reflected in his writings and speeches, where he frequently praised the beauty and richness of Indonesian dance, music, and theatre. His experiences and reflections on Indonesia not only enriched own creative works, but also reinforced his vision of a world where different cultures could learn from and inspire one another. The cultural exchange between India and Indonesia in the modern era has been marked by a vibrant and dynamic interplay of artistic, educational and diplomatic interactions strengthening the historical bonds between the two nations. Both countries have engaged in various cultural exchange programs that highlight the rich artistic heritage. Indian classical dance and Bollywood cinema are immensely popular in Indonesia, while Indonesian traditional dance and music find appreciative audience in India.

Educational exchanges and collaborative research projects have also fostered closer ties, with cultural festivals and exhibitions regularly showcasing the heritage of both nations, reflecting on the cultural exchange between India and Indonesia in the modern era. We must also seek opportunities for further research, preservations and promotion of our shared heritage. The legacy we inherited in the treasure trove that must be cherished and safeguarded for future generations. In conclusion, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the organizers, participants and everyone who has worked tirelessly to make this conference a reality. Your dedication and passion are the driving forces behind this noble endeavour. May this conference serve as a beacon of knowledge, understanding and collaboration. Let us embark on this journey which opens hearts and minds, celebrating the echoes of our shared past and forcing a future that honours and preserves our rich cultural heritage. Thank you very much.

