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## Oral narratives in Banjara Tribal literature

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**Noon Lecture (one hour)**  
**Thursday, April 25, 2019**  
**Room 254 Van Hise Hall**

Cosponsors: Department of English, Second Language Acquisition Program, Department of Curriculum & Instruction, Center for South Asia

India is a multilingual, multicultural, multi-religious country surviving with unity in diversity. Geographically diverse regions, environmental and climatic conditions are part of the nation's life. Another aspect of the land is that a large part of its population is still unexposed to the other parts of the world.

The presentation will focus on a large nomadic tribe—the Banjara—parts of which have become semi-sedentary with temporary settlements. Vanjra, Sukali, Sugali, Lambada, Lamani, Bagigar, Lohar are synonyms of the hyperonymic Banjara tribe. During the precolonial era, they organized caravans carrying goods on the back of bullocks and travelling all over India. The colonial rule fixed their status under the *Notified Tribe Act*.

The Banjara tribe speaks *Goarboli*, a language that is closely associated to the Indo-European language family. Languages like Devangiri, Khadiboli, Gujarati, Rajasthani and so many other North Indian languages are close in their phonology. *Goarboli* is a language without a written language. More than 10% of the Indian population speak this language. The oral literature of the Banjara tribe is varied and quite unexplored with its rich culture of stitching cloths with skilled miniature work of thread, glass and coins. This presentation will examine one example which was practiced during colonial times.



**Prof. N. Shantha Naik** teaches English literature and Language at Vijayanagara Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Bellary, Karnatak, India. He specializes in teaching American English and Linguistics to M.A. students. He has a number of PhDs to his credit. As a creative writer in Kannada as well as in English he penned four novels, four short story collection and equal numbers of plays and article collections also. He focused on one of the largest tribal community of India, known for Holi and Deepavali festivals. Prof. Naik submitted a major research study on *Banjara Language and its Cultural Dictionary*. He has written a play in English, *The Banjara Warrior*, and a novel, *Gormati-An Ending Journey*. He recited poetry in the 2019 World Bookfair.

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