

POPULAR LECTURE SERIES

**Wednesday 7 November, 2012 at 3.30 pm at the Conference
Centre (Opp. Botany Department)**

**"Many Stories – Many Worlds: Oral Narratives and Cultural
Communication in India"**

by

**Prof. Aditya Malik,
University of Canterbury, New Zealand and
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Abstract:

There are innumerable narratives in different regions of India that are only orally spoken, sung, and performed without using written texts. These oral narratives range from intricate epic tales, to heroic ballads, historical legends, folk-tales and much more. Some narratives, such as oral epics, are as long and as complex as the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Others such as folk-tales are short and pithy. What are some of the stories told here? Why are they told? By whom? For whom? One thing is certain: to fully comprehend the richness of Indian culture it is necessary to understand oral narratives and what they tell us about the communities in which they are situated. In this talk the speaker will present examples of oral narratives, specially from his own field research conducted in Rajasthan and Uttarakhand.

Bio note:

Professor Aditya Malik teaches in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand; formerly Chair of Modern Indian Studies at Bamberg University, and Head of Religious Studies at Canterbury. A graduate of St. Stephen's College, he has a PhD in Indian Religions, and a *Habilitation* (senior PhD) in Modern Indian Studies from the University of Heidelberg. Publications include eight volumes of books and a number of scholarly articles on pilgrimage, oral traditions, folk religion, violence, identity, and social justice. He has been a UNESCO International Consultant, Senior Fellow of the German Research Council, Visiting Faculty at the Institute for Advanced Studies (Jerusalem), and Deputy Director of the *New Zealand South Asia Centre*. He has lectured at the Universities of Chicago, Brown, Vienna, and Goettingen. Recently nominated as Associate Director of the *New Zealand India Research Institute* at Victoria University (Wellington), he is currently Visiting Professor at Delhi University's *Cluster Innovative Centre*.