

# COLLECTION: CATALOGUE

DECEMBER, 2023  
ISSUE #12

PREHISTORIC GALLERY

ART GALLERY

HANDICRAFTS GALLERY

# Sanskriti

Museum & Art Gallery







# Sanskriti

Museum & Art Gallery

DIRECTOR

**PADMA SHRI BULU IMAM**

EDITOR & CURATOR

**GUSTAV IMAM, RESEARCH FELLOW  
UNIV. OF EAST ANGLIA & CAMBRIDGE (UK)**

EXHIBITIONS

**MICHEL SABATIER, LA ROCHELLE  
DANIELLA BEZZI, MILAN**

ART DIRECTION

**LAVERENTY REPIN, NAMIBIA  
JUSTIN IMAM, SANSKRITI**

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IN COLLABORATION WITH



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## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

SANSKRITI is acceptance.

SANSKRITI is change in changelessness.

SANSKRITI is giving more than receiving.

SANSKRITI is searching.

SANSKRITI is remembering and forgetting.

SANSKRITI is understanding with the heart.

SANSKRITI is experience and knowledge.

SANSKRITI is self-awareness.

SANSKRITI is return to innocence.

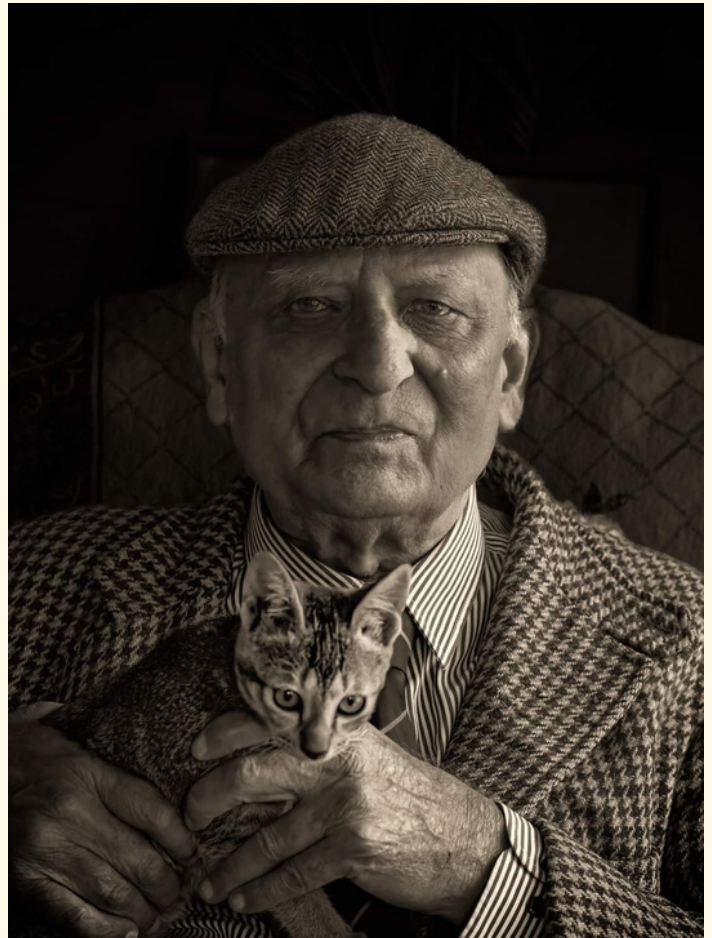
Sanskriti is a meeting place for all people. It is the fulfilment of my life's work. We wish to inspire through honouring and celebrating the ordinary things in life and the often overlooked details in Nature around us. These are times of challenge to which we must respond. I conceived of Sanskriti as a place where all could meet and share and find strength.

“A great and systematic effort done with passion and purpose. There is a need to join hands with Shri Imam in arresting the decay and decadence that are awaiting the habitat. After all, the objects in context and the life embellished by art come first. The museum can only be an extension of a living landscape, not a mirror of its extinction.”

Kalyan Kumar Chakravarty  
Director General,  
National Museum, New Delhi  
10th Feb., 2005

*Bulu Imam*

FOUNDER DIRECTOR



PHOTOGRAPH BY DR DEBAL SEN, CALCUTTA

## EDITOR & CURATOR

Growing up closely among the tribal communities in Jharkhand, I naturally developed a strong interest in Adivasi traditions and their life. Having an Oraon tribal mother and being the youngest son of social and cultural activist Padmashri Bulu Imam, my passion for the protection of tribal art and archaeology drove me to start working in 2001 on various research and documentation projects in association with the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), Hazaribagh Chapter. Over the next fifteen years I assisted in a series of research publications like 'Rockart of Hazaribagh', 'Hazaribagh School of Painting', 'Antiquarian Remains of Jharkhand', and Monographs on Birhors and Santals (2015).

I also coordinated a series of international exhibitions and art projects for the Tribal Women Artists Cooperative (TWAC), major ones being exhibition and mural painting project at the Arts Atlantic Festival in La Rochelle, France, Nov.2011, then another mural painting and workshop at the Museum Rietberg in Zurich during Aug-Sept. 2012, and exhibition of painted houses at the Brunei Gallery (SOAS), London in 2015.

Along with all this my focus remained with the Sanskriti Museum and Art Galley established by Mr Bulu Imam and our family after the discovery of Isco Rockart in 1991, and increasingly drawn to the critical potentials of museum practices in preserving indigenous cultures, in 2015-2016, I undertook an MA in Museum Studies at the University of East Anglia (UK), and completed my Museum Placement at the University of Cambridge's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA), and contributed to the Another India exhibition in Cambridge. I got employment at the South Asia Collection at SADACC Trust in Norwich as assistant Curator, but soon I returned from England in 2017, and started working on the Sanskriti Museum Collection and Archives. In 2018, I was awarded the Charles Wallace Research Fellowship to continue my research projects in UK, and in 2019, I was invited by the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa to lead a group of three tribal women artists to paint four large (35'x10' feet) murals for an Indigenous Exhibition- Abadakone (Continuous Fire) which was attended by 70 indigenous artists from 40 indigenous nations from around the world. Presently, I continue to pursue my passion and voluntary works for the Sanskriti Museum as Collections Curator, and take care of the Sanskriti mud houses, which I feel is important in promoting the unique tribal art and painted houses of Hazaribagh.



*Gustav Imam*

EDITOR & CURATOR

"In 2015, Gustav Imam went to England to do Masters in Museology at the Univ. of East Anglia, and did his research fellowship at the University of Cambridge's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology that helped to lay the academic foundation of Sanskriti and has led to an Archive and research publication department. The museum was entirely renovated and re-catalogued. The museum has hundreds of visitors every month from India and abroad who are enriched by the extensive archaeological, artistic, anthropological, and handicrafts collection."

Outlook, INDIA  
June, 2022

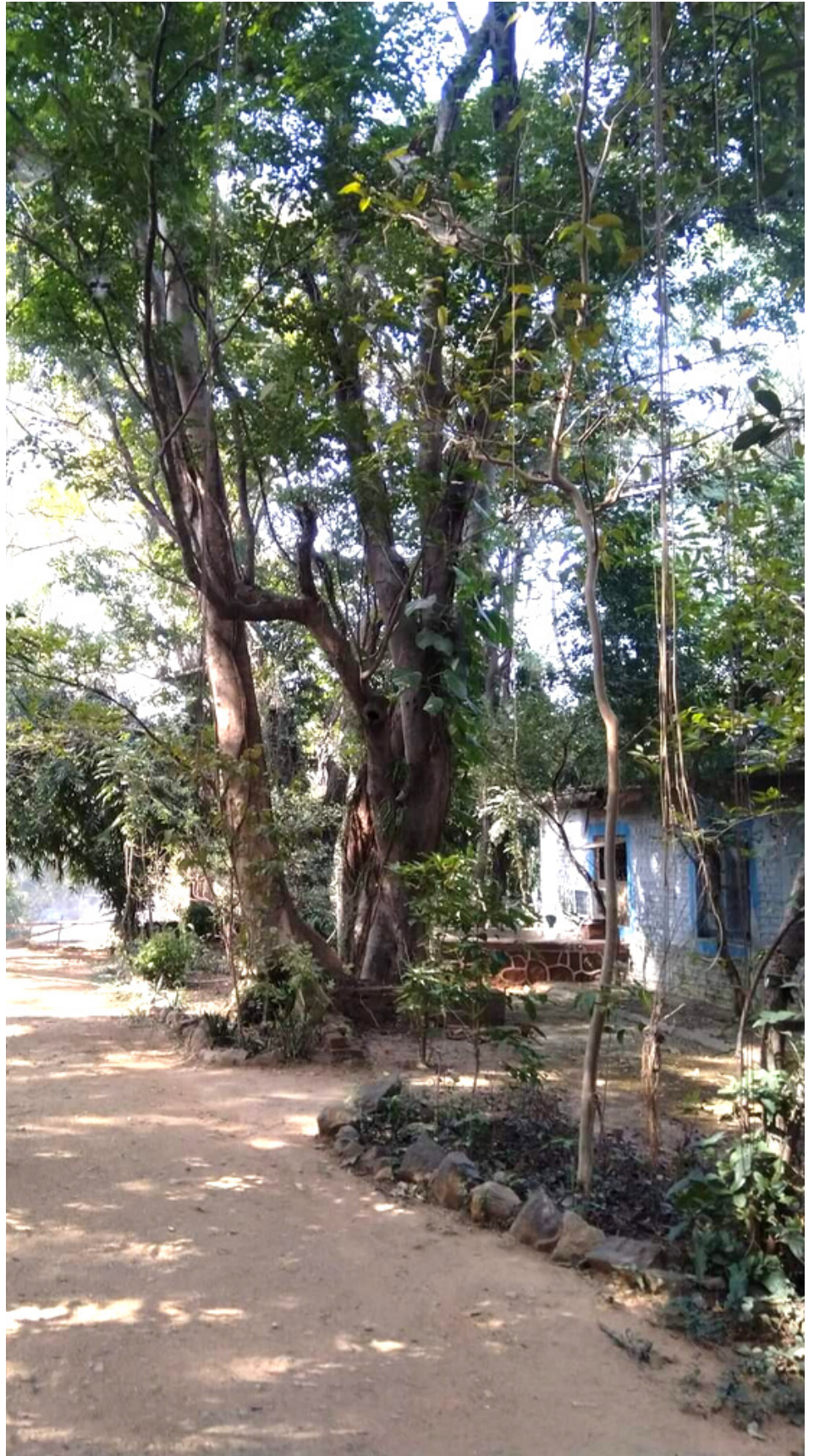


## ABOUT

Sanskriti Museum & Art Gallery, Hazaribagh was founded by Bulu Imam in 1991, after he discovered the first rockart of Hazaribagh district at Isco, subsequently bringing to light over dozen meso-chalcolithic rockarts, including the prehistoric archaeology of the North Karanpura Valley in Jharkhand.

The Sanskriti museum displays a comprehensive collection of Palaeolithic to neolithic stone tools, microliths, and bronze to Iron Age artifacts, including potteries and Buddhist antiquities from around the Hazaribagh region. It also has an ethnological gallery dedicated to the Birhors, Santhals, and Oraons along with monographs compiled on their Life, Folklore, Songs, Ethnobotany, available in the museum research archives, and library. It also has a gallery of local crafts and textile, and an art gallery over about 200 Khovar (marriage art) and Sohrai (harvest art) paintings of Hazaribagh exhibited and displayed.

The Sanskriti museum has a small library and a research archive, along with photographic and visual documentations to back up the exhibits in the museum. The library has several published papers, books, magazines and newsletters related to the Museum and Art Gallery in its Resource Archives and Library.



**Entrance to the Sanskriti Museum Archives and Library**



# **SANSKRITI MUSEUM: ORIGINAL TDLA BUILDING, 1919**

The museum is housed in original Tea Garden District Labour Association building of the early 20th century (1919), in a 3 acres campus with grove of trees.



PHOTOGRAPH BY  
JUSTIN IMAM





## SANSKRITI MUSEUM & ART GALLERY



The first thing about Sanskriti Centre is it is an open plan layout with no constraint for space as it covers over two acres. The general layout is open-plan, meaning it has unlimited views and wide spaces between different architectural spaces. The buildings were originally on a formal architectural ground laid out on British design in the mid 1900s when the campus was the local headquarters of the Tea-Garden District Labour Association (TDLA) for sending labours to Assam for the tea gardens.

The Sanskriti museum has a small library and a research archive, along with photographic and visual documentations to back up the exhibits in the museum. The library has several published papers, books, magazines and newsletters related to the Museum and Art Gallery in its Resource Archives and Library.

**GUSTAV IMAM**  
**COLLECTION CURATOR**





The need for an archaeological Museum arose in 1991 after the discovery of the first rockart at Isco, and an art gallery for the subsequent Khovar and Sohrai Tribal art project in 1993. The original existing block of the TDLA building which used to be the main drawing-dinning room, kitchen and pantry were converted into the Sanskriti Museum & Art Gallery for displaying the discoveries of prehistoric objects and tribal art of the region.

The museum emerged from the many subsequent discoveries that our family was making in terms of rock cave art and village paintings and the need for documentation and research which would require the requisite formal built spaces. Slowly the idea developed into making a large Centre with several facilities such as galleries and research archive cum library in the old building.





## **SANSKRITI: MUD HOUSES**

The ideas of new mud building started with my brothers Justin and Jason building a small mud house for the artists on the west side of the land which we call Sanskriti Mud House. This is for artists staying as well as wall space for mural paintings. Then another underground mud house built by Jason on the east end with mural paintings done by the women artists. In due course another building was built called Dove Cottage as a guest facility. These buildings were made as their requirement arose.

Jason's underground mud house was the subject for studies in vernacular architecture by IIT Roorkee and also BIT Mesra. Gradually Khovar and Sohrai painting were brought into the modern décor of the painted walls in modern environment using natural earth pigments and binders, and eventually to very large spaces in foreign museums such as the 2019 project at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa. Another important wallpaper project was also started with an interior design company L'AVIVA Home, New York running successfully for the past eight years.

The mud houses in Sanskriti of which now they are several are repainted every year with the Khovar marriage murals during the Spring festival and Sohrai in October during the harvest festival. During these months Sanskriti is a Mecca for art lovers, photographers, and filmmakers from India and foreign.

RUDHAN DEVI IN FRONT OF JASON'S MUD HOUSE  
PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANTAL JUMEL, FRANCE





# JASON'S UNDERGROUND MUD HOUSE



This is the famous Khovar room in Jason's underground house which the children call 'the bunker room' and which is painted every year by the Kurmi artists from Jorakath.

GUSTAV IMAM & ANITA HEIDENREICH  
PHOTOGRAPH BY LARRY REISNER





**VISIT OF STUDENTS AND ART DEPARTMENT FACULTY MEMBER FROM DPS BOKARO TO SANSKRITI MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY WITH SOHRAI PAINTING ART CLASS FOR INDUCTION INTERACTIVE SHARING AND EXPERIENCING TRADITIONAL ARTS, CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES OF JHARKHAND, AUGUST, 2022**



The art project became the focus of our Centre and the accommodation of artists, art collection, and guests associated with the Museum developed. An outreach programme to cover the outlying villages of Barkagaon, Kharati, Jorakath, Saheda, Bhelwara, etc., with which our work was involved and was in due course developed which led to a guiding program for tourists who were flocking to the Sanskriti Centre. The art project developed its own economy. Today Sanskriti is a buzzing Centre for art lovers, film-makers, architects, researchers both local and international. It has its own ambience. Sanskriti by nature of its layout and openness and international avant-garde atmosphere has for the past several decades attracted architects looking for new ideas from India and abroad.

*Sanskriti has been continuously working to promote the tribal art of Hazaribagh through the Sanskriti Museum and has gathered wide audience and visitors from all over the world in the last years. It has also been annually reviving the painted houses of Hazaribagh for students, art lovers, film-makers and researchers.*







**Bulu Imam with Vijay, DIG, CRPF and his friends, Nov., 2023**

## VISITORS FEEDBACK

Privileged to have met PadmaShri Bulu Imam at his residence in Hazaribagh today. Mr Bulu Imam is an extraordinary personality, rather an Institution in himself. He is an exemplary Archeologist , Author , Environmentalist, Gandhian Satyagrahi, Researcher and Historian. He has been instrumental in discovering Buddhist sites in Jharkhand area. His discovery of Itkhori Buddhist site was ground breaking. Mr Imam proved that the "Malapo" , referred by Huen Tsang where Lord Buddha had stayed during his eastward journey from Bodh Gaya was Itkhori near Hazaribagh and not Ujjain. Excavation in Itkhori and discovery of the Buddhist site was a revolutionary change in the Buddhist studies. He has been instrumental in discovery of various pre-historic rock art sites around Hazaribagh.

Mr Imam, now 82+ and still as enthusiastic as a curious activist has done great service to the Nation by preserving and popularising the various tribal arts. He has fought with the system through Gandhian Satyagraha so that the Tribal Art and pre-historic evidences could be preserved.

Bulu Imam established the Sanskriti Musium and Art Gallery in 1995 which houses the incredible treasure of pre-historic tools , stone arts and tribal arts. He is also the founder of the Tribal Women Artists cooperation to support the traditional tribal artists.

Bulu Imam is the recipient of the Gandhi International Peace Award at the House of Lords in London in 2011 and Padmashri in 2019. Mr Imam is the great Grand Son of Syed Hasan Imam, the President of the Indian National Congress in it's Bombay Session in 1918 and the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court.

The Sanskriti Musium in Hazaribagh Should be like a sacred pilgrim for the students of History , archeology , tribal studies and also for the common citizen. Mr Imam is a self learnt person and great scholar, enlightening people globally and strengthening the tribal culture by preserving, documenting and promoting worldwide. He is instrumental in establishing the Department of Tribal Studies at Hazaribagh.

Prime Minister Modi was so impressed of Bulu's impactful contributions in the diverse areas during his visit to Hazaribagh, it was a pleasant surprise for Mr Imam that he was to be honoured with the Padmashri in 2019. Earlier, his nominations from various corners were pending with the respective governments since last 20 years.

Those visiting Jharkhand must visit his incredible place.

Also thankful to his Son Mr Gustav Imam, a trained Collection Curator and scholar from Cambridge for giving me an unforgettable tour to the Museum.





"Happened by chance to visit this museum on our way to Jamshedpur . Glad we made the stop . Gustav showed us around and his father Mr Bullu Imam was a very interesting man . The museum itself was rich with tribal art and crafts . Met Putli the world travelled tribal artist who kindly gave us one of her paintings."

[rinchennargolwala](#) at Tripadvisor,  
21 Feb., 2021

The inimitable Bulu Imam, a fascinating man showing great generosity of spirit. We were privileged to spend a day with Bulu Imam and gt a personally guided tour of the museum. The grounds are sublime, the museum is very good and the artwork is stunning. Bulu Imam invited us to lunch and showed us a collection of art works he had not opened in 30 years. He is a living natural and national treasure, one of the most extraordinary people I have ever met.

Pater G, Australia, Dec., 2019  
at Tripadvisor







A most interesting experience

Sanskriti Museum and Art Gallery is one of the most interesting places I have been. Keeping the culture of the Adivasi people alive has been a dedicated journey for this family, over three generations. Fascinating personalities supporting a fascinating culture!

**Graeme B.**, Lillian Rock, Australia  
December, 2019

A wonderful experience . Mr Bulu Iman is one of the most interesting people I have ever met

It was such a privilege to visit the museum and to be fortunate enough to meet Mr Bulu Iman . This fascinating man has been active and passionate about protecting and promoting Tribal Art . It was a highlight of my visit to the area . I heartily recommend it and thank Mr Bulu Iman and his wife for their warm hospitality.

ron P., Australia, Oct., 2019





# PUTLI'S SANSKRITI MUD HOUSE

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANITA HEIDENREICH



Inside the courtyard painted in the Kurmi Khovar style of Jorakath

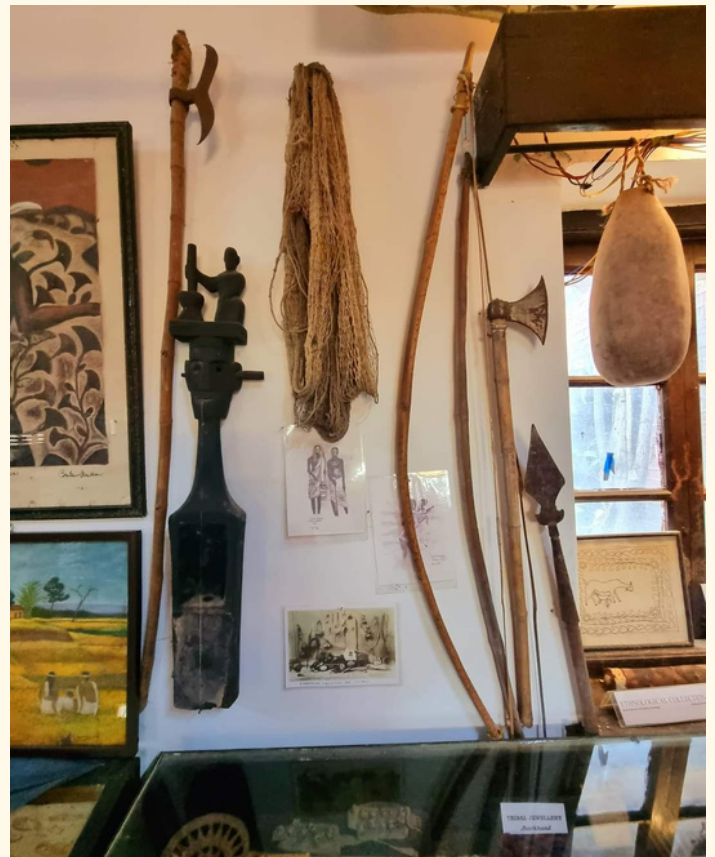


# ARCHEOLOGICAL GALLERY



**Lower Paleolithic to Mesolithic Stone tools, Neolithic stone and clay objects, Chalcolithic copper jewellery & coins, Iron-age weapons and artifacts, Buddhist Antiquities, etc.**





Views of Sanskriti Museum archaeology & anthropology display cabinets





anita.h

PHOTOGRAPH BY  
ANITA HEIDENREICH, BELGIUM

## ETHNOLOGICAL GALLERY

Our Museum boasts of a rich and living collection of Ethnographic objects of various tribes from Jharkhand in display. It has a diverse range from Oraon fishing traps to Birhor trapping nets, Santal bow & arrows, musical instruments, tribal jewellery, from clay toys to wooden cow-bells, etc.







Mother & Child forms







# New Collection

## SANSKRITI MUSEUM

• Collection | Terracotta, Bullock cart, 1990s •



## MALHAR DOKRA

• Bronze metal-work | Hazaribagh, 1990s •



## SANSKRITI MUSEUM

• Collection | Wooden Cow-bell (Tharki), 1990s



## SANSKRITI MUSEUM

• Collection | Copper-Age, Anklet, Tandwa •

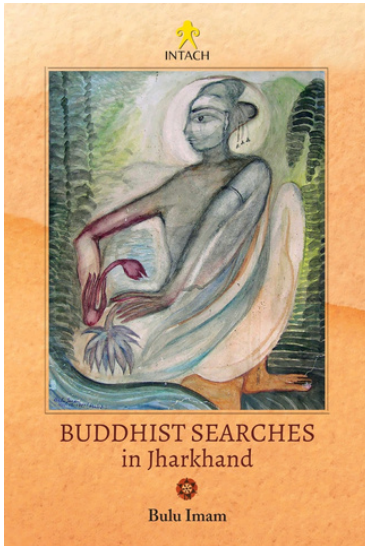




# Publication Catalogue

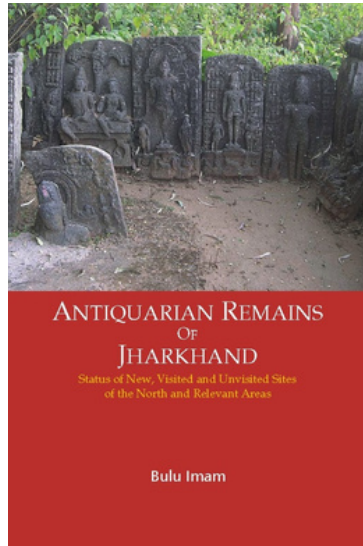
*Books by Bulu Imam*

INTACH & Sanskriti Publishing



INTACH, New Delhi  
(2023), 264 pages

**Rs.1200**



INTACH, New Delhi  
(2014), 566 pages

**Rs.1700**

**BRIDAL CAVES**  
A Search for the Adivasi Khovar Tradition

A study of the wall painting art  
Of the tribal (adivasi) women  
Of Hazaribagh



Artist: Kanti Devi (VIII. Jorakath)

IMAM  
1995  
INDIA

INTACH, New Delhi  
(1995), 185 pages

**Rs.1500**

## Archaeology

### DAMODAR VALLEY CIVILIZATION

The first report on the discovery  
of an ancient and living civilization in the valley of the river Damodar,  
Hazaribagh, Jharkhand, India



Bulu Imam

Sanskriti Publishing, 2001  
131 pages

**Rs.1100**

## Tribal Art

### THE PAINTED HOUSES OF HAZARIBAGH

The overview of the Khovar and Sohrai  
tribal women's house painting tradition of  
Hazaribagh, Jharkhand, India



Bulu Imam  
(2002)

Sanskriti Publishing, 2002  
60 pages

**Rs.800**

## Tribal Art

### HARVEST ICONS

Sohrai Village Murals of Hazaribagh



by  
Bulu Imam

Sanskriti Publishing, 2019  
104 pages

**Rs.900**

Print on Demand / Soft copy (PDF) @ Rs.150/- each

Contact: 8084211028



# Publication Catalogue

*Books by Bulu Imam*

Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany



Bulu Imam

**Hazaribagh School of  
Painting & Decorative Arts**



LAP, Germany, (2015)  
216 pages, Rs.7098



Bulu Imam

**The Nomadic Births of  
Hazaribagh**

Their Life, Art, Songs, Folklore, & Ethnobotany



LAP, Germany, (2015)  
336 pages, Rs.8113



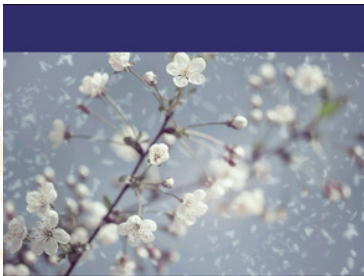
Bulu Imam

**The Manjhi Santals of  
Hazaribagh**

Their Hunt Rules, Songs, Lifestyle, Folklore, Art & Hunting Dogs



LAP, Germany, (2015)  
356 pages, Rs.8113

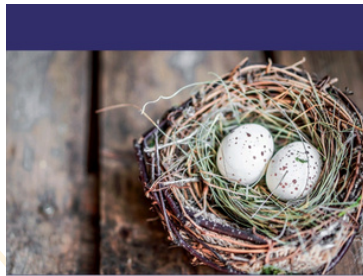


Bulu Imam

**The Flowering Branch**  
Songs of the Manjhi Santals of Hazaribagh



LAP, Germany, (2015)  
144 pages, Rs.5713



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**Oraon Songs & Stories by  
Philomina Tirkey**

Edited by Bulu Imam



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Gustav Imam

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