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## **SASNET Seminar**

**Professor Frank J. Korom, Dept. of Religion, Boston University, USA**

# **Singing Modernity: Bengali Scroll Painters Confront Globalization**

**Monday 19 December, 14 – 16**

**Venue: Room 438, Centre for Theology and Religious Studies,  
Allhelgona Kyrkogata 8.**

Frank J. Korom has explored the changing world of Patuas, a community of itinerant scroll painters/singers residing in Medinipur District, West Bengal, India. Impoverished artists now adapting to modernity, and expanding their repertoires to contemporary social and political issues, such as communal violence in India, religious identity, HIV prevention, and even 9/11 and the recent tsunami. Originally they were low-caste Hindus who converted en masse to Islam, but as a result of them singing praise songs about Hindu gods and goddesses for Hindu patrons, they have not become fully accepted into the Muslim Ummah. At the same time, however, they are not fully accepted by Hindus because of their low-caste status and tendency to eat beef. As a result, they are perpetual liminars, living on the margins of Bengali society.

Frank J. Korom is an Associate Professor of Religion and Anthropology. He was awarded the Ph.D. in 1992 for a dissertation on Dharmaraj, a local village deity worshipped in West Bengal from medieval times to the present. In 2004-2005, he was a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar in India, where he conducted fieldwork on itinerant scroll painters in rural West Bengal. This project will culminate with a museum exhibition and catalogue in 2006.

The lecture is arranged together with the Indic Religions Division at the Department of History and Anthropology of Religion, Lund University

**All are welcome!**

**Staffan Lindberg   Lars Eklund**

**Swedish South Asian Studies Network – <http://www.sasnet.lu.se>**