

**School of Undergraduate Studies**

**Ambedkar University Delhi**

**Course Outline**

**Time Slot- Mondays 1.45-3.45 and Thursdays 1.45-3.45**

**Course Code:**SOL3CL403

**Title:** Literatures of the Tribes of Northeast India

**Type of Course:** Elective

**Cohort for which it is compulsory:** NA

**Cohort for which it is elective:** MPhil and PhD students

**No of Credits:** 4

**Semester and Year Offered:** WS2018

**Course Coordinator and Team:** Shelmi Sankhil and CLTS faculty

**Email of course coordinator:**shelmi@aud.ac.in

**Pre-requisites:** MA in literature

**Aim:** The linguistic and cultural diversity of India's Northeast region is unlike any other in the country. This reality renders simplistic cultural and linguistic homogenizations untenable. But "Northeast" is regrettably often imagined as a linguistic and cultural monolith by the public outside the region. Long years of focus on select communities as representative of the region is most likely the cause of this imagination. The modest aim of this course consequently is to extend the focus of academic attention from the usual suspect communities to the other major constituents of the region: the tribal communities, their languages and cultures, their similarities and differences, their political histories and conflicts, etc. all of which find varied expressions in the imaginative works of native writers selected for this course.

**Brief description of modules/ Main modules:**

**Module 1: Poetry**

This module contains selections from Khasi, Garo, Naga, and Mizo poetry in English. They are fairly representative of the communities they represent. The objective of this module is to closely read the emerging poetic traditions of the region through these selections (and others through assignments, etc.)

**Texts**

Kharmawphlang, Desmond: *There Will Be Time*

Lungalang, Nini. *Nocturne; Dot; Dust.*

Selections from *Modern A'chik Poetry* by Ramona M. Sangma

Selections from the *Golden Harp* by U Soso Tham.

Zote, Mona. *Juvenilia* (The Idiot Goes to Hell, Home Going); *What Poetry Means to Ernestina in Peril*

## **Module 2: Fiction I: Novels**

Three novels by women writers in English constitute this module. In this module the select texts will be read against the wider, evolving historical contexts in which this texts are set, imagined and produced.

### **Texts**

Dai, Mamang. *The Black Hill*. New Delhi: Aleph Book Company, 2014.

Jacob, Malsawmi. *Zorami: A Redemption Song*. Bengaluru: Primalogue Publishing Media, 2015.

Kire, Easterine. *When the River Sleeps*. Delhi: Zubaan, 2014.

## **Module 3: Fiction II: Short Stories**

This module contains selections of short stories from Bodo, Naga and Khasi writers in English. In this module the viability of the form of the short story will be explored in conjunction with its capacity to aesthetically address a wide range of historical, political and cultural issues.

### **Texts**

Ao, Tamsula. Selections from *These Hills Called Home: Stories From a War Zone*. Delhi: Zubaan/Penguin, 2006.

Bwiswmuthiary, Uttara. *Onthub (Gift of Love)*. Published by Swrjisuma Kr. Bwiswmuthiary: Kokhraj (Assam), 2013.

Pariat, Janice. Selections from *Boats on Land*. New Delhi: Random House India, 2012.

Sankhil, Shelmi. "Survivor". (Unpublished)

## **Supplementary readings:**

Amin, Shahid and Dipesh Chakrabarty, eds. *Subaltern Studies IX: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Baruah, Sanjib. *Durable Disorder: Understanding the Politics of Northeast India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Beyond Counter-insurgency: Breaking the Impasse in Northeast India*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Bhattacharyya, Harihar (1989). "The Emergence of Tripuri Nationalism, 1948-50". *South Asia Research* 9 (1): 54-71.

Misra, Tilottoma. *The Oxford Anthology of Writings from North East India Volumes 1-2*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Pou, Veio. *Literary Cultures of India's Northeast: Naga Writings in English*. Dimapur: Heritage Publishing House, 2015

Satpathy, Sumanyu. "Locating Cultures: A Semi-Academic Essay on the English Poetry of the North-East". <http://www.museindia.com/viewarticle.asp?myr=2006&issid=8&id=348>

Spivak, G. C (1993). "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Williams, P. & Chrisman, L. (eds.) *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory. A Reader*. Hemel Hempstead, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993. pp 66-111.

Subba, T. B. and Sujit Som, eds. *Between Ethnography and Fiction: Verrier Elwin and the Tribal Question in India*, New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2005.

Syiem, Esther. "How Conflicts are Reflected in Literature: Transcribing Troubled Realities in the Written and the Oral" in *Search for Peace with Justice: Issues Around Conflicts in Northeast India*, Walter Fernandes, ed., Guwahati: North Eastern Social Research Centre, 2008. pp. 28-35.

Trivedi, Harish et al. eds. *The Nation Across the World: Postcolonial Literary Representations*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Zama, Margaret. *Emerging Literatures from Northeast India: The Dynamics of Culture, Society and Identity*. New Delhi: Sage Publication, 2013.

#### **Assessment Details with weights:**

1. Continuous evaluation: Participation in weekly class discussion (20%)
2. One Short Paper (20%): written paper of about 2000 words, excluding bibliography.
3. One Book Review (20%): any book on and from the region, fiction or otherwise, in 2000 words.
4. One Term Paper (40%): in not more than 4000 words, excluding bibliography. Optionally, original translation into English (with annotation) of any folktale or imaginative work of substantial length which has not been translated before can be undertaken as Term Paper.