

School of Letters

Ambedkar University Delhi

Course Outline

Instruction days:

Mondays 9-11 at Room 311

Thursdays 9-11 at Room 311

Course Code: SOL2CL111

Title: Indigenous Writing from Northeast India: Fiction

Type of Course: Elective

Cohort for which it is compulsory: None

Cohort for which it is elective: All MA Programme

No of Credits: 4

Semester and Year Offered: 1 and 3 Semesters (Monsoon Semester 2018)

Course Coordinator and Team: Shelmi Sankhil

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

Pre-requisites: None

Aim: This course explores fictional works in English by the indigenous people in India's northeast. The term "indigenous" is here used to mean those groups of people for whom literacy and writing culture came with and after their encounter with the colonial. The course aims to extend academic focus to this major constituency in the region, especially their shifting historical locations and relations with one another and the other communities in the region. Literary writing in English, itself a historical phenomenon that needs engagement, provides a fitting point of entry for these discussions.

Brief description of modules/ Main modules:

Module 1: Introductory

Through the two texts selected for this module, questions in alignment with the objective of the course will be explored. Also reading frames for the texts in the subsequent modules will be attempted.

Readings

Beteille, Andre. "The Idea of Indigenous People." *Current Anthropology*, Vol 9, No.2 (April 1998) pp. 187-192

Xaxa, Virginius. "Tribes as Indigenous People of India." *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 34, No. 51 (Dec. 18-24, 1999) p. 3589-3595

Module 2: Short Stories

This module contains a diverse collection of short stories from writers belonging to Manipur, Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Assam.

Texts

Janice Pariat. "19/87" and "Laitlum" from *Boats on Land*. Random House India, 2012.

Kasom, Jim Wungramyao. "Killing the Silence" from *Homecoming*. Promilla, 2018.

Shelmi Sankhil. "Survivor". Unpublished. 2016.

Temsula Ao. "The Boy Who Sold an Airfield", and "Three Women" from *Laburnum for My Head*. Penguin, 2009.

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

Module 3: Novels:

In this module, longer works of fiction in English coming from indigenous writers from Nagaland, Mizoram, and Arunachal Pradesh will be read. Incidentally, the texts are all by women writers.

Texts

Easterine Kire. *A Terrible Matriarchy*. Zubaan, 2007.

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

Mamang Dai. *The Legends of Pensam*. Penguin Books, 2006.

Supplementary reading:

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

_____. *Beyond Counter-insurgency: Breaking the Impasse in Northeast India*: Oxford University Press, 2009.

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

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.

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*. Oxford University Press, 2007.

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