



2 Day National Seminar on Ethnicity and Gender: North East India and Beyond

Organised by

Tribal Studies Centre, Assam University Diphu Campus

Sponsored by

Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi

(5/3/2015 – 6/3/2015)



Concept Note:

India's Northeast has gone through a set of new social movements (both democratic and armed struggles) in the post-colonial period and the name given to many of these manifestations is 'ethnicity'. The region is framed popularly through two dominant paradigms viz. militarisation and development under the aegis of the nation. The different ethnic groups in the name of self-rule (self-rule again having multiple meanings, sometimes autonomy, at others sovereign territory, and yet others separate state) reject the nation (even as they replicate the form of the nation) and re-define development (even as they borrow from hegemonic conceptions of development).

The formation and construction of ethnicity basically relies on the cultural differences between groups. As such definition/redefinition, invention/ re-invention are handy practices in ethnicity construction to create boundaries between groups or individuals. The uses of cultural artefacts/symbols (both tangible and intangible) in private and public spaces are popularly used in constructions of ethnic politics.

The question of gender, a marginal issue in the context of Northeast, has been hardly defined or touched by the ongoing ethnic identity movements. Ethnicity, whatever the definition may be, instrumentalist, primordial, and constructivist however have ignored the cultural markers 'imagined' or 'constructed' or perceived as 'innate' in the formation of gender.

Gender then, can be used as a way to open up the very definition and use of 'ethnicity' and also to problematise various constructions of it. Through the seminar we hope to locate the gender question at the heart of ethnicity and see how it transforms our idea of both gender and ethnicity.

The proposed two-day seminar will try to highlight the different theoretical issues related to ethnicity and gender. We invite original papers, theoretical and/or based on ethnographic work which can elaborate or raise issues around the questions of ethnicity and gender

Sub Themes: (indicative not limited to)

1. Rethinking Ethnicity Through Gender
2. Rethinking Gender Through Ethnicity
3. Gender in the Ethnic Imagination
4. Gendered Violence in Ethnic Struggles
5. Gendered Possibilities in Ethnic Struggles
6. Gendered Critiques of Ethnicity
7. Masculine Identities and feminine Subjects
8. National cultures and making of cultural symbols of Gender

The interested scholars are requested to send an abstract not more than 300 words on any of the sub-theme of their interest to the following address by on or before 15 February, 2015. The full paper needs to be submitted before 28 February, 2015

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Registration & Accommodation: A minimal Registration fees of **Rs. 500/** will be charged from the paper presenters and the participants of the Seminar. The Organizers will arrange accommodation and food for the paper presenters during the seminar days.

Travel Allowance: Travel expenses will **NOT** be reimbursed due to paucity of funds. The Paper presenters are requested to arrange their TA from the respective institutes.

For details Please Contact the Following Persons:

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About Tribal Studies Centre & Assam University Diphu Campus:

The Assam University Diphu Campus was established in 2007 at Diphu, as a campus of the Assam University Silchar. The Campus is located in the picturesque hills of the district headquarter of Karbi Angong District, about 7km away from the town initially with 8 departments. The Tribal Studies Centre started functioning from 2010 devoting itself in research on the tribal people on various issues like ethnicity, gender, sexuality, development, folklore from interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary perspectives.