

**CONTEMPORARY NON-FICTIONAL PROSE
WRITINGS FROM NORTH-EAST INDIA: A CRITICAL
STUDY OF SELECT TEXTS**

Dissertation submitted to Nagaland University, Kohima Campus in Partial
Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Award of the Degree of Master in
Philosophy in English.

By

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Registration No. 49/2020

Under the supervision of

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CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I, **AKOBOU PRESCILA LOUCÜ**, do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled ***CONTEMPORARY NON-FICTIONAL PROSE WRITINGS FROM NORTH-EAST INDIA: A CRITICAL STUDY OF SELECT TEXTS*** is a bona fide record of research work done by me under the supervision of **PROFESSOR N.D.R. CHANDRA**, Department of English, Nagaland University, Kohima Campus, Meriema during the period of my research (2019-2021). The dissertation has not been submitted for the award of any degree, fellowship, diploma to any other universities or institutions. This is being submitted to Nagaland University for the Degree of **Master of Philosophy in English**.

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SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled ***CONTEMPORARY NON-FICTIONAL PROSE WRITINGS FROM NORTH-EAST INDIA: A CRITICAL STUDY OF SELECT TEXTS***, is a bon fide record of research work done by Miss Akobou Prescila Loucū, Regd. No.: 49/2020 N.U./M.PHIL./ENG. Department of English, Nagaland University, Kohima Campus, Meriema during 2019-2021 submitted to the Nagaland University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in English. This dissertation has not previously formed the basis of award of any degree, diploma or other title and the dissertation represents independent and original work on the part of the candidate under my supervision.

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Akobou Prescila Loucū

Research Scholar

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Abstract

Non-fiction writing is a literary work that professes outwardly in good faith to represent truth with accurate facts, information about objects, events, society, and so on. Truman Capote introduced the term nonfiction novel. John McPhee calls it literature of fact. Nonfictional prose writings are “based not only on historical records but often on personal interviews with the chief agents.” (Abrams 257). The Nonfiction genre includes essays, critical writings, travelogues, autobiography and biography, journals, articles, memoirs, literary criticisms, philosophical writings and religious writings. The Northeast region of India, which consists of eight states. The Northeast region of India, which consists of eight states – Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Tripura, and Sikkim – and is narrowly connected with the Indian mainland by a small corridor. The region shares its boundaries with countries such as Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, and China. The North-East region is only geographically connected to the rest of India by a thin stretch of land known as the Siliguri corridor or the "chicken neck," and the region's eight states are surrounded by international borders. The Siliguri Corridor is a narrow strip of land that runs around the city of Siliguri in West Bengal, India. It is around 22 kilometres long and 60 kilometres (14 miles) wide. It is only 17 kilometres broad at its narrowest point. The corridor stretches through West Bengal's Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, and Terai region. This corridor serves as the artery for all land trade between the North East and the rest of the country. The term "Northeast" does not connote uniformity. A variety of generalized comments about the Northeast are made as if it were a homogeneous geographical and political entity. The labeling of the Northeast is also dominated by inaccuracies and misrepresentations by outsiders who are unaware of the true nature of the region. The concept of Northeast is purely geographical. The diversity of North East India defies easy definition.

The North Eastern Region's (NER) relationship to the rest of India dates back to 1826, when Burma signed the Treaty of Yandaboo at the end of the First Anglo-Burmese War. Even during British colonialism, the region was primarily regarded as a "buffer zone" between Burma and China. This attitude persisted after independence, and it was one of the driving forces behind the region's massive army presence and militarised infrastructure. Rather than being accommodating and striving towards the idea of a 'one nation' with a secular and democratic ideology, India adopted forceful measures of control, creating far more friction with the inhabitants of Northeast India. The NER incorporation with the mainland India was sudden. As the states were integrated into Indian territory. The region's politics or the political aspirations of dispersed tribes were suppressed by the greater political discourse. The abrupt integration of the region into the country led to armed conflict and enforcement of controversial law Armed Forces Special Power Act 1958 (AFSPA). This act gives the armed personnel the authority to search, arrest and shoot anyone on grounds of suspicion without a warrant. This resulted in the growth of insurgency and chaos among the Northeast population. Because of its historically tense relationship with the Indian nation state, North-East India was and continues to be a colonial construct.

There is no single definition for Literature from North East India, it broadly relates to English writing, but it can also apply to Assamese literature and writings in the Meitei language, Tenyiedie language and all the various regional languages which have extensive writing traditions and a glorious legacy of their own. Northeast India is diverse in terms of ethnicities, histories, cultures, and politics. Despite their differences, these regions do share similar characteristics in terms of geography, oral, identity and history. Northeast India is home to a diverse range of uncommon flora and fauna, making it a biodiversity hotspot.

The selected authors Mamang Dai, Visier Meyasetsu Sanyü, Sanjib Baruah and Temsula Ao are being introduced in this chapter. With the growth of Northeast literature, the current generation is focusing on producing written literature of which non-fiction writings plays a huge role as it contributes to the understanding and highlighting of the Northeast Indians. Nonfictional works by writers such as Visier Meyasetsu Sanyü, Sanjib Baruah, Temsula Ao, and Mamang Dai have provided realistic details of the society they live in. their works depict traditions, brutality, landscapes, trauma, and political upheavals. The turbulent political situation, stunning scenery, and confluence of numerous ethnic groups may have spawned a body of work that is distinct from Indian English Literature.

In the second chapter, the thematic ideas of the Northeast writings were discussed. The thoughts of sovereignty, mythical beliefs, cultural preservation, conflicts of insurgency, the natural environment and the usage of Native words are the basic themes in Northeast writings.

The third chapter solely focused on the writing techniques that the authors adopted. There is usage of narrative techniques. Stories were shared through narration. Style also defines the mood of a piece of literature, so it is extremely important in all genres. Different styles are required for different sorts of literature, and diverse writers are required for different styles! An author's style may differ with each new piece he produces. It's an author's style that can make a work truly stand out and change the way a reader thinks about what literature. In fact, it's really impossible to imagine what literature would be like without any style.

Fourth chapter incorporated the modernism and post- modernism theory into the research. The writings showed traces of both modernism and post-modernism. The use of Stream of Consciousness, Sense of disillusion, usage of multiple perspectives which modernists writers employ are being discussed.

The concluding chapter summarizes the previous chapters. It tries to study the contemporary writings from North-East particularly Non-fiction. This study shows the significance and relevance of North-east writings in non-fiction. It draws attention to the writer's efforts and contribution to the North-East community through their writings.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Prose is a literary device that refers to writing that is grammatically structured, with words and phrases forming sentences and paragraphs. In prose compositions, the language follows the natural rhythms of common usage. Prose, as a literary method, allows writers to connect with readers in an open, even conversational tone. This provides a degree of closeness for the reader, allowing them to connect with the writer's expression, narration, and characters. Prose is distinguished by natural patterns of speech and communication combined with grammatical structure in the form of words and sentences that stretch over the lines of a page rather than breaking them. In fiction and nonfiction, prose is the most prevalent and popular style of writing. Non-fiction writing is a literary work that professes outwardly in good faith to represent truth with accurate facts, information about objects, events, society, and so on. Truman Capote introduced the term nonfiction novel. John McPhee calls it literature of fact. Nonfictional prose writings are “based not only on historical records but often on personal interviews with the chief agents.” (Abrams 257). The Nonfiction genre includes essays, critical writings, travelogues, autobiography and biography, journals, articles, memoirs, literary criticisms, philosophical writings and religious writings. The Age of Renaissance saw the rise of prose written in various stylistic and linguistic forms. Bacon greatly popularised essay writing which became the celebrated prose genre. Richard Hakluyt pioneered travel literature, “the development of literary criticism by Sidney and Ben Johnson showed the interest of the people in the forms and principles of literature.” (Kumar 98). The basic modes of non-fictional prose writings are descriptive, narrative, expository and

argumentative. Nonfiction is diverse and multidimensional. It can educate us in comprehending the wonders of neuroscience or ancient history. It can be everything nonfiction authors can envision, but it must have the literary imprint.

Readers are intrigued by true stories about actual events and people. Nonfiction texts may give detailed information concerning different social and political organizations, cultures, and perspectives. In nonfiction literature, sometimes the use of fictional techniques such as suspense, an engaging narrative, or a plot progression can be found. The author utilizes description, conflict, transformation, and resolution in the style of a classic short narrative. However, the writer must always take into account that truth must be at the core of their writing. Nonfiction writers must pursue truth, but it is their knowledge of the various elements of actual fact that often gives credence and literary importance. It could be a book on understanding badgers or standing up to sharks, or it could be about feminist enthusiasm and indignation. It can enable us in comprehending the marvels of neuroscience or the chronology of civilizations. Literary non fiction writers offers a way of looking at the world, as well as serious research, which makes the content credible and helps shape the material. It dwells among lasting themes, offers a sense of the profound in which the subject stands for more than itself. Autobiographies, Biographies, memoirs, travelogues, crime, science, history, art and music, interviews and personal essays are some types of non fictional writings.

Autobiography: An autobiography is a book written by the author about his or her own life. In this section, the authors recount and offer to the reader their own life stories, experiences, and challenges, as well as success anecdotes or resilience. It is a nonfiction account of a person's life written by that person, sometimes with the

involvement of a collaborator or ghostwriter. Autobiographies are mainly written in first-person point of view. This implies that the narrator, or person telling the story, is within the story as the narrator uses the private pronouns I, me, and my.

Biography: A biography is a detailed, non-fiction record of someone else's life written by another. The narrative must be as accurate as possible and based on factual data in order to be deemed a biography. Biographies are written about important personalities or people who have had a significant influence on society. Biographies are always written in the third-person point of view, which implies the narrator is outside the narrative, therefore the author refers to the subject using pronouns (whose life is being written about). The goal of a biography is to give an accurate account of a person's life. The biographer must remain unbiased towards the subject and present the strengths and success as well as the failures and weaknesses. For writing a biography, the biographer studies the subject by interviewing the subject and researching the subject's life. This might involve mean reading various sorts of information on the subject, or perhaps interviewing people within the subject's life.

Memoir: A memoir is a written description of someone's life that is based on facts. This literary method is used to tell stories about a person's life experiences. Literary memoirs are generally focused on a single theme or aspect of a person's life. It's a narrative with the right form, focus, and narrative subject matter, and it incorporates reflection on a specific event or location. Memoirs are frequently connected with well-known individuals such as celebrities, athletes, warriors, musicians, and writers. It enables the audience to identify with what people find fascinating, intriguing, desirable, and entertaining.

Science: Science books contain technical expertise as well as explanations of academic research. The writing in science nonfiction is well-organized and adheres to academic standards such as indexing and referencing. It also provides a scientific evidence appendix to support the writer's arguments and broaden the reader's knowledge.

Essays: A collection of thematic pieces of literature written by an author, or numerous authors, who often have significant experience on or personal observations with the subject matter. They are generally introspective and personal. The term originated from French word *essayer* meaning “to attempt” or “to try”. The Oxford Dictionary describes it as “a short piece of writing on a particular subject, written in order to be published” (essay n2)

Travelogue: Some refers to them as travelogues while some call them travel memoirs. Travel literature books are those that provide information on the many cultures of the world and self-reflection. These travelogues are usually quite poetic and insightful. They are all quite meditative and eye-opening because it is about personal journeys. The writings can be about a specific place or a series of places, and availability of foods, facilities, and accommodations. It can act as a guide to those who wish to travel or tourists.

NORTHEAST INDIA

The Northeast region of India, which consists of eight states – Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Tripura, and Sikkim – and is narrowly connected with the Indian mainland by a small corridor. The region shares its boundaries with countries such as Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, and China. The North-East region is only geographically connected to the rest of India

by a thin stretch of land known as the Siliguri corridor or the "chicken neck," and the region's eight states are surrounded by international borders. The Siliguri Corridor is a narrow strip of land that runs around the city of Siliguri in West Bengal, India. It is around 22 kilometres long and 60 kilometres (14 miles) wide. It is only 17 kilometres broad at its narrowest point. The corridor stretches through West Bengal's Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, and Terai region. This corridor serves as the artery for all land trade between the North East and the rest of the country. The term "Northeast" does not connote uniformity. A variety of generalized comments about the Northeast are made as if it were a homogeneous geographical and political entity. The labeling of the Northeast is also dominated by inaccuracies and misrepresentations by outsiders who are unaware of the true nature of the region. The concept of Northeast is purely geographical. The diversity of North East India defies easy definition.

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armed personnel the authority to search, arrest and shoot anyone on grounds of suspicion without a warrant. This resulted in the growth of insurgency and chaos among the Northeast population. Because of its historically tense relationship with the Indian nation state, North-East India was and continues to be a colonial construct.

As per the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), AFSPA is an Act to enable certain special powers to be conferred upon members of the armed forces in disturbed areas in the State of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. A disturbed area is declared by the Government of India under section 3 of AFSPA that defines:

Powers to declare areas to be disturbed areas – If, in relation to any state or Union Territory to which this act extends, the Governor of that State or the administrator of that Union Territory or the Central Government, in either case, if of the opinion that the whole or any part of such State of Union territory, as the case may be, is in such a disturbed or dangerous condition that the use of armed forces in aid of the civil power is necessary, the Governor of that State or the Administrator of that Union Territory or the Central Government, as the case may be, may by notification in the Official Gazette, declare the whole or such part of such State or Union territory to be a disturbed area]. (THE ARMED FORCES (SPECIAL POWERS) ACT, 1958)

The Act came to force in the context of increasing violence in the NorthEast region. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Bill was passed by both the Houses of

Parliament and it received the assent of the President on 11th September, 1958. In the Northeast region at present, AFSPA is in force in Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur, and parts of Arunachal Pradesh.

NORTHEAST LITERATURE

In the sphere of literature, writings from North-East India are progressively gaining momentum. “Since Northeast has long been under the political scrutiny of post-independent India, anything that surfaces from the region is looked upon with certain curiosity, including its literature.” (Pou,8). The literatures of the Northeast have generated works in both vernacular languages and English. Because the Northeast had previously been under British colonial rule, the new generation of writers from the region has inherited the colonial masters' language and made it their own. The problems of Northeast that India acquired under British administration, continue to exist today, along with its unique culture, language, racial communities, and rich oral traditions. The nation's attention was drawn to insurgencies, ethnic conflicts, inadequate infrastructure, and inaccessible geography.

There is no single definition for Literature from North East India, it broadly relates to English writing, but it can also apply to Assamese literature and writings in the Meitei language, Tenyiedie language and all the various regional languages which have extensive writing traditions and a glorious legacy of their own. Northeast India is diverse in terms of ethnicities, histories, cultures, and politics. Despite their differences, these regions do share similar characteristics in terms of geography, oral, identity and history. Northeast India is home to a diverse range of uncommon flora and fauna, making it a biodiversity hotspot. Mountains, hills, rivers, valleys, people, myths, tales, rites, and rituals all contribute to the region's distinct environment. It is a

portion of the vast tropical rainforest that stretches from the Himalayan foothills to the Malaysian Peninsula's tip as well as the Mekong River's mouth

There are 450 tribes in India, out of which about 225 tribes belong to NorthEast India. All these regional tribes have their own regional oral traditions. Before written literature, the indigenous people stored and passed on their cultural practices, traditions and history through storytelling, songs, folklores, chants. Oral tradition reflects self-identity and preserves a certain community's social institutions, religious beliefs, ethical principles, and customary laws. These rich oral traditions are passed down from generations to generations. This is referred to as oral literature. “Briefly, preliterate orality and primary orality and oral tradition refer to the thought and expression of people before writing systems were invented” (Ao 178). The Northeast writers used the oral stories, folklores, tales and legends into their writings which makes Northeast literature quite distinctive from the Indian writings. The oral narrative serves the regional communities a sense of identity as it was part and parcel of their lives. “Oral literature is an attempt made to re-connect with the past through this unique literature, based on the older narratives” (179). When it comes to oral literature, there is no reference books because hardly any narratives is written down or recorded, however the best references or source of oral literatures are through story tellers and the elders of the village as they have numerous collections of tales to tell. It attempts to connect the past and the present through the oral narratives. Many myths, legends and tales have become irrelevant with the coming of advancements in science and technology, but for the ancient generations it was a source of living and believing. Many contemporary writers are attempting to produce and publish works concerning the past oral traditions to keep the past alive and trace the heritage and its importance. In the Northeast literary field, oral narratives have become a major theme.

Several literary works have been written in regional languages or local languages. There are some regional writers who continue to write in their own mother tongue to reach out to their targeted audience. There is no much translated works. In the literary world, writings from the Northeast are new and young. It began to emerge onto the literary-critical scene at the turn of the twentieth century, without a splash and with extreme modesty, sometimes eclipsed by the growing supremacy of the mainstream Indian literature. However, Manipur and Assam had their own literary works in their regional language which has been started centuries back. The Northeast Indian writers have their own distinctions and tries to create a place for the world to celebrate the diversities of the region. Tilottoma Misra views on writing in English from Northeast India in *The Oxford Anthology of Writings from North-East India: Poetry and Essays*:

An intense sense of awareness of the cultural loss and recovery that came with the negotiation with 'other' cultures is a recurrent feature of the seven north-eastern states. Each small community or linguistic group has responded through its oral or written communication to the encounters with the majoritarian cultures from either mainland India or from outside the borders of the country, in its own distinctive manner. (Misra 3).

The writings not only convey a storyline, but also portray the diverse histories, customs, and heritages of the numerous communities that make up the region. The eight NorthEast states are home to a broad range of indigenous peoples and languages, as well as traditions and lifestyles. When all the states are lumped together, it's easy to lose sight of the variety that's so important. North East writers have incorporated political and aesthetic aspects in their works. They are a group of restless

revolutionaries caught up with a decadent society's entropy. Aruni Kashyap, an Assamese writer states:

Due to the troubled relationship with the narrative of the Indian state which north-east shares with India, the writers have something very different to say than the other Indian-English authors. Apart from having different sensibilities, it's the political nature of these writings which make them different. The fraught relationship most of the North-eastern states have with the centre often gets reflected in the literature, be it in English, Assamese or Bodo. The fact that literary circles have been discussing 'literature from NE' as a different body of work, attests that it is in developing in opposition to Indian-English writing, which probably mirrors the fraught relationship NE has with Delhi. (Borpujari)

Violence, insurgency, and the deterioration of indigenous values are recurring themes in their writings. Each state has its own set of tales to tell. With the political turbulence that erupted in the post-colonial period, the situation of the northeastern states began to deteriorate. Despite the instability, inhabitants in the North-East states continue to maneuver their way through life with complete uncertainty about the political future. The authors make an endeavour to portray a genuine picture of life in turbulent times. Some writings are about violence and bloodshed as a result of historical upheavals, but others praise the regions particularly in terms of culture, tradition and the belief system that is strongly established with its history. They have come forward to paint the actual picture of a community that was previously misrepresented and misunderstood. Poetry, novels, short stories, and nonfiction are among the works. Professor Subhajit Bhadra opines, "Contemporary literature coming

out of India's Northeast is vibrant and reflects the concerns and issues faced by the people of this achingly beautiful, but strife-ridden region.” (Oiop)

With the growth of Northeast literature, the current generation is focusing on producing written literature of which non-fiction writings plays a huge role as it contributes to the understanding and highlighting of the Northeast Indians. Nonfictional works by writers such as Visier Meyasetsu Sanyü, Sanjib Baruah, Temsula Ao, and Mamang Dai have provided realistic details of the society they live in. Their works depict traditions, brutality, landscapes, trauma, and political upheavals. The turbulent political situation, stunning scenery, and confluence of numerous ethnic groups may have spawned a body of work that is distinct from Indian English Literature. Easterine Kire, a prominent writer from Nagaland mentions in an article by Utal Borpujari explains that:

The North-East has always been under-represented because all literary output from it has been hitherto overshadowed by the political conflicts that plague the region. We have had to make our own mark in the Indian literary world by forming The North East Writers Forum and showing the rest of India that there was much more to the North-East than political literature.”

She also strongly believes that literature from the region has its own uniqueness because of its cultural differences, myths and the landscapes which are mainly surrounded by hills and mountains:

The entire cultural base of the North-East is different from the rest of India. We may have some shared folk stories with some of the other states of India but otherwise, what the region has to offer is a wholly new literary experience. Its myths and legends are tied to the land, the hills and the rivers. Both the natural world as well as the spiritual world are always alive and real to the North-Easterner. What the North-East has to offer is this spiritual apprehension which is unlike anything that the other states have in their cultures. (Borpujari)

Mamang Dai in 2011, one of the famous writers in Northeast India remarked “The Northeast is writing and is being written about”. This quote demonstrates that people's perception of the Northeast is incomplete. Regional authors are growing, and they are beginning to write stories of their own and that of their predecessors' stories. Creative writers are taking on the role of cultural historians in the emerging literatures of the northeast region, providing alternate histories in the absence of authentic histories or written historical records. In ancient times numerous stories were passed on through oral traditions from generations to generations. A Mizoram writer, translator and a social activist, a professor of English by profession, Margaret Chalthantluangi Zama states:

The term “North East” is a geographical, linguistic and ethnic stereotyping that clubs together these often misconstrued, misjudged and misunderstood eight states — ... in the northeastern geographical periphery of the Indian union ... The northeastern region, which accounts for 7.8 per cent of the total land space of the country, is different from the rest of India in almost every way — be it in terms of

culture, tradition, language and ethnicity or of history, physicality, cuisine, dress and indeed, the very cosmology and ethos of life of the people here. This diversity is further reflected within the region itself — each state, and indeed, even each small region within the states, has its own distinct tradition, lore, music, myths, language and even cuisine, though separated by only a few kilometers in physical terms. (Zama 7-8)

The post-independence period is marked by displacement, conflict, and confusion as a direct consequence of the transition from a rural to an urban way of life, as well as insurgency, violence, disillusionment, and other issues. The writings of the NorthEast and the representation of these regions fall outside of the purview of the mainstream literature. The writers of Northeast tends to differ from the mainland writers. The consequence of innumerable misunderstandings and misrepresentations urged the emerging writers from the Northeast to write about themselves in order to accurately portray the genuine essence of being a Northeasterner or being in Northeast region. In addition to the historical, political, and social issues that the people of the region face, there are stories that honour the people's traditions, culture, and belief system, which are deeply anchored in history but are also strongly associated to current situation.

Writings in Northeast were not much mentioned in Indian Literature collections. For instance there was no Northeast writers talked about in *A History of Indian Literature* 1982. These regions work of art seems to be ignored and not paid much attention. The works of the writers from Northeast regions are not featured in the histories of Indian literature written in English by K. R. S. Iyengar and M. K. Naik. Only Praphulladutta Goswami's *Bihu Songs of Assam* is addressed by K. R. S.

Iyengar in his anthology. Only a handful Northeast writings got recognition from their fellow Indian writers in such compilations. Northeast writings are available in all genres. Many Northeast writers adopted different styles of writing to portray their image and realistic of the true Northeast. They attempt to give a First-hand experience through their writings. While fiction and poetry seems to flourish, non-fiction genre is gradually gaining the audience interest. Many prominent writers from North East are known for their fictional works and poems. Many traditional and cultural practices are relived and vividly expressed in this literary forms to help people from outside can get a better understanding of the whole scenario of the indigenous Northeast. The tribal norms and practices are beautifully captured by each writers own personal style. Northeast writings has a rich collections of aesthetic landscapes, unique cultural practices and the unseen sufferings of the Northeast indigenous population. Urvasi Butalia of Zubaan, a publishing business that has published a number of female authors from the region, explains the situation:

When publishing writers from the North-East it is difficult not to look at the political nature of that writing – virtually everyone writing from there is somehow or the other rooted and involved in the politics of the region. It is difficult to find writers from the North-East who, importantly, are not scared – as often writers of fiction are – of saying they are political. I'd say that is a key difference, and personally I find that much writing from the region has a strong sense of place. I expect that over the years, North-Eastern writers will begin to transcend borders and write about things that may not

necessarily be rooted in the North-East, but for the time being it is this that makes the writing so distinct and unique. (Borpujari)

Siddhartha Sarma, an Indian English novelist from Assam, in Utal Borpujari's article "Reading the Northeast", stated that:

The ethnic/tribal/linguistic interplays, tensions and interactions are possibly a little more pronounced, even edgy, in the region, than elsewhere. The more complicated the scene on the ground, the more fertile the ground is for harvesting stories. Viewed in that light, the North-East contains within it the kernels of some of the richest stories that can be told. I also like to believe that in many ways, the region contains some distinct attitudes to life and living. There is a degree of innocence and simplicity which runs through our lives. Part of it has to do with the fact that the region has stayed away from the mercantile approach to living that appears to have permeated the rest of the country so definitively. One still meets artists and craftsmen in far greater number from the region who practise their craft out of love for it, not so much for profit or publicity. (Borpujari)

The term "literature from North East India" applies to literary works in North East Indian languages or the regional dialects and the variety of works by English-language writers from the region. Though Northeast literature is known to be new to the world of literature, Assamese literature and writings in the Meitei language have a longstanding heritage of writing and a wonderful legacy on their own, while the other regions' literatures were mainly found in oral form or oral literatures. Most of

Northeast literatures were oral literatures as there was hardly any written records. Writings began only with the coming of Christianity and Britishers. With this invasion came development in various fields, education was one important introduction. With the British education, these regional society began to write their heritage. Assamese and Meitei literature began before this. Some prominent writers of Northeast are Uddipana Goswami, Janice Pariat, Yishey Doma, Easterine Kire, Malsawmi Jacob, Nameirakpam Bobo Meitei, Mamang Dai, Gambhini Sorokkhaibam, Yeshe Dorji Thongchi (Arunachal Pradesh), Temsula Ao, Hem Barua, Indira Goswami, Margaret Chalthantluangi Zama, Arup Kumar Dutta, Mitra Phukan, Charles Chasie, Sanjoy Hazarika, Dhruba Hazarika, Indari Siyem Warjri (Meghalaya), Arupa Patangia Kalita, Ilabanta Yumnam, Gambhini Devi (Manipur), Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya, Sanjib Baruah (Assam), Arabam Ongbi Memchoubi, Dayananda Pathak, Guru T. Ladakhi, Thingnam Kishan Singh, Tayenjam Bijoykumar Singh, Nini Lungalang, Bijoy Kumar Debbarma, Cherrie L. Chhangte, Gambhini Sorokkhaibam, Monalisa Changkija, Krittibas Chakraborty.

The focal point of this dissertation will be on the selected texts - *A Naga Odyssey: A Long Way Home* by Visier Meyasetsu Sanyü (Nagaland), *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land* by Mamang Dai (Arunachal Pradesh), *On Being a Naga: Essays* by Temsula Ao (Nagaland) and *Beyond Counter-Insurgency: Breaking the Impasse in Northeast India* by Sanjib Baruah. *Beyond Counter-Insurgency: Breaking the Impasse in Northeast India* is a compilation of essays from different authors and their considerations on Insurgency in Northeast India, whereas the other three are mostly concerned with their own states issues and aesthetics. While there is depiction of insurrection, brutality, and slaughter in their works, it will likewise underscore on the superbness of the scenes as seen through the eyes of the creators. Each state has

its own one of a kind practices and authentic heritage. In *Beyond Counter-Insurgency: Breaking the Impasse in Northeast India* the different authors contributed their thoughts on the dominant issue that is insurgency through analyzing literary text that talked about insurgency, researching about certain events and presenting their arguments with the aim to make the readers learn and understand the present issues and circumstances.

Mamang Dai is a prominent poet, novelist and journalist from the land of Arunachal Pradesh. Initially, her works centered on romantic verse and stories. She subsequently proceeded forward from the self to a broader reality. She focuses on the feeling of belonging she experiences from dwelling in smaller towns and villages. Dai was an Indian Administrative Service officer prior to her writing career. Though being the first woman in her state to be an IAS, she left her job and decided to explore more options. She chose journalism over administration. She contributed to publications such as The Telegraph, Hindustan Times, and The Sentinel, worked in Itanagar for AIR and Doordarshan and was appointed as an officer in the Eastern Himalayas Biodiversity Hotspots programme at the World Wide Fund for Nature. Her works comprises of poetry, fiction and Non-fiction. She educates her readers about her land through her writings. Most of her works speaks on the Adi tribes as she belongs to one. She is considered as a strong representative for her people. Her literary work emphasizes the magnificence of her hometown, the natural beauty of its natural environment, the region's rich and diverse culture, tribal folklore, and exquisite oral heritage. Her poetry include references to the Adi community, their animistic beliefs, and its customs and ceremonies. In her writings, myth and reality combine to create a magical world of spirits. As she embraces the captivating beauty of the Arunachal scenery, with an all grandeur of Nature that is still the dwelling of

spirits, she is well aware that the same territory and Natural environment are unfortunately tainted by violence and bloodshed. Insurgency, neglect and exploitation, mass killings, and migration have indeed impacted negatively on a land valued for its abundant biodiversity and natural beauty. Bipin Patsani describes Mamang Dai's works as delicacies from the hillsides of Arunachal Pradesh, served with affection and ethnic pride. Her writings focus a lot on the natural environment and presents Northeast as an exotic land different from the rest of India. She can be considered as an ecological writer who never fails to express her love for her land.

The book *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land* is an exploration into the region through an insider, from someone who belongs and live in the land. It gives a tour of Arunachal and its people and reignites the interest of the outsiders into this community. It gives a good insight of the tribal people to the visitors about their beliefs and cultural practices. Mamang Dai stated that, it is “just an attempt to record and to document life in life in the hills and also it's a collection of a lot of our traditional mythology and religious and spiritual beliefs.” (“Mamang Dai on Arunachal Pradesh - The Hidden Land” (01:28–01:43). This book was written as a recollection of her memories from the travel she experienced. The author tried to record her travel experience into a documented record. She received the Annual Verrier Elwin Prize for her contribution *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land* in 2013, in 2011, she was awarded Padma Shri by the Indian Government and in 2017, Dai was honoured with Sahitya Akademi Award in 2017 for her novel *The Black Hill*.

Visier Meyasetsu Sanyü is a Naga Historian who had books written about Naga and the land especially during the post-independence period. Dr. Sanyü is presently serving as the president of Overseas Naga Association and has worked in

various organizations. He is a published expert and Naga historian who has written numerous articles on refugees for the Victorian Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches. This professional reputation is built on the highest ethical standards and temperament. He wrote *A Naga Odyssey: A Long Way Home* and *A History of Nagas and Nagaland: Dynamics of Oral Tradition in Village Formation*. These books chiefly talked about the Angami Nagas and their ways of life. The post-independence period faced tremendous changes and witnessed violent bloodshed. He felt the urge to write about the Naga society as it has suffered greatly due to political unrest in the area. About his book *A Naga Odyssey: A Long Way Home*, Dr. Sanyü had been hesitant to tell his narrative for decades, but finally summoned the confidence to do so, in hopes for it to be remembered, as well as because speaking about it was therapeutic. He also believed that forgiveness was possible. The book is not merely about an individual but rather of a whole community experiences, though it speaks on the atrocities and sufferings faced to the political issues, it is not anti-India, but rather about an indigenous community of tribals striving to survive in the post-colonial age while preserving their culture, heritage and identity. Dr. Sanyü's unique odyssey from ancestral beliefs to Christianity, from village education to a historian professor, and from remote country existence to appearances before the United Nations is detailed in this remarkable memoir. Against the great tradition of the Naga desire for independence, his variegated sixty-year Journey to achieve peace, contentment, and reconciliation for others is passionately recounted.

Temsula Ao, born in October 1945, is an Indian poet, ethnographer and short story author. She is a well-known writer from Nagaland, along with Easterine Kire, Nini Lungalang, Charles Chasie and Kaka Iralu. She has dealt on topics ranging from insurgency to cultural practices. Most of her famous works are poetry and short

stories dealing on the Naga lifestyle and experiences. Her work has been translated into other languages, including German, French, Assamese, Bengali, and Hindi. Her poetry and articles have appeared in numerous anthologies and one of her short stories has been transcribed into German as well as her first collection of short stories titled *These Hills Called Home: Stories From A War Zone* was transcribed into Kannada. Temsula Ao is the author of five collections of poems, two collections of short tales, a literary criticism book named *Henry James and the Quest for the Ideal Heroine*, and a book about her own culture titled *The Ao-Naga Oral Tradition*. Dr. Temsula spent a decade documenting the ceremonies, customs, laws, folktales, myths, belief systems, and other aspects of the Ao-Naga Tradition and published about it, in 1999 as the anthropological book *The Ao-Naga Oral Tradition*. This book is generally acknowledged as the most reliable chronicle of the Ao-Naga community. She is an award-winning writer. In 2009, she awarded the Nagaland Governor's Award for Literature Distinction and for her collection of short stories *Laburnum for my Head*, she received the Sahitya Akademy Award. She was bestowed with the Padma Shri Award in 2007 and also received the Governor's Gold Medal by the Meghalaya government in 2009. Along with Mitra Phukan and Mamang Dai, she is widely regarded as one of the great literary personalities in English to emerge from Northeast India.

CHAPTER II: MAJOR THEMES IN THE SELECT WORKS OF NORTH-EAST NON FICTION WRITINGS

Voices for National Sovereignty

Sovereignty refers to a state's or community's possession or claim to supreme and autonomous power or authority in government. It means a dominant power or supreme control. It's personal, spiritual, and political simultaneously time. It is derived from peaceful relationships and utilised for oppression and dominance. In the Encyclopedia of Public International Law, Helmut Steinberger, defines that: "Sovereignty... denotes the basic international legal status of a state that is not subject, within its territorial jurisdiction, to the governmental, executive, legislative, or territorial jurisdiction of a foreign state or to foreign law other than public international law." (408) or it could be "supremacy of authority or rule as exercised by a sovereign or sovereign state" or, alternatively, as "complete independence and self-government" as defined by *The American Heritage Dictionary*.

The need for sovereignty arose among the Northeast since colonial rule. The insurgent groups in these areas were formed to fight for freedom. Sovereignty in these areas is still an ongoing issue. Northeast India is a violent separatist region that has become the location of innumerable military engagements since Independence, the most well-known of which is the still-going Naga independence movement. People in these areas felt isolated from the rest of India because they were physically separated and only connected by a chicken neck. As a result, when India was integrated, the regional people felt the need for their own independence. During the colonial

administration, the Northeast region was held apart from the rest of India, amidst its rich cultural legacy and diverse languages. These regions were given special administrative status by the British government. They had an intentional policy of keeping outsiders out. They were never fully colonized by the British. Aside from that, people in the region believe they are distinct from mainland India due to cultural and historical differences. As a corollary, the people of this region desired to be free and have their own government. However the Indian government had different plans. During the then-President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad's visit to Shillong, Assam's capital, on October 27, 1950, Visier Meyasetsu Sanyü mentioned that the Naga National Council issued a statement of sovereignty, claiming that the government of India has maintained a studied silence on the question of Naga Independence to this day in his book *A Naga Odyssey: My Long Way Home*.

The Northeasterners became apprehensive that the Indian government's authority would jeopardise their culture and freedom. They felt tremendous threat to their sacred heritage, property ownership, customary rules, freedom, and very existence. Due to these fears and torture by the Indian Army, many tribals expressed their dissatisfaction by protesting and joining the Nationalist group that advocated for liberation. On his visit to Kohima on March 30, 1953, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was confronted by enraged Nagas, who were protesting the Indian administration's continuous failure to listen to or negotiate with the Naga people and their demands. This protest enraged the Indian government, triggering a raid on the residence of T Sakhrie, the Council's secretary, in April 1943, as well as arrests and harassment of other leaders. Not only that, but 200 Indian soldiers stormed A.Z. Phizo's residence, ransacking homes and abusing villagers. A. Z. Phizo and Thieyiechüthie Sakhrie were from Khonoma Village. They were the President and

General Secretary of the Naga National Council, respectively. These two leaders bolstered the Naga National Council's philosophy and promoted the Naga Nation concept, but they eventually divided over differing ways to obtaining independence. These two leaders fostered the Naga Nation concept and enhanced the Naga National Council's ideology, but they eventually split owing to disagreements in their approaches to achieving independence. On August 14, 1947, A.Z. Phizo declared Naga independence. He established the Free Naga Government in September 1954, proclaiming Nagaland as a free independent nation which resulted in the military occupation by the Indian Army and a reign of terror on Naga villages. This act did not falter his determination but added fuel to the growing desire to become a free and have autonomy. Naga Nationalism is deeply rooted in the traditional interconnections of the people. Nagas had a strong sense of being different from those people on the plains which kept their passion of fierce opposition alive. The sense of resistance and Naga nationalism had taken birth in the minds of the people during the British colonial rule and grew larger with the invasion of the Indian Government.

The Free Naga Government led by Phizo was formed in September 1954. The new Government communicated names of its governing elders to the president of India and included a long exposition of Naga history and its ill perpetrated against it by India. It claimed the 'Nagas of Free Nagaland had a traditional history of 700 years as [a] free and independent nation which had never been interrupted... Naga have always been a democratic people'. The Naga, it stated, even defended their sovereignty against the British. The declaration listed the dates and places of atrocities perpetrated by the Indian Army, including beatings and torture, rape, killings, the burning of villages and crops, claiming 500 Naga had died to date. The communiqué

declared: 'We do not want anything from India... Please LEAVE US ALONE'. However these demands to have a free country were met with violence and gunshots. Villages were raided and destroyed, people were beaten and marched to encampments, and women and young girls were humiliated by having their hair chopped off, being stripped naked, and being raped.

Another reason for wanting sovereignty is due to the Indian Government negligence or ignorance. The feeling of alienation, unemployment and being ignored resulted in the belief in the insurgent groups and them wanting to have full authority to better their situation themselves. The small patriotic groups in these regions were gaining interest of the population. The inhabitants of the region saw the guerilla group as urgently pleading for justice, progress, and, above all, regional autonomy, despite the obvious prickly but central issue of sovereignty from the Indian nation. for instance: The attention that ULFA drew to Assam's lack of development and the failure to forge ahead while other regions of the country scripted their success stories in the post-Independence era also resonated with the public. However with time the ULFA (United Liberation Front of Asom)'s influence deteriorated. The Mizo insurgent groups made peace with the government as well. While the Naga insurgency seem to not falter but move deeper and longer becoming the longest fight among the insurgent groups. In today's situation MOU's have been signed between the Indian Government and certain guerrilla groups. Lacina believes that with the Indian government engaging and interacting with these regions more as a region and not as a threat to the security will help improve the situation and condition of the political instability.

Conflicts of Insurgency amongst the Northeast Population

In literature, conflict is a literary element wherein two opposing forces, generally a protagonist and an antagonist, compete in a struggle. An internal or psychological conflict occurs when a character experiences two conflicting emotions or desires – usually virtue and vice, or good and evil – within him. This disagreement causes the character mental anguish and creates a unique tension in the storyline, which is marked by a lack of action. External conflict is a struggle between the main character and an outside force. As a result, it exists outside of the protagonist's body. It usually happens when the protagonist is battling the antagonist. Other types of external conflict may arise as a result of other factors such as natural forces and the society in which the protagonist lives. In this context there is no protagonist or antagonist. The difference in ideologies among the insurgents has led to the creation of numerous insurgent groups. Their clashes of ideology caused them to fight each other rather than protecting the land or people. It is more like "man against man" conflict which refers to stories in which characters are challenged against each other. This is an external conflict. The conflict can be direct, such as in a gunfight or robbery, or it can be more subtle, such as a conflict between the desires of two or more characters. However, as new insurgent groups began to emerge, the conflicts have transformed into bloodshed and never-ending battles. But in Northeast India, it seems, the war continues without an end in sight. It is a war both undeclared and permanent:

The contest was once binary-between the Indian State
and the insurgents as two opposing camps. But over time, the
contests have shifted from binary to a multi-cornered one. The

conflict is no longer between the Indian State on the one side and the insurgents on the other, but also among the different insurgent outfits. (Baruah 183)

Conflicts, whether internal or external are always an integral part in man. It helps shape an individual when one learns to overcome or find solution to it. But the conflicts that insurgency have created seems worsen with the passing times. Ideological differences, a violent approach to achieving a goal, hatred for one another, fear of being overpowered by the other, and a desire for power appear to be the underlying factors of these never-ending conflicts. M. Sajjad Hassan in his essay titled “The Mizo Exception: State-Society Cohesion and Institutional Capability” mentioned that the internal conflicts between the Mizo Union (MU) and Mizo National Front (MNF) caused heavy bloodshed in Mizo Society, particularly in 1970. The MU is not an insurgent group but a political party and the MNF was an insurgent group formed to establish a sovereign state for Mizo people. The later group was an uprising movement against the dissatisfaction towards government during the famine hardships. They rebelled for some twenty years till 1986 as the leader Laldenga signed a peace agreement with the central government. This conflict among the Mizo two parties deeply haunted the common people as it was armed violence. The conflict between Nagaland's insurgent groups is an excellent demonstration of armed insurgency conflict. The tension in Nagaland expanded as the Nationalist group began to disintegrate due to disagreements. Sanyü recalled that the Naga National Council (NNC) and the Naga Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN) both had supporters in Burma, resulting in bitter disagreements and even deadly violent confrontations. The Naga Socialist Council of Nagalim- Khaplang (NSCN-K) was formed as a result of the NSCN split. On April 30, 1988, the NSCN-K launched an attack which killed over

200 members of Muivah's group. Villages were burnt and food supplies were destroyed if they are heard of supporting another faction. The factional groups would start shooting and raiding anywhere they feel threatened or to assert control.

The most affected sections due to these conflicts were the common people. These conflicts have deeply wounded the people of Northeast as their own people fights amongst themselves. The common people had been psychologically wounded since the beginning of the conflict with government of India and the fights within insurgent groups. The number of civilians affected as a consequence of this warfare had risen dramatically, with each insurgent faction targeting one another. The violent conflicts between factions caused turmoil, violence, and killing. The common masses were torn between factions and the government, on whose side they should be. The fratricide affected the individuals immensely. “We were living in traumatised and unstable society, which was a major reason why many young people, including my nieces and nephews, abused alcohol and drugs” (Sanyü 190) An individual could be a houseguest one evening, and then as you bid them farewell and they walked into the night, they could be shot on the way back home. It was a dreadful and stressful experience. People were murdered all throughout the neighbourhood. In the face of terror, people were inevitably striving for normalcy. Today the situation has become much better to live in but there is still existence of many insurgent groups. The past nationalist groups were formed for the freedom of one's own land and people from the Indian government but the present the rise of many insurgents is due to conflicts and disagreement among the groups as stated in the text *Beyond Counter Insurgency: Breaking the Impasse in Northeast India*:

...almost all insurgent groups have a history of splits along clan and ideological lines or according to personal rivalries. As a result, the areas faces an extraordinary number of self-proclaimed insurgencies-one observer estimates more than fifty as active (Shani)

The zero-sum nature of various groups' demands leads to competitive mobilisation and violence both within insurgent organisations and against the state. Proliferation also happens as a result of the symbiotic linkage between insurgent organisations and local government. The relevance and persistence of insurgency in the Northeast can be explained by the fact that insurgent organisations are deeply interwoven in the workings of northeastern democratic governance. Northeastern insurgent groups are numerous, fissiparous and frequently engaged in violence against targets other than the state. These conflicts have been longlasting and have resulted in repeated rounds of negotiations with, and political concessions from, the centre. At present the most important rebel groups in the Northeast are the ULFA, two factions of the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT), the All Tripura Tiger Force.

Ethnic/Culture and Traditional Practices Preservation

The word 'ethnic' comes from the Greek word 'ethnos'. Since the late Middle English period, the inherited English language term for this concept has been folk, and it has been used alongside the latinate people. Ethnic culture refers to a group of people who share common ancestry, beliefs, language, race, and customs that has been passed down from generation to generation. When it comes to Northeast India,

these regions culture/ethnicity differs from the mainland India. The North East is a land of sloping hills and valleys enveloped in lush greenery and home to a diverse range of unique and unusual flora and wildlife. Each state is more beautiful than the other, with its own values and traditions, and each with its own charm.

The Nagas ethnic group have their own unique cultural practices, norms and heritage. As Christianity grows in the Northeast region, many practices of the ethnic groups gradually faded. Very few cultural practices are prevalent today. These arose some sense of responsibility among the northeast writers to contribute to the society by recollecting experiences, revisiting places of values to preserve the culture. Through their writings the ethnic/culture is revived and made known to the people. Through Visier Sanyü's journey, the traditional practices of the ethnic Angami group is seen. The Angami Nagas celebrated several festivals such as Sekrenyi, Tekranyi and Chadanyi. Sekrenyi is still celebrated till today as it is the main festival of the Angami tribes, while the other two festivals are only celebrated by few among the community. Though Sekrenyi is still celebrated, it is not done in the way the ancestors perform. On Sekrenyi new class of adolescents began their quest to become men. Men and women performed their own rituals separately. While woman prepared food, men of the community goes to the village well to cleanse their soul chanting prayers 'I wash all that is unclean and impure in me, and with this cleansing good health will be upon me.' Chickens were offered as sacrifices and cooked for the festivals. Rice wine were prepared for men to drink. During the festival, foods are exchanged among clans as a sign of closeness. Young boys carry meat and wine to their uncles, relatives homes for blessings.

Colourful attires, ornaments and shawls of the clans are worn during the festival. Men goes out of the gate to perform another ritual for good hunting purposes.

Special reed arrows were made for this purpose, while the target is a dragon drawn with charcoal. The chant for this: 'Oh ancestors bless us. This land shall have no famine and no bushfire. We shall have plenty of rice and wine this year and we shall be victorious in war'. Stories of adventurous hunting were shared. Education in the olden days were given in Morungs. When boys reach a certain age, they are admitted to the morungs to learn ways of survival and gain knowledge about the traditional and cultural practices. However not much could be known about it, because the author had to flee to the jungle with his family due to the dispute between the Indian Government and the Naga Nationalist. After returning from the jungle they had to adhere to the new norms and education system. Formal schools were opened and girls who belonged to Christianity were allowed to study. In this modern world Morungs are kept as tourist attractions and for preservation.

Head- hunting was a common practice in ancient day. This practice was seen as honourable act for Nagas. For the tribals, head of a person is very important as it marks bravery, honour and strength. The village that took many heads were feared and not attacked because of their fierceness. Women's head were valued because their long hair was an additional design on the warriors head-baskets. This head hunting was not just an act of killing but had religious and social purposes. In Chungliyimti village, an Ao village, shawls were designed by women for those who successfully brings head of the enemies. This shawl is named 'Tsüngkotepsü or Mangkotepsü, gradually with time men who performed Feast of Merit were allowed to wear this prestigious. However this practice was eradicated when the Britishers came, as it was a heinous crime to murder. It is no longer practiced. Feast of Merit was performed by rich married man who have plenty of crops and stock to provide. This is done to enhance their reputation, not his wealth. In those days, a wealthy man is one who

possess a huge amount of domestic animals and crops. A man, who performs the Feast of Merit was required to kill all his cattle, pigs and Mithuns and prepare it as delicacies to feed to the whole village. Besides meat, other forms of possessions are distributed, except land. He was later given a special shawl or house to recognize his honoured status as a Man of Merit. This is no longer prevalent in the society but the special designs of shawls and houses are still preserved.

Weaving is not a common habit or hobby in the contemporary society, even in the Northeast where it was once practiced heavily. In ancient times, every girl in the village is expected to learn the art of weaving. It is through weaving that the traditional attires and special shawls for certain purposes were made. In the olden days it was a common sight to see womenfolks weaving everyday, in every nook and corner of the village. It was considered not just a hobby or means of survival but it was a traditional and cultural norms to follow. Only those who know or learn weaving are considered to be marriage material. For the Arunachal tribals, weaving was regarded as a gift from gods as this art was taught to their people through the dreams. Numerous stories are linked to the origin of weaving. Weaving is the sole activity of women in Arunachal Pradesh except for one shawl that is woven by men. The shawl is called Atondre. It was woven using Mallu plant fibre (Rhea Nivea) on a vertical frame called Ang-god. For the tribals weaving is immensely important that it is believed that one of the worst punishments after death is to be sent to a place where no weavers exist. One or two looms is seen in every household which is inherited or passed on to women. Dai explains the significance of weaving:

Weaving is a social activity generally done outdoors on open verandas in full view of every passer-by. Among the Adi tribe the Sumpa, the batten, made from the inner stem of a wild palm is the prized-possession of a weaver and regarded as a weapon for women, equivalent to a sword. It is imbued with magic and sometimes placed by one's bedside to ward off evil spells. (Dai 106)

Weaving is not exclusive to one tribe, but is practised by several tribes in Arunachal Pradesh and other parts of the country. Each tribe, however, has its own distinctive weaving design patterns. Various shawls, skirts, bags, and coats are worn by men and women in each tribe. Since no tribals replicate each other's designs, patterns, or motifs, a tribe is distinguished by its design elements, patterns, or motifs. A rich heritage of metal/alloy ornaments and artefacts, armaments, and cane and bamboo handicrafts, particularly in the production of headwear and headgear, exists alongside weaving. Some of these hats are so inextricably intertwined that they're waterproof and can endure a sword strike. The hats are generally embellished using Great Indian Hornbill feathers or boar tusks. With the changes in the environmental issues, a new headgear has been introduced using fibreglass to make the traditional hornbill beak that is decorated to the upper portion of the headgear used by the Nyishi tribe.

There are many cultural practices of the ethnic groups which are practiced in its tiniest form in the present day. Attempts to preserve the good values of the culture are made. Shawls, ornaments, and attires are used on special occasions in the present era. The preservation mindset has emerged in recent decades only. The modern society deterioration and determination to advance demonstrate how tribal identity is

being lost. This has caused concerns among the few intellectuals as the cultural practices which makes the regions distinct are getting buried. The ways of life have drastically changed with the coming of Christianity and westernization but the cultural practices are kept alive for the passing generations through the authors writings. Writers contribute to the preservation of the culture and traditional practices as they look and research and provide the readers with the information using their techniques of writing. Written records do help in preserving the cultural identity of the tribals.

Myths

Myths are stories containing religious connotations that provide explanation for natural occurrences, moral wisdom, and supernatural forces. Myths are usually told or shared to offer logical reasons to the people to explain certain natural phenomena. Myths are frequently told as though they are true. Because these stories were intended to provide reasonable explanations, the audience believed them to be true. Gods and goddesses frequently appear in myths, and these individuals often possess supernatural powers. A narrative for how everything came to be in the entire planet is included in myths. Because such narratives have ancient origins, they lacked the scientific explanations that we have nowadays for occurrences like weather. Morals are routinely taught to populations through myths. There is a moral to be acquired from several myths. The indigenous people of Northeast had strong beliefs in Myths which are unique to their own tribes. They believe certain things happen due to the mythical creatures. These beliefs are similar to Animism. It generally refers to

the belief in spirits and souls of objects, places and creatures who controls and dictates the happenings in the community. “Myth is the history of its authors, not its subjects: it record the lives not of superhuman heroes, but of poetic nations.” (Elwin 22)

Mamang Dai in her book mentioned that the tribes in Arunachal Pradesh believed in the Sun and Moon cult which is known as Donyi Polo religion. Donyi means Sun and Polo refers to Moon. They believed that the sun and moon are physical manifestations of a greater cosmic force. The Donyi-polo faith is an attempt to provide meaning to existence through a naturalistic intellectual and ideological pursuit. The term ‘Donyi-Polo’ has been assigned three theological meanings: Donyi Polo is the God/Goddess; ‘Donyi’ is the Sun and ‘Polo’ is the Moon; finally, Donyi and Polo are two supreme bodies (Pangkam 2011). The Arunachal hills are a home to numerous myths. There are many unwritten and written records of the traditional myths. These myths are mostly stored and retold in the form of oral narration, songs, story- telling, dances and folklores. The beginning of the world, the origin of dance and the story of weaving are all connected to numerous myths. Mamang Dai states in her book *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Place* that among the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, myths as primordial history represented in poetry form are remarkable.

The tribes had their own story of the creation of the world. It is believed that the Earth and Sky were husband and wife. “Sedi, the Earth and Melo, the sky lay close together and from their union every kind of tree and grass and living creature came into being.” (Dai 11). Their bond was so close that there was any place for mankind to move. When Polung Sabbo, a mithun and wandered along the hills, his horn was stucked to the clouds and in the feat of anger tossed it way, far from Earth

that separated them. In longing and desire for her husband the Earth (wife) raises herself towards her the Sky. But before she could reach the Sun and Moon appeared. She was embarrassed and stop going further. The part of her that was raising towards the sky became the great mountains. The Idu from the Anini region of Dibang Valley believed that they originated in Inni-la-pon to the north. They settled in a place known as Kabbui-bui- Anda meaning the place where the river flows backward. This is a reference to a great bend in the rivers which flows southwards from the Tibetan lands. They also named it Jawahi meaning where the water snakes lives.

Another myth is that the Khamptis in Lohit district of Arunachal Pradesh believed in a tree of iron which yielded golden fruit. The enemies feared that the Bor-Khamptis would become prosperous through this tree and so sent a demon to devour them. However, the demon made the gold-yielding tree his abode and threatened to destroy them which compelled them to destroy the tree to save themselves. They did so by burning the tree which in turn killed the demon. Another story of a huge bird living in a tree of silver and gold preying on children is a famous myth. the villagers had to cut the tree to save the children. The gold tree disappeared but a small lake emerged with overgrown and when the water dries, it annually ‘catches fire by spontaneous combustion’ (21).

Nagaland too had its own fair amount of mythical beliefs. The Angami Naga tribes while believed that killing of chickens as sacrifices to gods and goddesses and their ancestors helps in cleansing their souls and chasing bad situations. For instance Sanyü’s father performed the sacrificial rituals on Sekrenyi by singing chants:

Protect me from my enemies and let me live till I
perform this feast again next year. I pray that i will defeat my

enemies in war. My enemy will be drowsy as I attack and pierce
his heart with spear. (Sanyü 2)

In wedding ceremonies, the roosters are offered as bride price to the youths. The leader completes the presentation exclaiming: "This rooster is clean and without blemish so I will accept this as the bride price." (Sanyü 34). Thekranyi is a festival performed without killing animals but it had religious significance. It is celebrated before monsoon to prepare for rice-plantation. Terhünyi was celebrated as Thanksgiving in the month of December. Angami Nagas believed in various spirits, one of which is the God of wild animals known as Chükheu who protects them by confusing the hunters. Some claimed to have seen Chükheu but he vanishes quickly.

In Temsula's essay, the chapter titled "Ao-Naga Myths in Perspective" provides a brief overview of mythology and its significance in tribal societies. It also considers how the character and meaning of myths have altered as a result of shifting circumstances in the time-space continuum and the arrival of foreign concepts about life and death. In referring to the several theories regarding myth, it conveys the "real spirit of tribal life," explores the Ao-Naga origin tale, deity myths, and the creation myth. It demonstrates how, in dealing with the changes brought about by time and place, myths such as the lore of Lijaba, the creator or god of the cosmos, are only kept in narrative lore, where their religious meaning has only been turned to a cultural and ethnic one. This myth turned into a duration of worship which came to be known as Tsungremong and it is observed with three days of rituals to avoid the wrath of Lajiba. Sacrificial meat was offered on to the priest. Future were predicted in the cock's entrails. Strict norms were followed to perform ritual as it was considered that the god Lajiba would punish one immediately. they chanted and threw out shreds after the priest is done with sacrificial offerings:

Hang polang temang

Neli Khiogo

Nang dang Ja-angma

Teri la moa yang

(Ao 45)

This is translated as

Here we are offering

Everything to you

Even the bottom

Of the pots.

Eat this and in return

Give us your blessings.

(Ao 45)

The Meyutsungba / Tsungrem/ Mojing myth was believed to be the god of 'Land of the Dead'. rituals or worship were not offered but was feared because he was known as the god of justice. But with the coming of Christianity, the belief system altered. only one God began to be worshipped. Lijaba and Mojing are now considered evil or malevolent. Tsungremong is now a festival. Myths were treasured and worshipped but it has lost its relevance in the contemporary world. The myth's dissolution resulted in the introduction of the peoples personal actual experiences in the new surroundings.

The myths have evolved into a system of beliefs over centuries, through which certain concepts have become the cornerstone for indigenous customary practise. Without myths, the ancient life would have been filled with chaos and meaningless. Myths helped the tribals maintain order and restrain certain

behaviours which were considered as taboos. It served as an important element in the lives of the tribals as these myths helped them accept the natural phenomenon which man cannot understand or explain. The mythical beliefs were transformed into daily reality through natural environment and human mind. In the contemporary world, myths are no longer considered authentic and simply consumed as a form of entertainment and enjoyment. Interesting tales and adventures are shared in these mythologies. But there are still hints of belief in the old stories told by ancestors. It is not completely shunned. With the development of science and technology, the myths are considered false.

Natural Environment

The Northeast region is known for its beautiful landscapes and varied animals. The flora and fauna is immensely praised by outsiders or visitors. The areas of Northeast regions are mainly mountaneous and hilly. Many tribals practices Terrace farming and jhum cultivation. Sanyü describes Nagaland as a land “with such dense forests, animal life from tigers, elephants and bears to smaller ground animals like porcupines thrived in former times. Monkeys of all varieties still inhabit the tree canopy and mithun, the sacred buffalo-like beast of the Naga, has roamed theses forests from ancient times. The land was filled with thick forest that Sanyü’s experience in the jungle was difficult and hard. They had to run to the jungle to save their lives from the Indian Army. Since they couldn’t stay for long in one place, their movements began to move deeper into the forest. He explains that the “terrain was often impenetrable, even at times to animals, being thick with bamboo in parts to the

point of despair for any traveller.” Though it was difficult, he appreciates the rare beauty about the jungle and says that it will linger with him in his mind. The jungle was thickly filled with tall trees and dense with wild undergrowth and flowers making it beautiful and productive. Through his experience in the jungle we can see the abundant supply of foods that the forest offered. They survived with mushrooms, jungle fruits and vegetables, insects, bush rats and little fish caught in the streams. Birds were trapped with Ketsa. They saw monkeys, deer and tigers and jungle cats of various colours.

The Arunachal lands were no different from Nagaland. Mamang Dai explained that their land is a land of huge mountains which was supported by the mythical story of the Earth and Sky. In her book *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Place*, she describes her land as “Nature has been bountiful to Arunachal Pradesh”. It is a vast land of austere grandeur. The area’s remote geographical locations, its inhospitable terrain made it a land of unknown savages, grand but uncultured inhabited by shy indigenous people who were not very welcoming to receive strangers. The eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh is lush with rainforest and is home to several tribes. From the mythical belief of a huge bird once settled in their lands and fed on children, was so huge that only the tree of gold and silver could hold its weight. The tribals had to cut the tree for safety. Though there were numerous trees. None could hold its weight. The bird perched on a huge slab of rock where it was killed. This shows that the land is filled with varied trees and beautiful landscapes.

In her book she continues to show the beauty of her land. She writes “the tangle of root, vine and decaying vegetation provides distinct ecological niches where life sustains itself in a delicate balance that is vulnerable to extinction by even the smallest threat to the habitat”. She mentions that the land was very harsh as it is a

mountaneous area but her people survived for centuries despite being aloft from the outside world. She admires her peoples ability to live harmoniously with the environment. For instance:

The roads are steep and mountainous and sometimes non-existent... Yet, travelling in these remote hills, sitting in the dimness of long huts surrounded by mountains and mist... (Dai 91)

Throughout the centuries, the rich and natural abundance has attracted many a hand. It is home to a wide variety of endangered flora and fauna as Mamang points out that Arunachal Pradesh is home to “two species of pine- *Pinus merkusi* and *Abies delavayi*- are not found anywhere else in India” (27). Their traditions are intertwined with the natural environment. Capitalist avarice has caused a reduction in wilderness area, resulting in an imbalanced environment. “To cut down a tree was taboo” in their traditional practices (29). Due to the increase (road development) and the influx of immigrant workers, a large portion of the system is now in jeopardy. The Arunachali’s belief and practices were based on nature despite its harsh environment. The Miri establishes harmony and understanding between man and the forest by informing tribals of the meaning and importance of customs. For the tribals who live in rural places, the natural environment is more than just a place to call home; it has immense value and significance. The spectacular scenery is not only aesthetically pleasing to the eye, but it also contains a large wide range of therapeutic plants. The tribal groups of Arunachal Pradesh have an extensive knowledge about how to employ plants for traditional system of medicine. While expressing the region’s significance for natural environment, Dai also points out the fact that due to high demand of timber and plant resources, it has led to a huge reduction of forest realm,

contributing to urgent environmental concerns. Other major factors like development, road construction and the increasing amount of migrant workers are also responsible for the fragmentation of the habitat. Mamang Dai can be considered an ecological writer as she sings praises of the beautiful landscapes and throws shade on the negative aspects that has destroyed the land and its beauty.

Usage of Native Words

Native Languages are the distinct feature of the Northeast writings. There are several words which are used solely by the indigenous people themselves and serves as an identity to the tribals. These usage of native words help in understanding the native people. It is also an exposure of the language to the foreigners and to make it familiar. India is a land rich with varied languages particularly the Northeast Region. The Northeast regional areas comprises of numerous tribes and each tribes has their own language. According to the Ethnologue Language Catalogue of the world, India ranked 4th in terms of the number of language spoken and has become one of the most linguistically diverse countries.

The most linguistically diverse states in India are Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, followed by tribal areas and islands like Andaman and Nicobar. Small states with distinct ethnic and tribal groups show greater linguistic diversity than large, densely populated states like Uttar Pradesh and Kerala, where there is homogenisation induced by diffusion of people and culture over time. In Kerala, 97% of the population speaks one language: Malayalam. (India's Linguistic Diversity)

These diverse languages are commonly known as ‘mother tongue’ which refers to “the language spoken in childhood by the person’s mother to the person. If the mother died in infancy, the language mainly spoken in the person’s home in childhood will be the mother tongue” (Census of India 2011 3). There are 22 languages that are included in the Eight Schedule to the Constitution of India and 99 in the Non Scheduled languages in accordance to 2011 Census. These mother tongues are the native words used in the writings of the regional writers as certain words cannot be replaced. The writers choose to incorporate the native words in their English writings to make it native and keep it indigenous as possible. It particularly enhances the knowledge, understanding and increases the cultural enrichment of the readers or audience. The use of native dialect is an essential characteristic used by indigenous writers from postcolonial nations in recreating and reviving their marginalised cultural heritage. It is a process of transforming the oral into written language.

SEKRENYI, THEKRANYI, CHADANYI and TERHÜNYI is seen in Sanyü’s book. It is the names of the festivals. Nyi means festival and the words Sekre, Thekra, Chada and Terhü has their own significant meanings. While Sekrenyi is celebrated in the beginning of the year for a good year as well as to promote young boys to the community learning place to prepare themselves for becoming warriors and protectors of the community. In short this festival is making of men. Thekranyi is before cultivation of rice-plantation to offer rituals for good plantation. Chadanyi means clearing and cleaning of the roads leading to the field. THENUHE: Men who are in position to get married prepare themselves for the mating game in visiting. Men search for their potential bride through this process. This is called Thenuhe. The closest English word would be ‘dating’. The boys calls girls to spend times talking, singing and flirting. While the girls wove or stitched, boys would posture and show

off whatever skills they possess. During festivals they sing, talk until midnight. On the working months, visits are less welcome and can be refused politely. On these days, boys would ask if their family was performing rituals which forbade visitors and if the girls were tired they sung back saying rituals are being performed and cannot have visitors. Then boys would try other houses and be offered rice wine and stories of hunting, travel to other neighbouring kingdoms were shared. This visiting and show off game is continued till boys find their partners or love interest.

KENYÜ - This word means performing rituals to avoid bad curses or a taboo. Each tribes perform their own rituals. Hutton described these practices as 'genna'. He explains that the acts of worship fits "gennas" because there is no suitable English word which describes them and the word genna. It is derived from the Angami word "kenna", which means "forbidden". MORUNG was a traditional education institution. Nowadays morungs are seen only as attractions or remainder of the past. KAMBURA is a village chief. It is derived from hindi word Goanbura meaning the elder of the village. In Angami the village elders were called PEYUMIA. They were not chiefs or warriors but a respectable and wise men who has the approval of the community. This word came into existence when Britishers occupied India. DAO is a weapon larger than knives carried by men for protection, cutting woods and meat, clearing jungle etc.

PLUNG SABBO is a huge animal mithun from Arunachal Pradesh. KABBUI-BUI-ANDA meaning 'a place where the river flows backwards', KHAMPTI wherein Kham means to stick, to adhere to, or refers to spot, place. It can also mean 'golden locality',

NOI-KHAM which is the golden hill, DONYI-POLO is a religion worshipping the Sun and moon. Donyi is the sun and Polo is the moon. ABOTANI is

the first human being in history as believed by Arunachali's. AKA which means Painted because they had many tattoos TAZUNGTI are the upper group who makes the rules, CHIDANGONGDANG are the ones who have no authority and does menial works. TEKOGPUR are the law enforcers/ keepers

AJU NOZABARI – youngest in the group, general helpers. TEKHEPA ORI- similar to aju nozabari and carried news of death, approach of enemies or serious night messages. PANGKHANG- their main job was to gather rice from every house when there had guests. KITSUNG NOZABA- they were the ones who could get married, they collect bamboo mats for special occasions. AZU-AKHANG NOZABA AND AZU- AKHANG TEZENBA- the mature/ experienced group as well as acts as accountants of the village. AMO SAJA KHOZENBA- they helped in carrying goods like a coolie or porter. SAMEN NOZABA and SAMEN TEZENBA- this group becomes eligible for village council/ PUTU MENDEN. MOAZENBA TELAKBA- acts as a village guard and sends information about unexpected visits to those in fields. MOAZENBA TEMENBA- they were the village elders. Widows in Ao tribe were called AMITSUR and KETHAMIA in Angami. KINUSEKU- the dark place where rice wine is made. NHANUMIA was referred to the people who had to flee to the jungle during the Indian Army raids. The term loosely meant all who lived in the forests rather than living in the village. In today's world Nhanumia is now addressed to the insurgents or underground as they're the only one fleeing.

KEYUM means nothingness. The tribals of Arunachal believe that it is a place where no answer is received. It is not even darkness or light or colour or movement. They believe it is how the world started. INGA means earth, Mu means sky and IMBUNG is the wind. KEBANG refers to a council of elders responsible for

maintaining law and peace in the society. They acted as the law keeper or police force. The members of kebang were given no right to collect taxes or land revenue from the villagers but has the full authority to impose fine and punish anyone found guilty. They settle disputes according to the customary laws of their area such as laws that surrounds birth, death, marriage, property inheritance or rights, crime, worship, etc to maintain peace and harmony among the members of the area. BANGO is a group of villages and BOGUM-BOKANG is the main body of these villages which acts as a parliament with representatives from all villages. They look into inter-village conflicts and development progress. MOSHUP is the bachelors dormitory where kebangs are held as it can also be a community hall. It is similar to Naga Morungs.

TAPYA PARNAM/ LAPYA TANAM means forcefully capturing/ kidnapping the unwilling bride from her home or field and keeping her captive. The girl's left leg is tied or captured in a heavy log preventing her from walking without a helping hand. In some tribal communities this was considered as a punishment. The girl's parent had no say in it, the girl was forced to marry. Thus resulting in force bondage. This sometimes continues even after giving birth. Some met their death due to the brutality.

SEDI LITUNG BORBUNG or YAMO LIMANG BORKOK is a narrow gate where the dead man reunites with the ancestors and loved ones who passed away, with the help of the gods and goddesses. BIRI ANGUR PORTUNG was believed to be the son of the mighty leader of water. SILI-SIDONG means the domain of water. Unying Arang is a festival of the adi tribes to celebrate the beginning of new cultivation cycle. PONUNG is a ritual dance performed by women only.

SOTKYANG is a platform where MITHUN is sacrificed. DADI-SOMI is the god of animals. GA-LE- it is a wraparound skirt usually worn by womenfolks. DUMLING

is a hair ornament made with precious beads and strung with twine carefully. LIMIR LIBOM AABANG is a practice of the tribals recreating in details the pantheon of gods, the evolution of animals, birth of mithun, offspring of gods. BINNYAT AABANG is an epic song which is the longest. It is a tale of how grain came to man. Taktor is a ritual to fight off the evil spirits who comes in search for bloods of sacrificed animals and might cause harm on the people. MIRI is referred to the priest who perform numerous rituals and offers prayers for the abundance and prosperity of the village.

Names of traditional dances are irreplaceable as it solely belongs to the tribal community. The Arunachal tribes has their own contribution to the field of dance. The tribal dances are performed mainly during festivals as rituals or celebrations of events. AJI-LHAMU is the famous dance which is believed to have originated to distract a group of spirits. There were two small villages divided by a huge river and no bridge was connected. The two villages had problems of marriage as they are small circles and due to the unmarried status the population decreased. To solve this a monk Chapjam Wangmu started to build a bridge to connect the two village by the river. However, it was unsuccessful because the spirits would take away the materials made to build the bridge at night. In order to distract them, the monk arranged a pantomime, while the spirits were engrossed in the performance, the workers quickly collected the bridge materials, completed the bridge construction and dedicated it to the gods. The spirits left as they could do no harm to the bridge anymore. The villages were bonded in marriage happily and population increased. It is believed that this is how the dance was born.

GANZEN TSEMO LUNG DAR are tall prayer flags, swinging over the perpetual wheel with the wisdom sword emblem and the crown of the sun and moon. These flags are erected after every twelve years, in accordance with the Tibetan calendar. RIMPOCHE is a reincarnate lama. The primary flag is color-coded based on the current astrological sign, and there are fabric strips fastened to it:

Blue for the sky and water,

White for the clouds,

Red for fire,

Green for living things, trees and plants,

Yellow for earth

(Dai 62)

There are various other flags like MAN-PER, originated from maa-ne which means holy incantation *Om Maane Padme Hum*, and per meaning a block print. It is a mantra flag. Another prayer flag, SANFAN is used when a ritual or ceremony is performed. CHEYFAN are strips of cotton or rice paper attached to bushes and trees so that the engraved prayers and wishes are blown in all directions by the wind. DZONGPEN is a senior monk who is responsible for the monastery's revenue collection. A monastery is called GOMPA. MANI DUM DRUB is a special ritual performed during the TORGYA festival. NYEM BABNAM is a traditional farewell song for a bride.

The usage of native words in the literature is inevitable and important as it helps readers feel closely connected to the society they're reading about. There are noreplaceable words for some words as those particular objects, events, practices belongs solely to the indigenous population. Writing or using words from the native language is essential since translation ends up losing cultural depth and significance. A foreign language will never be able to accurately convey the indigenous cultures. The local dialects contributes to the vocabulary of the reader who desires to learn about the indigenous habitats and will provide better communication with the tribals in future. This adds to the uniqueness of the Northeast writings. The incorporation of languages and dialects is a significant factor embraced by indigenous writers to reconstruct and restore their neglected cultural identity. It is a process of transformingthe oral into formal writing. Easterine Kire who employs the Angami words into her writings stresses the importance of native words in an interview:

I listened to a lot of oral narrators before writing my novel. They helped me appreciate the beauty and richness of our native language and see how bereft English was where Angami or Tenyidie oral expression was concerned. So I have tried to incorporate that beauty in my writings especially through dialogue. I try to appropriate Angami speech patterns... so that my narrative sound as Angami as possible. (Elizabeth 35)

The above stated words stresses on the importance and concerns regarding the usage of native words. She embraces the vernacular language and incorporates it in her writings to appreciate the beauty and richness of her mother tongue. This helped add variety and beauty to the native writings. The usage of native words is not uncommon in the writings of North-east writings.

In conclusion, the themes discussed in this chapter are the main topics that are prevalent in the North-east writings and the North-east day-to-day lives. These themes cannot be ignored simply as it is deeply connected and interwoven in the North-east society. These themes are concepts that flow through stories, giving them more depth and significance hthat are commonly found in real life. They tell stories that are not just informative but also meaningful. It enhances the narratives or stories that are not just informative but also meaningful. It enhances the narratives or stories for the readers to understand and acknowledge.

CHAPTER III: CRAFTSMANSHIP OF THE SELECT NON FICTION NORTH-EAST AUTHORS

Writing Style is an important literary element which refers to the author's choice of words, sentence construction, figurative language, and sentence placement all work together to produce atmosphere, imagery, and significance in the text. This defines the author's way of expressing events, characters and object. It depends on how the authors desires to portray their work of art to the readers. Louise Phelp's defines Style as "the deployment of linguistics resources in written discourse to express and create meaning" (Ray 7) in a personal interview by Paul Butler. In every work of literature, irrespective of genre, style plays a very important role. It provides a platform for both the author and the reader to communicate and express their thoughts and views. Tone, word choice, syntax, language, descriptive method, and other factors all contribute to the overall style of a writer. Style also defines the mood of a piece of -literature, so it is extremely important in all genres. Different styles are required for different sorts of literature, and diverse writers are required for different styles! An author's style may differ with each new piece he produces. It's an author's style that can make a work truly stand out and change the way a reader thinks about what literature. In fact, it's really impossible to imagine what literature would be like without any style.

Paul Butler, Tom Pace, T. R. Johnson, Susan Peck MacDonald, Tara Lockhart, Jeanne Fahnestock, Chris Holcomb, and Jimmie Killingsworth are all proponents of style in speech and writing today. Style is explicitly discussed by these theorists, who employ an interdisciplinary approach that frequently incorporates classical rhetoric, linguistics, sociolinguistics, and stylistics. The study of style helps

in understanding the text better. Each writer has their own unique style of writing and way of communicating with their readers. While fiction, poetry and dramas employ varied techniques to make their writings interesting, nonfiction writers' main weapons are facts and actual events to help connect the reader to the author and their thoughts.

A Naga Odyssey: My Long Way Home (2018) by Visier Meyasetsu Sanyü is an autobiographical book where he describes his whole journey from birth till the time he wrote this book. Dr. Sanyü in an interview stated "This is a memoir and not an autobiography. This is my memoir of my life. This story is written to you and your children" (The Naga Republic). The memoir's primary objective is to chronicle the experiences of Nhanumia, those people who dwelled in the jungle/forest during the zenith of the Naga movement and Indian army atrocities. The text is intended for Nagas residing in other countries who, according to Dr. Sanyü, are seeking to find their place in the world.. Visier Meyasetsu Sanyü is a Naga Historian, who expresses the Naga aspirations and frustration in his memoir. He is a member of the Angami tribe's Meyasetsu clan from Khonoma village, the epicentre of Nagaland's armed resistance to authoritarian rule.

The text *A Naga Odyssey* introduces with a recollection of a festival that would serve as Sanyü's first of many rites of passage. His traumatic removal from a loving household in a traditional village contrasts sharply with the time he spent in the forests attempting to avoid capture by the Indian army and his attempt to live a normal life after returning from the jungle. The violent disturbances in the society uprooted him from his homeland and then his desire for home is being noted down precisely. Sanyü raises questions about his homeland and its people during his travels,

and he tries to establish common ground with everyone he meets along the route. His longing for his home place is evident in his writings. Visier used native words to describe and explain the situations better to his readers. Through his works the readers are taken on a full ride on Naga History and Naga cultural practices. Visier's storey is intriguing, a journey of adversity, strength, and perseverance mixed with Naga tales of freedom struggles. Visier, a Naga who refuses to identify as an Indian, is certain that Nagaland is an occupied territory with no ties to India. In some ways, he prefers British colonialism over Indian control because the whites dominated indirectly, causing the least amount of damage to Naga culture and language. They lived together with more peace than with India. He argues that the frequently exploited Armed Forces Special Areas Act (AFSPA) which provides soldiers the authority to shoot anyone on suspicion is the root cause of Naga Alienation which can apply to other Northeast states too. He employed the technique of Stream of Consciousness in his essay. The book *A Naga Odyssey: My Long Way Home* starts with his memory from Sekrenyi celebration to the freedom fighters and back to the year he was born and his whole life journey. There is no pressure to write in rhymes or any strict rules as it is a memoir. The author writes his recollections based on his memory thus making it impossible to write in chronological order. His writings are in free verse.

Mamang Dai, a well-known Arunachal Pradesh writer, frequently extols nature in its most original form and is a powerful literary voice from the emerging North-East Indian Literature. She has written extensively about the culture and history of Arunachal Pradesh and its ethnic groups. She embraces both the supernatural and the commonplace that nature exudes, digging into the mythologies that accompany the "forces of nature" and transporting the reader through natural woods and enchanting drum beats. *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land* (2003) by Mamang

Dai describes the land of Arunachal Pradesh to her readers. This brilliantly drawn book reveals the extraordinary beauty of this landscape, exposing a people that have lived in complete harmony with their unique surroundings since the beginning of time. The book also strives to capture the diverse tribal groups' rich oral traditions in this fascinating, forbidden land. Dai felt like it was a forbidden due to its huge mountain that surrounds the land. She chronicles the history of this slowly changing area, attempting to combine literary and historical facts in a thoughtful manner. The balance of power changes towards storytelling, despite the fact that it is a non-fiction work. She expresses her profound love for this place and its inhabitants. This book is a recollection of her travel history which infact helps in the preservation of the rich cultural history of Arunachal Pradesh. She believes that the isolation of Arunachal Pradesh must have been instrumental for its survival despite the harsh terrain and with not much contact as she explains “a way of life was established that enabled the different communities to survive in a harsh terrain for centuries with very little contact with the outside world”. Her travel journal captures the insights of the land. The land has changed with modernisation and development but she strives for a counter-narrative to the mainstream portrayal of indigenous people and their rituals as totemic and taboo.

Dai's employs visual illustrations in *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land* for better understanding of the regional area. The numerous pictures that are on the book were from her travel journey as she started writing it. This illustration is another form of technique to engage the readers' interest. This book does not contain high vocabulary like her poems or fiction but is written in the colloquial language. The simple and standard language is adopted to provide information and help understand her people. Dai incorporated several mythical tales into her text as the Arunachali's

have huge belief in myths. She uses story-telling as a means to give voice to the hitherto ignored past of her tribal community. Many stories which were only told through mouth, Dai collected as many as possible and incorporated it into her book. The earth and sky origin myth presents a range of magical narratives that reconstruct the area and highlight its fundamental relationships with nature. Sanyü and Dai shares the similarity in their idea of preserving culture and one's identity. Their writings are from the recollections and revisiting of memories. Dai's book is based on her travel notes and communication with tribals while Sanyü's book is pouring of his personal experiences throughout his life's journey. Mamang Dai even provides facts about her place. Her book can act as a guide for tourists or foreigners who wants to visit the land as she writes not just myths but also documented with details the places and its richness. In the chapter "Factfile" from this text *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land*, she has scripted down the various places of Arunachal Pradesh and the requirements necessary for visiting her place. For example:

SELA PASS: At 14,000 ft, this is the crossing over into Tawang. The route traverses through Nuranang which offers snow and rainbow trout fishing. On the highest point along the Bomdila – Tawang road at 14,000 ft lies Sela lake, a high altitude lake of crystal clear water. Alpine Flora in season turns the area into a carpet of flowers while rhododendron of all hues add to the spectacular landscape. (127)

PANGKA TENG TSO: At 3500 mts, this high altitude lake is 20 kms from Tawang toward the international border. Beautiful fir forests and alpine vegetation surround it. (128)

Many other places are mentioned by Dai in this chapter as she presents a portfolio about her indigenous land and its beauty. This book can serve as a guide and pamphlet for tourist visiting Arunachal Pradesh. Besides that, she can be considered as an ecological writer as most of her writings focus on painting the biodiversity of the land as she states, “the serene landscape of old pines and high peaks is silent and haunting” (134)

Dai also incorporated old sayings in her writings to emphasize on the past beauty and importance of the land. These old sayings are their expression of love for the homeland which has provided and sheltered the indigenous community and is dearly valuable to the people. The old sayings hold significant and universal values. An instance:

Land is life,

When there is no land

How can a man survive, and what is the use

Of living without land?

(Old Wancho saying)

(123)

Another example is that of a canopied memorial to the Indian war dead in 1962 that was erected, decades back, adjacent to the airstrip, with the following inscriptions made by a Walong veteran engraved on it:

The sentinel hills that round us stand

bear witness that we loved our land.

Amidst shattered rocks and flaming pine

we fought and died on Namti Plain.

O Lohit gently by us glide

pale stars above us softly shine

as we sleep here in sun and rain

(134)

The book *Beyond Counter Insurgency: Breaking the Impasse in Northeast India* (2009) by Sanjib Baruah is a collection of essays from several writers who poured in their thoughts and ideas of the insurgency. In this particular collection of essays, the analysis were based on the critical study insurgency and conflicts through text like that of the true narrative of Samiran Borua Aahi Aase (Samiran Borua is on His Way), Bandiyar (The Captor), Changlot Fenla (Changlot means revolution and Fenla means soldier) in chapter 5 titled “Writing Terror: Men of Rebellion and Contemporary Assamese Literature” by Rakhee Kalita and the adoption of field study like that of Maniko Kimura who personally visited and communicated with the participants of the riot of Nellie Massacre as seen in chapter 9, “Agency of Rioters: A Study of Decision-making in the Nellie Massacre, Assam, 1983”. In the recent years, India’s policy towards Northeast has seen significant shift. However the issue of armed civil conflict and ways to manage, solve them is still pending. This book discusses how national politics and the realm of armed rebellions connect in intricate

ways, establishing a sense of the region's rich and dynamic political dialogue. Several authors claim that only focused efforts to build the rule of law, a system of accountability, and faith in government institutions can break the cycle of violence. The complex relationship of the Indian government and the armed insurgents is brought forward to the readers without romanticising. The factual points are made in this collection. It discusses the shortcomings, the problems and root causes of the problem. This discussion may provide the readers to think and absorb the facts and confusion of the Northeast India.

This book provides open room for more rational and logical thinking over the issue of the never ending conflict between the insurgent groups and the Government. The chapters cover a wide range of topics, such as the multidimensional nature of the situation in the Northeast and the connection of the progressive politics and the armed conflict. The Naga war and its nation-building project are covered in detail. It has been discussed how the Northeast figures in postcolonial India's national consciousness, how Assamese society interacts with the term "terrorist," and how state-society disputes are mitigated in Mizoram. In Mizoram, the role of ideas in conflict resolution and an alternative vision of development have been debated. The writers use rhetorical questions to challenge the minds of the readers into thinking deeper and provide answers to the questions themselves. The writers do not wish to impose their concept or thoughts to their audience but rather focus on the issues and problems. They make attempts to stitch the broken pieces of thoughts and present to the readers so that they understand the conflicts. Their collection invites one to ponder on the problems and causes and stand for the logical solution and reinstating faith in the government. The writers in this book belong to various fields of study. David Ludden (Professor of History, New York University) simply states that "*Beyond*

counter-Insurgency is a model of creatively engaged and academically astute public intellectual work.”

Temsula Ao is a well known figure in Naga literature who has contributed a lot in this field. She is best known for her poems and short stories which narrates many tales about the Nagas and their way of life. She has also contributed in non-fictional writings. *On Being a Naga: Essays (2014)* by Temsula Ao is a compilation of essays where she discusses the Nagas way of life, particularly the Ao Nagas. The work analyses "the dichotomies in Naga life and lore" challenging readers to reconsider and re-evaluate Naga ideas and beliefs and principles. In this work of art she attempts to look beyond the political conflict of the Nagas which is mainly talked about and focuses to reveal the Nagas' unique sociopolitical-cultural heritage, which has been shattered by the consequences of invasion, modernity, and globalisation. The book is also crucial in the understanding of tribal women writing which not only re-evaluates women's position in the tribal society but also promotes the subject of women writing as a tribal woman. Through her essay she encourages the equal representation or voices of women to be written as well as the true representation of Naga community rather than the outside view from people who don't know about the actual Naga. The book paints a picture of Naga society in all of its facets. The articles also reveal how a Naga woman uses this enhanced culture as a source of writing, allowing her to establish a place for self-awareness as a woman and as a tribal woman writer.

A recurring element in Northeastern literatures is the use of rich oral traditions to enhance written literature. Oral tradition is a link to a past that has long been overlooked and lost. Before writing became a thing, the ancestors stored folklores,

myths, traditions, adventurous stories, tales, and legends through oral in the form of songs, ritual chants, poems, proverbs and everyday life. It was a practice of passing down from generations to generations. Through the rich tradition of oral literature, the Northeast indigenous population preserved their history and culture. With British invasion and Indian invasion into the Northeast region, many practices have been altered and lost. The present generation felt disconnected to the past. However in the contemporary times, there has been a rise of interest in the oral traditions being incorporated in the writing literature. Tilottoma Misra, in his introductory note for the two books *The Oxford Anthology of Writing from North-East India* (2011) remarks about the Northeast literature:

An intense sense of awareness of the cultural loss and recovery that came with the negotiation with 'other' cultures is a recurrent feature of the literatures of the seven north-eastern states. (Misra xiii)

Temsula Ao observes that the emerging trends of looking into the past will help writers find themselves:

By incorporating insights from their oral tradition, the North East Indian writers are not only writing orality but also creating a new literature of their own in a language which though not their own, nevertheless lends a kind of universality to the literature. By blending the elements of oral tradition with their creative imagination and synthesizing the past with the present, these writers are exploring an exciting and derivative

literature which is both oral and written at the same time. (Ao
107-108)

N. Scott Momaday, a Native American writer, believes that the oral tradition of the people is the wellspring of all literature. He describes:

The oral tradition is that process by which the myths, legends, tales and lore of a people are formulated, communicated and preserved in language by word of mouth as opposed to writing. Or it is a collection of such things. (167)

Oral tradition emphasizes self-identity and preserves a certain community's social organisations, religious rituals, ethical beliefs, and customary rules. Orality is a complicated phenomenon with its own range of expression and communication techniques. In this oral traditions, there is a whole lot of informations, ideas, collections, knowledge and religious beliefs. G.P. Singh says:

The oral literature or the traditional literature transmitted to us from generation to generation represents the most valid and appropriate expression of religions, mythological, historical and cultural milieu of the rural folk. It was the only form of literature that existed among the tribal society as a vehicle of expression. (Sen 226)

Dr. Dai shares stories outside official documentation as she interacts with the tribals and garners information from the old and tribal communities. She travelled around and had multiple communications and conversation with them to know the

truth and sufferings. These are done orally. There are numerous records of British invasion, wars and the struggle for independence, but there is very little about what the tribals went through. It is said that young men from all the villages were recruited into the armed force to serve as porters, guides and informants. The chapter “the Gifts of God” are all oral folktales of the gods, from the story of the two suns to the story of the gift of salt to the story of opium. These stories are being transmitted to the younger generations and thus was generally accepted. These tales are told to explain various phenomena. It is believed that the gift of salt was from the god Mathum Matta. The god gave the first people a bamboo cane as they came down from the mountains of Himalayas on ladders made of gold and silver. A girl called Chum-Machan came out of the bamboo tube when opened. Her entire body was made of salt. Another tale is that of opium being grown from the dead body of a beautiful girl who died out of weariness of too many suitors. Those lovers who could not be with her while she was alive used the fruits that came out of her body. This opium poppy was used for medicinal purposes. Today the young generation are getting addicted to this opium and the cultivation of poppy for money has become prevalent.

From the text of Mamang Dai *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land* it is visible that her land is full of myths like other Northeastern states which were passed on orally. The myths are treasure house of the creative art of imagination of its tribal people. These myths are incorporated into her writings. She also opines while talking about her tribal people origin story “Most of the migratory routes of the tribes are largely traced through the oral literature of each tribe, though very often the names of places recorded in memory in the form of legends cannot be identified with anything recorded in the maps”. It is through oral literature, one is able to connect with the past and relive the rich history of the regional people. The legendary tales of the origin of

the Arunachal tribes is unknown, but they believed that they came from the triangle, while in Nagaland, the Ao tribes believed to have originated from six stones. The mythical tales seems to be unimaginably true and out of the box or magical. Through narrative songs, the creation of the world, the birth of man, and all the gods and goddesses. This was the literature for them. All Adi spiritual and mythical beliefs are expressed through Aabangs, which are sung by a shaman priest or a miri. It is through memory and oral practices that traditions are learned. Mamang Dai includes those chants into her book *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land*:

The Role of Memory

Ngitomem atbito, soyolo atbito,

Dolila dosuto, dolila dosuto

Doyingem dosuto ngo.

Sedikem atbito, soyolo ngo.

Dolila dosuto, dolila dosuto

Ngitomem dosuto ng!

(Dai 86)

The English translations goes:

All the words were written

They were written on dried skins,

All the songs were written

They were written on dried skin

But I was hungry, but I was hungry,

I ate the story. Alas!

I, myself, have eaten all the stories

(86)

Ocean of Melodious Purity

White crane!

Lend me your wings,

I will not fly far

From Lithang, I shall return.

(Song of the Sixth Dalai Lama)

(81)

The writers in their texts had feminist perspective in their writing styles too. Through their writings, the women representation or the role of women is studied. Feminism refers to a broad spectrum of political forces, doctrines, and social movements with the purpose of defining, establishing, and achieving gender equality in political, economic, personal, and social matters. Feminism's core concept is that women should be treated equally and fairly in all aspects of life. The females in the selected text *A Naga Odyssey: My Long Way Home*, *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land*, *Beyond Counter Insurgency: Breaking the Impasse in Northeast India* and *On Being a Naga: Essays* represent the face of the society of the Northeast region.

The Naga society is a patriarchal society so naturally women in this society faces marginalization, suppression and looked down upon. In rituals, ceremonies, celebrations or any rights, men of the society is given first privilege. In Sanyü's *A Naga Odyssey* the practices of the society shows how women were treated. The author simply presents facts and the actual practices without any intention of hatred. The societal norms of the Nagas gave very little freedom to the Naga women. For instance, women had to follow certain rules and norms of hair growing process to prove their status. Such practices shows the control over women:

...shaved her head like every other Naga girl after reaching puberty, which was a symbol of her virginity. All young women remained shaven until their marriage, usually from seventeen to nineteen years old. (Sanyü 32)

This practice openly deteriorates a women's marriage status. Some in order to avoid being shamed of staying shaven because of their increasing age, choose men of lower status or older men to stop shaving and grow their hair. This process is known as hair growing marriage. Those girls with long hair who gave birth to children without marriage and spinsters are often tagged as Kethamia. During festivals, womenfolk stayed home to prepare food in the kitchen. The author's father strictly believed in the traditional practices despite the period of transition that came along with Christianity. The girls started going to schools but those were from the families who converted to Christianity. He and his brothers went to school but due to the father's view his sisters were not allowed. But with time and changes, the societal norms began to degrade. His sisters provided him inspirations and advices and uplifted his spirit. This portrays a strength of the female community as he says his sister would encourage him whenever he is feeling low and be his source of strength: my sisters would say: "When you leave the jungle and get an education, you can fly an aeroplane, you can dig oil and become rich." (58)

Zorampari (Pari), his wife is a strong representation of womenfolk. She had her education (Master's degree), independent. She acted as a typist, editor and critic for Sanyü's thesis which he continued after marriage. Her role as a mother and wife is commendable. The new journey in Australia was hard but they both took up small menial jobs to survive despite their high degree as they were migrants.

Pari walked each day to collect Siezo from the kindergarten in the middle of the day. She often carried him halfway home as he was tired after the morning's kindergarten... On one occasion when Kevisato's shoes split, Pari taped the upper to the sole and covered it with black boot polish, but it soon split again. (196)

There were many other independent woman mentioned in this text. Those mothers who willingly helped them as they were settling in Australia, the woman parishioner Meewon and his daughter Visopiano with an independent mind who has taken up medical profession and is completely independent. These changes shows that with development, the status of women is changing and becoming better.

Temsula Ao is one of the leading feminist authors in Naga literature. She, along with Easterine Kire, Nini Lungalang have strongly raised issues concerning women and have not shied away from encouraging young upcoming authors to do so. Her literary works have always shown interest in the womenfolks and their strength. Through her writings, she In Temsula Ao's *On Being A Naga*, she dedicated a chapter "Gender and Power: Women-Centered Narratives from Ao-Naga Folklore" to study the womenfolks of the past. In this chapter, her main focus is on the myths that actually praised or contains strong, independent women. She stresses that there are narratives which depicts women as strong characters and women-centered narratives. One strong personality is that of Akangla who is considered a heroine. She helped the Longkhum warriors who were unable to defeat the Nokrang though they were strong capable warriors. The Longkhum warriors had to face failure because of the fierce dogs of the Nokrang warriors, those dogs caused huge chaos and wreaked havoc.

Therefore when Akangla was informed of this, she calmly advised the women in the village to bring the hairs that fell off while washing their hairs and ordered them to mix it with rice and roll them into a tight ball. These were distributed among the warriors and Akangla instructed them to throw it when the dogs come attacking. They did so as Akangla's advice and these rice balls with hairs distracted the dogs. As the dogs became busy in untangling the hairs and sticky, the Longkhum warriors fiercely killed the dogs, easily defeated the enemies and took home many heads as trophies (Head Hunting). The Longkhum warriors acknowledge her act and called her a Wise Woman. To this day many folk songs and ballads are sung about her wisdom. Within her clan, the name Akangla has been passed down for generations and will continue to be handed down for generations to come. It's not just that, but her name contains the history of Longkhum's triumph over Nokrang.

With the narratives of Akangla who is an example of brain over strength, Yajangla who had supernatural power which is the ability to transform into a tigress and perform miracles and the broken doa story where the wife successfully, uses her sexuality to escape from her husband's wrath, Temsula Ao highlights some broad issues about what it means to be a woman in patriarchal society while also addressing some underlying misconceptions regarding gender prejudice in human society's power structure. She believes that the "definition of woman, as a weaker sex, is a male construct; advocated and enforced by man to perpetuate his superiority and prestige in society." (Ao 82-83)

In *Beyond Counter-Insurgency: Breaking the Impasse in Northeast India*, Ananya Vajpeyi portrayed the naked protest of the Manipur women as an example of the bare life of the Northeast. The brutal rape and death of Manorama led to a group

of women in Manipur to come out on the streets naked and show their resentment against the inhumane act, in front of the Assam Rifles Headquarters as this insane crime was committed by the Rifles personnel, under the pretext of AFSPA. This AFSPA act has crippled the life of the population of Northeast because it deprived the people of civil rights, protection, freedom and even the basic human rights. The Manipur women's protest on July 15 encapsulates the reality of what it means to be stripped to bare life, and turns the naked body into a metaphor of society robbed of rights and left vulnerable to the whims of sovereign power. The naked body is the ideal representation of this political state of rightlessness, humiliation and life stripped bare of democracy's civilities and powers:

The citizens of the Northeast living under the writ of the AFSPA and in the exception to the rule of law have no rights; it was to make this condition visible to the eye and apparent to the mind that the dozen women gathered at Kangla without clothes, bare life parading as bare life, rightless and resentful. (Baruah 41)

Mamang Dai can be considered an ecological author since most of her works focus on the natural environment. She grabs every opportunity to appreciate the beautiful landscapes of Arunachal Pradesh. Her fictional works, poetry and Non-fictional work concentrates on the ecological environment as she stresses on the importance of preservation and conservation of the land. Human civilisation advancement has completely destroyed these pristine surroundings, leaving them hardly visible through the trails of adventurers and colonial power. Mamang Dai's works appear as Arunachal Pradesh's silent whispers. She carefully works to remove

the stones of historical past in addition to exploring her home's hidden locations. She is not afraid to describe realistically the struggles and challenges she experiences in her place. She provides a historical overview of this gradually evolving land *In Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land*, attempting a deliberate mixtures of historical and literary facts. Despite being a nonfiction work, the balance of power shifts towards storytelling. She expresses her deep love for this place and its people as she writes, "The land was our birthplace. We worked the land and where we were was our home" (Dai 9).

Through these excellent writing techniques or style, the writers of the select texts contribute to the preservation and restoration of the Northeast society. They attempt to break down the walls of the misunderstandings and paint a picture of the actual Northeast to the world. Be it about the political instability or the beauty of the region or the shortcomings in the practices, everything is placed on the works without trying to manipulate or corrupt the minds of the readers in general. The writers meticulously portray the authenticity of the Northeast history, emotions, determination and perseverance. Through their writings we can see how the bruised Northeast society is trying to survive and co-exist with the present situations served to them. Each writer used free form of writing, simple language and different techniques to make their works interesting. Dai used numerous pictures for better understanding as well as myths. Visier divided his chapters according to his birth till present, however it is a Stream of Consciousness text because it would jump from one topic to another but keeping the readers engaged. Ao separated her essays to discuss on different topics which are interlinked as it talks about the Nagas as a whole. The Northeast writers have begun to mark their presence in the literary world with their own unique and distinct styles.

CHAPTER IV: TRACES OF MODERNISM AND POST MODERNISM IN NON FICTIONAL PROSE WRITINGS FROM NORTH-EAST

Modernism

Modernism was a cultural movement that began in the late nineteenth century as a result of a fundamental change in consciousness and a drastic alteration of social circumstances. This era began to break away from the old traditional norms of the Victorian age. The school of thought rejected the Victorian standards in all the fields of art, painting, sculpture, literature and science. They collectively sought to look into the world with renewed minds and break free from the restricted rules. Modernism was a reaction of industrialization, development in technology and science and the world wars. In modernist literature, continuous storylines, set points of view, and clear-cut moral attitudes were removed from. They used paradox, irony, and ambiguity as techniques to portray their ideas. The modernist perspective was theoretical, logical and analytical. Some of the great writers of modernism are T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf. Stream of Consciousness technique was introduced in this period. Disillusionment and fragmentation are also mirrored in their work. The sociologist Georg Simmel succinctly captures the general thematic interests of Modernist literature:

The deepest problems of modern life derive from the claim of the individual to preserve the autonomy and individuality of his existence in the face of overwhelming social forces, of historical heritage, of external culture, and of the technique of life (The Metropolis and Mental Life, 1903).

Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane in their text *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature, 1890-1930* suggest:

Modernism is our art [because] it is one art that responds to the scenario of our chaos. it is the art consequent on Heisenberg's 'Uncertainty principle', of the destruction of civilization and reason in the First World War, of the changed and reinterpreted by Marx, Freud and Darwin, of capitalism and constant industrial acceleration, of existential exposure to meaninglessness or absurdity. It is the literature of technology. It is the art consequent on the dis-establishing of communal reality and conventional notions of causality, on destruction of traditional notions of the wholesomeness of individual character, on the linguistic chaos that ensues when public notions of language have been discredited and when all realities have become subjective fictions. Modernism is then the art of modernization. (Bradbury and McFarlane, 27)

Modernism was a movement that intended to criticise man's irrational and subjective intellect. The goal of modernism was to find fresh views to serve as a foundation for their knowledge, that is, to disapprove of man's unreasonable reasoning. It challenged the social, political and religious systems. Modernism was inspired by feelings of isolation, loss, and sorrow. It emerged largely as a result of the displacement created by World War I. The so-called "lost generation" of artists felt especially isolated from the rest of the society. The modern state is seen as one of alienation, as a ceaseless onslaught of sound, knowledge, and danger. The

preconceived sense of purpose and consistency was shattered and divided. Modernism was an attempt to convey this emotion of fragmentation and social isolation through art. Modernist literature is characterized by a strong melancholy, a blatant abandonment of Victorian literature's enthusiasm in preference of depicting isolated or disordered inhabitants in a primarily urban and fractured environment. Some of the well-known writers of modernism are T.S. Eliot, [William Faulkner](#), James Joyce, Ezra Pound, Virginia Woolf, Franz Kafka, Katherine Mansfield, Joseph Conrad, William Butler Yeats, Ernest Hemmingway, Gertrude Stein, Wallace Stevens, Gottfried Benn, T. S. Eliot, Anna Akhmatova, William Faulkner, Dorothy Richardson and John Cowper Powys.

In contrast to Victorian and Romantic poetry, Modernism was characterised by a preference for fragmentation, free verse, contradictory allusions, and numerous points of view. Modernism is a lamenting literature, perpetually grieving the terrible and devastating loss of the golden age of belonging and togetherness. Reality and Beauty can still be seen in Modernism's art, but only through the changing facades of broken pieces piled upon human destruction. Many Modernist masterpieces, such as T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), are distinguished by the absence of any focal, heroic figure at all, with the narrative and narrator collapsing into a jumble of broken fragments and overlapped voices. Omniscient external narration, fixed narrative point of view, and fixed narrators points of view is absent from modernist literary texts, in terms of narrative approach. Language, on the other hand, is a crucial modernist strategy for distinguishing a literary piece from other texts. The emphasis in modern works of literature is on colloquial expressions rather than formal terminology. Modernist literary writings display a growing preference for broken structures and fragmented narratives. As a result, modernism distinguishes itself from the preceding

literary tradition, which was reduced to cold formalism and traditionalism due to corruption, degradation, and disappointments in the postwar psyche of the Western people.

Post Modernism

Post Modernism is a reaction to modernism which emerged after the Second World War. While modernism tried to detached itself from the old traditions, Post modernism is a mixture of all the past traditions and the present. In 1979, with the publication of Jean-François Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition*, the term "postmodernism" was first used. Postmodernism is correlated to the post-World War II age's power shifts and dehumanisation, as well as the onslaught of consumer capitalism. It has often been said that postmodernism is at once a continuation of and a break away from the modernist stance," observes [Nasrullah Mambrol of "Literariness."](#) Post Modernism techniques comprised of fragmentation, intertextuality, unreliable narrator, parody, dark humor and paradox. The thinking of the postmodern age was centered on an irrational, unscientific thought process. Postmodernism was centered on an irrational, unscientific thought process. It was based on subjective perspective. The acknowledgment of the sophisticated nature of reality and experience, the role of time and memory in human understanding, the self and the world as historical structures, and the problematic nature of language, as expressed in the writings of Beckett, Robbe Grillet, Borges, Marquez, Naguib Mahfouz, and Angela Carter, is at the heart of postmodern literature.

The difference between high and low forms of art and literature, as well as the separation between genre and forms of writing and story-telling, are commonly discarded in post-modern literature. In modernism, the writers searched for solutions

for the people who lost faith in the past beliefs. Post modernism ceased to search for solution and believed to be aware of the situations which is a rebellion on its own. Hyper- reality is introduced in this era. They believed that there is no universal truth and no absolute truth but many truths. The world, according to postmodern philosophy, is hard to precisely define or comprehend. According to postmodern philosophy, knowledge and facts are constantly relative to certain conditions, and it is both foolish and impossible to try to assign precise meaning to any ideas, concepts, or events. They rejected grand narratives and meta narratives. The variety of human experience and the multiplicity of interpretations are highlighted in postmodernism. Modernism and Post Modernism voices out the insecurities, chaos and fragmentation of the society as both periods originated due to the First and Second World War. Though both Modernism and Postmodernism embrace fragmentation, discontinuity, and decentredness in theme and technique, this is where the fundamental difference between the two movements resides. Modernism regards the contemporary world's fragmentation and decentredness as tragic. It asserts that works of art could rebuild the unity, integrity, continuity, and significance that have been lost in modern life. Whereas in Post Modernism, fragmentation and confusion is not considered tragic instead it is celebrated or accepted. These theorists continue to live with the chaos and make no attempt to escape it. As the two World Wars has deeply affected and bruised the human population. Many system and institutions faltered and were destroyed. The normal human world completely changed drastically. This eventually led to alienation and despair. It was a broken world where modernists felt hopeless and laments over the loss.

Whereas in the post modernism era, people were tired of lamenting over the loss and felt the need to embrace those despair, chaos and fragmented society. It does not aim to give solution but speaks of the solution to show their awareness of all situations. Postmodernism prefers to focus on the outside image and resists drawing conclusions or inferring underlying meanings from objects and events' interiors. Thomas Pynchon, Joseph Heller, John Barth, Vladimir Nabokov, Umberto Eco, Jacques Derrida, Jean Baudrillard, James Francois Lyotard, Fredric Jameson, Reisman, Jürgen Habermas were some writes of Post Modernism. Jorge Luis Borges was one of the first postmodernist writers. Borges' work, which was almost entirely comprised of short stories, explores philosophical themes as well as the boundaries of time and space, all without leaving the reader with any sense of a central theme or meaning. His famous work *Library of Babel*, a 1941 short fiction, presents a library full of everything that has ever been and will ever be written (the concept of everything that could ever happen has happened is very postmodern), where visitors from all over gather to try to find meaning. They never do, unsurprisingly. The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism states that:

Nowadays, the term postmodernism in a general sense is to be regarded as a rejection of many, if not most, of the cultural certainties on which life in the West has been structured over the last couple of centuries. It has called into question our commitment to cultural 'progress' (...), as well as the political systems that have underpinned this belief. Postmodernists often refer to the 'Enlightenment project', meaning the liberal humanist ideology that has come to dominate Western culture since the eighteenth century; an ideology that has striven to bring about the emancipation of mankind from economic want and political oppression. (Sim 24)

An important aspect of postmodern literature is fragmentation. Throughout the work, various aspects regarding plot, characters, themes, imagery, and factual references are fragmented and dispersed. In broad sense, there is a disrupted sequence of events, personality development, and action that may appear modern at first glance. Northeast society is a fragmented society. It also suffers from the fragmentation, alienation and despair. Northeast like the western world makes attempts to survive and rebuild the society. Writers of this region also adapted to the technique of Stream of consciousness, free verse and speak on alienation and despair. While also lamenting over the loss of traditions or past, there is also glimpse of acceptance and celebration of the world as it is. The Northeast is a chaotic region due to the political differences. Writers point out the loss of faith in one's own community and feeling of being isolated. The selected texts have traces of modernism and post modernism in their writings. Naga writer Visier Sanyü in his book *A Naga Odyssey* talks of the issues faced by the Naga society. He points out how the Naga society is divided and filled with tensions, laments over the loss of the past world as he steps into a new world after living in the jungle for two years. He cries over the disorientation of the society when he said "I was now living in two worlds and finding it more difficult to manage the two in tension" (Sanyü 76). He talks about loss of the old practices of the Angami Nagas, one of the major tribes in Nagaland which are no longer in practice due to various limitations and the advent of modernisation. Through his writings, one can feel the longing and separation that he felt for home. His journey had been an upheaval from his childhood to his adulthood. He had to flee to the jungle at a young age and even while returning to the village after living in the jungle for two years, he wrote how he was forced into a new system as he later on he flew to another country-

Australia tried to adapt to the new society. In this book the author recollects his journey and laments over the loss of the peaceful society.

The feeling of alienation is a major theme in modernism as seen in the poem of T.S.Eliot *The Waste Land*. The fragmented world leads to a sense of disillusion and alienated feelings. The Northeast writings have always focused on this main theme, the feeling of alienation especially after Indian Independence. With the freedom from colonial rule, there was a huge social unrest with the unification of Indian states. Due to cultural and racial differences, the Northeasterns felt alienated which still continues. Despite the control of the Indian government over the Northeast regions, issues of oneness were a big question. While insurgent groups created huge political unrest, the common population felt trapped to even live a normal life. For those who wished for normalcy, the alienated feeling became a huge part in their life. In *A Naga Odyssey: My Long Way Home*, the author narrates the conversation between him and an Indian woman passenger on a Thai Airways flight journey that left him baffled and alienated:

An Indian woman next to me asked me where I was from. I replied: 'I'm from Australia.' She asked many questions about Australia, but finally said: 'Oh, but you must have migrated from Malaysia to Australia, you're not real Australian'. I replied: 'No, I migrated from Nagaland, I'm Naga'. 'Ohhh', she said, 'you're just a Naga!' She added: 'I'm a professor, I teach a lot of Naga students, and I help them, you know, because they are weak in studies'. She virtually stopped talking to me. I was no longer interesting as she thought I was from a lower caste. (Sanyü 147)

This incident shows that the lady was welcoming and talked with him before she knew where he was from but dropped her courtesy when she came to know he was from Nagaland, Northeast India. She already had prejudiced thoughts about Nagas, calling them weak learners and stopped conversing with him which proves that the author was not welcomed but left alienated. This feeling of alienation led to identity crisis as he begins to question his own identity and heritage when he writes: “As a young Naga I had been very confused. In some ways we were part of India, but we were not Indian. We fought for independence, but we are not independent...The Nagas were also part of Burma, now Myanmar, but were not Burmese. For the colonised person there was and always is this conflict of ideas, of identity, about who you are. It is very big conflict, a crisis in your inner being.” (148)

While also lamenting over the loss faced by the society, he gathers himself and celebrates the fragmentation of the society by accepting the situation and celebrating the society as it is. He questions and makes his reader know that he is aware of the fragmented society as he decides to return to his Home from Australia. Though the social and political conditions uprooted and disturbed his physical and mental health, and scarred him for life, he longed to be back home because he fits in it perfectly. This act of returning home symbolises him making peace with the unrest and embracing the fragmented, disturbed society though the situation never calmed down after his flight to Australia, he learned being angry would not help but reconciliation and forgiveness heals the situation as he state: “And so my odyssey, and that of the Naga, continues from the indecipherable present into unknown future. But at least it will be played out for me on my Naga soil and amidst my Healing Garden” (287). The author makes peace with the tormented, fragmented world like the post modernists writers who accept their fate and enjoy the disrupted world.

Thus, modernism and post modernism traits are seen in his story that laments and celebrate the fragmentation, alienation and despair, and in his use of Stream of Consciousness technique.

Another Naga author, Temsula Ao's in her essays *On Being A Naga: Essays*, she also laments and celebrates the chaotic society where she recollected the practices of the Nagas, particularly the Ao Nagas. The author pinpoints its goodness and negative effects on the society. In this book, she presents the society of Naga as a society with so much changes that it has lost the essence of its own culture caused by the disruption of the political riots and the coming of modernisation. As she presents the Myths in the chapter titled Ao- Naga Myths in Perspective, she recollects that the traditions that once ruled the society could no longer be enjoyed or believed with the development of science and technology or scientific logical reasonings. In her essays, she laments over the past by bringing to the readers the rich practices, beliefs of the society and also celebrates the new world as she talks of the emerging new changes and adaptations of the new ways by the Naga society in her chapter the 'New Literature from North-East'. In this she states "The new landscape of the mind being etched by writers of the North-East is that new space where fair maidens from our past are resisting the obsessive forces of modernity by brandishing their mystical hairpins at them to ward off the evil intents of the demon!" (Ao). Her fear is that of globalisation taking over the true value of tribal identity which is the whole essence of being a Naga.

Sanjib Baurah's collection of essays from various writers also speaks on the society's confusion, the drawbacks and the political policy. The contributors attempt to provide wider aspects of the problem. They are aware of the fact that while they desire to have solution, they know that the problems would not come easy. Each writer talks of the problem in the region lamenting over the loss of peace. They desire for oneness or unity in the society while trying to dictate the reason of the problem and place it to the readers. However each one knows that the divided society will take its own course to heal and reach its unity among the ideologies of the insurgent groups and the Indian Government. These essays are written in free form as it is a nonfiction genre. Like the post modernists writers, there is intertextuality in each of their writings as they talk of not one but many stories related to the topic. The book *Beyond Counter-Insurgency: Breaking the Impasse in Northeast India* is not a solution to the problems but aims at providing better resources in understanding and accepting the fragmented, disoriented society. *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land* speaks on the beauty, myths of the land. The author Mamang Dai tries to relive the society of the past and dwell into the traditions by taking the readers to the once isolated land. As a modernists writer, she wishes for the restoration of the peaceful land which is corrupted by the infiltration of the society. And the book as post modernist studies, shows the recollection not as a source of lamentation but as that one of celebration. Dai's recollection of her aesthetic land and practices throws light on the attempt to live the society as the way it is. She shows no plans of altercating it but presents the land as it is to her readers while accepting the present world.

Though the genre being non-fiction, each book *On Being A Naga: Essays*, *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Place*, *Beyond Counter-Insurgency: Breaking the Impasse in Northeast India* and *A Naga Odyssey: My Long Way Home* employed the Stream of Consciousness technique in their writings. The stream-of-consciousness style is the most significant modernist technique. American Psychologist William James coined

the term “Stream of Consciousness” in his book *The Principals of Psychology* (1890). There is no one definition for Stream of Consciousness but M.H. Abrams terms it as “a mode of narration that undertakes to capture the full spectrum and flow of a character’s process, in which sense perceptions mingle with conscious and half conscious thoughts, memories, feelings and random associations” (Abram 164-165). The fragmented nature of modern man's mind is mirrored in this technique. It also allows the reader to get a glimpse within the character's mind. As seen by the writings, mind frequently swings from minor to major concerns, and vice versa. The writers simply talked of the minds to the readers without having to stress over the chronological order. This allowed them to express their minds freely. Stream of Consciousness is an important characteristic in modernism, introduced by Virginia Woolf. This technique ignores the orderly sentence formation or orderly way of narration but rather allows the free flow of emotions and thoughts. It can travel from past to present, from present to past and even future. There is no correct order of narrating the story to the readers. Flashbacks become a common occurrence in this type of writing. In *A Naga Odyssey: My Long Way Home*, Sanyü, though attempting to present his experiences from birth, he jumps to the past and provides not much chronological order since it is a recollection of his memories. For instance, he writes:

“ I joined the chase from the from the age of nine and brought back my share with pride. I remember on one hunt we were closer to the front runners, and my friend Viu, who is about two years older than me, was third to touch the deer. He gained an extra portion and gave me half of his share. I remember his words: ‘I’ll share with you today, as I am in third position’. He was clever boy, who became one of the highest

paid doctors in Nagaland, and later worked for the World Health Organization.” (Sanyü 75)

In *Beyond Counter-Insurgency: Breaking the Impasse in Northeast India* compiled by Sanjib Baruah, there is an absolute search for truth and finding solution to the chaotic instable political issue of the Northeast society as it mentions the now solved issue of Mizoram state and the most dangerous issue of the Naga Freedom Movement in the form of the insurgent groups. The writers bring forth the facts and issues causing the problems and hopes for a solution to end the fragmented and disoriented community. For instance, Bethany Lacina in the chapter “Rethinking Delhi’s Northeast India Policy (Why neither Counter-Insurgency nor Winning Hearts and Minds is the Way Forward)” believes that the Northeast issues can be solved as she concludes that “It should be the centre’s paramount goal to engage with the Northeast not as persistent security problem but as a region where it is determined to ensure that the elected government can and will enforce the rectitude of politicians, bureaucrats, security forces, and private actors. Only that shift can convince politicians, guerrillas, and civilians alike that the region is on a new and positive course.” (Baruah 342). The other writers in this book tries to provide information and solution to end the sufferings of the Northeast insurgency problem which has caused a great social unrest dividing the society and destroying peace like that of the World Wars faced by the western society. The bruised Northeast still succumbed to the injuries caused by the political instability, tries to survive in the changing world, while searching for the absolute truth and solution like the modernist writers. It aims to gain interests of the common population to rethink and believe in a better world with solution as Siddharth Varadarajan, a Strategic Affairs Editor, *The Hindu* sums up this book as “Between the apparent impossibility of peace through “reconciliation”

(Foreword) and victory through repression or terror, the book envisions the possibility of an open, more inclusive future.” making it a modernist text as they look for one truth and solution in the fragmented society.

The works, *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Place* written by Mamang Dai and *A Naga Odyssey: My Long Way Home* written by Visier Meyasetsu Sanyü inclines more toward the Post-modernists writings as the writers use colloquial language and disordered style of writing. They aim to present the region without having to feel devastation but rather enjoy the state of the situation and address issues. They address issues in order to make the readers understand the problems and reasons of the fragmented society but makes no attempt to provide solution or search for an absolute truth but look into the beauty of the society and enjoys the natural environment and the society as it is besides turbulent political disturbance. For example, their texts while discussing negative aspects do not fail to highlight the aesthetic beauty of the lands in terms of geography, people, myths, and abundant biodiversity. These aspects of the regional areas are what identifies and distinguish them from the rest of the country. The rich tradition and heritage is portrayed and painted with the simple use of language to the readers with the intentions to provide a realistic painting of the society without romanticising it. An example of finding joy and celebrating the fragmented society or finding normalcy in the disrupted society is when Sanyü states in his memoir (*A Naga Odyssey: My Long Way Home*) as he sits by the window on one morning:

I thought of that morning long ago in 1956 when I began the long road to manhood, just months before the Indian Army shattered our world, forcing us to leave Khonoma. As I sat and remembered, the vibrant green of the mountainside before me intensified, and with each passing moment overwhelmed me with its beauty. I was home! (Sanyü 282)

Mamang Dai attempts to recollect the beauty of Arunachal Pradesh in the ever changing environment due to developments and modernisation. In her text *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Place* the author stitches together the beautiful aspects of the land despite its deteriorating state in the present. She portrays the beautiful landscape of the tough land and the mythological beliefs which dominated the inhabitants. The coming of Christianity has abruptly changed the whole belief system but Mamang Dai brings it to the readers to enjoy and accept the beauty of the lands and traditions despite its ever changing state as she narrates mythical stories and the aesthetic landscapes of Arunachal Pradesh. *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Place* has no chronological order. She highlights that the tribe lived through centuries without harming the ecosystem but with modernisation it has changed completely when she states that it has come “clawing through the jungle and blowing mountains” (Dai 114), and accepts disrupting changes as she writes that with something new, there is concern of erosion of traditional values. This concerns and problems are not forgotten but adjusted.

Multiple Perspectives: Many modernist writers wrote in the first person with multiple characters to emphasize each character's subjectivity and to contribute meaningfully to the narrative by introducing a variety of perspectives. In fiction the

authors uses various characters to explain the plot. The characters viewpoints are made clear to the readers instead of only the protagonist minds and actions. This helps thicken the plot and makes it interesting as the readers begin to connect with the different characters and understand the plot and the characters deeply. In non-fiction, the authors employs this approach to help the reader understand the facts and gravity of the author's intentions

Sanyü's *A Naga Odyssey: My Long Way Home* uses the multiple perspectives technique to help readers understand the emotions of the author's experiences and narration. He, not only talked about himself or his struggles but gave insight of the other people in his life, particularly his children who made appearances in his book. He felt the need to let them speak for themselves rather than simply assuming their thoughts. Since this text is based on real events, he allows them to speak their minds and experiences in his book as he writes: "I will leave it to them to explain their feelings, each in turn, as to who they currently think they are; what they think of Australia; and where they might live" (265). In chapter 15, titled 'Where is Home', his children Kevisato, Visopiano and Siezo recounts their memories of their experiences and their thoughts on returning home, they talked about feeling of alienation and their home in Australia. It gives clearer idea of their sufferings and a dive into their minds as children of migrated and uprooted families caused by the political disturbances.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

With the Britishers leaving India, there came humungous joy and several painful events, especially in the Northeast region. While parts of India suffered the division of the Big Nation into two different countries, India and Pakistan, the Northeast areas were left shattered with most states feeling the need to be an independent nation. The desire to have an independent nation has since been rooted during the colonial rule. Never once did they feel united or integrated with the mainland India as they differ in varied ways. While the geographical locations isolated them from mainland India, the cultural practices, the ancestry and the language made them feel different and alienated.

The northeast community desired for freedom as their ancestors were free man. Until the British invasion, these lands were unknown to the world as they lived in hills surrounded by mountains and rivers. The Natural environment kept them safe and secure from the outside eyes. Britishers too had a tough time penetrating into these lands due to the thick, dangerous environment and the unwelcoming nature of the indigenous people. The writers portray both the negative and positive aspects of the regional areas. The dark and the mysterious life of these regional areas is not the only thing talked about. Mentions are made of its rich diversity, practices and various languages. The people from this region did not have normal and comfortable life like the other mainlanders, but they learned to live and enjoy in the turbulent situations. The political disturbance is far from solution in the disturbed areas as we can see that the different insurgent groups and the Indian Government is yet to arrive to a good conclusion with many insurgent groups or nationalist. Therefore this

regional areas are and will continue to live along with the problems and enjoy the rich nature, as Samir Kumar Das in the book *Beyond Counter-Insurgency: Breaking the Impasse in Northeast India* observes: “It is always a continuing war, a war of attrition that continues till the problem is politically served.” (Baruah 249)

In its attempt to explain the uniqueness of the society in the region, the writers also made the usage of native languages which clearly symbolized the distinct feature of writings from the Northeast. Several words used solely by the indigenous people also reflected in the writings giving a sense of its unique identity. These writings became a ray of hope for the region to be portrayed as it really is, besides the writer’s attempt to preserve and restore the Northeast society. The authenticity of the region and the struggle to survive and co-exist with the prevailing situations grew louder through the works of these writers.

It is evident that these regional writers continue to strive towards a better representation and painting of the actual Northeast. Through these writings, the distinct culture, and the sufferings are perfectly seen by the readers. The contemporary writings in Northeast region is witnessing a growth. The usages of native words are dominant as it helps keep the essence of the writings regional. It is through literature that the regional people are communicating with the outside world as there is numerous misconceptions about Northeast. A close review of Northeastern literature reveals a variety of topics relevant to the region's societies, but the most prominent are the current insecurity of social and political realities as a result of various forms of violence that have continued unabated in the region, and the growing reliance on oral tradition with the desire to boost in a form of cultural evolution. Esther Syiem summed up the emerging literary works as “a defiant gesture that

subverts the complacent realities... voices in the wilderness crying for sensitivity and compassion, and navigating the path beyond mere protest to a discovery of the humane and profound.” (Syiem 28-35)

Nature and environment play a significant role in North East Indian literature. The beauty of the region, which is rich in many types of flora and wildlife, mighty rivers, and towering mountain ranges, adds to the tribals of the North East's vivid culture and heritage. It demonstrates the region's ethnic variety. A few writers from the region have explored the interaction between man and nature in Indian English writing, particularly from the North East. Arunachal Pradesh community had many beliefs related to the natural environment, especially the religion Donyi-Polo. This ethic has been practised by the Adi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh in Northeast India for centuries. The Adis follow the 'Donyi-Polo' philosophy. They view all objects on earth like “[the] mountains and hills, the evergreen forest, the rushing rivers and rivulets, the animals and birds, the moving cloud and rain-fall, the shining objects in the sky” (Ering 35) as holy or sacred or profane. Under the leadership of the late Talom Rukbo, the Donyi Polo Yekam Kebang (DYK) introduced the 'Donyi-Polo Movement' in 1968 to show resentment against the “the policy of the Indian state and the interventions of Christian missionaries in the Adi inhabited areas” (Chaudhuri 261). It was felt that the advent of Christianity in the hills of Northeast India was taking a toll on the indigenous religions of the different tribal groups, and institutionalization is the only way to preserve such ancient faiths..Doyni-Polo is also the “origin of all things, beings, spirits, time and forces” (Borang 2011, p. 39). Anthropologist Verrier Elwin considers Doyni-Polo as a supreme deity who “is as important to man as the eye is to the body” (Elwin 1999, p. 31). Thus, Donyi-Polo has been ascribed as the watcher, witness, guide, and protector of the Adis. TheDonyi-

Polo worldview is also about maintaining an ecologically harmonious relationship among all creatures on earth. Poet and novelist Mamang Dai opines on what 'Donyi-Polo' means to the Adis: The traditional belief of the Adi community to which I belong is full of this union [between man and nature]. Everything has life - rocks, stones, trees, rivers, hills, and all life is sacred. This is called Donyi-Polo, literally meaning Donyi- Sun, and Polo-moon as the physical manifestation of a supreme deity, or what I like to interpret as 'world spirit.'(Dai 2009, n.p) Thus in the Adi worldview, the earth is a living being and all elements of nature are considered sacred and living. Most of her writings are from this religion.

The writers undoubtedly became a storyteller for the readers. They are like the 'Miri' in Dr. Dai's text *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land* who travel great distances to remind the people the importance and meaning of the rituals and maintain peace, harmony and understanding. They were the connecting link to the gods and goddesses and spirits. Likewise the writers have become the connecting bridge of the Northeast and the rest of the country. They write records of the past, the contemporary situation and bring out facts to the readers. They help the common people understand the regional society. They talked about the positive and negative aspects of the society to give clearer picture to the people who don't know about these regions and also to the young who have lost the sense of identity.

However, the present society is completely different from the past. Many of the youth failed to understand the roots of their own culture and neglects to the problems of the present society. The first chapter talks about the literature from Northeast which has garnered interest particularly after the 'Look East Policy'. The Northeast literature began or progressed slowly. It includes writings from all the

regional writers be it in English or their vernacular writings. It is learned that most literatures of Northeast were mainly unrecorded. It was primarily oral literature. Not much is in the official record. Even the study of Indian English literature doesn't speak on the Northeast writers. Therefore the writers are taking it upon themselves to create and talk about the history of Northeast. There are numerous writers in the fictional and poetry genres. These particular genres are flourishing. However the non-fiction genre is also existing with it side by side. This genre focuses more on facts and the serious issues by directly communicating with the readers. As the Northeast region is strongly affected by the political issues, insurgency is an evitable theme to talk about in Northeast writings. These writers from these region focus on the distinct culture, aesthetic environment and the cause of political unrest. The selected writers were introduced in this chapter.

In the second chapter, the thematic ideas of the Northeast writings were discussed. With the present situation being highly affected by insurgent groups, their ideologies and its relation with the Indian Government and its laws, it is evident that this political differences among the central government and the various insurgent groups have created a huge destruction to the lands and its people. The once peaceful lands were infiltrated with bloodshed, violence, hatred and distrust. It had made the innocent ordinary people run, hide and miss a normal growing process. They were left bruised and hurt. Many villages suffered burns and destruction. The lives of the people were miserable and difficult. Due to the unending social unrest, outsiders till this day have wrong ideas about the Northeast areas. With the tremendous development in the Northeast regions, these areas have also suffered the loss and degradation of the natural environment. At the same time, there are many areas which are yet to be known to the world. Nonetheless the authors beautifully painted the

regions in their own text as they discuss certain issues. We also learned that myths are an integral part of the tribal identity as it was through those mythologies, these ethnic groups were established and maintained. It contributed in maintaining harmony and creating religion. Through the writings, it is clearly seen that the indigenous society were strictly based on religious beliefs and they had strong faith. With the coming of Christianity, many tribals began to convert and live a new life. Significantly, the Donyi-Polo religion in the Adi tribes of Arunachal Pradesh still remains strong and is still believed in. The writers also used the native words from their own vernacular languages were incorporated into their writings to create a place for better understanding.

The third chapter solely focused on the writing techniques that the authors adopted. There is usage of narrative techniques. Stories were shared through narration. The non-fictional writings do not have much rules to apply to, so the selected texts were written in freeform. Stream of Consciousness technique was employed as the authors did not follow a chronological order. The readers were freely talked to through the minds of the writers. Since the texts are non-fictional writings, there are numerous facts applied and talked about. These facts are accurate as it is truly and personally experienced by the writers themselves. It had rhetorical questions which kept the readers engaged and interested in the factual texts. It talks about the importance of oral literature since Northeast writings are mostly based on this element. It is deeply rooted into the lives of the indigenous tribes that numerous information and knowledge were passed on orally. The present generation writers felt the need to write and document the oral literatures because it is getting lost in the heavy developmental advancements and the social unrest. It felt like these factors are silencing the oral narratives because once the elders who have various information

dies due to conflicts or natural cause, the tradition dies with them. The oral traditions are re-recorded to relive and understand one's identity and feelings for the state. The writers Dr. Dai and Temsula Ao employed the rich oral literatures into their texts to give information and create new link to the past from the present for a better understanding and acceptance of today's deteriorated society psychologically, environmentally and economically.

Fourth chapter incorporated the modernism and post- modernism theory into the research. The writings showed traces of both modernism and post-modernism. As both modernism and post-modernism talks about fragmentation, the writings too talked about issues of the fragmented society and the degradation. However like the post modernists writers, the writings portray the acceptance of the problem rather than questioning. It also questioned the fragmentation and loss of the society and tried to provide solution like the modernist. Since the selected texts are non-fictional, not many references could be made about the other techniques used. These writings also saw the use of Stream of Consciousness where the author jumps from one issue to another without following any particular order. They employed free form to express their ideas and experiences. Sense of disillusion is an indefinite theme as it talks about the real world. Though myths were used, the writers also provided facts and talked about the real world. They did not romanticize their writings but painted the reality into their texts. There was usage of multiple perspectives which modernists writers employ. More of modernism than post modernism is seen in these texts, probably because of the genre non- fiction.

In conclusion, the northeast writings do have potential in becoming established and strong in the game of literature. There are many unknown facts and

interesting imaginations of the authors and the indigenous people. The culture, the myths, beliefs, the hilly terrain and the ongoing political unrest makes the literature very distinct from Indian literature. The Indian writings are on the post colonial writings while the Northeast writings are about post-colonial rule and the colonial rule of the Indian Army. Most of these regions learned to write mainly during the colonial rule. The colonial writings were mainly about the coming of Christianity but it is the post-colonial era that triggered many scholars. Sufferings of these regions were ignored by the Government and thus, it led to huge differences. The Northeast regions had to demand for their rights to be noticed. The forced rule particularly the AFSPA rule, which is still in force, have wounded the society. At present, states like Nagaland openly despise the rule as a 'draconian' law despite the repeated extension of the Act by the Government.

However, despite all these sufferings, the regional areas continue to survive as many have learned to accept their fate while some remains unchanged and stays rooted in the ideologies. The voices for sovereignty were not only for want of power but because of negligence from the central government, like the Mizo insurgent group that was formed due to famine. The people sufferings in these regions were greatly ignored. Therefore it took violence to be noticed. These violent destruction and the environmental changes due to development has created concerns among the people. The writers felt the need to search for identity in their disrupted world and also act as a link between the tribals from the regions and the mainland Indians who were separated geographically.

The voices of contemporary English authors from India's Northeast are diverse and varied. It is both a reflection of a distinct artistic self and a narrative about the

inhabitants of the region as a whole. It gives a visual representation of the mountains, folklore, tradition, and the region's multi-ethnic population. It contains a wide scope of topics, including geography, politics, identity, traditional values and mythology which are disappearing in the fast changing world of modernization and westernization. The writers desire for a greater glory and better place to live in. They want to create a society that is understood and accepted with all its faults and shortcomings. They are the painters of the regions and thereafter attempt to give detailed information about the society. The scholars and writers are creating awareness and beginning to surge for the importance of the Northeast literature. Works of Northeast literature is being studied and critically analyzed by critics. Fiction and poetry have gained importance in Northeast literature. The Non-fictional writings are rarely touched topics because of the brutal facts and speaking against the government which may seem like anti- government. But it is through these writings that the actual reality is known. Through this research it is learned that literary critical analysis of the non-fictional writings are quite rare. Not much studies about the select texts could be found. This could have been because these are limited edition. It is important to study the non-fictional prose writings to have a better understanding of the fictional writings and poetry. The collection of Indian literature in a text hardly comprises of writings from Northeast.

These writers of Northeast are writing with intention. Their works present us with a multifaceted, captivating world of nature while also generating a conscious voice of resistance and assertion. Present English writing from India's Northeast deals with strongly advocates the preserving of history, cultural and traditional values and a sense of identity which differs them from the rest of India. This study shows more analysis needs to be made on the non-fictional genre for better understanding as they

contain facts, truth and true events personally experienced by the writers themselves. There is no exaggeration rather thoughts and experiences are carefully collected and presented to not sway the readers mind but provide more knowledge and deeper understanding of the Northeast regions. There are huge differences in cultural practices, norms, language and beliefs among the Northeast inhabitants themselves as well. In the midst of all these differences these regional people have shared common concerns regarding identity, alienated feeling and the huge disruption caused by the Indian Independence as many insurgent groups were created and birthed due to negligence of the government and the harsh rules that were introduced in these regions. Attempts are being made to maintain peace and normalcy but the end of it is nowhere near until there is true forgiveness and reconciliation which many writers suggest and advocates as these disturbances have never benefitted the people but destroyed the population's psychologically and physically. Based on this study, the Northeast literature has the potential of growing and expanding with vigour. It has made significant contribution to the Indian Literature and will remain relevant.

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