

National Seminar
organized by
Centre with Potential for Excellence in Particular Areas
Department of Cultural Studies, Tezpur University
on
BOOK HISTORY IN NORTH-EAST INDIA
11-12 February 2019

The ‘Centre with Potential for Excellence in Particular Areas’ working on the theme *Cultural Memory in North-East India: A Research and Documentation Programme on Textual and Visual Narratives* in the Department of Cultural Studies, Tezpur University granted by the UGC in 2016, aims to explore and analyze texts relating to cultural memories in the context of North-East India with emphasis on photography and other visual narratives, oral traditions and literary texts. One of the objectives of the project is to analyze the various historical junctures of modernity, industrialization and urbanity and their convergence in the context of North-East India. The seminar on ‘Book History in North-East India’ will focus on various issues of book history in the region.

Though the Dunhuang Diamond Sūtra scroll (said to be the oldest printed book in existence) is dated to 868 A.D., modern printing is thought to have begun with the pioneering of moveable type by Johannes Gutenberg nearly six centuries ago. Print has undoubtedly brought about a fundamental shift in societies and countries all over the world. In India, too, the coming of print, which was mainly but not exclusively during the colonial period, set in motion major social, cultural and political changes, many of which are still unfolding. With its long history of scribal, oral and manuscript cultures, India offers an excellent environment for the study of the introduction, transmission and reception of print. Book historians have provided important interventions by publishing studies of the role of print in Bengal (Swapan Chakravorty, Abhijit Gupta, Priya Joshi, Anindita Ghosh, Andrew Otis, among others), North India (Vasudha Dalmia, Ulrike Stark, Orsini Francesca, Akshaya Mukul, etc.), South India (Stuart Blackburn, A. R. Venkatachalapathy), and Western India (Rochelle Pinto, Veena Naregal). Book history however is still at a nascent stage in Northeast India, even though its relevance to this part of the country can hardly be overemphasized; to cite some examples: the Asam Sahitya Sabha’s annual sessions which attract thousands of people from all walks of life, making it arguably the biggest book festival in the world (and one that most people outside Assam have never heard of), the on-going projects in several endangered tribal languages of bible translation, dictionary-making and text book production, and the internecine feud, in the recent past, in

the Bodo community over the adoption of the Roman-Devanagari script (vis-à-vis Bodo) which has cost many leaders, writers, intellectuals and others their lives.

The proposed seminar hopes to provide a platform for scholars in India and abroad who are engaged in the study of print culture and technology in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. We would also like to welcome papers covering states like Odisha, Jharkhand, and Bihar which seem to be equally under-researched. We are particularly interested in book history scholarship that is attentive to the historical and cultural specificities of the Northeast and in approaches that might help unsettle the universal Gutenbergian narrative of the coming of the (European) book.

We are looking for papers on the following subthemes (though not limited to):

- Print, orality, folklore, cultural memory
- Print and public sphere
- Print, hegemony, and politics
- Printing and publishing in local languages
- Print and tribal communities
- Language standardisation, orthography, introduction of western genres
- Local publishers (e.g., Lawyer's Book Stall, Heritage Publishing House)
- Commercial printing, text book ventures, ephemera
- Newspapers and journalism in the region
- Libraries (including rural) and archives (traditional and digital)
- Literary bodies (Asam Sahitya Sabha, Northeast Writers Forum, etc.)
- Social, cultural, and political aspects of authorship, readership, publishing, and printing
- Aspects of book arts, copyright, censorship, bookselling and distribution, literacy, literary criticism, typography, lexicography, cartography, and translation
- Regional book fairs, book festivals, distribution networks, economics and sociology of print
- Preservation of manuscripts, manuscript-making techniques, and indigenous printing practices

Given the interdisciplinary nature of book history, the seminar is open to: academics and non-academics, scholars of literature, linguistics, history, sociology, economics, art, education, mass communication and journalism, translation studies, religion and anthropology, as well as to publishing professionals, book collectors, librarians, scientists, technicians and others involved in manuscript preservation and digitization.

AUTHOR GUIDELINES

- The paper submitted should be an original and unpublished work. Any paper submitted which is identical or substantially similar to work already published or under review for another seminar or publication cannot be considered. A covering letter clearly certifying that the manuscript is original should accompany the manuscript.
- The abstract of the paper should not exceed 300 words with 4-6 keywords. Please submit your abstract by 12 December 2018 to prsntdas3@gmail.com. / cpepa.tu.2016@gmail.com
- A Review Committee will screen the abstract(s). The abstract(s) approved by the committee will be selected for the submission of the full length paper for the seminar. All the author(s) of the accepted papers will be intimated accordingly.
- The first page of the manuscript should have the broad theme, title of the paper, name of the author(s), organization affiliation, complete postal address, phone number, and e-mail address followed by abstract and full paper.
- Recommended length of the research paper is between 3000-5000 words. Font used should be Times New Roman with font size 12 and double spaced.
- Tables, illustrations, charts, figures etc. should be serially numbered and duly acknowledged. Sources of the data should be given below each table.
- References should be complete in all respects, with authors' surnames arranged alphabetically, following conventional citation styles. Authors are requested to follow the MLA Style.
- Multiple authors, if attending the seminar, will have to register separately to be entitled for the seminar certificate. (Authors who do not register will not be entitled for the seminar certificate.)
- Please submit an electronic copy of the complete manuscript along with abstract(s), by 16 January 2019 at prsntdas3@gmail.com. / cpepa.tu.2016@gmail.com
- The author(s) must register themselves for the seminar by 12 December 2018 to ensure the inclusion of the paper in the seminar proceedings. Without registration, the paper will not be included in the seminar proceedings.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Seminar: **11-12 February 2019**
- Abstract Submission: **12 December 2018**

- Full Paper Submission: **16 January 2019**
- Last Date for Registration: **12 December 2018**

Co-ordinator of the Seminar:

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Dean, School of Humanities and social Sciences
Tezpur University

Deputy Co-ordinators of the Seminar:

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