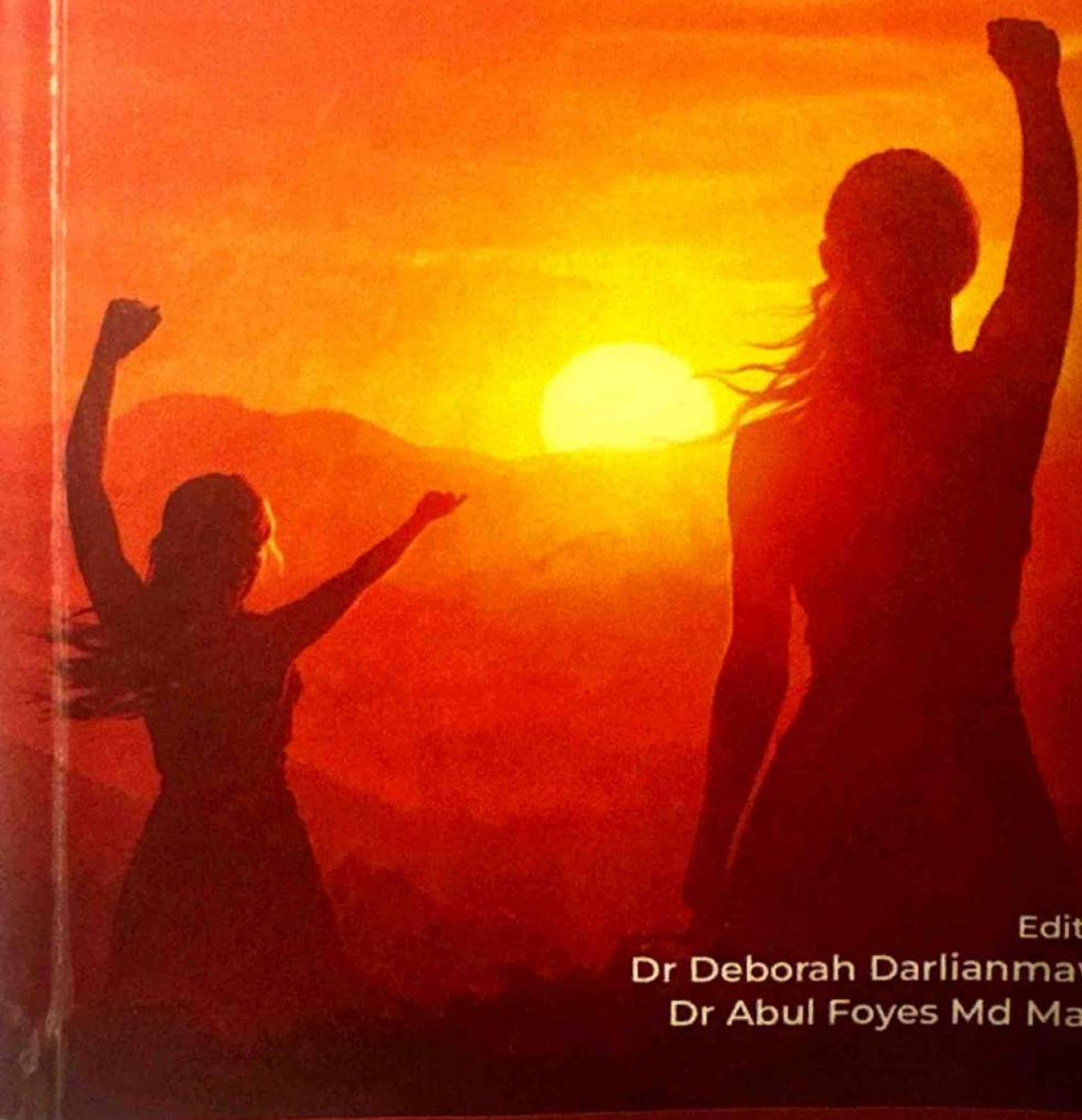


Introduction to
**Women's and
Gender Studies**

Interdisciplinary Approaches
and Perspectives



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Editors' Bio Note

Dr Deborah is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Allahabad. Her doctoral research investigates the mobilization and functioning of women's organizations- such as the Hmar Women's Association (HWA), Kuki Women's Union (KWU), and Zomi Mothers' Association (ZMA)- and how they address social problems within the ethno-politically bounded contexts of Churachandpur, Manipur. She is an alumna of North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur. She has contributed as a Unit Writer for the Course: Tribes in India (Constructs of Ethnic Communities), IGNOU and has presented her work at several national and international conferences. With multiple publications to her credit, she has also worked on an ICSSR project at Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development (OKDISCD), Guwahati, and has taught at Tetso College, Dimapur, and Martin Luther Christian University, Shillong. Her teaching and research interests include women's studies, research methodology, sociological theory, and tribal studies. She is a Life Member at the Indian Sociological Society (ISS), the Indian Association for Women Studies (IAWS), and the Sociological Association of North Eastern India (SANEI).



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CONTENTS

- Chapter – 1 Role of Women in Society and Inclusive Economic Development/ Tanjeeta Acharyya/ 9
- Chapter – 2 Women's Welfare Scheme and Its Effect on Gender Equality and Self-Sufficiency: A Block Level Analysis/ Tennisa Bairagi/ 15
- Chapter – 3 Media Driven Beauty Bias: Influence on Indian Youth/ Yukta Hazarika/ 21
- Chapter – 4 Reproductive Rights of Women in India/ Abul Kalam Sk/ 25
- Chapter – 5 From Women's Studies to Queer Politics: Expanding Feminist Thought in Global and Indian Contexts/ Angkurita Gogoi/ 31
- Chapter – 6 The Role of Criminal Justice System and Law Enforcement on GBV Laws/ Barsha Saikia, Habel Baro/ 35
- Chapter – 7 Women Education among Tribes in Assam with special reference to Bodos/ Dr Gajendra Ballav Devchoudhury/ 41
- Chapter – 8 In India the Role of Women in Society and Its Development/ Hemanta Kr. Sahu/ 49
- Chapter – 9 Rising Crime against Women in India and Its Remedies/ Nabanita Dutta/ 58
- Chapter – 10 Education of Women in the Post-Pandemic Era: Obstacles and Opportunities/ Parthana Boruah/ 68
- Chapter – 11 Women as Knowledge-Keepers of Indigenous Culture: A Deep Ecological Analysis of the Female Protagonist in Easterine Kire's *Spirit Nights*/Dr Asenla Yanger/ 73
- Chapter – 12 Aesthetic Non-Discrimination in Indian Traditional Dance Forms/ Soumen Palit/ 80
- Chapter – 13 Violence against Women: Causes, Consequences and Preventive Measures/ Dr Utpala Baishya/ 85
- Chapter – 14 Cybercrime against Women in the Digital Era: Structural Vulnerabilities and Awareness/ Babita Kumari Chandak, Dr Bonnie Amonge Crerar/ 91

Women as Knowledge-Keepers of Indigenous Culture: A Deep Ecological Analysis of the Female Protagonist in Easterine Kire's *Spirit Nights*

Dr Asenla Yanger

Introduction

Easterine Kire is a prominent literary figure and a living legend from Nagaland, with more than thirty-one books of varied genres. She is known as a poet and novelist whose works act as an indispensable repository of Naga cultural heritage. Awarded numerous prestigious awards like The Hindu Literary Prize, The Gordon Graham Prize for Literature, Bal Sahitya Puraskar, etc., Kire, through her works, brings to life age-old customs, beliefs, and oral stories that are in danger of being forgotten, making certain that Naga tradition, customs, perspectives, and knowledge are transmitted to future generations while also connecting with global listeners.

In Northeast Indian literature, especially in the writings of Naga women authors, indigenous knowledge systems are presented as dynamic frameworks that help communities address issues of identity, survival, and resistance. Easterine Kire's work, particularly *Spirit Nights* (2022), delves into the role of women as custodians of traditional-ecological-spiritual-cultural knowledge within Naga societies living in the forest and hills of India's northeast. The communities have a deep connection with nature, thereby seeing the natural elements from the perspective of being stimulators of growth and prosperity. The patriarchal framework that has been guiding these communities gives a lower status to the womenfolk when it comes to them playing a role as knowledge-keepers and transmitters. Easterine Kire's chronicles, however, challenge the established narratives that often marginalise or overlook indigenous women. Kire, through her works, brings to the forefront the role played by women as those who are attuned to the traditional knowledge passed