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Editorial

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It gives me great pleasure to bring out the December issue of Litinfinite, concentrating upon folk studies as a multidisciplinary initiative. If we scrutinize the historical background, we found how the term folklore as a careful combination of folk and lore was coined in the year 1846 by an Englishman called William Thoms. As a part of any cultural discourse, folk studies can be considered as an integral part of communication and in underlining the well-integrated pattern of any community as such. Folklorists always claim a wider disciplinary aspect with the help of history, linguistics, literary productions of an age, economics, artistic and communicative approaches to highlight the main constituents of folklore. Through inventions, collections, documentations and combined knowledge, the work of the folklorists always give birth to some or the other form of contested space: these can be traditional, modern, popular, mainstream and academic and of different other varieties in nature.

Dr. Chandramani discusses how this folkloric structure, myths, the usage of different paradigmatic shifts in the form of cultural and Feminist studies can be included in re-reading Githa Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night*. The study of Indian mythology, storytelling as a cathartic process and the entire narrative of women's studies interwoven with the societal and familial repercussion that a reliance on myths can have. Dr. Surapriya Chakraborty's folk angle is slightly different, verging on the study of Femininity in Tantric Buddhism, taking a magnanimous work like *Nastik Panditer Bhita* and discussing the psycho-sexual, social, mythic and religious dimensions that the thought-provoking realms of the novel proposes to investigate. She highlights the several elements present in some of the American Feminist schools, and some of the Buddhist and the Oriental mystic conceptualization of Femininity in occupying and reinstating power, balance and newer forms of esoteric practices.

Folk culture itself is densely multilayered. With the cultural developments, additions and the vantage point that critics create, the area of folk studies has increased manifold in the past few decades. Dr. Imchasenla's paper on Re-imagining the Morung culture and translation of the Ao-Naga folksongs is an innovative study on how these varied cultural parameters are responsible for sustaining the vitality of any culture, across time. The oldest and the strongest controlling doctrines that are part of the Morung culture and cementing community development through songs and other cultural narratives illumine an alternative non-Western discourse on studying indigeneity and nativity. Dr. ResenmenlaLongchar, on the other hand, discusses the various aspects of the Ao-Naga culture, with special reference to their puberty rites. The finer and subtle passages of transition from boyhood/girlhood to youth and the induction as part of the Ao-Naga culture are well-depicted by the researcher. Beliefs, rituals, tales, tattoos, marriage, cultural communication, all are invited on a common platform for diverse social, cultural, political and cross-disciplinary criticisms, to enhance the knowledge about the cumulative identity of a community.

In folk literature, cultural studies, folk theatres, performance and lores, we find often dissident voices that contest for recognition. There are tensions created as per ethnology, geo-political circumventions, expressions and specific attitudes from communities across cultures. There are different portions of the same work, or in other cases, significant binaries existing as part of a single work that is published within the variations of a time. How do we study oral literature in terms of the immediate social context? Where do we find the nature of hybridization existing? How does the compass of folk culture and interdisciplinary study regulate community behavior, or does it endanger any social community to a large extent? As folklorists, as researchers dealing with multidisciplinary studies, then how do we place the fantastic elements, recurring features, archetypes and the study of folk culture from an inherently historical perspective? Are myths and folktales related somewhere? All these and many other questions do arise when we study the concept of folk and indigeneity from an interdisciplinary perspective.

The paper by SoumyadeepNeogi is a fine tapestry in understanding the Kashmiri Pandit narratives in Rahul Pandita's work *Our Moon has Blood Clots: Memoir of a Lost Home in Kashmir*. Neogi has tried to unearth the poetics of indigenous representation through this memoir. Exile, rootlessness, homeland, indigenous identity and the functioning of hegemony, power-play and distinct cultural groups in forming identity and socio-political discourse. Studying indigeneity and through some common concerns like 'political neglect, economic marginalization and social vulnerability with regards to the protection of their cultural rights', as Neogi mentions in his paper, find out a distinct voice of the Pandit narratives through the text. The location of the Kashmiri Pandits as the significant 'other', the more marginalized segment of a dominant Muslim culture in Kashmir, thus finds a suitable voice through Neogi's research-oriented lens.

There are several segments and voices of dissent and experimentation that also arise while we study nativity, folk and cultural performativity across a given time. Language plays a special role in that, and in their paper titled *Animating Folktales: An Analysis of Animation movies based on folk tales of three different languages*, the authors Maya Bhowmick and Dr. Ankuran Dutta have enlarged the resources on how to study multiple layers of culture through storytelling modes, manners and mechanisms. Bengali, Assamese, Hindi, these three languages and popular folktales disseminated through these reflect the glorious integrity of semantics, culture, social equations and even community approach toward customs and vulnerability. Oral and visual performances, voicing opinions and regionalized mechanisms in re-reading folktales-this is what the paper tries to communicate as some of the broader aspects.

It should be noteworthy how fairy tales and riddles have always played a vital role in attenuating the different dimensions of a certain culture, across borders. A specific cultural production and inheritance over a passage of time requires diverse investigations, social and literary researches and reviews and integration of dialogues across spaces. SewanouLanmadousselo interrogates these varied ideas that are deeply embedded into the reconstruction and structuring of myths, folktales, lores and community connectivity in Beninese Fairy Tales and Riddles. Orders, solutions, learning capability, reasoning and heterogeneity, this is what takes the best solution in understanding the work of Lanmadousselo. This is the constant deconstruction of myths, a method to understand polyphony in Indian literature, that finds an appropriate voice in Samarsh Mondal's paper titled *Indian Literature: The Polyphonic Nature of Deconstructing Myths*. A comparative analysis of folk tales and mythical constituents that are well-integrated in works of Eliot, in Tarashankar Bandyopadhyay who writes about rustic myths and multilayered collectives in his novel, form the area of Mondal's study. And finally, we have a special contribution by Naruhiko Mikado in understanding drama in terms of speculative materialism.

With an urgency toward reinstating specific community and cultural development across borders and nations, we thus present a volume on folk studies as a multidisciplinary exercise. Navigating through the primitive discourses on folk literature and performance and highlighting the current, the more recent and contemporary ones, we have tried to present research papers that provide multifaceted contextual paradigms in advanced research.

Extending my heartfelt thanks to all our respected advisors and editors, for their support and constant encouragement.

I express my gratitude, warmth and thanks to our publisher Mr. Supriyo Chakraborty and Penprints Publication for their unflinching support in this academic endeavour.

Wishing a great year ahead to all our readers.