

Editorial

Tribal communities comprise 8.2% of the total population of India. Constitution of India has recognized tribal communities in India under schedule 5 of constitution. Hence they are known as scheduled tribes. And there are around 605 distinct tribes in India who are spread over the different states of India. Each tribe possesses certain qualities and characteristics that make it a unique cultural unit. In the rapid industrialization and globalization, each tribe is struggling hard to protect its language and art forms which constitute its culture. Cut off from the commercial life of the metros, each tribe is largely dependent on age old means of sustenance. A cursory view of their life style, practices and oral literature speaks volumes of their interests and concerns for the safety and protection of environment and their zest for an organic life - the concerns of the present world intelligentsia.

This special issue on tribal literature should be read as companion to earlier special issue on Folk literature. It has many common concerns which are integrally associated with the identity and existence of the Folk and the tribal. In this issue, Basavaraj Naikar's well researched paper on *Killiteta* performers of Karnataka who have continued the art form of Shadow plays since ages, and H S Chandalia's paper on the Bhils of Rajasthan who have preserved the Folk Ballad form, "Bharat" are examples of how tribals not only maintain their identity but also carry forward indigenous traditions. Rohit Phutela has exemplified how Mizo Poetry serves as aesthetic catharsis as well as a political response to Mizo tribal plight. Shiv Shankar's paper on the tribals of Bastar opens up new vistas to understand tribals' art and literature. Similarly Sangeeta Kotwal's and Shivangi Srivastava's papers on tribal stories of Mahashweta Devi pinpoint the atrocities undergone by tribals and their indomitable spirits. Pooja Joshi and Shalini Mathur have tried to decode the consciousness of the life of tribal people, reading the poetry of North East tribes and Arun Joshi's novels respectively. Vipin K Singh's paper on Baiga Folk Songs painstakingly probes the generic form of their literature. Mridula Kindo's paper on Judith Wright perceptibly analyses her sense of guilt for belonging to the class that unfairly occupied the lands of the aboriginals in Australia. Overall, the whole issue presents multi-faceted realities of tribal life and culture through the lens of literature and makes a plea to preserve the life patterns and literature of the tribals.

At last we would like to thank all the contributors whose papers have appeared in this issue. We also have a sense of gratitude towards all the Review Editors of this issue, their suggestions have helped immensely to improve the quality of the papers. Hope the readers would find the papers valuable and send their feed back.

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