JOGLTEP

Special Issue on Yakthung and Cherokee Indigenous Rhetorics

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INTRODUCTION

It is evident that social media and cloud computing are shifting culture, academia, and science in the context of the 21st century digitally networked globalized world. These emerging digital (multimodal) technologies have revolutionized the way we teach, instruct, share, and communicate across the globe in multiple ways by complicating or/and simplifying every aspect of life. In this process, cultural, academic, and scientific shifts have been possible due to cloud-based network or/and digital global network communication. The shifts have facilitated local and global networked dialogues by benefitting diverse communities. Based on the background information, in this special issue, we will present how local and global Indigenous peoples use cloud computing and digital network to share, contest, and negotiate to create their cultural, spatial, political, and Mundhumic identities. Specifically, in this issue, we will focus on how Indigenous

peoples are digitizing and legitimizing their cultural assets, and how such activities facilitate to preserve and institutionalize their cultural identities. In this regard, to elucidate a broader concept of local and global Indigenous rhetorics, we have invited Indigenous scholars, researchers, oral Mundhum rhetors, and writers from different Indigenous cultures such as South Asian Yakthung (Limbu) Indigenous communities (represent Nepal and India) and Cherokee community (represents North American Indigenous communities). Here, we will accentuate how these Indigenous communities from two different parts of the world are maintaining, preserving, and institutionalizing their cultures, oral rhetorics, and Mundhum rhetorics.

We, editors, have attempted to bring historical framework of global Indigenous rhetorics, historical connection of Indigenous peoples, and non-western South-Asian Yakthung and Cherokee-North American rhetorics in the global context. And it will also justify the importance of Yakthung and Cherokee Indigenous rhetorical methodology as well as relevance of Indigenous rhetorics. Via this issue, we attempt not only to expose global Indigenous rhetorics, but also facilitate to network with other global Indigenous phu-ne-nusas (brother and sisters) so that we do not remain compartmentalized (as in the past), but we collectively struggle to challenge the mainstream politics, discriminatory, and hegemonic state policies in order to create their cultural and linguistic identities and/or to collectively strive for creating our cultural, spatial, political, and Mundhumic identities in local and global contexts. In other words, this issue focuses on how Indigenous Yakthungs and Cherokee use multimodal and storytelling strategies to study historical cultural assets and oral Mundhumic artifacts to delink paracolonization, to relink their historical identities, and to link their histories both from local to global contexts and to preserve and maintain their cultural, linguistic, and oral-performance-based rhetorics (Limbu, 2016, 2017; Mignolo, 2009; Powell, 2002; Vizenor, 1990). In other words, this issue will initiate a global Indigenous campaign that will promote the network of local and global Indigenous peoples and will seek to explore how Indigenous peoples currently are decolonizing colonial epistemologies and are maintaining, preserving, legitimizing, and formally and informally institutionalizing their languages, writings, and cultures via digital technologies and local and transnational networks (Limbu & Jennings, 2017). This issue will demonstrate how Indigenous Yakthung and Cherokee re-storisize and relink their narratives, stories, and histories, and how they de/-link Hinduized and Anglicized epistemologies.

Finally, this special issue critically examines global and local Indigenous rhetorics focusing on the histories, narratives, oral texts, and Indigenous symbolic cultural resources as well as existing Indigenous rhetorical practices, and it maps out an historical overview from ancient Indigenous oral-based rhetorical practices to current Indigenous digital rhetorics. We endeavor to look at various Yakthung and Cherokee Indigenous rhetorical theories, philosophies, and practices such as narratives/stories, multimodal contents, Indigenous symbolic resources, and (oral) cultural assets as cases to

synthesize them. This special issue strives to re/form a coherent glocal (both global and local) Indigenous theoretical framework. Via this issue, we attempt to present and future global readers/audience with solid Indigenous (oral) historical and contemporary overviews, local and global Indigenous theoretical groundings, philosophical understandings, and rhetorical practices that will help the maintenance of Indigenous peoples' cultures and languages or/and archive, legitimize, and formally and informally institutionalize them in different geo-political contexts.

PART I

The first four articles in this issue address practices in place across the globe for the preservation and maintenance of Indigenous peoples and cultural epistemologies. These articles look at the ways in which Indigenous peoples are working to preserve their languages, traditional community roles, and Indigenous food practices. These articles capture the ways in which Indigenous people all over the world are pushing back against the often-forced disappearance of traditional Indigenous ways. In the first article in this section, "Every Word is a Prayer: Heritage Language Literacy and Indigenous Identity," **Catheryn Jennings** discusses how the modern Indigenous heritage language revitalization and reclamation are working to bring back this piece of what was lost to so many people, and in order to do this, many tribal communities and community members have turned to digital sources for that learning. This project not only discusses the loss of languages and the nature of the efforts to rekindle them, but also serves as a discussion of the ways in which Indigenous methodologies and worldviews can be used to conduct academic research when it comes to this specific topic.

   With the second essay in the section, "Limbus Traditional Headmanship Subhangi: An Overview of Its Emergence and Disappearance (1774- 1964)" **Arjun Limbu** looks at the ethnography, ethnohistory, and historical documents related to Limbus (Yakthungs) in order to explore how the Gorkha rulers once treated *Subhas* as equal as their nobles to control their territory, Yakthung laje, through "indirect rule" and how the Gorkha rulers gradually ignored the "Nun Pani Sandhi" (the treaty of Salt Water 1774) in order to displace and destroy the *Subhangi* system in Yakthung laje, Limbuwan (the homeland of the Limbus). Further, Limbu contends how Gorkha rulers gradually adopted a policy against the *Subhangi* system to weaken the system, and how cultural surroundings were created and developed in such a way that the *Subhas* remained "faithful to salt" of the rulers and behaved as superior to their fellow Yakthungs.

   Jaquetta Shade returns the discussion to North America with her article, "Constellating 'the Nourishing Arts,' Decolonial Theory, Land, and Indigenous Food Sovereignty Activism through Story, Relations, and Making" and a discussion of the ways in which the Cherokee people are enacting sovereignty and survivance through the food

practice of gathering wishi mushrooms in Oklahoma. Turning to a review of both cookbooks and academic texts, Dr. Shade 'constellates" Cultural Rhetorics and Indigenous studies in order to reveal themes of relationships and cultural memory embedded in the knowledges and practices of Indigenous peoples. Similarly, **Dr. Buddhi L. Khamdhak** in his "The Tsongs (Limbus) Down the Ages in Sikkim" introduces the Limbus (Yakthungs or Tsongs) of Sikkim who have inhabited the Himalayan belt of Kanchanjanga since time immemorial. Then, in this article, Dr. Khamdhak demonstrates the socio-cultural and linguistic conditions of Yakthungs in Sikkim prior and during the Namgyal/Chogyal reign. In his article, Dr. Khamdak critically depicts the Namgyal/Chogyal's political ideologies (Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum treaties) and how the Yakthungs have been denied and deprived of Indigenous Yakthung rights and justice in Sikkim.

PART II

In the second part of this issue, the authors focus on oral-based Mundhum rhetorical theories, philosophies, and practices. In this section, **Dr. Nawa Raj Subba**'s "An overview of the association between the myths and proof of *Lepmuhang Mundhum* and *Matsya Puran"* discusses the *Lepmuhang Mundhum* (Yakthung Mundhum) and *Matsya Puran* (Hindu Puran). The *Lepmuhang Mundhum* is an oral sacred Yalthung text; *Matsya Puran* is also a sacred Hindu text. By comparing and contrasting the *Lepmuhang Mundhum* and *Matsya Puran*, Dr. Subba revisits the myths and evidence of the deluge and related archeological, linguistic, and genetic studies to create a better way of understanding Yakthung oral Mundhum rhetorics. Similarly, **Dr. Chaitanya Subba** on his "Cho?lung: The Core of the Political Philosophy in Yakthung Mundhum" discusses the ways in which *Cho?lung* signifies the core of the political philosophy embodied in Yakthung (Limbu) Mundhum. In other words, Dr. Subba contends that *Cho?lung* signifies the land of dignity, accomplishment, fulfilment, and ultimate good or supreme happiness; it is effulgent by the rays of sun, glimmering in the light of the moon and opulent with peace and tranquility. It is the core of the political philosophy embodied in Yakthung Mundhum. Mundhum connotes a wide range of meanings ranging from mythologies, religious scriptures, cultural and historical narratives to oral/folk literature and philosophies. Through a deep exploration of the language and meaning embedded in Mundhum, Dr. Subba discusses the wide range of examples, ranging from mythologies, religious scriptures, cultural and historical narratives to oral/folk literature and philosophies.

    Finally, **Damber Tembe**, in "Saimundri: The Post-Marriage Ritual in Limbu-Community Is on the Verge of Extinction," discusses the customary marriage law of Yakthungs (Limbus), in which the parents of a married woman can retain rights to safeguard their daughter for many years even after the marriage. Focusing on the unique

tradition in the Yakthung community called the *Saimundri* ceremony, Tembe examines the formal processes of the *Saimundri* ceremony, which was once a matter of pride among Yakthung communities. However, such traditional customs are consigned to oblivion gradually in Yakthung societies largely due to modernization and the guidelines of the state's laws. Then, Tembe relinks the old Yakthung *Saimundri* tradition as it deserves to be at least preserved as a heritage in Yakthung community.

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