

LITCRIT

An Indian Response to Literature

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A SPECIAL NUMBER ON INDIGENOUS STUDIES



- **Debashree Dattaray** Editorial: Rethinking Indigeneity • **Michael Heneise** Contemporary Naga Fiction
- **Peter Keegan** Indigenous Ruminations from New Zealand
- **Dharamsing Teron** Opium: The Curse of Colonialism and the Karbis
- **Bulu Imam** The Art of the Hill Villages of Hazaribagh • **B. Hariharan** Interview with Lee Maracle
- **Kyle Whyte** Concepts of Collective Continuance in Indigenous Studies



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A Literary Half-yearly Since 1975

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Cover Painting: **Ranjit Rongpi** is an international award winning artist from Karbi Anglong, Assam, who paints artwork related to the study of primitive cultures of inaccessible societies.

Glimpses of Indigenous Life: Language and Rituals in *Enmakaje*

Abstract

The basic component of any country's knowledge system is its indigenous knowledge. Indigenous Knowledge refers to the complex bodies and systems of knowledge, practices and cultural expressions that have been and are maintained, used and developed by local and Indigenous communities. Experiencing and envisioning indigenous knowledges in Kasaragod is the primary concern for the paper. The study intends to trace the indigenous life in Kasaragod district in the Malayalam novel *Enmakaje* by Ambikasuthan Mangad. The traditional knowledge of Indigenous communities, which reflects their holistic worldview, also contributes to the world's cultural and biological diversity and is a source of cultural and economic wealth for humanity as a whole.

Keywords: Muga, Koraga, Indigenous, Jaga, Maima, Birinda, Theyyam

The narrative space of the novel *Enmakaje* is a village in Kasaragod district. As far as language is concerned Kasaragod occupies a unique position in the map of Kerala. There are as many as seven languages used actively by a considerable number of people in Kasaragod. Though the administrative language is Malayalam, Tulu, Beary bashe, Kannada, Marathi and Konkani are also spoken. (Commission Report, 13) Furthermore, there are ever so many dialects and indigenous languages that augment the cultural affluence of Kasaragod. The version of Malayalam spoken here varies a lot from the standard Malayalam and is generally considered difficult for the people from southern Kerala.

Kasaragod was part of the Kumbala Kingdom in which there were 64 Tulu and Malayalam villages. When Vijayanagar empire attacked Kasaragod, it was ruled by the Kolathiri King who had Nileschwaram as his headquarters. During the decline of that empire in the 14th century, the administration of