

Editorial Introduction to “Across Cultures: Ibero-America and India”

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About the Editorial

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Editorial Introduction to “Across Cultures: Ibero-America and India”

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Rupkatha Journal in collaboration with Universidad Católica del Maule, Chile and Doon University, India has published this special issue on the theme “*Across Cultures: Ibero-America and India*”. The volume is edited by faculty from Universidad Católica del Maule, Chile and Doon University, India along with a team of experts from the *Rupkatha Journal*. This special volume titled “*Across Cultures: Ibero-America and India*” intends to shed light on the trans-axial South-South history that implicates academic, cultural, intellectual, commercial and political exchanges between India, Spain, Portugal and Latin America. This special issue is an attempt to fill in the existing void in the academic literature on the theme, by exploring the bonds between the two cultures, so distant from each other and yet continuing to contribute towards the process of mutual understanding of their respective societies and thus reinforcing socio-political and cultural relations between these two regions. We propose to record segments of the crucial dialogue that imbricates these extraordinary geo-cultural entities through their various interactions and evolution in far and recent history.

In the current special issue, papers were invited from distinguished scholars working in areas of expertise related to the theme of the issue. We received seven invited papers; the other papers were selected from the call of the journal for this special issue. As this special issue is being published in a continuous mode, we shall be reviewing some more papers, which could add value to this debate on the relationship between Spain, Latin America and India. In our selections for this special issue, the main focus was on articles that did not just present a comparative study from different points of view (literary, political or social) but rather incorporated a critical historiographical analysis of the themes.

As mentioned, the papers in the special issue deal with different themes. For example, Castillo and Bhaumik in their paper discuss the idea of the border in the digital age. The paper illustrates different types of borders, citing examples from films. It also discusses how historical narrative and mediation influenced the concept of nation and border, primarily in the context of the border as an intellectual entity both in Mexico and India. It further elaborates on the concept of virtual ethnicity, and digital citizenship in the context of posthuman presences and projections. Óscar Figueroa presents a unique and first-hand empirical study on the representation of India in two

works of the nineteenth-century travel writer from Mexico, Ignacio Martínez. The paper also underscores the difference between the representations of India in Ignacio Martínez perceptions of the region before it emerged as an independent nation and the representation of India in the writings of Mexican intellectual Octavio Paz, who reflects on India’s consciousness and symbolic projection of itself as a newly independent nation. Canzobre in his paper underlines the Argentine women’s contribution to the knowledge of India’s culture in Latin America. López Torres and Fierro Concha in their article analyse the representations of Indian culture in the writings of two of the Chilean writers Pablo Neruda and Juan Marín. We also include one article by Seshasayee who provides an overview of the encounters between these two geopolitical regions on various levels of cultural signalling and responses. Through interviews of diplomats, journalists, businesspersons, he presents a Latin American perspective of India.

The collection of scientific manuscripts included in the issue highlights the strong interdisciplinary methodology that is always promoted at Rupkatha, an approach which draws from diverse fields like literature, politics, gender, culture etc., to address and focus on the human question as a contested projection and intersection of narratives. This special issue represents dialogue and exchange of ideas from two distant regions and is true to the objective of Rupkatha that the history of humanity can no longer be analysed in terms of its singular objectivity but as a contending hierarchy of discourses emerging from multiple or variable branches of knowledge like as in intersections of economics and travel writing, politics and poetry, culture and information science. We are happy that the issue includes authors from different parts of the world, thus, also embodying the reflections of an international community with significant commitment to a Latam India dialogue. We would like to thank all the contributors, the Chief Editor of Rupkatha, Tirtha Prasad Mukhopadhyay and the Editor, Tarun Tapas Mukherjee, for providing an opportunity to publish this special issue on a theme that has not received fuller consideration as of yet and for creating the freedom of space for aspiring scholars like us who are ever committed to a refreshing dialogue and synthetic view of cultures who are weaving together in the fabric of a closer and more bonded narrative of human values, discoveries and critical understanding of the need for coming together on the same platform.