

EDITOR'S NOTE

Though 'better late than never' is a cliché in most situations, this issue bears this spirit. Back date issue of any academic journal is a challenge; it asks for various explanations. For some known and unknown reasons, this issue could be brought out only this year. However, we could add on some advantages; for example, making it a peer review journal so that the inter-university associates are benefited under the ranking system of UGC, we could accommodate topics of contemporary relevance, and invited scholars of repute to contribute to this volume, over and above IUC associates. The authors, IUC associates had a chance to relook at their papers, written back at least five years ago, with fresh eyes and mind and while revising the paper, recent work could be cited on the topic. Some contributions therefore carry references of later years than 2008.

The variety of academic disciplines, regional representation, review of existing theories, and newly emerged debates have made this issue rich and versatile. It covers issues related to Buddhism in historical perspective, philosophy of time and Vivekanand's predicament as well as language inter-subjectivity, theoretical approach to language engagement, experiences and thoughts shared on population stabilisation, film studies on nationalism, and contemporary debates on dialectics through poems on race milieu and moment. Two book reviews include two different disciplines, a book on dramatics written by a Sanskrit scholar and reviewed by a theatrical personality while the other book on modern political thought in retrospection is reviewed by a political scientist.

Siddharth, in his essay on Ananda's offences, argues that the orthodox elements were in action inside the Buddhist order during the time of the Buddha and after the demise of the Buddha. He feels that post-Buddha history of Buddhism has not drawn the attention of the scholars so far as it genuinely deserved, and a careful investigation of the whole episode is truly needed to understand the function of the First Buddhist Council. He overviews modern scholars' views, textual description of Ānanda's offences, Ānanda's response to the offences, mutual relations of Ānanda and Mahakashyapa and concludes that except making efforts for women

to be part of *Samgha*, all other offences were trivial. Opening the doors of the *Samgha* for women was not an ordinary job, especially in the order, which owes most of its density to the Brahmins, who were, generally, not in the practice of seeing the women at the parallel platform in the Brahmanical system before they entered the Buddhist *Samgha*. Undoubtedly, this incident might have hurt those puritanical monks and lay supporters of Buddhist order who were against the admission of women in the *Samgha*.

Anirban, in his paper on Swami Vivekanand's predicaments, delves into the relation between philosophy (a philosophy aspiring to timeless truth: *mahākālikāsatyā*) and history (in the sense of a certain time: *khaṇḍakāl*) and other relevant questions. He observes a tendency in much of Vivekananda's writings as well as writings on him to somehow accommodate different radical strands within the broad sweep of his kind of Advaita Vedanta Philosophy, trying to re-establish Hinduism. He highlights the presence of contraries in Vivekananda's writings and presentations, depending on whether he is speaking in India or to western audiences. While speaking to an Indian audience, he is much more critical of the ills in the then Hindu society and practices while in the west he is deliberately silent about those. Thus, he remains relevant in Indian psyche and politics, open to being co-opted by a Gandhi as well as a Subhash Bose, or in the contemporary by the secular as well as the Hindu right wing. There are bits in him that each conveniently find and use.

Meti approaches language engagement in a theoretical manner, highlighting some critical concerns of the present times in India, such as language loss, language shift, dominant language and its use, and language death. He captures debates on each issue after examining its definition or important characteristics, quantitative data, identifying trends and policy issues. After considering linguistic diversity in India, he refers to standardization and modernization of language as politicized discourse and a sociolinguistic attitude. Towards the conclusion, the paper stresses language maintenance, in the context of various economic and socio-political pressures in the country.

Sreekumar begins his paper on language, inter-subjectivity and transformation of being saying that the linguisticity of one's existence implies that inter-subjectivity is embedded in one's being, as language is necessarily a domain of inter-subjective subsistence and constitution of meaning. The paper refines understanding on the inter-subjective domain of language based on works of Heidegger and Gadamer to show relevance and usefulness of the

ancient Greek conception of “truth as unconcealment”. He refers to the situatedness that characterizes human existence and intersubjective linguistic horizon and shows how the infinite is always found manifested in and through the finite, and how a language is ontologically significant as it enables us to know and to undergo experience, and as something that transforms human beings. Quoting three temporal dimensions—the “ahead-of-itself” stands for future, “being-already-in” for past and “being-alongside” the present—he then explains human’s potential to live in truth owing to its essential facticity and structural incompleteness and how facticity deconstructs the idea of a pre-structured world, and accent to truth and knowledge. The experience of truth and knowledge begins and ends with self-understanding within the enclosure of a language.

Nigamananda has explored presence of theoretical concepts of ‘Ecotopia’ and ‘Ecocracy’ in the pre-colonial Indian literature, including selected Vedic, post-Vedic works and works from medieval literatures upholding ecological concepts, and the select literary works from South-Eastern to North-Eastern Indian provinces. The paper exhaustively addresses thoughts and debates on ‘Ecotopia’ and ‘Ecocracy’ through deep ecology, shallow ecology, and spiritual ecology. It encompasses various concepts in ecological thoughts, including economy of nature, concept of real wild nature as depicted in the romantic literature, as a science and its strong connection to a history of verbal expressions. The paper describes Vedic literature that upholds the cosmic glory of five elements to provide stability/strength to the human society; Vacana poetry of twelfth century mocked animal sacrifice and narrated Sangam poetry with rich accounts of nature; and Ecofeminism through *Laxmi Purana* was propounded in sixteenth century in Oriya literature saying that there would be economic and ecological stability in the society by honouring women and downtrodden. Such detailed accounts of poetry from Bengal, North-East and South-East regions are presented with commentary highlighting principles of ecocracy.

Sunetra spots grandeur and valour through a review of Bollywood films which have portrayed Indian military personnel and have substantial reference to the army. She discusses war movies produced between 1973 and 1997 as well as films dealing with wartime situation, but each has as its protagonist a defence personnel. She notes that the topic of war surfaced on the Indian celluloid only following a real historical incident, with a few set patterns, depending on the nationality of the war and the prominence of

the characters and other characteristics and tendencies of these films. The other genre of films is not much different, yet some paradigm shift is observed wherein the films show the conflicting stance adopted by secular, patriotic and pro-peace state officials.

P. K. Kalyani has developed her essay based on French critic Hyppolyte Taine's scientific approach to literature that it was the race, milieu and moment which have shaped the creative mind. This paper focuses on selected poems of the two Jewish poets, Nissim Ezekiel and Irving Layton, an Indian and a Canadian respectively, living in two entirely different socio-cultural situations. Ezekiel's poems convey that various factors in the society corrupt human mind and having been corrupted people remain alienated. The idea is ideal and appears practical as both extremes cannot be rejected from life. This attitude of Ezekiel who tries to resolve problems is not so much found in Layton. Layton perceives that every human being is an exile for the simple reason that the spirit of his/hers belongs to another realm and it never belongs to the body forever. He believes that God is taking the Jews for a ride giving them false promises of Justice, Love, Peace and a Land of their own; and Cosmos has created the Jews to use them as a tool to expose God. Thus, the difference between the poets is the milieu and therefore, the moment as well, though the race is the same and their poems are reflections of this belief.

Manas focuses on dialectics in the light of contemporary debates, calling it unruly spiral. The dialectical tradition is influential in various disciplines of social sciences, and it has been under sustained challenge with the advent of poststructuralist theorizing. The paper attempts an intellectual cartography of the state of dialectics after poststructuralist incursions. He revisits several thinkers and their thoughts to capture different dimensions and applicability of dialectics and reflects on its convergence, differences and challenges. He goes back and forth on Marx's dialectical materialism, Derrida's understanding of dialectical reality and supplementarity, and towards the end he discusses Malabou's reading of Hegel against the grain and its evitable dispersions.

Leela shares some reflections as a demographer based on her work experience related to population growth and stabilisation in India. She discusses factors responsible for population growth referring to fertility—total fertility rate, women's desire for family planning and population momentum. State-wise figures show the level of fertility and state specific share of population and its implications such as density of population, rural-urban distribution

and urbanization process, inter-state migration of people, and increasing number of elected representatives in both the Houses of Parliament. In this context, critical concerns for planners like options for population stabilisation, its cost, whether it occurs are raised. Policy implications such as family planning, delaying marriage of girls, reducing infant and child mortality and eliminating son preference are addressed. She concludes the paper saying that population stabilisation achievement and sustainability would depend on creating conditions in which individuals, regardless of sex, age, caste, religion, can exercise genuine free choice.

The book reviews include two publications, one an edited volume *Political Ideas in Modern India: Thematic Explorations* by Mangesh Kulkarni and the second, *New explorations in the earliest living tradition of Sanskrit theatre Kutiyattam theatre* by Mahesh Champaklal describes the essence and importance of the book. In the process of review, both of them spell out what these books could have offered otherwise as a contribution to the respective discipline.

I'm grateful to all the peer reviewers for insightful comments and feedback on each paper within a short time. The book reviewers need special mention, as reviewing a book within a short time needs dedication and an inclination of a special kind. I had a chance to interact with some of them personally, which has enlightened me on many counts.

I am very happy that within a span of six months, we all together are able to bring out this volume. I'm thankful to IAS for appointing me as an editor of this volume, to provide the needed assistance, guidance and autonomy to function and decision-making to shape up the volume to match up to its reputation and recognition. I took it as an opportunity to enlighten myself and equipping to edit a volume of an academic journal of high-quality repute. This process became very educational in many ways; reading of work done by IUC associates across different disciplines of social sciences and humanities, understanding ongoing debates within each academic faculty and locating a particular paper in a wider scholarship, ways of articulating and shaping up of papers as well as inviting academics to contribute to the volume.

This volume could not have been possible without the contributors' will, efforts and cooperation. I pay due respect to all the contributors for their contribution, reviewers and bearing with me for demands of being an editor. Negotiations on time, quality of paper and working back and forth for quality outcome between three of us provided depth of humane interactions. In the process

of editing this volume, support of Publication Department, Academic Resource Office and the Director of the Institute needs special mention and appreciation. I'm specially thankful to Prof Chetan Singh, Dr Debarshi Sen, and Sangeeta Rana.

In acknowledgement, though many names are not spelt out individually, each one of the person and the process are acknowledged respectfully, as such ventures are collaborative, team efforts. With this spirit, I thank all those whose names are not specially mentioned but they have been co-travellers in the journey of this publication.

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