

EDITORIAL

Journal of Indian Research reaches another point of no return. Our effort to promote new thinking based upon indigenous lines is bearing fruitful result. At the same time, with the change in the political dispensation, there is upsurge of claimants for indigenization of knowledge. Science and history are the new battlegrounds. But, there is an urgent need for academia to rise above the ideological divide and defend their niche. Sacrificing the arduous quest for wisdom in favour of ephemeral fame will dissipate the vigour of knowledge tradition of our civilization.

Empiricism and critical rationality is being marauded by the power of faith. Epics and myths are under threat of extinction with the effort of historicization by the crafty crypto-thinkers. In fact, chronology itself faces the gravest threat of being reduced into abracadabra for the next generation. The paradoxical movement is all couched up under the garb of "decolonization of mind". The scholarship will lose wherewithal to sail in the vast ocean of wisdom if we do not resurrect the serious philosophical inquiry into mode of our thinking. We need to rescue knowledge traditions from both extremes: proponents of indigenized knowledge and votaries of western knowledge - as-universal knowledge.

Professor Sthaneshwar Timalina has done yeoman service by bringing in the perspective of middle path by juxtaposing Bhartrihari and Abhinavagupta on one hand and Plato, Heidegger to Derrida and Caputo, on the other. This issue of the JIR is publishing his elaborate philosophical enquiry, "*Indigenous Epistemology and Placing the Cultural self in Crisis: A New Hermeneutic Model for Cultural Studies*". He argues for 'fusion of horizons', a symposium of mutual understanding which requires prior dissolution of the differences and breaking apart of the 'epistemic shells'.

In fact, fusion is inherent in South Asian cognitive DNA. A singular thing that is identified with Indian civilization is the contribution of the 'Yoga' to the world civilization. Recent decision by the world body, United Nations to commemorate 21st June as the International Yoga Day every year has been supported by 170 member states. Yoga (योग) is the art of joining, the breaking apart of the boundary between the world of immanence and transcendence. The etymological root of the term is 'yuj' (युज्) or to join. Yoga is not merely the physical and mental exercise to attain balance and equanimity or to join mind and action. It is the paradigm for fusion of horizons. Similar idea permeated other religions of Indic tradition and the last major sect that arose before India was colonized by western invaders, was the Kalachakra Buddhism. In Kalachakra, an attempt was made for a grand synthesis of all the major Indic sects and they came up with a beautiful seed syllable for their sect- *Evam* (एवं). *Evam* is 'and', joining together. Under this category, one can join anything and everything. The cosmogram of Kalachakra Tantra that symbolizes the seed syllable or the Ten Powerful One consists of the Lantsa character for E(ए) on the left and VAM(वं) on the right, representing the ultimate fusion of emptiness (E/ए) and bliss (VAM/ वं). The two parts of *Evam* contain within themselves the grand idea of fusion of wisdom (प्रज्ञा) and method (उपाय). This is the most sublime and secular formulation for 'fusion of horizons'.

It is another matter that our sub-continent is facing the politics of divisiveness of all kinds. Dr. C.P. Singh et al. have traced one of the origin of politics of divisive identities to the census started by the British administrators in their paper, "*Colonial Agenda of Census in India*". British used the census to create new identities and divisions in society to counter the emerging nationalism. Their basic purpose of dividing the people on sectarian lines was meant to pursue their policy of divide and rule so that they could perpetuate their colonial rule in India. The British administrators encouraged divisive policies rooted in census data and findings to institutionalize the divisions amongst the people in India. From Michel Foucault to Benedict Anderson and Sudipto Kaviraj, all of them have argued how the colonial forms of knowledge like enumeration and the statistics (science of state) transform the fuzzy boundaries into frigid boundaries and cause the rise of politics of identities. Modern knowledge tradition does discourage the fluidity of self and 'fusion of horizons'.

Our administrators are also responsible for falling into the trap of the statistics as panacea for ills of governance. They discourage the indigenous categories at the altar of data and tables. India launched the National Population Policy decades back in 1976. But, two-child policy could not permeate the masses. In spite of mass advertisement, public announcements, workshops and literature dissemination, the policy failed to appeal popular imagination. Rather there was a popular backlash forcing the retreat of the state. What went wrong? Population policy was couched in the western epistemic framework which prioritizes empiricism and hence the science of state viz. statistics. The government went on flaunting the ill-effects if the population continued to rise. Ironically, in spite of constant effort by the state to slow down the population figure, now the population is touching the unbelievable 1.3 billion mark and we might surpass China within a decade. Imagine if the government contextualized the policy in the cultural root and deployed indigenous narrative, the policy might have been effective. The State could have used the epic Ramayana and argued how the hero, Rama had the first child only after 14 years of marriage. Buddha had the only child after 13 years of marriage. This could have been effective in communicating how our civilizational heroes lived and discouraged bearing many children.

In recent times, we are witnessing massive campaign against non-vegetarianism. The votaries of vegetarianism drool over paranoia when they demand blanket ban against even consumption of eggs. Seeds of new fragmentation are being sown in Indian society. There are political movements picking up against cow slaughter and pink revolution in India. But, by tying up the consumption of egg with the cattle slaughter is problematic. Meat consumption is bad, is being justified by referring to some obscure research in the West. It is as if the results in western societies bear the sole stamp of authority. There is total absence of indigenous categories in the whole discourse. The problem exists in India; the understanding ought to be premised over the Indian categories of thinking.

Few weeks ago, I was attending a panel discussion over "Buddhism and Vegetarianism". The speakers were unanimous in reducing non-vegetarianism as a sin of the worst kind. In fact, one of the speakers mentioned how the stomach becomes graveyard for all sort of dead beings. The audience comprised of people from the Himalayan belt, for whom the non-vegetarianism is a way of life. In cold climates, they require protein-rich source of energy and by asking them to even forego consuming eggs tantamount to disrupting their own life-cycles and cultural ecology itself.

But, is there a way to discourage cattle slaughter and yet not imposing a blanket ban over non-vegetarianism? The answer cannot be convincing if it is coated with the environmental logic and the statistical fallacies. In the Indian context, cow slaughter is a taboo about which there is unanimity among all Indic traditions. Though, the necessity discourages extreme vegetarianism; there cannot be any justification for cattle slaughter in this part of the world. The freedom to satiate gastronomic desire and bodily necessity ought to be balanced so as not to offend the Indic sensibility. In such a puzzling condition, western categories might not offer the solution. But, does Indic thinking has appropriate indigenous categories?

Vasubandhu, the 4th century Mahayana philosopher composed a treatise *Garbhavakrantinirdesa-sutra* (Sutra on Entering the Womb) and described how there are four modes of entering the womb. He describes how embryo grows into foetus through various stages like *kalala*, *arbula*, *pesin*, *ghan* and finally *prasakha* when material organs with support get fully developed. Vasubandhu describes how the fetus in its 28th week of gestation experiences the 'eight disordered conception' and in the 36th week, feels unhappy about being caged in dark womb and wishes to escape. Tibetan yogi, Gampopa (1079-1153 A.D.) describes in the book, *Jewel Ornament of Liberation*, experiences of pain that embryo undergo throughout gestation. It is during the 36th week when foetus wants to escape the dungeon of womb. Similarly, *Garbha-Upanishad* of Krishna-Yajurveda mentions that during the 9th month of gestation, the foetus learns to contemplate over the miseries of human life.

One thing is common among Indic scriptures that it is only during the birth through the womb (*karma-yoni*), that karma-cycle operates. Though, there are two more kinds of wombs- *divya-yoni* and *bhoga-yoni*, karma cycle does

not operate through these. While the various forms of demi-gods and angels which do not have material body are supposed to take birth through *divya-yoni*; animals, insects and such beings at lower level of evolutionary ladder which do not possess discriminatory wisdom are said to be born of the *bhoga-yoni* (enjoyment womb). There is consensus among various sects that the world we live in is full of sorrow. The karma cycle is supposed to operate only when the foetus learns to experience suffering.

It is sin to interrupt the completion of karma-cycle of other beings. Every being must be given fullest opportunity to strive for own escape from the ubiquitous karma-cycle. Since, none of the scripture mentions about operation of karma cycle in beings which are not born of womb, the non-mammals can clearly be excluded from the karma-cycle. There should not be blanket opposition against consumption of fish, chicken and eggs all being *a-yonij* (अयोनिज). But, what about consumption of red meat? The categorization of non-vegetarians between white meat and red meat- eater can reduce several differences over cattle slaughter.

Human beings survive within an existential band. It appears that existence of beings itself is quantized. Our hearing organs respond to vibrations within a range of 20 Hz-20000 Hz. Similarly, we have a homeostatic temperature. We see within a small visual range. Our gastronomic range should there of be clearly defined. *A-yonij* seems to be a natural category.

We have seen how Indic tradition describes foetus of 36-37th week duration as entering the cycle of karma. Based upon this parameter, we can classify the mammals which can be avoided for the consumption so that they can complete their own karma-cycle. The gestation period of mammals can be classified into two categories: more than 36-37 week duration and less than 36-37 week duration. While camel(406 day), cow(280days), dolphin(276 days), elephant(640 days), giraffe(395-425 days), horse(337 days) will belong to the former category; goat(151 days), kangaroo(40 days), pig(151 days), rabbit(32 days), sheep(148 days), dog(62 days), mouse(21 days) will belong to the latter category.

Such indigenous knowledge-based modern categorization will come to aid for the people who seek culinary freedom and those who resist cattle slaughter, particularly that of cow and beef.

Our constant endeavour to brood over Indian scriptural knowledge and blend those with the modern knowledge is possible only due to the perennial support of the Chancellor of the Mewar University, his office and the colleagues. We also make an appeal to the scholars to support this risky venture of bringing out a periodical in print without support from the government sectors, by sending serious contemplative studies and methodical empirical results with promising results. The life of a periodical depends upon the paramount mantra of *Evam* (एवम्). Only "we" and "you", working in tandem can guarantee the survival of ideas.

– Niraj Kumar