



Connecting Thinkers...

Striving to bring you diverse perspectives each time, we at Thinklet decided to let our Ph.D Research Scholars be in-charge of this month's issue, and bring in their expertise and research ideas to you. We are happy to introduce the four scholars who have coordinated and edited this issue, by collating articles, interviewing experts, and contributing articles themselves.



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Inside this Issue	
<i>Guide's Column</i>	<i>Pg 3</i>
<i>Article by Dr. Shiva Chaudhary</i>	<i>Pg 4-5</i>
<i>Article by Srinivasan Ramaprasad and Book Review by Nalin Rai</i>	<i>Pg 6</i>
<i>Poetry by Suhasini B. Srihari</i>	<i>Pg 7</i>
<i>Article by Ronika Mukherjee</i>	<i>Pg 8-9</i>
<i>Interview of Dr. Meera Iyer by Diana Sushmita</i>	<i>Pg 10-11</i>
<i>Article by Revathy R.</i>	<i>Pg 12</i>
<i>Achievements and Publications</i>	<i>Pg 13</i>
<i>Alumni Achievements</i>	<i>Pg 14</i>

Editors' Message



The culture of any city is understood as located within the negotiations of the present cultural contemporaneity and the ways in which it has existed in the past to evolve over the years. In this sense, Bangalore is not one city, it is both Bangalore and Bengaluru, they simultaneously exist within the city space at present. This transformation has evolved over the years emulating multiple simultaneous being across the world. Bengaluru has been coercively adaptive of Bangalore in a globalised and technologically driven context. It is nostalgic of the “ooru” (Ananthamurthy, 63) being dis-placed and subsumed within the affluent cosmopolitanism of Bangalore. Bangalore on the other hand in choosing to be a cosmopolitan city, has culturally accommodated people from diverse cultures across India, for work and better prospects. This has transformed the existing city space giving room to diverse cultural experiences and multiple cities to exist within the city space. The symbolic shift of the name Bangalore to Bengaluru in October 2014 has enabled us in understanding the strings of authenticity that exist within Bangalore. However, the emergence of diverse cultural experiences within the city space enables the mapping of the city through new shoots in old roots.

The Marxist thinker Aijaz Ahmad in an interview published in the Frontline titled, “The State is Taken over from Within” speaks about the many facets of globalization and its effects on culture. In calling the word “globalization” as a bourgeois euphemism for the latest phase of imperialism, he says that cultural imperialism has always been a fundamental aspect of imperialism. With the advent of new information, particularly visual technology there is always a local variant of anything American in the Asian and African countries. He calls it “imitative originality”. He goes on to say that it is not reactionary but there seems to be an objective correlation between such changes in the everyday life and American cultural forms.

Our city now classifies people as “IT people and non the IT people.” It is hard to define and understand what ‘local’ means in the context of Bengaluru, today. If it is defined only in terms of language, then are we denying the existence of history and the migrants from other parts of the country? Today, to understand who a localite is one must take into consideration regional, national and global interactions. With the intervention of the state, democratic means must be followed to negotiate this local identity. Today, in a city like Bengaluru with migrants pouring in for job prospects this “ooru” experience is highly fragmented. Also, these negotiations are not mediated in a simple manner but rather it is through complex abstract understandings of culture and identity. Through this process, new cultural ways of living emerge which give rise to different cultures to coexist.

Research in the city of Bengaluru has evolved to account for the subjective lived experiences of people. In a globalised and technologically driven society there has come a need to mark these shifts in progress. For a going on generation which often dehistoricises experiences there has come a need to claim experiences that involve the simultaneous interactions of the “ooru” and the world at large. These glocalised experiences enable us to unravel discourse around gender, labour, environment, urbanism and how these ideas impact everyday living conditions of the people in the city. There is a growing want and need to know the city’s history. This often remains only at the level of gaining information. The need to know one’s history must also lead into formulating creative civic virtues that develop a sense of belonging within the city. The right to the city needs to be claimed and more research in this area would enable writing worlds by negotiating the native and the world at large. In accounting for this multicultural and cosmopolis experience, there is a growing research in accounting these shifts and marking progress in a subjective manner using objective methods.

Guide's Column



The Importance of Theoretical Texts in Indian Music Research

Music is mainly viewed as a performing art. The type of research most preferred by Indian Music researchers today is that which has a connection to contemporary performing traditions. There have been several theoretical texts written over centuries, starting from 2nd century AD, which have documented concepts in Indian Music. Many of them are in Sanskrit. Of what relevance are these historical texts to the modern researcher of Indian Music, especially one who is focussing on modern performing traditions?

Learning to be a good performer in Indian Music involves detailed instruction by the teacher and intensive practice and keen listening by the student for many years. The process of the student imbibing the music is mostly spontaneous and intuitive. He learns to 'think musically'. However, 'thinking about music' is very different from 'thinking musically'. It is about knowing not only the 'how's of the art but also the 'why's of the art. It is about developing a deep understanding of musical concepts and how they form an underlying framework for a particular genre of music.

'Thinking about music' is very different from 'thinking musically'

In order to develop a clear understanding of the concepts in Indian Music, it is essential to know how they have evolved over the centuries. For instance, if we take the term 'shruti', it has several meanings in different historical contexts. It could refer to the frequency interval between two musical notes, it could refer to a certain pitch position or it could be a tonic note (the note 'sa' in the set of seven notes– 'sa', 'ri', 'ga', 'ma', 'pa', 'dha', 'ni' in present-day Indian Music). If we read Sanskrit theoretical texts, they give a range of definitions that this term covers. But why would a researcher of contemporary Indian Music need to know these?

Let us take a simple example. The 'Tambura/Tanpura' instrument in present-day Indian Classical Music concerts is a drone, usually playing only two musical notes – 'sa' and 'pa'- throughout the concert. This drone is unique to Indian Music and is not seen in other classical musical systems of the world. To understand its role and significance, one needs to understand how 'shruti' has evolved, the evolution of the Tambura and the musical developments that led to it becoming a key instrument in Indian Music. This understanding can only come with a study of theoretical texts.

Theoretical texts also broaden our perspective. They have descriptions of songs that belong to the 'folk music' or 'ritualistic music' category, such as lullabies and marriage songs, not necessarily those which belong to the 'classical music' category. One learns from them about instruments such as 'Kinnari Veena' that exist only in tribal music today. They tell us that ragas that we consider 'traditional' today were considered 'inferior' at one point of time, and 'traditional' ragas of those days no longer are in vogue today. The texts show how Indian Music has evolved with time, and we develop a holistic understanding and an open-mindedness to view developments in Indian Music with objectivity. This understanding and open-mindedness are vital traits for researchers of Indian Music, including those studying contemporary music.

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Indian Folk Theatre

The historical development of Indian theatre can be divided into three broad phases known as Sanskrit or Classical theatre, Folk or Traditional theatre and Modern Indian theatre. The very foundation of the Indian theatre is ascribed to the Sanskrit drama beginning roughly in the first century. Gradually, the Sanskrit language started splitting into various vernaculars later adopting the form of regional languages. Persian invasion stilted the growth of theatrical activities in India and by the twelfth century AD, with the establishment of the rule of Muslim invaders, theatre was restricted. About this time, the growing folk theatre replaced Sanskrit drama. The subject matter of the various forms of folk theatre was derived from the epics, *puranas*, legends, mythology, popular lore and the religious stories, etc. This second phase of Indian theatre evolved in the form of oral traditions. This kind of theatre was in vogue with its performances from about 1000 AD to 1700 AD with the further continuation upto the present time existing in almost all the parts of India. The change of Indian political set up and the evolution of different regional languages in every part of India caused the emergence of this form of theatre. The classical theatre being inspired by *Natyashastra* was basically urban-oriented with the great satisfaction of its form and nature. This folk theatre, known as traditional theatre, based on rural roots, was quite simple, immediate, unsophisticated, informal and basically rural-oriented. The peak period of folk theatre's emergence in different regions of the country ranged from fifteenth to sixteenth centuries. In every region, it emerged in the same regional language. Initially, they were quite devotional in nature being based on religious and local stories and mythological tales. Later, with the change of time, they got quite secular in terms of their content, getting inspired by romantic folk stories, heroic deeds and biographical accounts of the local heroes.

Though there are a number of forms of folk theatre existing in different regions of India with a slight or huge difference from one another, sometimes, sharing the same feature or having an interconnection yet a brief description of the most popular folk theatre forms should be given to have a better understanding of it.

The very foundation of the Indian theatre is ascribed to the Sanskrit drama beginning roughly in the first century

- *Swang* is the most popular folk theatre form of North India especially that of Haryana. This folk drama is basically musical enacting almost the similar stories with slight variations according to the related regions. These verse stories are presented with the help of related folk musical modes. Several musical instruments as *dholak*, *sarangikhart*, *ektara* and *harmonium* are also used in *Swang* to make the dialogue delivery quite effective. A major offshoot of *Swang* is found in the form of *Nautanki*.
- Another folk theatre form known as *Bhavai* is popular in Gujarat and Rajasthan. The *Bhavai* of Gujarat is more theatrical and less musical in comparison to that of Rajasthan. Flute, *sarangi*, *tabla*, *manjeerabaab*, *bhungal* and *pakhaawaj* etc. are the instruments to be used in *Bhavai*. There is found a rare synthesis of romantic and devotional sentiments in this form of folk theatre.
- *Yatra* or *Jatra* is the traditional theatre form of eastern India especially that of Bengal. Even in the different regions of eastern India including Orissa, Assam and West Bengal, it is presented in different forms. The literal meaning of *Yatra* suggests a pilgrimage or a procession moving from one place to another. So, its performance requires an open area. Being originated in Bengal, *Jatra* was basically a ritual theatre deriving its themes from the life of Lord Krishna. Chaitanya, the famous Vaishnava saint used *Jatra* as a medium to collect his devotees in a large singing and dancing group with the propagation of his teachings of Krishna. Along with the dramatisation of Lord Krishna's exploits, the *Jatra* also presented folk-tales, *puranic* legends and various episodes from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*.

- *Maach* is the popular folk theatre form of Madhya Pradesh. The term *Maach* signifies both, the play and the stage itself. This form of folk theatre gives more importance to the songs which are played in between the dialogues. It originated in Ujjain about two centuries ago. Romantic folk tales or the mythological events are basically used as its themes.
- *Bhaona*, one another folk theatre form presents the *Ankianaat* of Assam. Several glimpses of the culture of Assam, Orissa, Bengal, Brindavan and Mathura are presented in *Bhaona*. The story begins with *Sutradhara*'s narration who first speaks in Sanskrit and later turns into Assamese or *Brijboli*.
- The earlier forms of folk theatre existing in Maharashtra gave birth to a new form called *Tamasha*. It is full of humour, erotic songs and dance. In this traditional theatre form, women themselves play the feminine roles in place of men which is rarely found in any other folk theatre form. A *Tamasha* play always begins with some naughty episode of *Krishna-leela*. The erotic songs, sung during the performance of dancing, are called the *Lavani* songs.
- Kashmiri folk theatre form, known as *BhandPather* is a combination of music, dance and acting with the inclusion of witty, satirical and parodical elements which add laughter to the performance. The musical instruments used in this are *dhol*, *nagaara* and *turnai*. As *BhandPather* is performed by the local farmers, the influence of their life-style, sensitivity and ideals is marked in this.
- *Dashavatar*, presenting the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu – the God of creation and preservation, is the folk theatre form of Goa and Konkan regions. The performers personifying these incarnations of God wear stylized make-up and wooden masks.
- *Krishnattam*, a folk theatre form evolving in seventeenth century AD, belongs to Kerala. It is a sequential performance of eight plays lasting for eight days. The themes of these plays are based on various events of Lord Krishna's life presenting the victory of good over evil. There is one another traditional form of theatre of Kerala called *Mudiyettu* being performed only in the Kali temples as an oblation to the goddess. It is celebrated in the month of November and December presenting the triumph of goddess Bhadrakali over the *Asura* Darika. It contains seven characters in the form of *Shiva*, *Bhadrakali*, *Darika*, *Narada*, *Koimbidar*, *Kooli* and *Danavendra*, all of them wearing a heavy make-up.
- *Yakshagana*, a popular folk theatre form of Karnataka, gives the presentation of puranic tales and mythological stories. The prominent episodes of the *Ramayana* as *Raajyaabhishek*, *Baali-Sugreevayuddha*, *Lav-kushYuddh*, and of the *Mahabharata* as *Subhadravivah*, *Draupadiswayamvar*, *Karna-Arjunyuddh* and *Abhimanyuvadh* etc. are presented through it.
- *Khyal*, belonging to Rajasthan, is such traditional folk theatre form which is full of music, songs and dance. In different regions of Rajasthan, it is known with different names as *Nautanki*, *Tamasha*, *Swang*, *Maach* and *rammat*. Thus, all these forms are similar, with the slight difference in their stylistic features, maintaining their particular identity.
- *Keertan*, being presented in almost every part of India with different names, is the most popular narrative form of traditional theatre which is used in the exaltation and worshiping of the god by chanting and celebrating his praises with the help of music.

It was only in the eighteenth century that a new awakening in Indian theatre was marked with the establishment of British imperialism and this influence of Western civilization on Indian life caused a new renaissance to emerge in Indian theatre.

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Attributes of a Good Researcher -My Reflections and Thoughts

Research is always about contributing to the body of knowledge in a small way. A young or a budding researcher is thus always required to pick a small thread of idea from the ocean of knowledge that lies before him and expand the scope of the idea. This is a daunting task and the research guide plays a critical role who inculcates all the good attributes in a researcher besides preparing him for an intellectual and stimulating academic career. There are many qualities needed to become a successful researcher such as patience, perseverance, scientific mindset, critical thinking, curiosity, focus, commitment and more importantly an attitude to absorb repeated failures. Besides these, there are many other attributes that help in the development of a researcher.

The journey to become a good researcher usually begins with proper career planning. He/she must decide very early in his/her career whether to work towards a corporate or an academic career. The researcher must engage himself in significant amount of readings and connect with intellectuals, to choose an area of interest, and pursue his Master's degree in his chosen area. Young researchers often find that the research study takes a heavy toll on them due to the pressures of steady progress expected to be maintained by university norms. Hence, they must spend sufficient time in developing the pre-requisites and the skills needed before even entering the research degree. Also, proper coursework aligned with the chosen area of specialization is very critical. These shall help in preparing the research student with an ability to read technical papers. This phase is very important as the research student develops attributes like abstraction, generalisation, critical thinking, etc. which help in identifying the gap in the literature and enables him to select the problem for his research topic. This is perhaps the most difficult step of a research study. Next step of a research is to define his research objectives and goals and to come up with high level formulation of the problem. Assumptions and Limitations of the theory must be clearly defined and a good formulation shall always be reducible to some well-known results already published in the literature. The novelty in the work must be explicit and visible and lead to expanding the body of literature. The research thesis must conclude with a detailed output that emerged from the thesis and identify the future scope of research which ideally should be very broad.

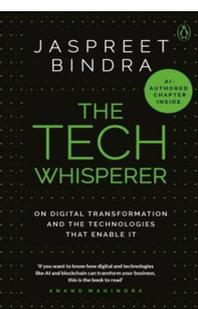
The journey to become a good researcher usually begins with proper career planning

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Book Review

The Tech Whisperer On Digital Transformation and the technologies that enable it?

By Jaspreet Bindra



As a research scholar always grappling with putting the thought into words and trying to complete a chapter of the research work, what if I were to tell you that a new book has come into the market where a whole chapter has been written through the help of Artificial Intelligence or AI. Yes, The Tech Whisperer written by Jaspreet Bindra is the book where perhaps for the first time this has been accomplished. Jaspreet Bindra has used the Indian tradition and folklore to elucidate how technology is evolving and how it is going to impact our lives in the times to come. Well, books are being written left right and centre so what is so unique about its book? The uniqueness of this book lies in the fact that it has made technological advancements an interesting read by weaving it through the prism of folklore and Indian traditions and culture. It is a story that unfolds seamlessly through the pages and captivates you till the end.

Whisperer play an interesting role in the social construct-the role of fear allayers and prepare the common people for a change. The book also adopts the same route by using the semantics of whisperers to ally the fears associated with technical disruptions happening around the world and prepares the reader for a smooth transition into a new world that is evolving. Though digital transformation has been happening for more than a decade, it still a genie and Bindra has tried to uncork it in a beneficial manner. Most of the practitioners are in their comfort zones to explain the digital of transformation but are in zones of discomfort when they are asked to elucidate the transformation. Bindra, through this book has focused more on transformation than on digital leveraging on the metamorphosis that digital is ushering in. It is a must read for all of us.

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Just a Poem That is Read and Forgotten!

They say, it is the postmodern era
There is a complete concoction of objects and ideas
This new anarchy has challenged the elite!
But, wait –
Slavery, Indentured Labourers,
Colonialism, Neo-colonialism,
Imperialism, Neo-liberalism,
Marxism, Capitalism
And other *isms* –
Are we done?
A fat cheque from an MNC,
A flat in Electronic City,
Waking up to GMT -5 in India,
Driving a General Motor,
Giving a new meaning to staple food,
Appropriating a foreign tongue,
Questioning when it is convenient,
Unintentionally awaiting another problem –
It is not the land that they are after,
Not people, not material,
It is a capital of a different kind:
The knowledge capital!
Are we teaching or preaching?
Are we creating or manufacturing?
A generation bred in the illusion of revolution
It is this anarchy we have come to love,
Which no longer teases us out of thought
For generations to come, it is winter forever
Immersed in brooding thoughts
While mankind awaits in vain for the *Second Coming*
Looking through this heap of broken images
In search of tranquility in the shattering of ideals.

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Gender Equality and Gender Parity - Institutions and Processes

‘Move towards social reform’

To start, it is imperative to discuss the concept of gender parity and equality. Gender equality implies equal rights and contribution of both men and women towards varied spheres of society. Gender parity involves relative equality of women and men in terms of ratio and proportion and is usually represented as male to female ratio against a standardised indicator. Traditionally speaking the terms gender parity and equality have incorporated gender binary between men and women and hence the attention is mostly drawn towards marginalisation of women, deprivation of their representation and discrimination. Gender as a broader spectrum also encompasses gender fluid and LGBTQ community. With the advent of queer studies as an academic discipline, there is greater awareness about LGBT rights and movements from time to time and the impact of such movements on government policy making. Of course in my attempt to historicise the feminist and LGBT Movements, it will be clearly evident how the marginalised women, gays, lesbians, transfolks and gender variant community had been victims of the universal patriarchy and heterosexual superiority.

Feminist movements brought the issues of lesbian feminists under the ambit of feminist rights and prerogatives. Underlining the ideological lacuna of feminist movements, the third wave feminists moved towards accepting gender as social construction and fluid. Lesbianism is even considered as the logical outcome of feminism. A protest against the autonomous nature of patriarchal superiority, lesbian feminism challenged heterosexism of heterosexual feminists. Again the third wave feminism also saw the emergence of lesbians of colour as protest to the supremacy of white lesbian feminists. As Audre Lorde, lesbian feminist of colour mentioned in her 1979 speech ‘The master’s tools will never dismantle the Master’s house’.

LGBT Movements- The age old criminalisation of LGBT community and their subsequent persecution in many countries even till date based on their sexual orientation and gender Identity (SOGI) is now reducing as a result of frequent community activism and the changes in laws and policies thereafter. The persecution faced by the community had always been violative of fundamental human rights and hence was exploitative in nature. Sexual violence and assault, deprivation of basic civil rights, right to employment, ill- treatment and extrajudicial killing have victimised the gender fluid community.

Even after turning down of section 377, the society may not be regarded as free from homophobia as Freud calls it law is internal more than external and the detrimental effect of the colonial law still continues to impact the lives of the sexual minorities in so far as their struggle for inclusivity is not even half achieved. The rigid nature of section 377 and anti sodomy law which only boils down to homosexuals have terrorised the community who suffer depression due to apprehension of public prosecution because of gender identity. Again limitations of the law lie in the fact that the tortured, molested, blackmailed homosexuals cannot even come out to lodge a complaint in the police station out of fear of entrapment by the law itself that is prone to engulf even the innocent gay men. Given the vague nature and the repressive rigidity of the law, section 377 must consider the stigmatising effect of the law on the innocent homosexuals which is also impeding the battle against HIV. As homosexuals out of the fear of getting caught and get imprisoned hesitated to go for medical check up and discuss the result of the tests lest they are brought under the ambit of section 377. Distribution of condoms amongst the homosexuals were also not encouraged by the society as it would imply condoning such practices.

Government policies and its impact on lives – With the repeal of section 377, gender neutral community is also covered under rape and molestation laws and hence will be lawfully safeguarded for justice if the situation demands. This includes the transfolks, hijras, gays, lesbians and intersex. As it is argued by Nivedita Menon in ‘Seeing like a Feminist’ that society have trained children to grow up performing gender roles depending on the gender in which they are born. Hence vigour and chivalry as masculine qualities and grace and sensitivity as feminine qualities have been instilled and reinforced by tradition to strengthen compulsory patriarchy. Hence to quote Judith Butler such set social practices are backed up by institutions and people are made to perform gender roles as imposed by society.

Thus Beauvoir correctly puts it, 'one is not born but rather becomes a woman'. Though there are positive waves of changes in democratisation of gender neutral rights and protection, queer politics is a long way to go and is not very organised even now with the multiplicity of issues overcrowding the singularity of queer identity. . Even when we look at the voices against section 377 they comprise child labour activists, feminists groups and NGOS collectively standing to gather voice against injustice. There are further sub divisions within the LGBT community where the order of the acronym suggests the privileged and the unprivileged. In LGBT politics prominence is usually given more to the elitist cis gender men, educated and high class lesbians with almost negligible or no recognition given to the poor trans folks and intersexuals. The English speaking educated gays and lesbians had at times criminalised the non-elitist transgenders and had usually shown indifference towards their judgements. There is no solidarity in the group when the Dalits and transwomen are excluded from the meetings conducted by educated cis gender feminists of gays. Even in mainstream discussions issues like poverty, population, corruption get more leverage than mere trans issues that are considered not so important in nation building. Creating an alliance among all the marginalised and oppressed is a constructive step towards strengthening community building.

Collective intersectionality among the marginalised groups- The need of the hour is cross sectionality in the marginalised classes. For example, a white lesbian feminist may be indifferent to a lesbian of colour or an elitist transgender neglects the undereducated and non -elitist transgender. Again men of the subordinate group may be oppressed sometimes like women. An ethnic group's range of knowledge and lived experiences can create strong political agendas. In order to make the experiences heard and as credible as the dominant mainstream groups, all must stand together.

Sexual politics is interrelated with sexual identity which in the modern times have increased and have become more varied. There are identities like homosexuals, bisexuals, intersex or hermaphrodites/ pseudohermaphrodites, transvestites, transsexuals and so on. With the difference in orientation, there are differences in their oppressors, rival groups and their issues and agendas which also constitute different sexual politics. In spite of the attempt of the queer community to club the sexually deviant under the umbrella term, there are internal divisions and collisions and cases of splits with different sexual politics are quite rampant..Also the other side of the coin requires such collisions for sustaining political tensions. Both the category strippers and the category defenders need to conform to their positions for balancing both the pros and cons of an issue or agenda.

Gender parity and Governance is no longer restricted to men women binary but surpasses it and encompasses even the deviant sexuality. With democratisation in sexuality and questions on inclusivity the sexual minorities have come up to a stage where they are visible and discussed. The age old suffrages and movements and activities have resulted in leniency of the harshness of law related to sexual minorities. Hence the society at large irrespective of personal and collective issue must fight against the prerogatives and oppressions of the marginalised women, sexual minorities so as to restructure the social order with new laws and policies.

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Interview with Dr. Meera Iyer

Dr. Meera Iyer is an independent writer and researcher. She is currently the Convenor of the Bengaluru Chapter of INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage). A former development journalist, she now writes primarily on history, heritage, science, and environmental issues. She has a PhD in Forest Ecology from Michigan State University and is also the brain behind the highly popular 'Parichay' walks of INTACH Bengaluru. She is a co-founder of Carnelian Heritage Consultants. One of the editors, Diana Sushmitha met her to discuss about her new book



Diana: Congratulations on your new book – Discovering Bengaluru: History. Neighbourhoods. Walks. What are your thoughts on writing this book?

Dr. Meera: This book primarily talks about the past that is still present in Bengaluru. It has archival maps and photographs to enhance the reading and understanding of the city's past. It is part history and part walking-guide. It tells stories of the various streets and people's lived experience in those streets. It marvels the architecture, culture and nature of the city as well.

Diana: What are the preparations you did as a researcher and writer before you began writing the book?

Dr. Meera: Research is a fundamental part of my writing, especially archival research. Lived experiences also enabled me to have an emotional connect with the places I wrote about. So, in my case monuments, coins, heritage sites and spaces became my area of exploration. Once you develop a bond with what you are going to research about, the need and curiosity to get to know more about your study evolves. Again in my case, my love and familiarity with the city space is also backed up with archival research work from various sources. This perhaps may seem like a slow process but it is extremely necessary while one is engaged in research.

Diana: Do you think digital technology has made the process of research easier and how have you incorporated it in your work?

Dr. Meera: As stated earlier, one cannot replace the “traditional” ways of doing research. Note making and simultaneously spending time in the library and reading through newspaper articles and other archival sources become a tedious yet necessary part of one's research. Visiting the heritage sites, observing them, talking to old timers and people living there in the present, examining the sites all become an integral part of my research. Writing to people and getting in touch with them to access information becomes extremely easier because of technological advancements. Recording experiences for further use and capturing photographs with enhanced quality also have been integral in my work. Accessibility to information is one of the crucial aspects of digital technology. Accessibility in terms of tracing resources and definitely in making sure that people are able to read your work.

Diana: What is your idea of the cultural of Bengaluru in today's world?

Dr. Meera: Bangalore has traversed so many paths that it is hard to pin it down to any one aspect. Acceptance of differences is not something new to the people of Bengaluru. There is always a culture of letting people be and other cities might not have this unique feeling other than Bangalore.

Diana: How relevant do you think it is to historicise a city space in today's world?

Dr. Meera: Oral history of any city can be traced to some extent through archival research. There is a need to know the history of a place as it enables one to value memories, lived experience and look beyond the narrative of the present times. The prime focus of our volunteer program is to enable more people to get to know their history. People tend to have an attitude of moving on or de-historise events. People will be amazed as they understand the nuances of their past how conflicts in the present are also rooted in historical events.

Diana: People often say that Bengaluru has always been multicultural and there are sub cultural ways of living in the city so there is nothing new about multiculturalism in the city. What are your ideas on this in the context of Bengaluru being a Global City?

Dr. Meera: Bangalore will always remain Bangalore to me cause the experiences I associate with it leaves behind a sense of nostalgia. Walking through the streets of Basavanagudi and Malleshwaram as a child, admiring the flowers and trees around and being one with nature or understanding that the Sampige Road was named after the golden champa/ Magnolia champaca leaves behind so many memories. Over the years the city has transformed to be known as the Silicon Valley or IT city but for me as an old timer, the city will always ring in the Bangalore Blues.

Diana: It is a common perception that research needs to be objective but at the same time historicising a space requires accounting to subjective experiences as well. How would you negotiate with that?

Dr. Meera: There is always a need to expose yourself to the “other”. Attempt at objectivity is not a bad thing at all. There must be a scientific method that is to be followed and it is not about the Sciences alone. This involves critical thinking and data collection. There needs to be conscious effort at the back of a researcher’s mind about the purpose of the research otherwise one can easily get carried away.

Diana: How interdisciplinary has your study been about the city of Bengaluru? Is it necessary in research?

Dr. Meera: I am a science student and my research was in Forest Ecology. Over the past few years I’ve been engaging in historical and archival research. But there is a need to constantly remind myself about the multidisciplinary ways in which research can progress. There is a need to unlearn and also relearn constantly. Research is an evolving process so there is a need to always learn, relearn and unlearn.

Diana: What is the advice you would like to give our readers and research scholars?

Dr. Meera: The first and foremost thing about research, as cliché as it may seem is to know what you are doing, understand it and love it. The only thing that will drive you further is your passion towards your research. Also, your work must be accessible to all so you must be able to summarise your ideas in a paragraph when someone asks you about your research. It is best to ensure that common people understand your ideas which requires the researcher not jargonise the ideas as well. Be passionate about what you do and everything will fall in place as you dwell into it!

Gender Representation in Media

The digitally-driven world has access to innumerable multi-media texts apart from the antiquated manuscripts and mythologies. The Indian media and entertainment (M&E) industry are progressing rigorously, mostly driven by the digitisation, backed by mounting consumer demands and improving advertising revenues. It is delivering unique content that can compete with global media giants. The power of media on our lives is massive, more than a source of entertainment it can influence our decisions, opinions and perspectives.

Over the past three decades, the contribution of media to our conceptions of social reality and how it influences our perceptions of the real world has been studied and proven in George Gerbner's cultivation theory. He postulated that continuous exposure of media texts can cultivate a behaviour and attitude that believe the fictional world created by television is an ideal depiction of the real-world (Gerbner& Gross, 1976; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1980, 1986). Representation of media is the way how media portrays certain communities, people, races, gender or ethnicity and present them before the audiences. Media communicates images of genders which are commonly stereotypical and perpetually unrealistic. Women are underrepresented on all forms of Indian media and this falsely implies that they are unimportant and invisible whereas men are the cultural standard of our society. The stereotypical gender portrayal reflects the socially endorsed views of gender.

Apart from informing and entertaining, media's major function is social control and reinforcement of the status quo. The fictional representation of gender and their roles will lead to the formation of attitudes and perceptions. An unrealistic expectation of gender will be set in the minds of audience by media. Viewers accept traditional gender roles shown in the media and they worship the ideal, passive female trait. Whilst, the rigid, masculine, privileged role of men are accepted widely. If media sends such messages constantly, it could efficiently foist superficial values in the society. Hence, there is a need for media to change such misrepresentation and accelerate social change by cultivating liberal views on gender. Media literacy could also become an effective tool for helping the audience decipher the message they receive. Media should let people think freely instead of thinking on their behalf.

*Revathy R.
Ph.D Scholar in Mass Communication
Email: revureghu@gmail.com*

“When I realized that I could no longer trust the data that I had reported in some of my papers, I did what I think is the only correct course of action. I retracted them.”

Kate Laskowski

This quote was sent to us by S. Sivaram, Ph.D Scholar in Cultural Studies

Achievements and Publications



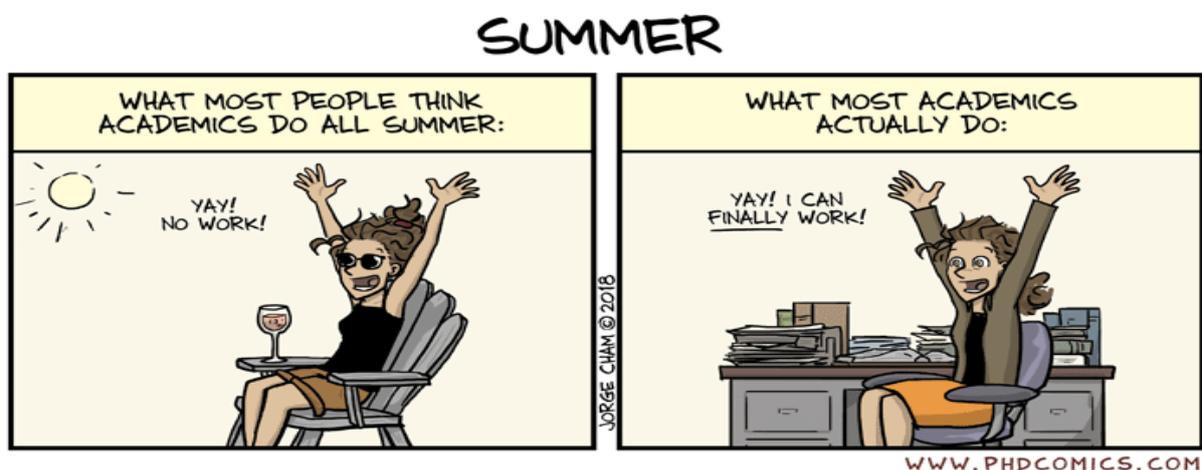
Dr. Shweta Gupta, Associate Prof., Dept. of ECE, has been inducted as a Technical Committee Member for ICBBT 2020 Conference to be held in Xian' China in 2020. She has been working as a reviewer for this conference since 2016.

V. Jagannatha, Ph.D Scholar in Civil Engineering, chaired an International Symposium on Current Space and Society at 43 Indian Social Science Congress at Bangalore Central University held during 17-21 Jan 2020 at Central College, Bengaluru. He also participated as an Alumni, International Space University, Strasbourg France, in an online workshop 'Examining the Soci Economic benefits of International Space Station ISS' held at NASA - Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI) along with Secure World Foundation, USA on 30th Jan 2020. He also served as one of the editors for 700 abstracts covering the focal theme: *Current Science of Nature -Human Society in India* which covered 28 Research Committees and 21 Thematic Panels. Jagannatha also contributed as an author/co author of five scientific papers on decentralised community centered practice in Solid waste management, lakes conservation: ecological illiteracy and best practices, skill building for vulnerable groups a case study. As Local Joint Organizing Secretary, 43 ISSC for Bengaluru Central University and Indian Social Science Academy. He is currently serving as one of the Conveners, Karnataka Social Science Academy and Director, National Translation Centre, Indian Social Science Academy.

Sunil K R, Ph.D Scholar in Management was invited to IIT Bombay for their Doctoral Consortium held from 20-22 February 2020. He presented a paper titled '*Positive Leadership and Flourishing in Emerging Economy: Mediating Role of Trust and Psychological Empowerment*'.

Peter Reji Ramanatt, Ph.D Scholar in Aerospace Engineering, has published a paper titled '*Performance Evaluation of Wireless Protocols for Avionics Wireless Network*' in the Journal of Aerospace Information Systems.

Rwibasira Michel, Ph.D Scholar in Computer Science and Information Technology, presented a paper titled 'A Survey Paper on Consensus Algorithm of Mobile- Healthcare in Blockchain Network' in the IEEE International Conference on Emerging Trends in Information Technology and Engineering, during 24-25 February 2020, organised by School of Information Technology and Engineering, Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore.



Alumni Achievements and Publications

Dr. Smitha S. Ranganathan won the Association of Indian Management Scholars (AIMS) International Outstanding Young Management Teacher Award (2019). The award ceremony was held on January 2, 2020, and was hosted by Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode, India along with the annual conference of AIMS.

Dr. Suja R. Nair, alumnus in Management, has been appointed "Editor" of 'International Journal of Big Data Management', Inderscience Publishers (Switzerland). Journal link: <https://www.inderscience.com/info/ingeneral/forthcoming.php?jcode=ijbdm>



She is also the recipient of the RULA AWARDS 2020 - “*International Best Researcher in Entrepreneurship*” for the paper entitled ‘The link between women entrepreneurship, innovation and stakeholder engagement: A review’, published by Elsevier in ‘Journal of Business Research’ (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.06.038>).

Her Publications: 1). Nair, S. R. (2020), “Cause Related Marketing and Consumer Buying Behavior: Opportunities and Challenges”, in Soares, A. M and Elmashhara, M. G. (Eds.) ‘Emotional, Sensory, and Social Dimensions of Consumer Buying Behavior’ (pp.324-348), USA: IGI Global. DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-2220-2.ch014

2). Shams, S.M. R., Belyaeva, Z. and Nair, S. R. (2020), “Stakeholder Engagement for Sustainable Entrepreneurial Marketing: Theoretical Synchronization and Empirical insights”, in Shams, S.M. R., Vrontis, D., Weber, Y., Tsoukatos and Galati, A (Eds.) The Annals of Business research: Stakeholder Engagement and Sustainability’ (pp.49-61) New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis group.

3). Suja R. Nair (2019), "To Examine Women Social Entrepreneurial Ecosystems - Opportunities and Challenges”, in Palma-Ruiz, J. M., Saiz-Álvarez, J.M and Herrero-Crespo, A. (Eds.) ‘Handbook of Research on Smart Territories and Entrepreneurial Ecosystems for Social Innovation and Sustainable Growth’ (pp.326-345) USA: IGI Global. DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-2097-0.ch018.

Dr. Triveni K., alumnus in Microbiology, has published a part of her thesis work in the Journal of Microbiological methods (Elsevier) in March 2020 issue. It can be accessed at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mimet.2020.105858>

Dr. Dwaita Goswami, alumnus in Cultural Studies, received the Award for the 'Best Poem' in the Regional Language Category for the year 2019 by the Wingword.in (India’s largest poetry competition -Wingword Poetry Prize 2019) for her poem -'তাহার সঙ্গে তাহার '.

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