

BHĀRATA THAT IS (SEEN AS) INDIA IS THE BHĀRATA

Bhārata, the land of myriad philosophies, the land of mystics and the rationalists, is to be seen from a multi-dimensional perspective unbound by philosophies. It is however bound to be misunderstood. The current edition and its editorial concept “*Bhārata* that is (seen as) India is the *Bhārata*” with its exhaustive theme seeks to unfold discussions around what constitutes the idea of *Bhārata* and *Bhāratīyatā*. The current edition does not seek to homogenise this idea of the *Bhārata*, nor does it seek to offer the only real and the ultimate meaning of the idea of *Bhārata*. The concept note was formulated with the idea of celebrating the flux that is *Bhārata*, and the ever-changing inflow of philosophies and ideologies in its ambit which retains its original idea of being the primordial civilisation of the Mankind. The present edition seeks to not compartmentalise the idea of *Bhārata* but rather seeks to dissect the original idea of India, that is *Bhārata*. The idea of *Bhārata* is an all-encompassing term which carries with it the age-old notions of this antediluvian civilisation and also the modern idea of India. The focus of the journal, however, as evident from the concept note is in generating arguments about the original idea of *Bhārata*, dissociated and separate from the term India and the connotations attached with the latter.

The standpoint of the current edition rests on the strong premise that the concept of *Bhārata* is steeped in “multi-culturalism” and “pluralism” and as one which is embedded in the culture of what may be termed as *Bhāratīyatā*. The contents of the 6th edition of *Ad Litteram* successfully captures that very essence. The theme topic of this edition is timely in the contemporary times as it not only initiates but also deals holistically with what can be termed as *Bhāratīya* studies and attempts to propel *Bhāratīyatā* as an emergent area of ancient Indian scholarship.

Adrita Bhattacharjee’s essay “The Concept of *Dharma* as Expounded in Hindu Mythology” sets the tone for the theme topic in the journal. By first highlighting the essential difference between *Indianness* and *Bhāratīyatā*, the paper discusses the cosmic meaning of *Dharma* in relation with Hinduism and Hindu mythology. Using *Mahabharata* as the central text, the author expounds multiple interpretations of *Dharma* and concludes by narrowing down the scope of *Dharma* as an essential axis in *Mahabharata*.

Any attempt to understand *Bhārata* would go in vain if one does not take into account the other epic *Rāmāyana*, for the two texts centrally define the idea in the most sanguine manner possible. The previous article by Bhattacharjee focussed on *Mahabharata* as a text resting on the axis of

Dharma as a resonant ideology. The other paper by Dipak Kr. Mandal titled “Revisiting the *Rāmāyana*: An Analysis of Kavita Kane’s *Lanka’s Princess*”, as the title itself suggests would be a feminist reading from a literary theoretical perspective. The character of Surpanakhā, Ravan’s sister in the epic of *Rāmāyana* is the vantage point of the author's analysis with reference to the Standpoint Theory and the Muted Group Theory. Through the idea of an often neglected and ridiculed character in *Rāmāyana*, the author has analysed Surpanakhā’s character through the lens of literary theory and has broken a crucial ground of feminist debate rooted in the *Bhāratīya* discourse.

The proposition that the contemporary idea of *Bhārata* has been grossly underrepresented and misrepresented in the contemporary sphere is the tacit idea that runs through the concept note and also the contents of this edition. The current edition takes into consideration this very thought and seeks to present the readers with varied ideas and arguments about this overtly elusive topic.

E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India* has long been hailed by the critics for painting an ardent picture of colonial rule in India. But critics have undermined the idea that Forster's idea of India as expounded in the novel is not just mis-represented but also mis-contextualised. The novel despite being a valuable critique of colonial rule in India, nonetheless fares poorly in the authentic portrayal of *Bhārata*. Using textual criticism and an interdisciplinary approach the paper by Ganga Nand Singh and Amisha Kumari has succeeded in shaping this idea to dispel the cloud of Indianness in Forster's novel to give rise to a more legitimate idea of *Bhāratīyatā*.

The journal with an open mind invites feedback from all its stakeholders, readers and contributors. *Ad Litteram* is committed to and open to both appreciation and criticism alike, for that is the sure shot route to academic merit and quality enhancement. It has always been the constant endeavour of *Ad Litteram* to provide quality content to its readers and the journal with its review policy and rigorous publishing standards strives to achieve that. Even a micro progression is a progression and *Ad Litteram* believes that if it is able to achieve even a miniscule progress in generating quality and unique arguments, the actual addition to academic world will surely be of gigantic proportions. *Ad Litteram* congratulates the contributors for featuring their articles in this edition and adding up to this ongoing debate in its 6th edition.