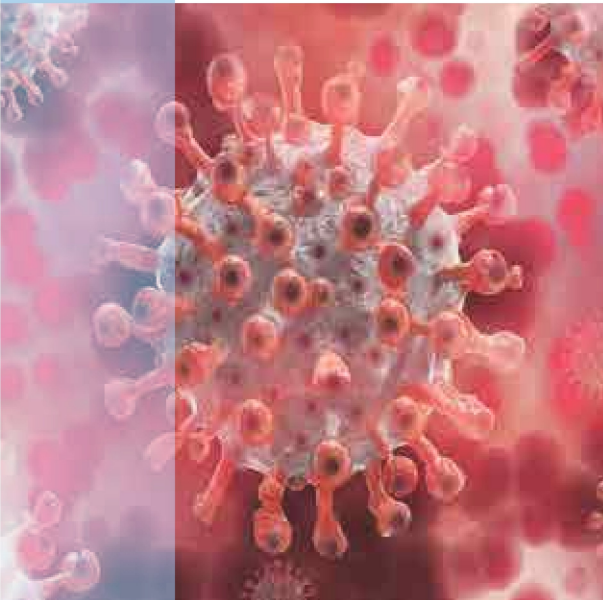


S a m b h ā ṣ a ṇ

A Free Open Access Peer-Reviewed Bilingual Interdisciplinary Journal
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English • मराठी



Special Theme:
COVID-19 and RESPONSES

Volume 01 | Issue 02
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S a m b h ā ṣ a ṇ

A Free Open Access Peer-Reviewed Bilingual Interdisciplinary Journal

On the occasion of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's 129th birth anniversary on 14th April 2020, the Office of the Dean, Faculty of Humanities, University of Mumbai has launched a free open access online journal, Sambhāṣaṇ / संभाषण. This interdisciplinary and bilingual journal hopes to bring diverse disciplines in dialogue with each other through critical reflections on contemporary themes.

संभाषण

मुंबई विद्यापीठाचे मुक्त-प्रवेश नियतकालिक

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर यांच्या १२९व्या जयंतीचे औचित्य साधून १४ एप्रिल २०२० रोजी अधिष्ठाता, मानव्यविद्याशाखा, मुंबई विद्यापीठ यांनी 'संभाषण' हे मुक्त-प्रवेश नियतकालिक प्रस्तुत केले आहे.

या आंतरविद्याशाखीय व द्विभाषिक (इंग्रजी व मराठी) नियतकालिकाच्या माध्यमातून विभिन्न विद्याशाखांमधील सद्यःकालीन प्रश्नांबाबत टीकात्मक व सखोल विचारमंथनाद्वारे संवाद प्रस्थापित करण्याचा एक प्रयत्न आहे.

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Sambhāṣaṇ / संभाषण or conversation as an art of dialogue has been crucial to the development of both Indian and Western thought. Dialogos in Greek literally means “through word”, where one establishes relationships on the basis of conversations to initiate processes of thinking, listening and speaking with others. Thinkers such as Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu, David Bohm, Hans Georg Gadamer, Anthony Appiah and Martha Nussbaum have projected shared dialogue as a way of understanding the relationship between the individual and society. While Jyotiba Phule, Savitribai Phule, Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, Pandita Ramabai, Jürgen Habermas, Paul Ricoeur, Patricia Hill Collins and Judith Butler, to name a few, have started out anew through ruptures in conversations. The inevitability of conversation in academic life emerges from its centrality to human development and ecology. Conversations are not restricted to any single territory, but are enacted between global and the local topographies. This online bi-lingual journal aims at continuing and renewing plural conversations across cultures that have sustained and invigorated academic activities.

In this spirit, Sambhāṣaṇ (संभाषण) a bilingual (English and Marathi) interdisciplinary monthly online journal endeavours to:

- be an open platform, where scholars can freely enter into a discussion to speak, be heard and listen. In this spirit, this journal aims at generating open conversations between diverse disciplines in social sciences, humanities and law.
- preserve and cultivate pluralism as a normative ideal. Hence, it attempts to articulate a plurality of points of view for any theme, wherein there is both a need to listen and to speak, while engaging with another's perspective.
- act as a springboard for briefly expressing points of view on a relevant subject with originality, evidence, argument, experience, imagination and the power of texts. It hopes that these points of view can be shaped towards full-fledged research papers and projects in the future.

संभाषण

संभाषण : मुंबई विद्यापीठाचे महाजालावरील पहिले नियतकालिक.

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर यांच्या १२९व्या जयंतीचे (१४ एप्रिल २०२०) औचित्य साधून अधिष्ठाता, मानव्यविद्याशाखा, मुंबई विद्यापीठ यांच्या कल्पनेतून 'संभाषण' हे सर्वाना महाजालावर मुक्तपणे उपलब्ध होऊ शकणारे नियतकालिक प्रकाशित होत आहे.

या आंतरविद्याशाखीय द्विभाषिक (इंग्रजी आणि मराठी) नियतकालिकाच्या माध्यमातून विभिन्न विद्याशाखांमध्ये समकालीन प्रश्नांबाबत टीकात्मक चर्चा सुरु व्हावी व सखोल विचारमंथनाद्वारे संवाद प्रस्थापित व्हावा, असा हेतू आहे.

प्राचीन काळापासून भारतात आणि पाश्चिमात्य विचारविश्वात वैचारिक आदानप्रदानासाठी 'संभाषण किंवा संवाद' ही महत्त्वाची पद्धती म्हणून उपयोजिली गेली आहे. 'Dialogos' या ग्रीक भाषेतील शब्दांचा अर्थही 'शब्दाद्वारे' (through words) असा होतो. शब्दांच्या माध्यमातील संभाषणाला येथे 'डायलॉग' म्हटले आहे. अनेक महनीय व्यक्तींनी उदाहरणार्थ, मोहनदास करमचंद गांधी, रवींद्रनाथ टागोर, सरोजिनी नायडू, डेव्हिड बोहम, Hans-Georg Gadamar, अँथनी अपिहा, मार्था नुस्सबॉम आदींनी व्यक्ती आणि समाज यांच्यातील नातेसंबंध समजून घेण्यासाठी सामायिक संभाषण आणि संवादाच्या पद्धतीचा वापर केलेला आहे. जोतीराव फुले, सावित्रीबाई फुले, डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर, पंडिता रमाबाई, Jürgen Habermas, Paul Ricoeur, Patricia Hill Collins and Judith Butler अशा अनेक विचारवंतांनीही आपल्या वैचारिक मांडणीद्वारे संभाषणाची नवी स्फुरणे जन्माला घातली.

संभाषणाच्या माध्यमातून एखादी व्यक्ती दुसऱ्या व्यक्तीसोबत विचारांची देवाणघेवाण करते. तसेच ऐकण्याची आणि बोलण्याची प्रक्रिया सुरु करण्यासाठी संवादाचे नाते निर्माण करत असते. शैक्षणिक क्षेत्रातील संवादाची अपरिहार्यताही त्याच्या मानवी विकासातील केंद्रवर्ती स्थानामुळे निर्माण झाली आहे. कोणतीही संभाषणे ही केवळ विशिष्ट भूप्रदेशाशी मर्यादित किंवा संबंधित नसतात. तर ती एकाच वेळी स्थानिक व जागतिक स्वभावचरणांनी घडलेली असतात. अशा विभिन्न संस्कृतीतील संवादाच्या आधारे जग समजून घेणे, शैक्षणिक क्षेत्रातील सर्जनशीलतेला जपणे याच भूमिकेतून 'संभाषण' या द्विभाषिक आंतरविद्याशाखीय 'ऑनलाईन' नियतकालिकाचा प्रवास सुरु झाला आहे.

Framework

- This journal is open to contributions from established academics, young teachers, research students and writers from diverse institutional and geographical locations.
- Papers can be empirical, analytical or hermeneutic following the scholarly culture of critique and creativity, while adhering to academic norms.
- Commentaries and reviews can also be submitted.
- Submissions will be peer-reviewed anonymously.
- Some of the issues will publish invited papers and reviews, though there will be a call for papers for most issues.
- There would be an occasional thematic focus.

Guidelines for Submission

- Original, scholarly, creative and critical papers with adequate references.
- All references to the author should be removed from the submission to enable the anonymous review process.
- There can be a limit of approximately 3500-4000 words (for papers) and 1500-2000 words (for commentaries) and 1000-1200 words (for reviews).
- Essays should follow the Times New Roman font in size 12 with double space.
- Marathi contributions should be typed in Devnagari with any Unicode font in size 12 .
- All contributions should follow the author-date referencing system detailed in chapter 15 of The Chicago Manual of Style (17th Edition). The style guidelines in this journal can be consulted for quick reference.
- Authors should submit a statement that their contribution is original without any plagiarism. They can also, in addition, submit a plagiarism check certificate.
- The publication of research papers, commentaries and book reviews is subject to timely positive feedback from anonymous referees.

Publisher

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This journal accepts original essays that critically address contemporary issues related to social sciences, humanities and law from an interdisciplinary perspective.

**अधिष्ठाता, मानव्यविद्याशाखा यांचे कार्यालय, मुंबई विद्यापीठ, आंबेडकर
भवन, कलिना कॅम्पस, विद्यानगरी, मुंबई – ४०००९८.**

हे नियतकालिक समाजविज्ञान, मानव्यविद्याशाखा आणि विधी या विद्याशाखांमधील सद्यःकालीन प्रश्नांना आंतरविद्याशाखीय दृष्टिकोणातून भिडणाऱ्या अभिनव आणि टीकात्मक निबंधांचा स्वीकार करते.

“In an ideal society
there should be
many interests
consciously
communicated
and shared... In
other words there
must be social
endosmosis.”

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Foreword from Dr. Snehlata Deshmukh

Former Vice Chancellor

University of Mumbai.

Covid-19: Creator of Paradigm Shift

At the outset, let me appreciate the efforts of the teachers, professors, eminent personalities in the field of education and media, the Pro-vice Chancellor Dr. Ravindra Kulkarni, the Vice Chancellor Dr. Suhas Pednekar and all the staff of University of Mumbai who have taken the lead to start a new venture of establishing a dialogue in the form of a bilingual inter disciplinary journal. This is an innovative idea, which will be very helpful to not only educationists and students but also to the public at large to disseminate proper information. The current issue is on the subject Covid-19 and responses, which focuses on the problems of dealing with pandemic.

A novel corona virus (nCov) spill over event with its epicenter in Wuhan, Peoples Republic of China has emerged as a public health emergency of international concern. Corona viruses (COVs) represent a major group of viruses mostly affecting human beings through zoonotic transmission. In the past two decades this is the third instance of emergence of a novel corona virus after Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003 and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERSCoV) in 2012. The repeated emergence and this time on a global scale

of transmission resulting into a significant number of deaths, infection of care providers is rather alarming.

The mean incubation period is 5.2 days but as the analysis goes it varies from 3 days to 24 days that is why the current recommendation of WHO (World Health Organization) regarding isolation and quarantine is 14 days. The most common symptoms at illness onset are fever (99% cases), fatigue in (75% cases), dry cough in (60% cases), myalgia in (44% cases) and dyspnea i.e. difficulty in breathing in severe cases. Less common symptoms are headache, dizziness, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting. Pharyngeal pain is more likely to be present in patients with severe disease. Elderly patients with underlying co-morbidities including hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disease are more likely to have serious outcomes, so they need to be more careful.

The most common laboratory investigations abnormalities found was lymphopenia, prolonged prothrombin time, elevated d-dimer, ground glass appearance, bilateral patchy shadows are seen on chest X-ray. The disease spreads via respiratory droplets and physical contact hence it is essential to practice preventive measures. Hand hygiene should be maintained with sanitizer containing 70% alcohol and soap. For hand drying, cloth towels must be avoided disposable tissue papers should be used instead.

For droplet and contact based transmission, medical masks or face shields, goggles, gowns, gloves and shoe covers should be used. Persons in the community settings who are symptomatic, persons who are in home care setups and suspected cases of Covid19 with mild symptoms need to wear surgical masks. As far as treatment is concerned, preventive measures of are to be maintained such as, social distancing, wearing a mask, regular breathing exercise, nutritious food, vitamins like B- Complex, Vit. D & A, adequate calcium replacement, enough water intake. Oxygen saturation level should be maintained between 96-98.

There are drugs like hydroxychloroquine (antimalarial drug) that have been advised. There are antiviral drugs on trial but there is no specific antiviral as yet which has been found useful. The recent treatment consists of antibiotics, oxygen therapy, and in case of small thrombi an anticoagulant in small doses

(heparin) has proved to be useful. The drug trials are on and the search for vaccine is in progress. Asymptomatic transmission is more dangerous. Sneezing spreads one million droplets, so it is advisable to wear a protective mask. As there are asymptomatic carriers who can transmit the virus universal masking is advised. Till the time we get a definite cure early diagnosis and available appropriate management has led to 80% improvement in patient care. For students, the risk factor is lack of sleep, mental stress, long hours of starvation and less water intake. These factors can be avoided if one attempts to lead a non-stressful life, with the help of seeking counsel of the wise and the knowledgeable.

Though international emergencies have occurred earlier as mentioned above, Covid-19 has created a history by involving almost the entire world for a duration long enough that has drastically affected our life as we knew it. It has severely impacted us on socio economic as well as psychological realms. This pandemic has forced us to re-examine everything we know about ourselves and our world. Though these are testing and difficult times, we don't want this pandemic to become just the darkest era in the world history. We would want to create a silver line in the dark cloud for our future generations who would study this pandemic as an international emergency; and how we faced it like warriors and came out as winners. We have to win this war, protect ourselves, our dear ones, our country and our world.

For that, we need to understand different issues that have emerged and find sustainable ways to sort out those issues. We must also take into consideration immediate and long-term future ramifications and arm ourselves against those as much as possible. This journal has become an important platform through which experts from various fields will be enlightening you, discussing issues through their articles and will be suggesting solutions. I am sure that this journal will be an enriching experience for every reader and eventually help in suggesting ways to come out of this problem relatively unscathed.

So have faith in yourself and the Covid warriors, fight the battle and finish the war. Wishing you all the very best.

Editorial Note

Mary Shelley's dystopian work *The Last Man* published in 1826 narrates the thinning of a populated earth to just one person, through sweeping pandemic waves of plague. The novel sums up the impossibility of escape routes through Lionel Verney, its protagonist narrator. He anguishes before the earth that "On no one spot on its surface could I put my finger and say, here is safety" (Shelley 1998, 204). In the course of the novel, Verney manages to extricate himself from labyrinthine containments of disease and its strife, anxieties, miseries and ghost-towns. But all is not well, as he is the last man alive on earth at the end of the 21st century narrating his "catalogue of losses" (369).

Yet rather than induce hopelessness, Verney's recording of sorrows becomes an act of hope, a desire to change and an aspiration for community. Acknowledging with Verney that "Death is a vast portal, an high road to life" (369), it becomes, along with disease, an occasion to reflect on the potential of what the philosopher Jaspers terms as "boundary situations" or "Grenzsituationen"

(Jaspers 1970, 177-183). Since such situations push human beings to the peripheries of their existence, planning, strategizing or capitalizing remain inadequate responses. Indeed, as expressions of instrumental rationality, they only exacerbate the woes of the pandemic through acts of surveillance following Foucault (1979, 138). The ambiguity and seamlessness of “boundary situations” of death and disease are never abstract objective facts. As Jaspers observes, they are rather concrete and historic (194-195). Death and disease could open up unpredictable responses that convert loss into creative explorations within the horizons of the finite. As Jaspers aptly discerns, such creativity is also communicative (195-196). Thus, for Shelley’s Verney, narrating, recording, writing are also activities that resist fatalism and utilitarianism by constructing and reconstructing meanings, however tenuous. Verney does not let himself become condemned to the instrumentalism of quarantine. He professes to “have chosen my boat” (Shelley, 413) to journey on with his selected books, as “the libraries of the world” (Shelley, 413), in which the dead come alive and await him. His writings and thoughts explode from his being alone and frail to his continuing endless search for public meaning through his capacity to listen and interpret, in his urge to transform and desire to communicate.

As we experience Verney’s isolationism uncannily in the 21st century, Shelley’s critique of quarantine becomes profoundly relevant. Reading Shelley in contemporary India also raises an uncomfortable question: does she construe the plague as a disease originating in the East and transmitting to the West? In her novel, the plague begins in Constantinople before it starts spreading globally. Verney survives both a visit to Constantinople and chance contact with an African, who suffers from plague. Such a reading has parallels with contemporary racist and communal responses to COVID-19. However, one could also read Shelley with Anne McWhir (1998, 2002), on a more egalitarian tone, of critiquing the contagion view of disease as transmitting through bodily contact and the consequent xenophobia. For Shelley, the plague is in the air, a mysterious force without origins beyond human control that can randomly affect anyone. The inevitability of the plague’s spread forecloses all border-closing. The disease afflicts everyone regardless of continents and race, so that cosmopolitanism alone constitutes an adequate response.¹ Verney’s meeting with the unnamed African under the grip of plague can also be a sign of

the impossibility of contagion. It can be reinterpreted as a gesture, perhaps involuntary, towards camaraderie across the races in the midst of coping with the plague.² Hence, Shelley's "last man" is a critique of controlling quarantine measures premised upon contagiousness of disease (McWhir 2002, 28-29). One might add to McWhir that it enables a postcolonial reading of Shelley, of the impossibility of naming the East, or any other part of the world, as the starting point of disease.

Waves of the ongoing pandemic continue to rage on, highlighting the inevitability and anguish of being alone and away from family, friends and communities. Isolation introduces order within the disorder of an ever-expanding disease. The latter demands the act of sequestering oneself as a commitment to being a responsible individual who values human life. Since every single human being can potentially spread the disease, being alone appears to be the only way of containing it. Coping strategies abound with Foucauldian self-disciplinary practices of self-isolation. Additionally, institutional measures are also introduced to effectively circumscribe the ongoing disease by separating human beings from each other. Camus in *The Plague* narrates the predicament of locking the gates to the town, when unprepared parents, children and spouses are "without the least warning, hopelessly cut off, prevented from seeing one another again..." (1948, 133). Thus, lock-downs, quarantines and contactless ration supplies become normalizing techniques of seclusion (Foucault 1979, 195-200). Such maneuvers of blurring the divide between voluntariness and coerciveness are open to those who have the potential to become ill. The sick are coerced into seclusion in congested quarantine centers and isolation wards of hospitals, as well as, their homes. They are kept on watch during their period of forced isolation, so as to record and contain the disease. As is well known, Foucault defines surveillance as a crucial aspect of epidemic management, premised upon segregating the sick (195-200). Yet, going beyond Foucault, disease outbreaks do not necessarily isolate only through orderly physical seclusion. The Indian context reveals that disorder also performs a disciplining role, as the qualitatively different modes of being alone, despite their "strict spatial partitioning" (Foucault, 195), disclose. Thus, overcrowded hospitals segregate masses of people who are in physical contact with each other, reinforcing their vulnerability to disease, but isolate them psychologically. Pandita Ramabai's 1897

observations on the squalid and exploitative consequences of epidemics, especially for women, in the detentions of overflowing plague hospitals (Kosambi 2016, 231-233) have renewed significance in the context of hospitals treating COVID-19 patients. The long walks home by migrants testify being alone, but in a disorderly crowd, exposed to disease and hunger. Reports on the current pandemic reveal that the terrain of “spatial portioning” is not static as Foucault implied (Foucault, 195). Rather there are diverse mobilities and privileges within them. Being alone is a protective shield only for those with privileges of voluntary self-isolation; they are signs of social capital and advantages from the class, caste and gender perspectives. For those without any access to such capital, being alone reinforces the vulnerability of disease. Pandemics have shown that modes of being alone are mediated by the social. The research papers, commentaries, reviews and obituaries in the present issue of the journal attest as much. As attempts to write and engage with suffering in the “boundary situations” of disease and death, they are not acts of extraordinary heroism of being on the frontlines. Yet, by illuminating the extent to which ordinary life is permeated with struggles akin to Verney’s, they are expressions of hope and communication. They endeavor to usher in another kind of capital, perhaps the psychological.³

This second issue of Sambhāṣaṇ has a wide array of discussions on the ongoing pandemic in the Indian context. There are deliberations ranging from the social, psychological, political and journalistic aspects of living with COVID-19 to possibilities of slowly recuperating with creative writing and collective activity. We have received an overwhelming number of submissions to our May 2020 call for papers, some of which are published in this issue. We will be continuing with the theme of the pandemic in the Indian context in our July 2020 issue.

This issue would not have been possible without the grace of enormous help and support we have received, despite all the difficulties of the lockdown. We, the team of Honorary Editor, Editor and Co-editors thank the university authorities, Prof. Suhas Pednekar, Vice Chancellor, and Prof. Ravindra Kulkarni, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, for their guidance. We thank the former Vice-Chancellor of our university, Dr. Snehlata Deshmukh, for her valuable time in writing a foreword to this issue. We are grateful to the authors for their rich contributions. We remain obliged to several members of our Advisory Committee and Board of

Consulting Editors for timely advice. We thank our Review Editors for their perceptive inputs. Our reviewers have gone out of their way to help us out with their irreplaceable expert feedback and detailed comments, often balancing their own prior commitments with our time-bound requests. We put on record our gratitude to them. As always, our team of Assistant Editors assiduously strived to make sure that this journal sees the light of digital print. Ms. Prajakti Pai, our Designer and Artist, went beyond the call of duty to share her imaginative inputs with us so that the layout becomes accessible. Shukriyaan to Ms. Andrea A. Pinto and Ms. Chhaya G. Sayam from the Knowledge Resource Center, Jawaharlal Nehru Library, University of Mumbai Kalina Campus for their daily help. Last but not the least, danke schön to Dr. Srivaramangai, Mr. Sanket Sawant and Mr. Rohit Choubey for their ready help with all the information needs that enabled the journal to go online.

NOTES

¹ McWhir notes how despite the novel endorsing English culture, the latter's inadequacy in responding to the air borne plague is also subtly laid bare (1998, xxviii).

² Although this reading has to contend with Verney's racially laden description of his encounter, "I lowered my lamp, and saw a negro half clad, writing under the agony of disease, while he held me with a convulsive grasp" (Shelley, 311). Thus, the novel does not lend itself to singular exclusive readings, either Eurocentric or postcolonial.

³ This is possible through hope. See Luthans & Youssef, 2004 for a discussion on this notion of psychological survival.

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S a m b h ā ṣ a ṇ

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Florence Nightingale

(1860)

This issue is dedicated to the transnational work and memory of Florence Nightingale on the occasion of her 200th birth anniversary on May 12, 2020.

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