
Editorial

The second issue of *Rupkatha* journal is ready for access. The gratitude due to contributors should be acknowledged not just as a matter of courtesy but because they have introduced interdisciplinary methods of study, making parts of this issue a good reflector of the transformation of disciplines. At least a couple of essays investigate the relationship between nature and the impulse of literature. The other essays raise issues of history and individualism in literature.

Indeed interdisciplinary studies is the need of the hour. The fundamental idea for interdisciplinarity derives from an evolutionary necessity; namely the need to confront and interpret complex systems. To put it simply this means that [a] the entities that we investigate within the environment of contemporary science are perceived to be more like organic or interrelated complexes. The entity that is studied [say like one from logistics, or psychiatry, or dietary cuisine, for examples] can no longer be analyzed in terms of an object of 'biology' or 'chemistry', but as a contending hierarchy of components which could be studied under the rubric of multiple or variable branches of knowledge. Thus for example a health insurance program involves a consideration of [economics] distribution of wealth, pharmacology, social behaviour, statistics, and probability. Any policy decision on implementation of a viable health care system will have to factor in knowledge from multiple disciplines. Human knowledge can no longer be classified in accordance with the academic compartmentalisations of even classical 19th century science.

Furthermore, processes of nature would have to be deciphered as a combinatorial operation of both scientific and emergent characteristics. This is especially true of aesthetic reflexes which are a vital part of human behaviour. Singing, Darwin said, is an example of antiphonal harmony that originated in mating calls. A piece of communication—be it a dance performance or a visually textured painting—offers an entire range of acculturation.

Again the beauty of a piece –and frankly speaking - its complexity lies almost beyond the human capacity of reconstructive integration; any piece of art remains unique and unreduplicated in this sense.

The Humanities may be the only discipline outside the new 'sciences' that affords an opportunity for studying the most subtle or occluded forces that shape and retain stable forms of communal beliefs and rituals. The combined and orchestrated multi-functionalism of nature gives rise to such moments as those of memory, excitability, preference, suppression, and harmonization. The neuro-aesthetics of cultural expression are still unknown to us. First, there is hardly any consensus on the exact nature of human consciousness, let alone the entire range of deviant functions or multi-tasking that the brain is capable of. As far as aesthetics is concerned, we have to re-define the propensity for parallel perceptions, or what Aristotle unerringly called mimicry, which might help in explaining the capacity and /or competence in designing and short-routing experiences of 'metaphor' and allegorical images, or things like suggestivity and excitability [of emotions].

I am inclined to believe that the first steps in this direction could be taken through a fuller knowledge of pharmacological sciences and clinical anatomy, reflexology or discharge behaviour, learning, and sensitization through acts of communalisation.

Another interesting project that has to be undertaken is a study related to the conditions of experience we associate with such states as those of 'god' or 'immortality'.

But there may be something irreducible in the components of experience, and therefore of knowledge itself which derives from the former. Either this, or the other position has to be accepted. According to the anthropic principle there is no vantage point and that we are by nature not equipped to know, or gather total knowledge – however small or exclusive the domain may be. Perhaps the latter position is more modest and appropriate here. Unknowability is no safe haven—but a form of recognizing the complexity and paradigmatic failure of intuition.
