

Department Report – Philosophy

January-December 2020

The Department of Philosophy organized its annual departmental event, *Eidos*, on 27th February 2020 on the theme, ‘The Theory of Knowledge’, and hosted Ven. Geshe Dorji Damdul (Director, Tibet House, Delhi) and Prof. GC Tripathi (Director, Bhogilal Leherchand Institute of Indology, Delhi) as the speakers. On 10th November 2020, the department held its yearly Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Memorial Lecture with Dr. A Raghunramaraju (Professor of Philosophy, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Tirupati) who addressed the audience on the topic, ‘Revisiting the Lively Activities in Indian Philosophy’. The lecture was chaired by Dr. Balaganapathi Devarakonda (Professor and Head, Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi). To welcome and initiate the new students in their first year of Philosophy in Kamala Nehru College, an orientation programme was held with the presence of all faculty members and was arranged by the Philosophy Association on 19th November 2020. Besides organizing the academic lectures, social media handles of Philosophy Association were also launched on Instagram and Facebook, and regular updates and posts about philosophy and department events are shared through these handles. The student body of the association has also been holding informal interactive sessions with the first-year Philosophy students to help them get through these extraordinary pandemic times while managing the challenges of attending the college via virtual mode.

Dr Geetesh Nirban is the Co-Principal Investigator with Prof Balaganapathi Devrakonda (Head, Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi) as the Principal Investigator of an ongoing webinar series, ‘Yoga Consciousness in Mahābhārata and Bhagavadgītā: The Ethical Value for Societal/Political Well-Being’ under the aegis of SPARC Project (MHRD, Government of India) with coordinating partner as IIT-Kharagpur. The webinar series began in June 2020 and the following lectures have been held so far:

(i) ‘Mahābhārata: An Epic on Social and Political Well-being’ by Dr SR Bhatt (Former Chairman, Indian Council for Philosophical Research), (ii) ‘Ethical Dilemmas in the Mahābhārata’ by Dr Kavita A Sharma (Former President, South Asian University, New Delhi), (iii) ‘*Samatvam Yoga Ucyate* - Deliberation on Yogic Equality as expounded in the Bhagavadgītā’ by Dr Sampadananda Mishra (Director of Sri Aurobindo Foundation for Indian Culture (SAFIC), Puducherry), (iv) ‘Place of the Gītā in Mahābhārata by Dr Sadanand Shridhar More’ (Professor, Sant Namdev Chair, Savitribai Phule, Pune University, India), (v) Influence of Mahābhārata and Bhagavadgītā On EcoDharmic Activism Of Bishnoi And Swadhyaya Communities by Dr Pankaj Jain (Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy and Religion, University of North Texas, USA), (vi) ‘Gender and Sexuality in Dialogues between Male and Female Sages in the Mahābhārata’ by Dr Ruth Vanita (Professor, University of Montana, USA), (vii) ‘Karma Yoga in Bhagavadgītā as World Philosophy’ by Dr. Ithamar Theodor (Associate Professor at the Department of Religious and Spiritual Studies, Zefat Academic College, University of Haifa, Israel), (viii) ‘Political Well-Being & State Administration as Reflected in Mahābhārata’ by Prof. Gaya Charan Tripathi (Director, Bhogilal Leherchand Institute of Indology, New Delhi), (ix) ‘Indra in the Mahābhārata: Vedic, Tantric, Devotional’, Local by Michael Baltutis (Associate Professor, Global Religions at University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, USA), (x) ‘Yakshaprasna and Yudhishtira: A Conversation on Dharma and Ethics’ by Dr. Gangeya Mukherji (Associate Professor, Mahamati Prannath Mahavidyalaya, Mau - Chitrakoot), (xi) ‘The Concept of Dharma in the Mahābhārata’ by Dr Radhavallabh Tripathi (Karnatak Chair of Orientology, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune), (xii) ‘Reunderstanding Patañjali’s Yoga’ by Dr Pradeep Prabhakar Gokhale (Professor (Honorary), Department of Pali, Savitribai Phule Pune University,

Pune), (xiii) 'Karma Yoga and Instrumental Violence in Bhagavadgītā' by Dr Ravi Khangai (Assistant Professor, Department of History, Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Maharashtra), (xiv) 'Ekalavya and the Possibility of Learning' by Prof Sundar Sarukkai (Founder, Barefoot Philosophers), (xv) 'Reformative Vision of Vyāsa in the Mahābhārata' by Dr. Penna Madhusudan (Professor and Dean, Faculty of Bhartiya Darshan, Kavikulaguru Kalidas Sanskrit University, Maharashtra), (xvi) 'Justice and Consciousness: Arjuna's Transformation' by Dr Shyam Ranganathan (Department of Philosophy, York Centre for Asian Research, York University, Toronto), (xvii) 'Dialogic Consciousness, Answerability and Dharmic Validity in Engaging with the Mahābhārata' by Dr. Lakshmi Bandlamudi (Professor of Psychology, City University of New York, New York, USA), (xviii) 'Satyavan's Dialogue: The Need for Humaneness in Punishment' by Dr K. Srinivasan (Former Principal and Head, Dept. of Sanskrit, R K M Vivekananda college, Mylapore, Chennai. Presently holding Anna Subrahmanya Iyer Chair at the KSRI, Chennai), (xix) 'Myths and Legends of the Mahābhārata: An Overview' by Dr. Sridhar Melukote K. (Professor, Registrar, Former Dean, Yoga and Humanities, SVYASA University, Bengaluru, India), (xx) 'Vyāsa on the Meaning of Life, Death and Free Will' by Dr Arindam Chakrabarti (Lenney Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, University of Hawai'i of Mānoa, USA), (xxi) 'The Notion of Governance in the Mahābhārata' by Shri Bibek Debroy (Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister Government of India), (xxii) 'Mahābhārata in the Age of Digital Humanities' by Dr Srinivasa Kumar N Acharya (Assistant Professor and Coordinator, Department of Philosophy, MAHE, Manipal), (xxiii) 'H.D. Thoreau, Yogi: An American Transcendentalist Reads the Bhagavad Gita' by Dr Richard Davis (Professor, Interdisciplinary Study of Religion, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York), (xxiv) 'Text and Performance: Exploring the Living Traditions of the Mahābhārata Among the Folk and Tribal Communities of India' by Dr Molly Kaushal (Professor, Performance Studies; Head, Janapada Sampada Division, Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts), (xxv) 'The Mahābhārata War and the Teaching of Yoga' by Dr. Joydeep Bagchee (Core Doctoral Faculty, Hindu University of America), (xxvi) 'Dharma's Grief: The Unsettling Moral Emotion in the Mahābhārata and Tagore's Art' by Dr Purushottama Bilimoria (Principal Fellow and Associate Professor, University of Melbourne, Australia; Research Fellow, Center for Dharma Studies, GTU, Berkeley, USA; Teaching Professor, California State University Long Beach, CA/USA), and (xxvii) 'Three Bhārata Heroes: Karṇa ~ Bhīṣma ~ Kṛṣṇa in Epic Mahābhārata' by Professor Kevin McGrath (Associate of the Department of South Asian Studies and Poet Laureate at Lowell House, Harvard University).

Dr Geetesh Nirban was also the convener of a seven days residential seminar, 'Happiness and Good Life: Philosophical Reflections Through Cultures' from 6th to 12th January 2020 organised by Kamala Nehru College (University of Delhi) and Department of Philosophy (University of Delhi) in association with Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, Washington D.C. The seminar was sponsored by Indian Council of Philosophical Research, in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (New Delhi) and DELNET - Developing Library Network (New Delhi). Prof Balaganapathi Devrakonda (Head, Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi) was the Academic Advisor of the seminar. The following speakers were invited:

(i) Dr Ramesh Chandra Sinha (Professor and Chairman, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi, India), (ii) Dr Kalpana Bhakuni (Principal, Kamala Nehru College, University of Delhi, Delhi, India) (iii) Mr Iwo Greczko (Research Scholar of Philosophy Adam Mickiewicz University Poznan, Poland), (iv) Dr Debora Spini (Faculty Member Humanites, Social Sciences and Business Syracuse University and New York University Florence, Italy), (v) Father Thomas Menampampil (Apostolic Administrator Roman Catholic Diocese of Jowai Shillong, India), (vi) Dr Balaganapathi Devarakonda (Professor and Head Department of Philosophy University of Delhi, Delhi, India), (vii) Ven Dr Phramaha Somphong Khunakaro (Unyo) (International Buddhist Studies College Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Wang Noi, Thailand), (viii) Dr Sunita Sengupta (Professor, Head and Dean Faculty of Management Studies, University of Delhi, Delhi, India), (ix) Mr Colton T. Ames (Doctoral Researcher School of Education Indiana University, Bloomington, USA), (x) Ms Piyali Mitra (Doctoral Researcher, Department of Philosophy University of Calcutta, Kolkata, India), (xi) Ms Lisa Häberlein (Research Employee, Coburg University of Applied Sciences and Arts,

Coburg, Germany), (xii) Dr Anant Kumar Giri (Professor, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai, India) (xiii) Ms Megha Kapoor (Doctoral Researcher, Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, Delhi, India)

Speakers for the panel discussion on “In Pursuit of Happiness: Embracing Compassion for Global Well-Being”:

(xiv) Dr Hu Yeping (Director, Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, Washington, DC., USA), (xv) Dr João J. Vila-Chã (Professor, Faculty of Philosophy, Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, Italy), (xvi) Dr Kaveri Gill (Associate Professor, School of Humanities and Social Sciences Shiv Nadar University, Greater Noida, India), (xvii) Dr C.V. Ramanan Director, Center for Joy@Work INMANTEC Institutions, Ghaziabad, India), (xviii) Dr Geetesh Nirban (Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Kamala Nehru College, University of Delhi, Delhi, India)

(xix) Dr Sachchidanand Joshi (Member Secretary, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi, India), (xx) Dr Ramesh C. Gaur (Professor, Dean and Head, Kala Nidhi Division, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts), (xxi) Dr. Hu Yeping (Director, Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, Washington, D.C., USA), (xxii) Dr Lai Jia Weng Carmen (Lecturer, Faculty of Communication, HELP University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), (xxiii) Ms. Jayshree Jha (Doctoral Researcher, Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, Delhi, India), (xxiv) Mr. Shiv Aditya Purohit (Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi, India) spoke on the topic, ‘Yoga and Sound Healing Session’, (xxv) Dr. Sudhir Lal (Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, New Delhi, India) gave his address on the topic, ‘Interaction on Creating Happiness Through Vedic Wisdom’, (xxvi) Dr. Molly Kaushal (Director of the film “Leela in Kheriya” Professor and Head (JS) Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, New Delhi, India) spoke on ‘Leela in Kheriya’, (xxvii) Dr Siddheshwar R. Bhatt (Professor and Former Chairperson, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, Delhi, India).

