



EDITORIAL

It is with great pleasure that we are presenting the second Issue of Volume 43 of the Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities to our enthusiastic readers. Both issues of Volume 43 were published amidst great pandemonium, social unrest and economic crisis, forcing us to confine this issue to an online publication due to scarcity of paper and other resources. However, these matters have not hampered the quality of journal in any sense, and we wish to continue to maintain the quality standards of this prestigious journal. It is with immense gratitude that we would like to hereby thank Dr. Kalana Senarathma, former Co-Editor of the Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities for his contribution to make this Volume a reality in spite of all the stumbling blocks.

We are seeing the publication of five scholarly articles of the finest blend in this issue. The first article, *Antebellum White American 'Mission Wives' in the Orient: A Tale of Flawed Mimicry* is by Gayathri Hewagama. Her article is based on Betsey Learned's poem on Who'd be a missionary's wife, in which she launches a critical analysis of the American missionary wife who travels to Eastern cultures in the shadows of her husband, performing endeavors that are supposed to lift her up as an ideal woman. Gayathri discuss in depth how this "role play" has resulted in ambivalent identities for the missionary wives, removed from the reality and engrossed in a mere "mimicry" as she calls it.

The second article by Sumudu Dhtarmarathna is a review of *Arabs in Serandib: Trade Relations between Sri Lanka and West Asia from Ancient to 15th Century A.D. A Historical and Archaeological Survey* by Rohitha Dasanayaka. The author appreciates the book for being one of the most outstanding rarities that delves deep into the trade relationships between West Asia and Sri Lanka. It is shown how Rohitha Dasanayaka has used large amounts of data from documents and archeological evidence to spin a magical story of politics, culture, and religion, all intertwined with trade between Serendib and the Arab countries.

Chandeera Gunawardhana, in his article *First Language Transfer in the Acquisition of English Object Pronouns by Sinhala-Speaking ESL Learners*, presents findings of an empirical study on

unlearning of null object pronouns by Sinhala ESL learners. Gunawardhana, in a simple, yet captivating manner explains to even novices to linguistics how Sinhala speakers find it difficult to drop the null object pronoun, and therefore continue to speak English with the null object pronoun.

In the fourth article, *Panibharata and the Invention of Sinhala Folk Dance Repertoires in Post-Colonial Sri Lanka*, Sudesh Mantillake uncovers a history of folk dance in Sri Lanka that has never been explored before. The article is ground-breaking because it challenges the existing notion that modern dance nurtures itself on the folk dance tradition that has already part of the culture. Mantillake demonstrates with comparisons with Russian and English dance traditions, how Panibharata has invented a Sri Lankan folk dance tradition fairly recently, which is independent of the traditional folk dance culture. He also shows how institutionalized and disseminated through the formal educational system in the country, this tradition has come to be recognized as the only genuine and only Sri Lankan folk dance tradition.

The fifth article of this volume, *Priest, Woman and Mother: Broadening the Horizons through Transgender/nachchi Identities in Sri Lanka* is a masterpiece by Kaushalya Ariyaratne based on a case study of a transgendered priest (*gurunnanse*) in a shrine for Goddess Pattini. In this academically robust story of the *gurunnans* and the rituals and traditions revolving around the shrine, Ariyaratne narrates an enchanting story of how attitudes, beliefs and perspectives of gender, birth, rebirth, purity and profanity are challenged and redefined. Priest, Woman and Mother also inspires readers to re-interpret notions of motherhood, femininity, sexuality in contemporary Sri Lanka.

With a collection of articles that are intellectually scintillating and inspiring, we hope that this volume of the Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities would bestow a reading experience that nourishes and enriches.