



EDITORIAL

Robyn Andrews and Brent Howitt Otto

In March of 2024 the *International Journal of Anglo-Indian Studies* convened a Research Workshop in conjunction with the 12th International Anglo-Indian Reunion in Canberra. Hosting such events for interdisciplinary scholars to meet and present their research to one another as well as to a lay audience of Anglo-Indians has been a tradition of the Journal for the past four reunions spanning more than a decade. As in the past, some of the papers presented at the Workshop have been expanded by the authors and submitted to the journal for peer review and publishing. While this is a general issue of the journal it contains two articles that began as papers presented in Canberra, both of which address the watershed event for Anglo-Indians in India, Government's removal of their nominated MPs and MLAs by amendment to the Constitution of India in early 2020.

Our first article addresses the way in which language defines ethnic communities and particular subsets of them. Smita Joseph, Assistant Professor of Sociolinguistics at The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad studied the slang employed by members of Hyderabad's Anglo-Indian Community to show how they apply it as a defining feature of their ethnicity and the manner by which they situate themselves in their Indian linguistic and cultural milieu while also maintaining their European ancestry.

The second article is by Upamanyu Sengupta, Assistant Professor at the Maharashtra National Law University in Mumbai, entitled 'Difference, Disadvantage and the Anglo-Indian Engagement with Affirmative Action'. In it he goes back to the legal arguments made in the Constituent Assembly by two Anglo-Indian leaders in favour of creating

the reserved, nominated, seats granted to the small and geographically dispersed Anglo-Indian community. He analyses these historic arguments in relation to the recent arguments made by government against the continuation of these reservations which resulted in their revocation.

Historian and Anglo-Indian leader from Kerala, Charles Dias, authored the next article which came out of the Workshop in Canberra: 'Solidarity of Anglo-Indians is Still the Question'. By recounting the history of Anglo-Indian leadership of the community, he concludes that a lack of solidarity among Anglo-Indians, a solidarity which has too often not been cultivated by Anglo-Indian leaders including the nominated MPs and MLAs, has been a weakness that has negatively impacted upon the community's social and economic fortunes. The Constitutional amendment (2020) that revoked the reserved nominated seats in the Lok Sabha and several state legislative assemblies, could have been avoided, in his view, by greater efforts at Anglo-Indian solidarity and the advantageous use by those who held those seats in serving the community's pressing needs in critical areas such as housing and education.

Finally, related to the articles concerning the Constitutional amendment that ended Anglo-Indian representation in parliament, we republish an opinion piece from scholars printed in *The Hindu* in December 2019 protesting the Government's announced intentions in this regard. They argue on national and historic grounds why the preservation of the nominated seats is consistent with the national project to which Anglo-Indians have served.

We encourage readers to promote the journal among their scholarly colleagues and friends.

Robyn Andrews holds a Ph.D. from Massey University in New Zealand where she is currently a Research Fellow and Associate Professor in social anthropology. Her 2005 Ph.D. thesis was on Calcutta's Anglo-Indian community. She continues to research and write extensively in collaboration with other Anglo-Indian Studies scholars in various disciplines on the community in India and the diaspora. She is contactable via R.Andrews@massey.ac.nz

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