

Editorial

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All but one of the articles in this issue are revised versions of papers given at the Spalding Symposium, one in Oxford in 2013 and the rest in Manchester in 2014. The exception is the first, which was given at the annual seminar on the Sanskrit Tradition in the Modern World (STIMW) in Manchester, in 2013. We are happy to see the connection between *RoSA* and the Spalding Symposium continue, and offer our thanks and best wishes to its new convenor, Naomi Appleton. The Symposium, which for many years was in Oxford, is now peripatetic, thanks to Naomi's initiative. Last year it was held in Manchester, and this year in Edinburgh; in 2016 it will be in Cardiff.

We were sorry to receive news of the death of Lance Cousins on 13th March, at the age of 72. Although he did not have any publications in *RoSA*, he was a regular participant in the Spalding Symposium, and many articles in *RoSA* that were previously aired at the Symposium have benefited from his deep knowledge of early Buddhism and his firm but patient insistence on textual accuracy.

The articles in this issue range widely—chronologically, geographically, and in method. The first, by Nick Allen, is an application to Vedic material of the methods developed by Georges Dumézil (1898–1986), and subsequently by others including Dr Allen himself. While Dumézil analysed Indo-European social structures and mythology in terms of triads, Allen has elaborated these into pentads. Pentads are abundant in the ritual theory of the Vedic

texts themselves; the statement that ‘The sacrifice is fivefold’ (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 1.4.17) is borne out many times in the Brāhmaṇas. But Allen also traces pentads which are not explicit in the sources, and argues that they are part of an inherited Indo-European ideology.

Alice Collett continues her work on women in early Buddhism, by examining inscriptions which name women as teachers, as pupils of monks, or as donors of sculptures or dwellings. As Dr Collett notes, the identification of women as pupils of other women contrasts with the patrilinear style of identity common in ancient India, while the identification of women as pupils of particular men calls into question the evidence of the *Vinaya* and other canonical texts, in which monks take the duty of advising nuns in rotation, rather than taking individual nuns as pupils.

Catherine Robinson brings us to the twentieth century with her account of official attitudes to the Indian soldiers who served in the First World War. She focuses on the use of Brighton Pavilion as a hospital for wounded Indians, and the ways in which the provisions for religious and caste differences which had developed in British India were transferred to English soil. She also looks back to the nineteenth-century development of the theory of ‘martial races’ which informed the recruitment and organization of the army of British India, and forward to some twenty-first-century manifestations of the martial race ideology, and how it has clashed with equality legislation and with the politicization of Islam.

K. Unni Krishnan studies another twentieth-century development which has its legacy today: the iconography of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari, a mother goddess embodying the state of Karnataka. He draws insightful parallels between the mother goddess of the nation, Bharat Mata, and the regional mother goddesses. He notes that twentieth-century political developments led to conflict over the representation of mother goddesses embodying India and its states. While Rabindranath Tagore avoided conflict by representing the national goddess in abstract terms, Kuvempu’s poem on Thayee Bhuvaneshwari was selected as the Karnataka anthem precisely because it was inclusive of all religious groups. Krishnan discusses the state-building and peace-keeping role of Thayee Bhuvaneshwari as the patron of all religious communities in Karnataka.

The last article has a contemporary subject which reaches back into the past and its contested representations. Eleanor Nesbitt examines the claim that Sikhs are vegetarian, and its repercussions on matters such as school meals, town planning and employment law. She finds discrepancies between this claim and the textual record, including codes of discipline, as well as variety in contemporary Sikh practice, and finds that it is true of particular groups, rather than of Sikhism as a whole. Professor Nesbitt’s article, like Dr Robinson’s, shows how the modern view of religion as a private matter is brought into question when religious practice enters the public sphere.