

Symposium¹

This issue's Symposium section is multidisciplinary in form, bringing together a memorial lecture on education by a scholar from the field of medicine, a response to it by a scholar from the social sciences and a poem related to the topic. As the first item, we publish a condensed version 'Revisiting Humanism in Education: Insights from Tagore', the J.E.Jayasuriya Memorial Lecture by Prof Panduka Karunanayake of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Colombo. In this, he presents Rabindranath Tagore's vision for humanistic education, which Karunanayake argues is very necessary to today's educational landscapes. 'Tagore's Ideas on Humanistic Education as a Civilizational Burden' is a response by Sasanka Perera, former Professor of Sociology, at South Asia University, New Delhi and previously at the University of Colombo. Perera's is a reflective – almost meditative – response, considering the civilizational burden we bear, and a consideration of reasons why Tagore's ideas of humanistic education will not be espoused in the current age. The third item in this section, the poem 'ශෝක පණිවුඩ' [Condolences], epitomizes the issues that are discussed by the two scholars. It is written by Prof Darshana L. Weerawarne, of the Department of Physics of the University of Colombo. The poem is in the Sinhala language, with a translation to English and an introduction. The poem is an allegorical lament of the state of education in the present day in Sri Lanka. Creative expression is a form of commentary and 'ශෝක පණිවුඩ' [Condolences], is an additional form of expressing the matters raised by the lecture and its response. The three items dovetail fittingly, commenting on the problems of Sri Lanka's present day circumstances as the authors perceive them.

¹ The Symposium section is published with the purpose of contributing to debate and discussion on aspects that broadly fall within the mandate of the UCR and need not be scholarly in form and register. They are often keynote lectures at academic events, general reflections on matters relevant to interdisciplinary research, academic publication or higher education. As such, the material published in this section are general and not subjected to anonymized peer-review.