

Preface

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The 26th International Conference of the International Association for Intercultural Communication Studies (IAICS) was held online at the Manipal Academy for Higher Education, MAHE (deemed University) in Karnataka, India, on March 12th-13th, 2021. It was co-organized by the Manipal Institute of Communication at MAHE, the Centre for Intercultural Studies and Dialogue at MAHE, and the College of Communication and Information Sciences at the University of Alabama, USA. The Board of Directors and the members of IAICS express their deepest gratitude to the Vice Chancellor of MAHE, Lt. Gen. (Dr.) M. D. VENKATESH, as well as the conference conveners, Dr. Padma RANI, Dr. H. S. SHUBHA, Dr. Praveen SHETTY, and their team of faculty and students, for their wonderful organization and strong support for intercultural communication studies.

The program of the 2021 IAICS conference included 39 presentations by 53 scholars (paper authors and co-authors), representing 11 countries and territories: China (18), Germany (2), India (16), Japan (1), Macao (1), the Netherlands (2), the Philippines (1), Poland (1), the Republic of South Africa (2), Vietnam (1), and the United States (9).

The theme of the conference was "Diversity and Multiculturalism in Contemporary Times". In the words of the conference organizers, "As we move further into the 21st century, issues of diversity and multiculturalism are becoming increasingly complex. The constant flow of persons, cultures and ideas between and among nations not only intensifies contact and connection among global citizens but also brings to the surface both emergent and perennial issues of difference, identity and territory. With expansive networks moving at breakthrough speeds and intensities, the very concepts of diversity and multiculturalism are changing, especially as they encounter transglobal forces of nationalism, populism, and hegemony. What does it mean to live in a multicultural society? How does the one and the many create community, resolve conflicts, in complicated religious, linguistic, educational, and cultural contexts? What happens to minorities and indigenous peoples within larger majority cultures?" The theme of this conference sought to address these issues in national and international contexts.

In addition, it should be emphasized that the conference was originally planned to take place face-to-face at Manipal in May 2020, and eventually switched to a virtual platform in March 2021. During the "lost year" of 2020, the world was greatly impacted by the global pandemic of Covid-19, which has not yet abated (as of June 2021). Therefore, the above issues addressed by the conference have been impacted, amplified and amended by the exigencies of the pandemic, as is partially reflected in the papers included in this current issue of ICS.

This first issue of Volume XXX of *Intercultural Communication Studies (ICS)* contains several sections: Comparative Rhetoric, Ideology, Impact of Covid-19, Media Studies, and Psychology. The first four of the seven articles included here are based on presentations at the 2021 IAICS conference at MAHE.

Firstly, the section on Comparative Rhetoric contains the keynote address at the conference by Keith LLOYD, Executive Director of IAICS. The article compares the Indian/Hindu and Western/Greek rhetorical traditions, which underpin the

communication and argumentation styles of these respective global regions. Intercultural communication needs to take into account these differences between cultural traditions spanning millennia.

The section on Ideology contains first and foremost the Presidential Address delivered at the conference by President of IAICS, Margaret Usha D'SILVA. The author takes stock of the cultural othering and tense race relations which pervade American society currently, and urges mindfulness as a pathway to easing tensions. In the second paper, Clyde A. MISSIER gives an insightful and nuanced examination and typology of ideological fundamentalism, including religious fundamentalism, a pervading phenomenon in the European Union and the Middle East as areas of cultural contact and potential conflict. The third paper in this section, based on the keynote address by Joanna RADWAŃSKA-WILLIAMS, General Editor of *ICS* and President-Elect of IAICS, examines a historical instance of apostasy as an act of social protest and renunciation of ideology.

The remaining three sections of this issue each contain one paper in various areas relevant to intercultural communication studies. In a synthetic article that combines historical and political analysis, Michael SHARE examines the far-reaching impact of the global epidemic of Covid-19 on human security. The article by Yowei KANG and Kenneth C. C. YANG applies the methodology of text mining to study consumer post-exposure narratives to a racially-themed controversial advertising campaign. The issue closes with a paper in the area of psychological counseling, which applies a modified grounded theory approach to extract emergent storylines of the ethnic identity formation of 'Hafu' (biethnic) middle school students in Japan. The author recommends that more attention should be paid to the special psychological and cultural needs of these students in their childhood and adolescence within the educational context.

It should be added that the authors in this volume represent eight different universities in five countries and territories (Japan, Macao, the Netherlands, Taiwan, and the United States), reflecting the diverse membership of IAICS and the great success of the 2021 conference at the Manipal Academy for Higher Education.