

EDITORIAL

The Gandhi Centenary Number

THE October 1968 issue of *Modern Asian Studies* was devoted exclusively to a single country in its commemoration of the Meiji Centenary. It was said that the main subject of that issue, the transformation of modern Japan, provided 'one of the dominant themes which can never be ignored by any student of modern Asia, whatever may be his own particular region or discipline'. This October's special Gandhi number is devoted to a single individual, and perhaps it is not too much to say of Gandhi's remarkable example what was said above about the transformation of Japan. For the subject of Gandhi and nationalism in modern India is inextricably interwoven with a series of dominant themes that cannot be ignored by the student of contemporary Asia.

The range of international scholarship, the variety of academic disciplines, and the scope of intellectual concerns seen in this issue, offer a good indication of the way Gandhian studies have developed since his assassination. In these articles, the historian, journalist, social scientist, and political theorist each approaches Gandhi from his or her chosen angle of vision. All these contributors are South Asian specialists, but their collective outlook is international, coming from Cambridge and London, Madras and Melbourne, California and New York. This is the sort of scholarly interest which Gandhi, perhaps unparalleled among nationalist leaders of Asia, has commanded.

Each contributor to this issue seeks to illuminate one aspect of a multi-faceted subject, and so to increase in some way our total understanding of the Mahatma and his meaning for modern India. It is hoped that the combination attempted here of close historical analysis, theoretical interpretation, and critical reassessment will at least offer an encouraging sign that, even in this centenary year, Gandhian studies are surviving the canonization of the Mahatma.

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The Editorial Board of *Modern Asian Studies* wish to thank Dr Dennis Dalton for acting as Editor of this special Gandhi Centenary number.