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EDITORIAL

Raghuram Rajan's exit was fast overshadowed by Brexit. While the word globalisation may have come into popular parlance more recently, international integration really began with new modes of transportation. The Berlin wall came down, the Cold War ended, and over four decades ago, Europe decided to join together for a common market. With this, borders opened up to a diversity of peoples and cultures. Several treaties and collectives like NATO, ASEAN, SAARC, to mention only a few, followed, the telecom revolution gave us the internet and social media, and there seemed to be only the one road ahead.

Brexit is a more complex phenomenon than it seems on the face of it, and there are many reasons for it, not least concerns about the economy and autonomy, among others. An analysis is best left to experts to assess what it portends for the future globally. But it is a step back into the past. This is not about tradition, or about a glorious past. It is about fear, suspicion and exclusion. Interestingly, it is the most cosmopolitan city, London, that voted to remain in the EU. One may ask if a referendum is really an informed choice. Be that as it may, the fact is that integration seems to no longer be as important as it was over 40 years ago when the EU came into existence. A contradiction that is hard to get one's head around.

I visited London as a child with my mother in 1972. I remember it as a beautiful city, and we enjoyed every minute of the conducted tours we took to the usual sights. But I also remember feeling the outsider. It was our first trip outside the country. We were the only Indians on the tours, and the people were rather cold. Fish and chips were the highlight of the evenings. The only Indians we saw were employed largely at the airport or cash counters in grocery stores. And they were not particularly friendly either. Fast forward to 2013. It was a vibrant city, now a huge melting pot. The front desk at our hotel was manned by a Polish couple, the staff were from

Somalia, the taxi driver was Turkish, and we tried every possible cuisine from Vietnamese to Iranian and Spanish. In the crowded Underground, we were hard pressed to hear the Queen's English spoken. Sadly, this, I believe, is one phenomenon that drove Brexit. If this is not regressive, I don't know what is.

The articles in this issue cover a range of subjects. We look at small, less represented communities; the problem of diminishing languages; cosmology and the puzzle of the universe; notions of identity; Gandhi's role in Africa, and during Partition; and unabated terrorism with the use of technology. Some of these articles are visually rich.

We have a poignant and moving photo essay on the Italian film director, Pier Paolo Pasolini, who died a young and unfortunate death. He was equally poet, writer, actor and political figure.



OMITA GOYAL