

# Letters to the Editor

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## HISTORY IS ALWAYS INTERESTING!

November 01, 2020

Dear Prof. Roy,

I read with much interest the 85th anniversary article that you co-authored with Dr. Rajinder Singh. I particularly enjoyed the narrative on the north-south culture/science 'frictions' of the 1930s. As you rightly pointed out in your article, occasionally good things do come out of controversies/disputes involving luminaries: *Science and Culture* is a living example.

Your article provided an insider view into the beginnings of *Science and Culture*, and how it nurtured a different scientific (and cultural/political) philosophy at the East end.

(After all, as you know, it is at this East end that the seeds of what eventually became a Union/Nation were sown!)

Such types of articles are very much necessary - they lay the truth on the table, and let the readers make opinions and decisions. Since your article mentioned about

how *Nature* reacted in 1935 to the launch of *Science and Culture*, it makes sense to take into account how it reacted in 1932 to the launch of *Current Science*. I provide a snapshot to put things in perspective.

I think the next decade (2030s) is going to be really exciting - both *Current Science* and *Science and Culture* will be celebrating their centenaries! □

Sincerely,  
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November 12, 2020

Respected Sir,

As a young researcher, it was a delight to read the article: *85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Science and Culture: An Introspection* authored by Dr. Rajinder Singh and Professor S.C. Roy (*Science and Culture*, May-June, 2020). It was really interesting to note the political and scientific reasons which led to the establishment of the journal *Science and Culture*. The authors very aptly points to the fact, which I fully agree, that man of substance or 'remarkable people' (in the parlance of the authors) can turn a controversy into a concrete positive output. This dictum fits rightly for both Prof. M.N. Saha and Prof. C.V. Raman, both of whom seems to have differences of opinion or may have even political or academic rivalry between them (which had both positive and negative consequences in Indian science). Both of them through their academic and personal brilliance and exceptional organizational skills and prowess have created fertile fields for generations of younger Indian scientists to irrigate and gift the fruits of modern science to the country. By the way, it is my small but interesting observation that name of Prof. M.N. Saha appears in web pages of both the journals – *Science and Culture* and *Current Science* (released from Indian Academy of Sciences) as one of the founding fathers. Both Saha and



Raman were great institution builders, Saha being instrumental in formation of premier institutes like INSA (Indian National Science Academy) and NASI (National Academy of Science) and Raman in formation of IAS (Indian Academy of Sciences). It is however unfortunate that despite efforts being made to merge these three premier Indian science academies into one, it has not been possible for various reasons (Singh and Roy, *Science and Culture*, September-October, 2020).

I believe that *Science and Culture* has a very important role to play in the current socio-scientific cultural background we are passing through. There is a severe intellectual challenge to the attitude of scientists these days. There is a recent trend of glorifying the past history at the cost of scientific proof or reasoning which sometimes propagated through social platforms like Facebook and Whatsapp. Glorifying one's national and scientific achievements of the past is great but it should never be done at the cost of scientific reasoning and knowledge. This is a dangerous norm and it is where a prominent, authentic scientific journal like *Science and Culture* has

been playing an important role in dissipating truth among the populace and salvaging them from misinterpretation of science. The journal being a gold-mine of history of Indian science for researchers and layman alike - is bringing the true essence of Indian science and the psyche of the true Indian spirit as our own ancient sheers of Upanishads proclaim. It is heartening to note that the journal has not shied away in expressing controversial issues as this is one of the many paths to reach the truth. There is an inherent drive in every human to know or experience truth in every culture irrespective of his/her nationality, language, cast or creed and a true service to science and human spirit would be to go beyond these boundaries and reveal the true spirit of scientific inquiry. I believe that the journal *Science and Culture* is doing the same in its true spirit and I truly appreciate both the authors for such a delightful and informative article. □

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