

THE BOOK REVIEW

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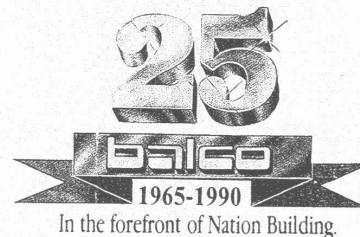
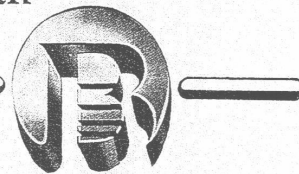
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A Year Draws to a Close

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With this, the sixth issue of volume fourteen, *The Book Review* completes one year in its new incarnation. The tabloid format has met with almost wholehearted approval from our readers. A few voices of dissent have also been heard—from readers who preferred the old journal format as, it is felt, the tabloid size is a little difficult to handle and to preserve. We have decided to make available a bound edition for the convenience of libraries and the more avid collectors of *The Book Review* at the end of each year. But on the whole, the change over would seem to be paying off, if the rapidly increasing circulation is any indication. The new format gives us the space to be able to make greater visual impact as well as to pack more reading matter into each issue. The editorial board of *The Book Review* would like to put on record its sincere thanks to Tulika Print Communication Services and Rajinder Paul of Pauls Press for their unstinting cooperation and enthusiastic support to the journal.

To our readers of course we render many thanks—for genuine interest in the promotion of the journal. Their valuable suggestions are carefully noted by us and we hope to be able to implement them by and by. Congratulated and criticized as we are for our achievements and our lapses, the subscribers of *The Book Review* provide the kind of moral support which we cannot do without. We have started a *Letters to the Editor* column to share the views of our readers. We invite all of you to send in constructive critiques of the reviews we publish for that would indeed help to improve their quality as well as to start a dialogue about books and ideas.

The successful launching of *The Book Review* in a new format has emboldened us to plan on turning it into a monthly in the New Year. We had hoped to make the change in frequency valid from January 1991 itself. But due to some unavoidable difficulties we are constrained to defer the decision. We shall intimate our readers well in advance when we are ready to take the plunge. In the meanwhile, the rising cost of paper, production and postage has forced us to raise our subscription rates for the coming year. We hope our readers will bear with us.

The Members of the Editorial/Advisory Board join me in wishing our readers a Very Happy New Year.

C.C.

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Cover photograph by Parthiv Shah

Peeling the Onion of Gender and Development

Devaki Jain

WOMEN, POVERTY AND RESOURCES

By Ponna Wignaraja

Sage Publications, New Delhi & UNICEF, 1990,
pp. 241, Rs.185.00

LABOUR PAINS AND LABOUR POWER

By Patricia Jeffery, Roger Jeffery and
Andrew Lyon

Manohar, New Delhi, 1989, pp. 292, Rs.325.00

STRUCTURES & STRATEGIES, WOMEN, WORK AND FAMILY

Edited by Leela Dube and Rajni Palriwala

Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1990, pp. 284,
Rs.195.00

One of the fastest growing crops in the field of information and analysis are the onions of gender and development. Peeling, cutting and cooking these onions not only causes tears but it can throw a spanner into the whole claptrap of theory and practice in the humanities—and in many ways into the physical sciences too. It is proving to be the most energetic unfold of ideas, methods, and actions on how to retrieve society—and its location, the planet—from its almost maniacal path of self destruction.

Women know the “business of living” (Dube). They can teach this to the rest of society. Women can save and re-circulate cash/credit (Wignaraja): women can self-examine and critique their context (Jeffery). But alas, the world is not listening. This great flood of useful knowledge, sensitively and passionately created remains ‘private’, silent and peripheral, like the domain in which by and large women live (D & P).

In my view this inadequacy is not only in the system’s encrusted deafness and blindness. There is an inertia in translating/converting this energy into an audible, visible phenomenon which should by its very aggregation and consolidation command attention.

However, this inertia is not easily disturbed. It

Devaki Jain, an eminent sociologist, is currently the director of the Institute of Social Studies Trust, New Delhi.

stems from more than an absence of collective will. It stems from the very nature of women’s existence: that they are 50% (more or less) of society so they are dispersed across all the many cross sections of which any society is made up of.

Further the integrity of scholarship and activism of “business of living”, as women do it, is such that there is a deep inhibition against rhetoric, over simplification, skirting issues, “pretending”. There is also a reluctance to dominate. Hence it is often found that women’s discussions/debates do not end too easily in “consensus” but in open ended agendas and questions, giving ‘autonomy’ to these involved to choose their outcome. The tendency is to remain ‘heterogenous’, to differentiate.

But this psychology can be self defeating—and if it persists even self destructive. Either the movement strikes or dissipates itself in the fluff of over sensibility, of too much self consciousness, of overstatement, glut and tedium.

Each of these three books seems to be peeling a layer of the onion of gender and development—from the external skin to core in the order listed and considered—but hesitating to develop the perspective and the clout of what may be termed gender-power.

Donor Agencies and other funders like government, like to have some nuts and bolts to “fit in” women into development design. Ponna Wignaraja does just this—takes 7 projects from 4 of the 5 countries of South Asia, where women have been able to have access to credit and draws from each set of “case studies” inferences (lessons) as well as strategies (how) for linking poor women to financial resources. He also brings the experience from Latin America and Africa—two cases from

the former and four from the latter which reveal the potential in these regions for adapting the methodology and processes used in South Asia. It can be done, is the message. Needs some sensitivity on the giver’s side and some professional capabilities on the receiver’s side.

Patricia Jeffery and her co-authors, go with the anthropologist’s diary into rural communities in Uttar Pradesh and find that women are painfully locked into tradition. It is a long haul for women to get out of the intermeshed web of suffering and toiling. In more than two hundred pages, the authors record the minutiae, the usually missed details of thought, perception, and action that make up the lives of the ‘Muni’s’—the child bearing age women of rural India.

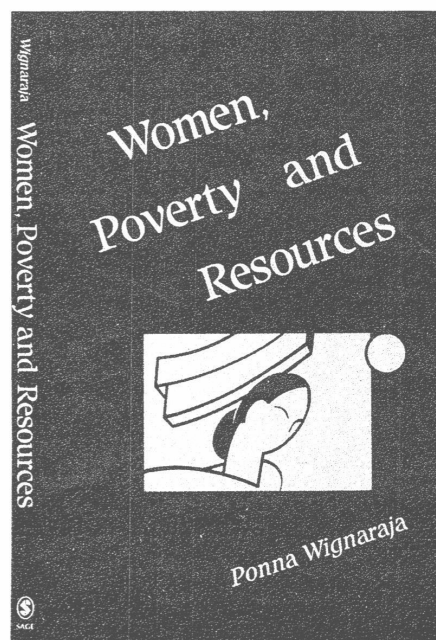
It does not seem likely that Wignaraja’s credit-spanner can quite put together Jeffery’s women into self-help groups. Many more structures—economic and social have to be loosened, it would seem, before they can get to the credit and the credit to them, for any meaningful gender-specific strengthening.

The volume of ten essays, drawn from six countries in Asia edited by Dube and Palriwala—with an editorial essay by Palriwala—take a vigorous view of the Jeffery concern—intra household relationships especially power relations. Travelling up and down and sideways across class, culture, caste, religion, historical and economic context,

they seem to suggest that the inadequacy is not in the women but in the explanatory theories and the categories from which they are drawn—a most significant finding providing the basis for the “strike” that is awaited. The volume is part of a series emerging out of the conference on women and the Household in Asia.

Wignaraja strategises for strengthening women’s economic power—an input agreed by all to be vital in assisting poor women in the business of living. Jeffery et al call attention to the terrible inadequacy of medical services for

women and questioning the romanticisation of the ‘traditional’ support systems including the village *dai*. They see an ugly black hole here—a blot on



Indian development. The essayists in *Structures and Strategies* try to find the doors of power, the sources at autonomy for women, the elements that would provide the critical lever, the one which will remove gender-specific injury and deprivation more deeply and more lastingly than ad hoc development supplies.

But there are jarring notes too. When Palrivala disengages the analysis from the more conventional frames of patriarchy, or capitalism—socialism, she ventilates the closed room of analysis. We start walking. But we cannot walk far, as the fountainheads or sources of inspiration and stimulus are still largely drawn from “Northern” scholars and theorists directly or indirectly (through being alumni of N-based institutions). Even if the essayists are from Islamic or Tamil or Korean cultures, their lenses, their tools are the intellectual equipment of the Anglo Saxon, Judea Christian and “capitalist-socialist” system discourses.

Jeffery et al however helpful are a jarring presence. An oil diya is a piece of dried mud with a twist of cotton in it; a piece of organic fuel, a ‘coke’ is a dried dung-cake. As we are described we look pathetic. Perhaps we are. But are we?

Wignaraja’s do’s and don’ts—wrapped in “participatory research” decorative paper is also jarring—it dries up the very spontaneity of collective forward walking. It turns away from the ‘macro’, the political, economic and social frame and policies which in fact are the walls that close in, even if women hold a piece of credit in their hand. It assumes away what seems to be the first essential—a little space, an opportunity to be, to step, to create.

The next step of re-writing the landscape, seeing its shades and contours from itself and from the track records of women engaged in the business of living would make the required quantum leap of not only intellectual emancipation but to a fertile soil of reconstruction.

The South—the developing countries, especially the poor countries in the Southern Hemisphere—needs re-building and from its own bricks a house;

not necessarily with its doors and windows open to all but to its comrades horizontally. The creativity of poor women living in the South—and the diagnostic and constructive formulation of that experience by women and men can perhaps provide the resource guide for that self-reliant, culturally

revitalising reconstruction.

The South has become critically fragile in the last few decades. Post colonial experience has sometimes been as painful as the colonial experience. While much of the current hardship can be traced to the trauma of colonisation, and to neo-colonialism, much also can be traced to the neglect of the deeper currents of social strength. The assault of the North has been deeper than mere political control—it presented itself as the paradigm, whether from the west/capitalistic or the East (socialistic). Its mo-

mentum in generating wealth and material well-being left a hangover of dependence. The leadership in the South were mostly chips off the old block, however militant and affirmative they may have been in their liberation struggles, however injured they were through racism and other such obscene instruments.

As the political distance increases between the North and South—a necessary corollary of the cutting of the umbilical colonial cord; as the East merges into the West, as the economic distance North to South gets longer and more congealed, the South is beginning to become another ‘homogenous’ entity. The ‘hemispheres’ are not East and West, but North and South.

The South has begun to look at itself—more through feelings of victimisation, deprivation, distress. There are gropings for finding new “mainsprings”, to resist as well as to rebuild. The only untired and untried mainsprings—ironically because of their “neglect and invisibility” are the social mass of women, and their family and household activities. Hence this area of action and thought needs to see itself as a potential key to unlock that energy.

While gender swings across all other identities, gender is also tethered in conventional stratifica-

tion (D&P). But poor women of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and of Asia are engaged in very similar spaces in their socio-economies, in their cultures. While these books are predominantly about Asia they could as well in their ultimate message or case be about the other parts of the South. The identity arises from the “business of living”. They are thrusting into the social cake—even if it is dry mud—to make life and a living. Their coping strategies need not be glorified, but need not be snuffed out either. Their household strategies for food—and nurture aggregated do not make a quality of life that is pretty, but aggregated it provides an important section of per-capita income.

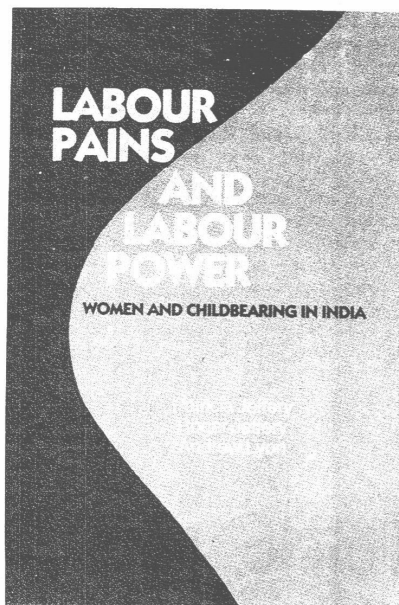
That they are the “backbone” of Society may be pure tokenism in the North—as well as in the “North-in-the-South—but it is in reality in the South. They are the backbone. In Africa they are/ were the principle food growers. In the Caribbean they are the “vendors”—the fastest growing economic sector to-day. In Latin America they hold up the invisible economy. In Asia they are the ‘workers’. But it has taken the South too a long time to wake up to this and to clean its lenses from the steam put there by the Northern Scene, its social structure and women’s involvement.

The recently concluded South Commission in its report says:-

“Women account for more than half the South’s population. They participate in the development process in a myriad ways, but their contribution to economic and social change continues to be inadequately recognized and greatly undervalued, because male dominated cultures have given them an inferior position in them, subordinate to men. .

... Economic, social and cultural factors have combined to produce a situation in which most development efforts have tended to discount the potential social and economic contribution of women, and so fail to mobilize and benefit from this vital human resource. There is a persistent misconception that the value of women’s contribution to the economy and to society is adequately recognized and their needs and interests are satisfied if they are made the beneficiaries of *certain welfare programmes*. . . .

... The adjustment programmes of the 1980s have made the position of women worse. . . . There is a need as well for instruments and mechanisms which are responsive to the gender dimension in developmental activity. The design of strategies, training of development agents, and restructuring of legal and administrative systems should reflect the important role of women in the economy and society. What is no less important is that these changes should be accompanied and supported by deliberate endeavours to *foster a gender-sensitive culture*.

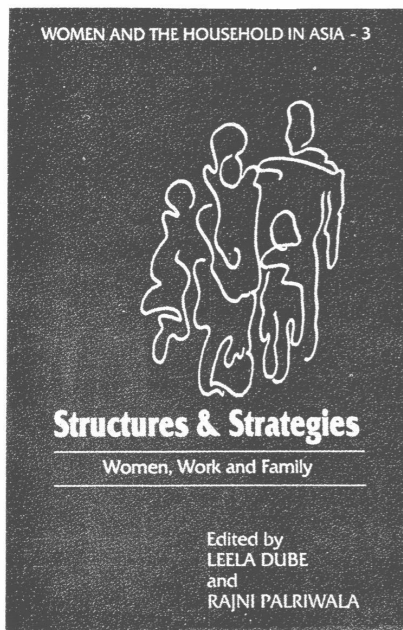


... A gender-sensitive approach to development is not just a political imperative, but a basic condition for sustained economic and social progress...

Changes will be hastened to the extent that women themselves become actively conscious of their rights, and work to safeguard them. They need to create strong organisations to advance their interests".*

But while its role in rebuilding the South is critical in a most significant sense, gender based formations of public and political opinion need not be limited to the South alone. They could play the critical role in global politics, environment, (saving the planet); in bridging the economic gaps.

The election of a woman, on the women's vote—as President of Ireland gives a glimpse of this search amongst people even in the North for an alternative. She has cut across religion, political ideology and historical alliances as women have voted for her, through a sense of identity with her:



gender's accommodation in that growth process. They have allied themselves with Green and Peace movements as they have found that Northern production and consumption strategies have led both to environmental hazards and to militarism. It is women's articulation in the North which has sometimes worked in "alternatives" especially in production and trade, in health, in education. At the moment these ideas are considered to be

as well as a sense of not belonging to the existing lines of political stratification, as well as because what they have seen or received from 'leadership' has been unproductive in every way, conflict ridden, insecure economically and politically. Of course, it needs no intelligence to recognise that this is a feminist leader i.e. a woman sensitive to gender as different from a leader who happens to be female.

Women of the North have been in the vanguard of the critique of Northern development strategies. They have had to fight for

"marginalising". If rich, growing countries, consider these ideas and programmes legitimate and viable, then they will be seen in the South Countries as central and not marginalising.

Looking at the North with South created lenses might be productive and revealing—and help to extract the positives and negatives in a more, just intimate manner than the currently used double—standards, i.e., looking at North with one set of measures, and South with another, or even worse looking at South against North's priorities, processes, and growth styles.

It is women who can put forward a joint critique on the basic principles, the normative positions the classical categories, taken-for-granted measures and indices of "progress"—and start the process of global rebuilding.

A less tentative, less self-conscious, more blurred on heterogeneity, more sharp on collectivity perspective, providing feminist views on economic and social processes and goals could provide an immense hand to this process of rebuilding.

Contradictions and breakdowns will plague the effort—as all coalitions know, but diligent back room exercises, careful determined concentrated orchestration can support a collective position even if for a temporary period.

The gender perspectives and forces need to be released effectively, even if only once. Perhaps this will be followed both by a perpetuation and a withering away. But one release is necessary: both because of its efficacy in impact as well as to avoid the wastage of a build up. Harvesting and using the baskets of onions still needs doing. □

* The Challenge to the South: Report of South Commission, OUP, 1990 pages 128-131.

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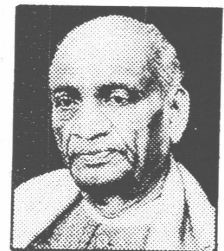
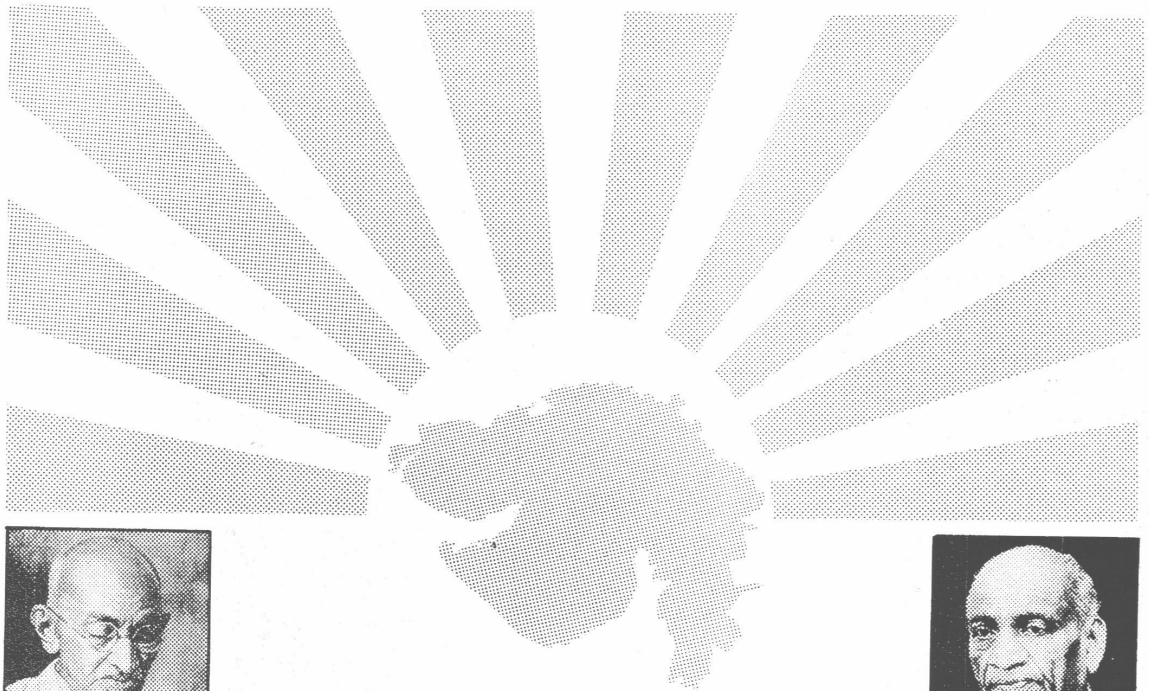
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**LET US PARTICIPATE IN THE TASK OF
MAKING "NAYA GUJARAT"**

A Work of Textured Subtlety

Gopal Gandhi

HYMNS OF GURU NANAK

Translated by Khushwant Singh

Orient Longman Ltd., 1990, pp. 123, Rs. 300.00

From the explicit pen of Khushwant Singh has come a work of textured subtlety: an English rendering of the hymns of Guru Nanak (1469-1539) with a life-sketch of that extraordinary saint and founder of the Sikh faith. If the brilliantly sensual sixteenth century poet John Donne could, in later life, create religious literature of exceptional power, there is no reason why the same should not happen with the author of *Delhi*. Not that *Hymns of Guru Nanak* marks a turning point for Khushwant Singh; it does not. The serious and the jesting, the holy and the unhallowed, have co-existed effortlessly in Khushwant Singh's versatile mind. *Hymns of Guru Nanak* is a creation of Khushwant Singh's protean talents. The book takes its place with the scholarly works by the same author which include the two-volume *History of the Sikhs* and *The Sikhs Today*.

Khushwant Singh is not just a novelist—witty, irreverent, moving, disturbing—but also a major interpreter of India's Sikh persona. And when he is playing this role he becomes transformed; he becomes almost a different person. In his 1909 biography of Gandhi, the late Joseph Dole says: "When Mr. Gandhi speaks of his parents, those who listen realize that they are on holy ground. It is as though some priestly Israelite had lifted the curtains of the inner Shrine to allow the Shekinah to be seen. There, in there, are the springs of Divine power and life."

Khushwant Singh is on similarly holy ground when talking of Nanak whom he describes simply and humbly as "my Guru". And there, in the life and works of Guru Nanak, resides the Shekinah of Khushwant Singh's faith. What are the ingredients for Khushwant Singh's life-sketch? Mehervan's *Janam Sakhi* has been described by Khushwant Singh as "the more authentic version on the life of Guru Nanak." He has, not surprisingly, used that early text as the basic resin of facts

Gopal Gandhi belongs to the Indian Administrative Service and is currently posted as Joint Secretary to the President. His novel, Saranam, first published in 1988, has been reprinted under the title Retreat by Ravi Dayal Publisher.

from which to draw out the sequence of the guru's life for his biographical chapter. The narrative in this life sketch of Guru Nanak has a tonal quality that places it alongside Hagiographa. It is reminiscent of lives of sages such as the *Life of Saint Cuthbert* as told by the Venerable Bede (673-735), *The Life of Our Lord* written by Charles Dickens "for his own children" in 1849, and the more recent *What the Buddha Taught* of the Sri Lankan scholar-monk Dr. Walpola Rahula. All these works expand on extant sources, employing an uncynical discretion to leave the improbabilities and yet retain the mystic appeal of their subjects. Bede recounts the following:

One day a great crowd of lads were at their usual games in a field, Cuthbert among them, twisting themselves about in all kinds of contortions in the excitement of the game. Suddenly a child no more than three years old ran up to him and began to upbraid him, with all the solemnity of an old man for his idleness and indulgence in games, saying he would do better to exercise a steady control over mind and body. . . . Cuthbert took this good-naturedly, listened indeed with rapt attention and soothed the child's feelings with a friendly show of affection. He forsook his foolish games at once and went home. From then on he showed himself more mature and earnest, as the Spirit who had spoken to him through the mouth of an infant, spoke to him now in the recesses of his heart.

This passage is powerfully recalled by this description of Nanak's infancy by Khushwant Singh:

Nanak was a precocious child; smiling and sitting up in early infancy. When he was only five years old, people noticed that he did not play with other boys but spoke words of wisdom well beyond his years. The people's reactions were interesting. Whosoever heard him, Hindu or Muslim, was certain that God spoke through the little boy—and this belief grew stronger as Nanak grew older.

Khushwant Singh's description of Nanak's progress through childhood into youth, economical in words, is unusually vivid. It portrays, in the words of the poet Keith Douglas:

Under the parabola of a ball a child turning into a man. . . .

How and why is it that the childhoods of different sages bear so strong a resemblance? This ques-

tion must have occurred to Khushwant Singh as it is bound to occur to his readers. Is there a re-play that is in progress, a divinely-clapped encore?

Dickens for instance, has this account of Jesus' precocity:

They found Him sitting in the Temple talking about the Goodness of God and how we should all pray to him, with some learned men who were called Doctors. . . . And Jesus Christ showed such knowledge in what He said to them and in the questions He asked them, that they were all astonished.

One thousand and five years after that Jerusalem scene, an almost identical incident took place with the same vibrations, in the land of the five rivers. Khushwant Singh relates it thus:

At the age of seven Nanak was taken to a pandit to be taught. Nanak apparently turned the tables on his teacher and his discourse with his teacher is the subject of a beautiful hymn in Sri Raga.

Do you know (says Nanak) how and why men come into this world and why they depart? Why some become rich and others poor? Why some hold court while others go begging door to door—and even of the beggars why some receive alms while other do not?

Nanak then went on to teach his pedagogue: "That which is gained by falsehood becomes unclean."

A figure that emerges on these pages from the interstices of history in Mardana, a Muslim family servant from a brewer caste who was also a good musician, playing the *rabab* and singing hymns. Mardana is friend, disciple, interlocutor and alter ego. A single apostle to Christ's twelve, Mardana is to Nanak what Ananda was to the Buddha. One wishes someone could do a study of these faithful shadows of the great, their 'other', who invest the sages with a human dimension. It is these personalities who enabled converse as against discourse.

The catechismal method of explication was adopted most effectively by the Buddha. Walpola Rahula gives the following description of the Buddha and Sigala:

Thus have I have heard. The Blessed One was once staying near Rajagaha at the Squirrels' Feeding-ground in the Bamboo Wood.

Now at this time Sigala, a householder's son, rising early, went out of Rajagaha. With wet hair, wet garments and his clasped hands uplifted, he performed the rite of worship to the several quarters of earth and sky; to the east, south, west, and north, to the nadir and the zenith. Early that same morning, the Blessed One dressed, took bowl and robe and entered Rajagaha seeking alms. He saw Sigala at his rite of worship and spoke to him thus: 'Why, young householder, do you, rising early and leaving Rajagaha, with your hair and raiment wet, worship the several quarters of earth and sky?'

'Sir, my father, when he was on his deathbed, said to me: "Dear son, you should worship the quarters of earth and sky." So I, sir, honouring my father's word, reverencing, revering, holding it sacred, rise early and, leaving Rajagaha, worship in this way.'

'But in the Discipline of the Arya (Noble One), young householder, the six quarters should not be worshipped in this way.'

'How then, sir, in the Discipline of the Arya, should the six quarters be worshipped? It would be an excellent thing, if the Blessed One would so teach me the way in which according to the Discipline of the Arya, the six quarters should be worshipped.'

The Buddha then gave what is celebrated as the *Sigalovada-sutta*, leading the householder's son to say:

'Excellent, Sir, excellent! It is as if one should set upright what had been turned upside down, or reveal what had been hidden away, or show the way to a man gone astray, or bring a lamp into darkness so that those with eyes might see things there. In this manner the Dhamma is expounded by the Blessed One in many ways. And I take refuge in the Blessed One, in the Dhamma and in the Community of Bhikkhus. May the blessed One receive me as his lay-disciple, as one who has taken his refuge in him from this day forth as long as life endures.'

Khushwant Singh tells us of a Nanak incident of remarkable similarity:

Nanck and Mardana stayed at Hardwar for some time in order to be present at the *Baisakhi* (March-April) fair. It was on this occasion that an incident, that made Nanak famous, took place. There was a large crowd bathing in the river. Nanak saw them face eastwards and throw palmfuls of water to the sun. Nanak entered the stream and started throwing water west-wards. 'In the name of Rama!' exclaimed the shocked pilgrims, 'who is this man who throws water to the west? He is either mad or a Musalman.' They approached Nanak and asked him why he offered water in the wrong direction. Nanak asked them why they threw it eastwards to the sun. "We offer it to our dead ancestors," they replied.

'Where are your dead ancestors?'

'With the gods in Heaven.'

'How far is the abode of the gods?'

'49 crore kos from here.'

'Does the water get that far?'

'Without doubt! But why do you throw it westwards?'

Nanak replied, 'My home and lands are near Lahore. It has rained everywhere except on my land. I am therefore watering my fields.' 'Man of God, how can you water your fields near Lahore from this place?'

'If you can send it 49 crore kos to the abode of the gods, why can't I send it to Lahore which is only a couple of hundred kos away!'

The people were abashed at this reply.

'He is not mad,' they said, 'he is surely a great seer.'

If *Hymns of Guru Nanak* is a cousin of the three

Nanak's hymns do the same. Following the traditional pattern of the *Adi Granth* which contains almost a thousand hymns of Nanak under eighteen different ragas, Khushwant Singh has presented his translations in the given raga sequence. The morning *Japji* and the celebrated hymn to the twelve months—*Bara Mah*—have been translated in their entirety. Some of the pieces are translated into rhymed verse and others not. Each hymn is given its original title (the first line) in italicized roman characters which is the form adopted

by Tagore in his *Kabir's Poems*. The original *raga* is also identified for each hymn.

As with the Tagore translations of Kabir's poems Khushwant Singh's translations of Nanak's hymns have remained umbilically close to the original and yet are autonomous, even, 'contemporary'. There is this hymn among the *Var Majh*:

(There are ten stages of life steeped in ignorance)

First the child's craving for the mother's breast;

Then his awareness of his father and mother,

Of his sister and brother and brother's wife.

Thereafter he takes to games and sports,

He relishes food and drink,

And wallows in lust and passion

That know no caste,

He hoards wealth, he builds a house.

Then cholera afflicts his system,

His hair turns grey, his breath becomes wheezy.

(He dies), flames consume his body and reduce it to ashes.

His friends lament for a while and go away.

The swan has flown, who knows where!

He came and he went; his name is soon

forgotten.

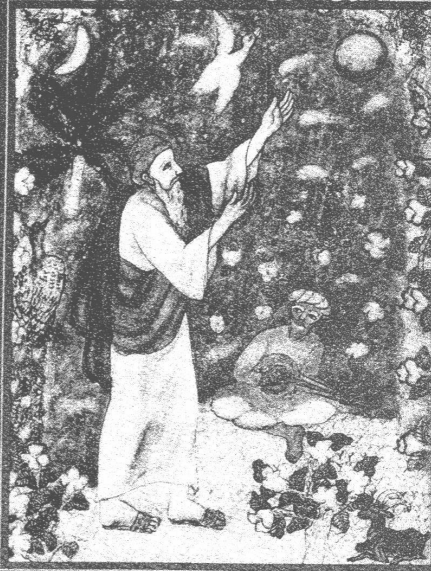
For a while the obsequial ceremonies; eating off leaf-plates.

And feeding crows.

That piece could have been written by A.K. Ramanujan, straight out of contemporary Mysore. "Then cholera afflicts his system/His hair turns grey, his breath becomes wheezy" could be from Bellow! But Nanak's line in that hymn "The Swan has flown, who knows where?" is typically Kabir. Kumar Gandharva has rendered that Kabir song memorably:

उड़ जाया हँस अकेला

Hymns of Guru Nanak



Translated by: Khushwant Singh
Illustrations: Arpita Singh

lives of sages mentioned, it is a veritable twin to a fourth—*Kabir's Poems* translated by Rabindranath Tagore with the assistance of Evelyn Underhill and first published by Macmillan in 1921. That book has a fine introduction written by Underhill in which Kabir's life is described and the mystic power of his poetry is explained. Underhill writes: "Written in the popular Hindi, not in the literary tongue, they were deliberately addressed—like the vernacular poetry of Jacopone da Todi and Richard Rolle—to the people rather than to the professionally religious class; and all must be struck by the constant employment in them of imagery drawn from the common life, the universal experience."

It is said that after the death of Kabir his muslim and hindu disciples had a dispute over the possession of the body which the muslims wished to bury and the hindus to cremate. Kabir "appeared" before them at one point in the contestation and asked them to lift the shroud. They did so only to find in place of Kabir's body a heap of flowers, half of which were then buried and the other half, burnt. We learn from Khushwant Singh that an almost identical episode is believed to have taken place after the guru's passing away.

Mehervan's *Janam Sakhi* records the manner his body was laid to rest. Said the Mussalmans: 'we will bury him'; the Hindus: 'we will cremate him'; Nanak said: You place flowers on either side, Hindus on my right, Muslims on my left. Those whose flowers remain fresh tomorrow will have their way.' He asked them to pray. When the prayer was over, Nanak pulled the sheet over him and went to eternal sleep. Next morning when they raised the sheet they found nothing. The flowers of both communities were fresh. The Hindus took theirs; the Muslims took those that they had placed.

Nanak was one of those sages who believed that spoken or written words, hymns and hymnals, can be of help to those who wish to be seekers but not renouncers. The repetition of *jap*, (which lies at the root of our mnemonic traditions) was held by Nanak to be beneficial though not the sole or the best method of seeking. Hymnals and books such as the *Adi Granth* become forms of the formless which help understanding.

Hymns of Guru Nanak is a collection of works that are ingrained in the psyche of millions of sikhs but have remained largely unknown to non-sikhs. Khushwant Singh has served not just mystical literature, or hagiography, but the philosophical inclinations of those of other faiths as well, with this beautifully produced book.

Illustrating a book such as this would need more than a brush and palette; it would need tinctures of *sraddhaa*. Arpita Singh's familiarity with the subject is obviously as great as her skill as an artist. Her sixteen paintings and numerous line drawings are held in an easel of devotion. The colour plates accompany fourteen hymns and two episodes in the narration of Nanak's life. Like Nanak's compositions, these plates and drawings exist at many levels, utilize many modes. There is something of the fallen-plaster look of cave paintings in *secco* or of faded wall-hangings canvas (No. 8, No. 46). The water-borne floristics, ducks and geese are distinctly reminiscent of these cave paintings at Sittannaval in Tamil Nadu. There is also something in them of stained glass pigments (No. 42). Some of them are strongly reminiscent of Kangra miniatures (No. 104, No. 106). Fenestral balconies, terraces, trees, birds, swelling horizons

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From 'Hymns of Guru Nanak'

and one or two humans all in 'a close pack' vividly recall Kangra miniatures. Other plates bring to mind a child's brush or crayon pastille. (No. 20, No.26, No.108). Waxy smears and irregularities in colour tone invest these with the earnestness of a child's work—and its purity. They send a signal to the *tabula rasa* in the beholder even as a scene unsuspected by adults could impact itself on a child's mind. The absence of scale which does not amount to disorder and an imbalance which is yet controlled by a silent harmony that characterize a child's crayon painting, mark some of Arpita Singh's work. The human figures in the colour plates have distinct shades of Amrita Shergil, especially in the soft fall and folds of their apparel and their relaxed carriage. There is a Shergil quality of *soothe* about Arpita Singh's colour plates, a built-in abatement of tension. Khushwant Singh has explained that the word 'Sufi' is from *suf* meaning wool. Sufis are believed to have worn garments of this wool. Arpita Singh's Nanak wears a loose but unsagging garment of soft, wintry folds. Others are similarly attired. Fabric is clearly her forte, be it in apparel, floor coverings or quilting.

Nanak and Mardana age sequentially with the plates, the guru's countenance and eyes acquiring a progressive beatitude. As one proceeds from frame to frame, Nanak's life unfolds—clement, gentle, redemptive. So does his *baani*. In his hymnal, Arpita Singh's plates constitute a tender trope in colour.

The line drawings are no less distinctive. They would in fact be better described as hemstitch drawings. Created by an etching needle rather than a stylus, they have an elliptical quality to them. If the colour plates portray, the drawings suggest. They hint, rather in the manner of an artist's work-sheet preliminaries. Some of them evoke woodcut blocks, architrave carvings.

There is, in fact, a markedly Christian texture to the colour plates and line drawings. Arpita Singh's Nanak himself bears a striking resemblance to known depictions of early Christian saints. Slim rather than portly, wearing a slender beard rather than the platinized Tagorean cascade which calendars have invariably given him, and eyes luminously open rather than half-shut, the guru emerges very human, and the more appealing for being so. A fulfilling pictorial correlative to the saint of these sainted texts.

Is *Hymns of Guru Nanak* what can be called 'a coffee-table book'? Its large size, illustrations and handsome get up would suggest that. But then Nanak—unlike the Taj Mahal—cannot be so confined to a "precious" publication. One hopes this collection of the songs of one who wore a cloth cap, a long cloak used by mendicants and carried a beggar's bowl, will reappear more accessibly in our midst. □

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Tributes To a Genius

T. C. A. Ramanujachari

RADHAKRISHNAN CENTENARY VOLUME

Edited by G. Parthasarathi &
D.P. Chattopadhyaya

Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1990, pp. 352,
Rs. 250.00

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was born in Tiruttani, a famous centre of worship of Murugan, the God of mountains. He was educated in Christian missionary institutions. A lucky chance made him study philosophy. When Indian heritage was derided he studied Indian Philosophy on his own because that was not, in his student days, part of the approved course of studies. This brought him into contact with many flowers blooming in the desert. Such an eclectic tutorial in combination with his native endorsement of clarity of perception and a dulcet but scintillating, though simple, diction established for him that linkage prayed for in the invocation in the Aitreya Upanishad.

*Om, Vang me Manasi: Pratishtitha
Manome Vachi Prathistham.
Aveera Veerma Edhi: Vedasya ma Aanisthaha.*

(May my speech be firmly rooted in mind, May my mind be rooted in speech. May I be illumined by Atmajyoti. May speech and mind be the two lynch pins of knowledge.)

Radhakrishnan found early international renown. He delivered the Upton Lectures when he was 38, the Hibbert lectures when he was 41 and wrote his *Indian philosophy* in that period and was knighted when he was 42. He became Spalding Professor in Oxford when he was 48. Truly, he "was a multifaceted personality. He was a diamond with many splendoured radiance, a flash of light, sometimes blindingly brilliant," (Malcolm S. Adiseshiah, p.266). He was the only Indian Philosopher to find a place, as early as 1952, in the Library of Living Philosophers. He was rightly held out to young students of philosophy as one who ought to be emulated though it was difficult to do so. Very few measured up to the challenge.

*Durdarsha—Mati Chambira—Majam Samyam
Visharadham
Buddha Padh—Mananthvam Namaskurum*

T.C.A. Ramanujachari is a retired IAS officer who has specialized in philosophy.

*Yadhabalam.
(Mandukiya Upahishad 4-100)*

(We do obeisance according to our capability to THAT which it is difficult to see or know or understand, which is immaculate (without beginning), full (complete) and pure.)

Radhakrishnan's philosophy and teaching was one such continuous obeisance. Let us see how he is seen in his birth centenary year.

The book under review is a collection of selected papers out of those received for presentation at the Radhakrishnan International Conference held in Delhi in December, 1989 as part of Radhakrishnan's birth centenary celebrations. The volume is divided into two parts—Part I deals with Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan the philosopher of Religion and the Spirit; and the Universalist and World Statesman is the subject of Part II. This volume contains ten papers by foreign scholars, six by Indian scholars teaching in universities outside India, four by Indian scholars and nine by erstwhile administrators with scholarly pretensions and scholars turned politicians. Some pieces, (it will not be polite to name these) appear to have been included only out of protocol compulsions.

Subimal Dutti's piece is exquisite for its gracefully expressed touching personal reminiscence. C. Subramaniam has contributed a delightful cameo of Radhakrishnan's philosophy and thought. Some of the contributors have said, inappropriately, that Radhakrishnan's idealistic world view flowed from Tagore's aesthetic spiritual world view and his ethical and spiritual concerns from Mahatma Gandhi. Meticulous comparative justification and elimination, substantially of the possibility of referring similar insights of great contemporaries to their common heritage alone can warrant a finding that one of them derived his insights from the others.

J.N. Mohanty (13-19), a great student of Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) compares Radhakrishnan with Husserl to say that (a) both sought to rescue the autonomy of the spirit from all sorts of objectivism, naturalism, scepticism, (b) both discarded all authoritarianism, in favour of a genuine empiricism (not the false empiricism to which the only and true experience is sensory experience) and (c) both believed that philosophers are "functionaries of mankind".

Bimal Matilal (20-29), currently occupying the chair in Oxford that Radhakrishnan occupied, highlights his exposition of the distinct levels of

efficiency of knowledge through sense experience, analysis and synthesis and intuitions and Radhakrishnan's preference for intuition—"the deepest things of life are known only through intuitive apprehension." (*Idealist View Of Life*, p.112). Radhakrishnan derived support for his thesis from Plato, Plotinus, Bergson, Croce, Bradley, the *Nyaya-Vaisesika Darsna* which called it variously as *arsa-jnana-pratibah*, *Siddhadarsna*, *Yogi-pratyaksha*, the Buddhist *prajna* and the Vedanta *aparoksanubhuti* (non-sensory integral experience).

Mohanty and Matilal, however, are casual and disappoint. Neither has made an attempt, as they ought to have because of their standing, to assess and portray Radhakrishnan in his true dimension.

Radhakrishnan described by R. Venkataraman in enthusiastic malapropian terms as "a bright mark of vermilion across nascent India's forehead" (p.3), should be understood and evaluated, in the Hindu Sastrakara tradition, essentially as a product of his *desa* (geographical location), *kala* (historical time context), *stama* (studiousness) and *guna* (conditioned response capability). The chief characteristic of his times, as of now, was the profound crisis in the transition of human civilisation marked by disappointment with the present and anxious concern for the future. Radhakrishnan responded to this situation with "expectancy, at once deeply worried and hopeful or what he calls the 'world's unborn soul', which was the title of his inaugural address at Oxford" (J.G. Arapura, p. 284), and developed the theme of a spiritual commonwealth as the remedy for the crisis of the times and to recover faith.

Another concern of the times, particularly for an Indian thinker, was the persistent denigration of Indian philosophy, religion, culture and thought starting with James Mill. Before that in the Romanic period India was portrayed as a country of origins and as the moderating agent of the stress of modernising, but stern, rationalism. But Hegel, taking his cue from James Mill, severely rebuked that exegis and installed, instead, his progressive linear teleology depicting "the future of mankind as a western monopoly and relegated the Indian heritage to hopeless obsolescence". (Fred Dallmayr, p. 217).

Many Indians reacted to this imperialist colonisation of the Indian mind by becoming victims to Anglophilia and by looking at the Indian heritage after transposing it into the rationalist homocentric Western concepts and interpretation. Radhakrishnan countered that enterprise not by

surrender or sectarian polemic but by being "the near founder of comparative studies". (Herman, p.34). Thereby, by comparison, criticism and analysis on their own terms, method and style he corrected the Western decontextualised interpretations of the Indian heritage.

Another concern personal to Radhakrishnan but inescapable in the circumstance of his education in missionary institutions was his quest to study and understand Indian and Western thought independently of and in relation to each other particularly in the context of the irreversible "Europeanisation of the Earth" (Husserl). That understandably, induced him to reinterpret Vedanta to find and formulate a meaningful, coherent, integrated world view which was at once loyal to India's philosophical heritage and also reached out to the western heritage of science based metaphysics, and explicated the integral relation between tradition and modernity and the past, present and future. Through interpretative mediation Radhakrishnan articulated a cross-cultural vision of concrete religion—"experience of or living contact with the Absolute"—rooted in the Vedas and Upanisads and in the matrix of an idealist view of life, in which "ideas" which were, and are, the "operative creative force".

J.G. Arapura deals with Radhakrishnan's theme of spiritual Commonwealth in "terms of two fundamental dimensions, namely, idealism and concrete religion, in as much as these two exist in conspicuous prominence in Radhakrishnan's thought" (p. 280). Arapura delineates cogently how Radhakrishnan skillfully worked into the theme the Platonic concept of idealism of value and cosmic process, by modifying it with Whithead's process philosophy and leavened it by St. Augustine's profound modification of Plato's vision of the ideal state by linking it with concrete religion of concrete revelation. Radhakrishnan refined the idea further by opting for "religion in all its actual and potential varieties" (p. 286) instead of St. Augustine's choice of one specific revealed religion.

Comparative study of religions was Radhakrishnan's riposte to the established western Indological scholarship of decontextualised reading of Indian heritage to denigrate it as part of the process of imperial aggrandisement. But that study is a tricky venture as its postulate is, or ought to be, that the different spiritual insights are equally valid though these have been conditioned by different social and cultural inventories of varying content and quality. Consequently, though "mankind at each period of its history cherishes the illusion of finality of its existing modes of knowledge," (*Indian Religions*, p. 13), none of these insights can claim superiority or over-riding finality. Thus, comparative study of religions runs the risks (a) of heresy, because it has to critically evaluate established theology, (b) of offending self



Radhakrishnan

CENTENARY VOLUME

edited by G. Parthasarathi • D. P. Chattopadhyaya

Preparing a volume of this nature, focussing attention on the various aspects of Radhakrishnan's life and work has not proved an easy task. Radhakrishnan's fields of interest and activity were wide-ranging and in each of these fields his contribution has been of lasting importance. . . . The contributions in this volume are concerned primarily with his thought as a philosopher and his achievements as a statesman.

—From the Preface to Radhakrishnan Centenary Volume, G. Parthasarathi & D. P. Chattopadhyaya.



esteem and orthodoxy as it compels reevaluation of the past and tradition by taking it out of its native roots and matrix, and (c) of spawning religious relativism.

Those risks can be avoided best if (a) such comparative study grows out of its infantile idealisation and exuberant acceptance or criticism; (b) it finds a comprehensive, unifying perspective, an integrative conceptual centre, which will subsume, without affecting their autonomy of different spiritual religious insights; and (c) concede the worth of the specific human experiences in all the vicissitude of change in time and variety to provide a basis for understanding the inter-relatedness of such experiences. Radhakrishnan was predisposed by endowment, study, Sravana (hearing), Manana (reflection) and Nididhysana (steady meditations)

towards non-dualism and its related contemplative mysticism. So he found in Advaita that overarching comprehensive approach and integrative centre. But for doing that Radhakrishnan reconstructed Advaita in a manner that its great exponent like Gandapada, Mandana Misra, Sankara, Padmapada, Suresvara, Dharmaraja et al would not have ratified. Richard De Smet's piece (p. 52-70) is a meticulous exposition, but not looking "for fleas in the lion's mane", of this discrepancy.

Al Herman (p. 34-40) objects to Radhakrishnan's Advaita solution of religious relativism and wonders whether comparative study of religion which has "critical thinking is, always will be, one of man's most dangerous undertaking" (p. 46) need at all be undertaken as it threatens religious belief and spiritual faith. Julius Lipner (p. 135-152) points out that Radhakrishnan had, very much in the fashion of Hegel's progressivism at every point, put forward a "scale of religious truths" which "is an ascending one: the closer a religious ideal is to monism the higher up the scale it is" (p. 146). Radhakrishnan's unrepentant thesis articulated in his *Hindu View of life* is: "The worshippers of the Absolute are the highest in rank; second to them are the worshippers of the personal god; then come the worshippers of the incarnations like Rama, Krishna, Buddha; below them are those who worship ancestors, deities and sages; and lowest of them all are the worshippers of petty forces and the spirits". Lipner criticises cogently this thesis, which is against the *Gita* precept (IV-11, VII-21, IX-23) and the bhakti tradition (e.g. Nam-mazhwar—*Thiruvaimozhi* 1-1-50)

Krishna Sivaraman (189-203) expounds how Radhakrishnan countered the major thrust of Western Indologists' denigration of India's philosophical heritage, i.e. that Indian philosophy devalues purposeful action and ethics by its advocacy of the mysticism of identification with Brahman and that such mysticism was amoral and stood in conflict with the activism and voluntaristic element characteristic of western philosophic thought. Krishna Sivaraman points out how Radhakrishnan had shown that Vedanta addresses the practical world of here and now, and its inclusion of the religious sphere as part of man's actual aims in life and as preparation for the ultimate aim of spiritual realisation is to emphasise that Dharma is the concept of practical morality that embraces both ethics and mysticism. (p. 193). Practical morality was adapted by Vedanta to an individual's station in society and spiritual status and structured along that individual's role and function in that society.

The papers of Herman, Lipner, Sivaraman, Glyn Richards, John M. Koller, Debabrata Sinha and Fred Dallmayr bring out the grace and majesty of Radhakrishnan's perception and exposition that the fundamental truth of a spiritual religion is that our real self is the Supreme Being, which is our

business to discover and consciously become that (*Tat Tvam Asi*) and this being is one in all. They also bring out prominently that Radhakrishnan did not support claims of exclusive infallibility of any one religion but expounded the Vedic "*Ekam Sat, Viprah bahudavadanti*."

The papers referred to above substantiate, though these were not written for that purpose, George Conger's characterisation of Radhakrishnan: "less ponderous than Royce, less meticulous than Bradley, less involved than Hegel, he has made idealism flow from a deep spring. By comparison Eucken is provincial and Keyserling is trivial. Not since Fichte

and Schelling has there been such a precipitate stream of inspiration." (George P. Conger in *Philosophy of S. Radhakrishnan*, ed. PA Schlipp, p. 86).

Radhakrishnan believed with Karl Marx that philosophy had hitherto been concerned with life but the time had come for it to change life. He

recognised that for doing that philosophy must articulate the forms and dynamics of the human experience and human condition in a manner that is illuminating and acceptable to people despite

combative who mounted a "counter attack from the East" (Joad). Others called him a "philosophical bilinguist", "a bridge builder" "a liaison officer" between the East and the West. But he was

truly a pilgrim in search of the Universal Spirit. And like all such pilgrims he occasionally stumbled, e.g. in his understanding of Buddha's concept of human suffering, his prescription for philosophical analysis as an instrument for realising *Aham Brahmosmi* (Narayana Moorthi, pp. 100-126), his hesitant pursuit of his early commitment to discover what has not yet been perceived to be the

true Vedic and Upanishadic thought, to use Heidegger's phrase, stepping back to the beginning. Even so, he was truly an ambassador of rapprochement. George Conger has rightly quoted "*Sa Mahatma Sudurlabah*". (*Bhagavad Gita* Ch. 7-19). □

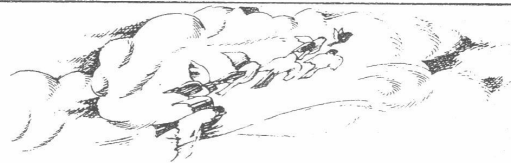
Radhakrishnan's vision has a grandeur and magnanimity that inspire and ennoble, and in a world where despair looms large, gives the energetic hope that these goals are within our reach. But it is also a prophetic vision. Radhakrishnan does not write platitudinously. Where religion is concerned, for half a century he has upbraided the petty-minded, rebuked the arrogant, deplored blind obedience, castigated overweening authority. Again and again, he insists—with good reason, I believe, that we face the challenge of a new age of spirit and that we must meet this challenge with unshakable faith in human nature, for it is the spirit within us that has guided us to this threshold. In the closing words of Radhakrishnan's 'Fragments of a Confession':

It may not be given to us to see that faith prevails, but it is given to us to strive that it should.

—Julius J. Lipner: Religion and Religions, in *Radhakrishnan Centenary Volume*.

the differences in their traditions and in their historical, social and cultural conditioning. The papers in the volume attempt to measure the extent to which Radhakrishnan succeeded in this task, some critically and some in adulation.

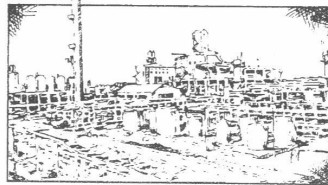
Some thought of Radhakrishnan as highly



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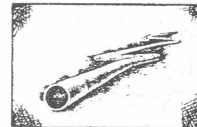


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The Realm of Regional Cooperation

Umashanker Phadnis

THE CHALLENGE IN SOUTH ASIA, DEVELOPMENT, DEMOCRACY AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

Edited by Ponna Wignaraja and Akmal Hussain
Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1989, pp. 358, Rs. 250.00

SOUTH ASIAN STRATEGIC ISSUES: SRI LANKAN PERSPECTIVES

Edited by Shelton U. Kodikara
Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1990, pp. 204, Rs. 165.00

Given the common civilizational heritage, a shared legacy of contemporary historical experience and the geopolitical integrity of the region, cooperation among the states of the South Asian sub-continent should have followed as a natural corollary for the development of the region as a whole and with it, of the individual states comprising it. And, yet far from it, four decades of post-colonial record shows that the region is nowhere near acquiring a distinct regional political identity of its own, capable of influencing global trends in international relations instead of being buffeted about in the sway of forces beyond.

Part of the reason why such a sorry and seemingly helpless situation has come to pass is, undoubtedly, the fragmentation of a homogeneous region into a conglomeration of sovereign states which came about in the wake of colonial occupation and withdrawal. Such fragmentation, moreover, took place quite arbitrarily breaking up in the process intra-regional racial, religious and linguistic contiguities forming the demographic pattern of the region. The consequence of such an artificially created configuration of states has been avoidable discord in the region, exacerbated suspicion and hostility inherent in the asymmetrical nature of the regional state system.

Are these deterrents impossible to surmount, to strive for a regionally cooperative effort towards the betterment of the peoples of the region? Is it possible to maximise the utilization of the resource endowment of the region which can come

about only through a regional approach, an imperative ordained by geography but denied by considerations of realpolitik as perceived by the ruling elites of the countries of the region? Who, indeed, are the ruling elite and do their interests coincide with those of the masses?

These are some of the critical questions to which the volume on *The Challenge to South Asia, Development, Democracy and Regional Cooperation* addresses itself. Consisting of papers submitted to a workshop on the subject convened in Kathmandu by the United Nations University of Tokyo, the volume is a review of the developmental record of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka since their independence and of Bangladesh since it broke away in 1971 from the parent state following the inability of the elite leadership of Pakistan to manage and contain the conflict of ethnically polarised communities.

Besides probing the main thrust of the economic objectives set for themselves by the ruling elites of these countries, the contributors to the volume have posited alternative models of growth which could induce systemic stability instead of breeding forces of instability which can only be possible through a regime of sustainable growth and the maximum use of domestically available resource endowments.

Since these preconditions have a bearing on the value orientation of the ruling elite managing the state system in the countries of the region, there is a close scrutiny of the groups controlling and managing the levers of powers in society in these states.

Finally, there is a brief review of what the SAARC has been able to achieve in the realm of regional cooperation and the preconditions for harmonising the conflicts, latent and actual, arising out of the asymmetrical pattern of the state-system of the region. And, based on the discussions at the workshop is a "Consensus Document" on "Issues in Nation Building and Regional Cooperation in South Asia".

First, a glance at the Consensus Document. To begin with, it spells out as a preamble four "compelling imperatives" for regional cooperation. These are "a profoundly humane valuational framework" in the civilizational heritage of the subcontinent, "the available renewable resource base of the Himalayan system, river ocean and solar energy sources, the mobilisation of available stocks of knowledge to permit enlarging the range

of technological options; the need to prevent destabilisation resulting from external intervention and superpower rivalry."

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... the consensus document takes the rather simplistic view that "the ideology of nation state which was articulated by the ruling elites in the early period of state formation underwent severe pressure from the ideology and politics of ethnic assertion".

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Unexceptionable as the reasoning is underlying the rationale for cooperation, any meaningful effort to strive for it can only be possible if, as the Document recognises, there are attempts to improve inter-state relations on the "basis that the existing state structures are given". For this purpose the Document recommends "confidence building measures especially by the relatively more powerful state in the region" which reciprocally would involve the necessity of the smaller states "refraining from actions that could be perceived by the most powerful state in the region as a hostile collaboration to isolate it."

This rather subjective approach to what the Document refers to as "misperceptions" ignores, however, the prevailing objective ground reality of demographic linkages criss-crossing the boundaries of the states. Religious, ethnic and linguistic affinities are such that the minority in one state constitute a majority in the neighbouring one as a result of which the fate and fortunes of a minority in one state becomes the concern of the majority in another.

Thus, for instance, the civic and political disabilities of the Sri Lankan Tamil minority in Sri Lanka or those of the Muslim minority in India cannot but trigger a reaction respectively in India or in Pakistan. It is, of course, possible to argue with justification that, often enough, these disabilities are more imagined and considered to be unmanageable within the existing state structures than real and that they are frequently invoked for

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the purpose of mobilising political support for domestic power ends.

While there can be no short answer to this question clearly such conflict situations will be endemic till the states in the region evolve structures odium and, group affinities do not attract a minority odium and, therefore, the deprivation of a stake in the system. In these circumstances the absence of a viable state structure capable of absorbing such group conflicts will be a veritable invitation to external intervention whether it be from within or without the region.

In its analysis of the growth process of the South Asian states, the consensus document takes the rather simplistic view that "the ideology of nation state which was articulated by the ruling elites in the early period of state formation underwent severe pressure from the ideology and politics of ethnic assertion". The document also believes that the "homogenization of culture" had been impeded by increasing poverty.

Experience in the developed world such as, for instance, Canada demonstrates that affluence does not necessarily wear off ethnic identities nor result in homogenization of culture. It would be, therefore, more realistic to accept the reality of ethnic identities and multiple cultures in plural societies and find a *modus vivendi* in institutional arrangements rather than hanker after such notions as "national integration" as a monolithic corollary of a "nation state".

The disastrous consequences of assuming religion as the national ideology to the exclusion of other attributes of ethnicity such as language and culture was well brought out in the case of the breaking away of the East wing of Pakistan. By the same token, it is inconceivable that India could sustain itself as a "nation state" except with the acceptance of its ethnic plurality.

The document recognises this reality and has appropriately come to the conclusion that "the fact of diversity of culture and language lies in the decentralisation of political and economic power at the regional and social levels" and has rightly warned against the tendency of a section of the ruling elite, seeking monopoly of power, to play the external forces card to mobilise support for itself.

A sinister motivation behind the bogie of external intervention is in many cases an attempt to divert public attention from the social and political consequences of the grossly iniquitous economic structures that have come into being in all the countries of the region. The country profiles which have been drawn whether by Syed M. Hashemi in the case of Bangladesh, K. Sundaram in the cases of India, Akmal Hussain of Pakistan or W.D. Lakshman for Sri Lanka, reveal the startling similarity of sordid conditions of poverty "Behind the Veil of Growth" as Akmal Hussain puts it. Proponents of linear models of growth leading to the

take-off point, apostles of so-called "scientific temper" or worshippers at the temples of "Modern India" little seem to have foreseen that the end product of it all would be the continuing affluence of a few and stark stubborn poverty for the rest.

This, notwithstanding the forebodings anticipated in unmistakable terms by Gandhiji of aping western models of growth which were rooted in the exploitation of the economic resources of their colonies. Such was his intuition that the leaders of emergent India would ignore his *upadesh*, he found himself compelled to declare as far back as in 1935 that after independence he would wage as relentless a struggle against the new rulers as he had waged against the British. At the moment, this perspective for regional cooperation can at best be the starting point of debate and discourse. If the volume serves this purpose, it would have fulfilled its purpose.

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If by the phrase "internationalisation", Professor Kodikara has in mind the Indian involvement in Sri Lankan domestic ethnic conflict, as he legitimately could, it was but a situation the Sri Lankan leadership should have anticipated considering the Tamil Nadu factor.

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It is not as though the contributors to the volume took merely a negative approach of fault-finding for a state of affairs in which 40 per cent of the population of the countries live below the poverty line. On the contrary, the Consensus Document spells out in clear terms a policy frame for economic growth which would not exclude the vast masses of people from the productive process of the economy and, therefore, deprive them not only access to the wherewithal for a better quality of life but also keep them away from the levers of power in society.

In the context of the commonality of this secular situation in the countries of the region, supported by able and perceptive country profiles, the document sets the ethos of regional cooperation at the fundamental level "as cooperation among the people of South Asia" to bring about changes in state structures and in their economies to enable them "to embark upon independent industrialization effort as part of the search for alternative forms of resource use, social organisation of production and choice of technology for sustainable development."

For quite some time to come, however, this

model of regional cooperation will remain a distant vision for the simple reason that the SAARC has yet to come to grips with the core issues of developmental cooperation before it can be said the countries of the region will have a vested interest in it. Besides, security concerns continue to dominate the mind of the leadership of the states which is beset with fears that an integrated cooperative approach might become a destabilising factor particularly because of unresolved domestic conflicts.

This is brought out in the study edited by Professor Shelton U. Kodikara on a Sri Lankan perspective of South Asian strategic issue. Although his introduction to the volume speaks of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord having been included en passant in the study, the papers have as their focus the developments following what Professor Kodikara maintains to be the "internationalisation of the ethnic conflict" in the island.

If by the phrase "internationalisation", Professor Kodikara has in mind the Indian involvement in Sri Lankan domestic ethnic conflict, as he legitimately could, it was but a situation the Sri Lankan leadership should have anticipated considering the Tamil Nadu factor. It is another matter whether Indian intervention should have followed the course it did and there is, indeed, a considerable volume of public opinion in India critical of the manner in which initially Indira Gandhi and subsequently Rajiv Gandhi handled the situation.

Professor Kodikara, however, overstretches the point when he insists that Indian involvement was motivated by hegemonistic impulse of a regional superpower imposing its will on its neighbours.

There is no doubt that there were apprehensions in the mind of the Indian leadership in the early stages of the ethnic conflict that the Sri Lankan Government sought to bring in extra-regional forces to help it militarily solve its domestic ethnic conflict. These apprehensions were accentuated by the fact that these forces were, or were seen to be, in collusion with elements in the subcontinent overtly and covertly abetting destabilising factors in the Indian State structure.

To substantiate his allegations of Indian designs, Professor Kodikara has delved into historical data, which was not necessary at all, to prove the obvious that Sri Lanka constituted one of the critical elements of India's security concerns and, therefore, the external ramifications of domestic conflict there would be worrisome to India.

However that be, the volume provides an insight into Sri Lankan perception of India and its role in the sub-continent and will constitute an important input to foreign policy planners in mapping out a viable regional role and policy. The volumes take a holistic approach to strategic issues and examine the perceptions of the different South Asian states of the developments in the region besides those of China. □

Mao's Strategy

P.L. Mehra

CHINA: REVOLUTION TO REVOLUTION

By K.R. Sharma

Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 1989, pp. 266, Rs. 200.00

Oddly for the high stakes we have in such an important and powerful neighbour as China, our expertise on that land and its people is woefully inadequate. Whether it be the academia and seats of higher learning, or trade and commerce, or the information media, the singular paucity of our resources to meet ever mounting demands should be a matter of some concern. In the event, the slender volume under review is doubly welcome, both in its own right as an important contribution as also an assurance that though poor and unequal, the response to the challenge is not altogether non-existent.

The study deals with an important facet of recent Chinese history: the crucial and turbulent decade of 1960–70 in Mao's leadership and all that it meant for his people. The author suggests that during these 'most crucial and decisive' years, Mao abandoned his pragmatic Marxism and opted for rigid Marxist dogma. The more cautious and moderate policies of New Democracy with their emphasis on consensual politics were given the go by, their place being taken by 'war communism' and the high-sounding 'permanent revolution'.

What made Mao go the whole hog for such a radical departure? A host of international and national compulsions. Sino-Soviet differences were getting aggravated and as the great helmsman perceived it, the Soviets were becoming 'revisionist'—firmly set on the path of 'capitalist restoration'. Nor was the West yet prepared to mend its fences and draw closer. Nearer home, the Chinese Communist Party, now increasingly bureaucratized, had shown distinct bourgeois tendencies and was no longer an instrument of its leader's will. In the event, Mao harked back to his formulation of a permanent revolution with its exclusive emphasis on class struggle. This, he was convinced, would restore revolutionary puritanism.

Those who opposed Mao, among them Liu

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Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, were no conspirators. Only a little less precipitate, if also perhaps a wee bit more cautious. They underscored the importance of economic rationality and objective laws of social development. Nor did they share Mao's 'excessive anxiety' about revisionism.

Unhappily for them, and for China, Mao was in a hurry, his 'radical impetuosity' running riot. His new dicta about 'primacy of politics' and putting 'class struggle in command' led inexorably to its logical sequence in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. And in the bargain exacted a heavy toll and not only in human life and limb. On a conservative estimate it has been suggested that between 1959–61, at least thirty million peasants died of malnutrition and hunger alone! This was on the eve of the revolution; the cost it claimed during its progress and in the aftermath has yet to be fully computed.

While China watchers mull over these thirty million 'missing' Chinese, Mao's successors let him easily off the hook. For even though Deng and China's new leaders who inherited his mantle held Comrade Mao and the Gang of Four squarely responsible for the enormity of the disaster that the Cultural Revolution spelt for China they underlined one extenuating circumstance: 'For after all', the Party ordained, it was 'the error of a great proletarian revolutionary'. For Deng himself and his 'Four Modernisations', the post-June 1989 Tiananmen square China continues to pose, and not in terms of ideology alone, a veritable question mark. This would imply that at the very least, the debate on Mao and his revolution in the corridors of power in Beijing, must remain open-ended.

Sadly, the author's reference to the Sixth Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee on 27 June 1981 (pp. 14–5) fails to highlight the essential fact that denouncing Mao was not easy for he was at once the Lenin as well as the Stalin of the Chinese revolution. Hence the recourse to distinguishing between his *personal* errors and the *Thought* of Mao that still was, and is, the ideology of the People's Republic. It was indeed bold of Deng—five years after the Great Helmsman was dead and cold in his grave—to assert that Mao's principal theses in launching the Cultural Revolution 'conformed neither to Marxism-Leninism nor to Chinese reality' representing as they did an 'entirely erroneous appraisal' of the prevailing class relations and the political situation in the Party and the state.

The preceding paragraphs essay a broad sum

The study deals with an important facet of recent Chinese history: the crucial and turbulent decade of 1960–70 in Mao's leadership and all that it meant for his people.

up of a detailed narrative that spans six chapters and goes into such minutiae as the 'First Ten Points' (May 1963) which were to mark the beginnings of the class struggle in the Chinese countryside. Their relative failure led to the 'Second Ten Points' (September 1963) which were designed to broaden and intensify the movement. Followed the 'Small Four Cleanups' (first half of 1964) aimed at rooting out corrupt and unclean basic level party cadres and the 'Big Four Cleanups' (latter half of 1964–January 1965) which were to witness 'perhaps...one of the severest cadre purges' in China since 1949. In the aftermath, Mao was to assume a commanding role and initiate a radical overhauling of the Chinese educational system so as to prevent any 'revisionist' backlash. And finally, the withering away of the Socialist Education Movement (1965–6) and Mao's sad conclusion that it had failed to expose the party's revisionist tendencies 'in an all-round way and from below'.

In the event, there was a renewed emphasis on the Mao Study Campaign, on his personality and Thought leading to its inevitable corollary of many a 'gem' of inane absurdity. Two such may be rated as broadly representative:

In playing football, the main thing is to play politics. In the matches you must give prominence to politics and apply Mao Tzedong's thinking to guide your play.

Or what was to emerge as the virtual national anthem with its opening bar:

The East is Red
Rises the Sun
China has brought forth a Mao Tzedong.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was already on the launch pad.

Vis-a-vis Mao's Cultural Revolution however, this study with its title strongly suggestive of Stanley Karnow's perceptive *Mao and China: From Revolution to Revolution* (Viking, 1972) occupies a somewhat ambivalent position. The author's parameters are a little less than clear: while the dust-jacket talks of the period from 1957 to 1969 as 'the most turbulent decade' for Mao and for China, the

preface refers to 'the decade from 1960-1970' as 'the most critical and decisive' (p. ix) while the last chapter ('The Withering Away of the Socialist Education Movement') stops short in January-February 1967 with Mao exhorting his people to 'seize power' (p. 241). A lot of this confusion could perhaps have been avoided if the author had stuck to the straight and honest proposition that his study relates—as did his doctoral dissertation—essentially to the Socialist Education Movement (1962-1966) which was a precursor if curtain raiser to the Cultural Revolution.

Nonetheless, this book would be of interest to the keen researcher who would like to burrow deep into varied sources, both in the western languages and Chinese, which the author has made use of. Happily his own credentials are unimpeachable: grounding in political theory in terms both of study and teaching and brief spells at the Australian National University (Canberra), Uni-

versities Services Centre (Hong Kong) and a few weeks' visit to the mainland.

Two major lacunae which stare the reader in the face are poor editing, resulting in a great deal of avoidable repetition, and heavy footnoting. Unavoidable concomitants of a doctoral dissertation being rushed headlong into print. One has much hope though that a future edition takes care of these and appends a short note on the source material that would help the interested reader separate the grain from the chaff in the present nondescript listing, and lumping of items in a select bibliography'.

Another little loophole needs to be plugged. Considering that the book was published last year, some important and related studies appear to have escaped notice. A few more, suggestive rather than exhaustive, are briefly listed. Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution, Contradictions Among the People* Vol. I (Columbia

University Press, 1974) offers a highly skilled textual analysis. Immanuel C.Y. Hsu, *China without Mao: The Search for a New Order* (Oxford University Press, 1983) essays the ideological trauma that Deng inherited while Lucian Pye, *The Dynamics of Chinese Politics* (Cambridge, 1981) is strong on factionalism. On Mao and his ideology, both Helmut Martin' *Cult and Canon: the Origins and Development of State Maoism* translated from the German edition of 1980 (ME Sharpe, London, 1982) and Maurice Meisner, *Marxism, Maoism and Utopianism: Eight Essays* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1982) offer critical analysis.

Lest this should appear to be petty nit-picking and one hates to quibble, this reviewer would hasten to add that K.R. Sharma's contribution is signal in highlighting the important role of the Socialist Education Movement in the launching of Mao's Cultural Revolution. □

Love Poetry

After months of silence, there comes a day
When I feel I can turn anything I wish to say
Into poetry. And they talk so much
About the discipline of being a poet,
Of setting up schedules for practising the craft.
But look at us vagrants—the muse feeds us too,
And we too manage to scrape by.
So Ezekiel was right.
As it is with love, it must be with poetry:
Wait, wait, wait, and never force the pace.
Years vanish behind one, leaving only the debris
Of so many wasted afternoons with no sympathy,
No relief, no reward. Then the pain
And humiliation of so many rejections; jealousy
And rage over the success of other poets,
And one's own pathetic rationalizations—
He knew so and so, she was lucky—and throughout
The same nagging question: "Am I of any worth?"
But then this also passes and one feels
A lightness, freedom, and confidence,
That comes from having nowhere to go,
No one really to speak to, none to impress.
So, my doors are ever open to you, poetry,
Come when you will: how can I seek you and what for?
Effort destroys poetry as it destroys love.

—From *The Serene Flame* by Makarand Paranjpe
Rupa & Co., 1991, Rs 40.00

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Evolution of Early Hinduism

Kunal Chakrabarti

THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF CLASSICAL HINDUISM

By A.L. Basham

Edited and annotated by Kenneth G. Zysk, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1990, pp. 159+xix, Rs. 175.00

This book is a history of the development of Hinduism from earliest times to the early centuries of the Christian era. It is based on a series of five lectures delivered by A.L. Basham in the United States during 1984-85. These lectures have been edited and annotated by Kenneth G. Zysk, who has also added a chapter towards the end to round up the author's discussion on the early history of Hinduism.

The chapters are organised chronologically, beginning with the proto-historic period to the composition of the *Bhagavadgītā*. The first chapter is a concise account of the state of religion in the Harappan civilisation which is based principally on informed speculations from archeological reports. The author briefly mentions the Mother Goddess, the sacred bull, the importance of ritual purity and belief in survival after death as the main elements of the Harappan religion, but contends that the evidence is inadequate for the popular assumption that the religion of the Harappan culture was an early form of Hinduism. This is followed by a presentation of the religion of the early Vedic period which offers an analysis of the cult of divinities in the *Rg-Veda*. The author says that the hymns of the *Rg-Veda* were in no way archaic or primitive and in fact contain the earliest recorded Indian speculations about the relationship of the one and the many. Agni, a very important divinity of the *Rg-Vedic* pantheon, is manifested in myriad ways throughout the world. It was therefore supposed that there is only one Agni, of which all the lesser Agnis were aspects. The author thinks that the typical Indian drive to reduce all apparently diversified phenomena to a single principle had thus already begun.

The second chapter uses the tenth book of the *Rg-Veda* and the *Atharva-Veda* for a discussion of Hinduism's attempts to explain the origin of the world, followed by an analysis of the contents of

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later Vedic literature and the Vedic sacrificial system. The author discusses in detail two of the outstanding examples of speculative thought contained in the hymns of the tenth book of the *Rg-Veda*. One (*Rg-Veda* 10.129) is particularly striking for its cosmic vision, its imaginative picture of the universe evolving out of a primal condition that was neither being nor non-being, neither cosmos nor chaos. The author thinks that this is the oldest expression of philosophic doubt in the literature of the world. The other is the famous *Purusasukta* (*Rg-Veda* 10.90) which explains the creation of the universe by a sacrifice of the primal man at the beginning of time. The conclusions drawn from this premise is significant, for among the entities produced from the gigantic victim of the sacrifice were the four estates of the Hindu social order. The ideology behind the later Vedic literature, particularly the Brahmanas, derives from the *Purusasukta*. The world began with a stupendous sacrifice performed by the gods and to maintain it in good working order constant repetitions of that original sacrifice are necessary.

The next chapter focuses on the further development of Hindu philosophical thought in the literature of the Aranyakas and Upaniṣads and contains the author's analysis of the origin of the doctrine of transmigration. According to him, the period between the eighth and the fourth centuries B.C. saw the virtual beginning of such typical aspects of Indian religion as the doctrines of transmigration and nonviolence, organized asceticism, mystical gnosis in search of release from the cycle of birth and death and the rise of heterodoxies. A major development of this period was the growth of pessimism which showed itself chiefly in the ideas about the afterlife. Belief in the World of Fathers continued, but doubts arose as to whether life in the other world was eternal. The other important development was the growth of asceticism. There is enough to show that many people embraced an ascetic order not merely to find peace of mind but to discover the ultimate meaning of existence. The author thinks that it was among these people that the doctrines of *samsāra* and *karman*, closely linked in the system of transmigration, developed. He believes that from the Upaniṣadic texts it appears that the doctrine began as a new and strange one and the idea that it was held widely by the non-Aryan peoples of the Ganges plain has no basis in any source, except that some primitive peoples in various parts of the world believed in a form of transmigration. Rather

all the evidence goes to show that the doctrine of transmigration began in narrow circles of the elite as a new, rare, and almost secret doctrine.

Chapter four examines the evolution of the mystic traditions beginning with the orthodox asceticism of the early Upaniṣads and continues with a brief survey of the principal heterodox ascetic traditions of Buddhists, Jains, and Ājīvikas. The author maintains that the heterodox forms of asceticism derived from the orthodox forms. For example, he refers to a myth in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* which says that at the beginning nothing existed but Death. After producing the elements and space Death longed for a second self and produced the year. Death created the whole world as food for himself. This macabre myth implies that everything is destroyed by time and this passage, according to the author, anticipates the basic doctrine of Buddhism. He also believes that brāhmins formed the largest group of both the monks and the lay supporters of Buddhism.

The fifth chapter discusses the historical background and development of the epic tradition in South Asia and focuses on the composition and contents of the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata*. The author points out that in the *Mahābhārata* the most important gods are Brahma and Indra and many other Vedic gods were still influential. Even in the *Rāmāyana*, Brahma was the highest god of all, and the divinisation of Rama was quite a late phenomenon.

Chapter six addresses the *Bhagavadgītā*, its place in the epic tradition and its religious significance. The author argues that the *Bhagavadgītā* is in fact a composite of three different strata written by at least three authors over a period of about two hundred years, reaching its final form around 100 B.C. Each of the three authors added a new religious doctrine, forming in the end a text epitomising the new orthodoxy of classical Hinduism. The author thinks that chapter one and two down to verse thirty-eight form a unity, which poses the ethical problem—is warfare justified? The remaining portion was added later, by at least two authors. One of these was a philosopher of the Upaniṣadic type interested in the ultimate impersonal Brahman, which he considered the final truth of the universe. In fact, he believes that the *Bhagavadgītā* is the culmination of the Upaniṣadic tradition. But the other author was an impassioned theist, a devotee of Viṣṇu, especially in his incarnation as Kṛṣṇa. He thinks that this is the only way to explain the apparent contradiction be-

tween the quest for the impersonal Brahman and *bhakti* towards a personal God as the goal of the sage in the text.

The concluding chapter, written by the editor, provides a brief survey of the *Kalpa Sutras*, which form an intrinsic part of the Vedic corpus, but mentioned only in passing by the author. It also includes a few remarks on the development of Hinduism to the present day to illustrate its adaptability in the face of internal and external influences.

This book, the final major contribution of A.L. Basham, is written with his usual clarity. Written with the general reader in mind, the book answers many questions which may appear baffling to the uninitiated. Yet the author has never deviated from the rigour of his approach towards the study of Indian religion which combined history, philology and phenomenology. He has also utilised his vast knowledge and the experience of a lifetime which gave him a rare personal intuition and what he called "a controlled imagination", to put together the intricate data of uncertain chronology on the evolution of early Hinduism. The perspective of comparative history has been an additional source of richness for his analysis. Above all the lucidity of his presentation will endear the book to both the student and the master.

However, as an introduction to classical Hin-

duism, the book suffers from a serious shortcoming. In certain chapters of the book, such as the one on the *Rg-Veda* or on the epic tradition, the author has adopted the technique of a textbook, presenting his material in a clear and concise manner, synthesising the past scholarship on the subject, without offering his own interpretations. In some other chapters however, such as the one on transmigration, the emphasis is mostly on his own point of view. Without going into the question of the validity of his interpretation, it seems that simultaneous use of the techniques of a textbook and a research monograph may confuse an undergraduate reader to whom these lectures were initially addressed. For example, the problem of the origin of vegetarianism in ancient India is a much debated one and no satisfactory answer has yet been obtained. The author suggests that the doctrine of transmigration included animals as well as humans, for a human being in one life can easily become an animal in the next. The wanton killing of animals was therefore considered little better than murder. Thus, from that time to this, respectable Indians have been inclined to vegetarianism (p.58). This is a reasonable surmise, but not supported by any evidence. It is doubtful whether the inclusion of such speculative hypothesis, however justified, in an introductory book of this kind, is advisable. Similarly, the latter part of the editor's

concluding chapter, particularly the section on the neo-Hindu movements that have flourished in the West in recent years, is somewhat out of place in a book of this kind, although his notes and bibliography are useful.

The author also seems to be a little unwilling to recognise the role of the material background in the generation of ideas. He is certainly aware of this context and refers to it from time to time. For example, the author devotes some space to the discussion of social change and economic progress from the *Rg-Vedic* times to the period of the *Aranyakas* and the *Upanisads*, but adds that this material expansion is not well reflected in the literature and he is unsure whether any practical or social factors encouraged the growth of contemporary ideas such as pessimism (p.39). Even in his careful and perceptive analysis of the *Bhagavadgītā*, he largely ignores the correlation between *bhakti* and feudal formations, worked out by historians like Kosambi. On the other hand, he is too inclined to find continuity of the Vedic ideas in the later religious developments of early India, including that of Buddhism.

Despite these lacunae, however, this is a very useful introduction to the study of early Hinduism. □



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The Politics of Secularism and the Recovery of Religious Tolerance

ASHIS NANDY

I. Faith, Ideology and the Self

A significant aspect of post-colonial structures of knowledge in the third world is a peculiar form of imperialism of categories. Under such imperialism a conceptual domain is sometimes hegemonized so effectively by a concept produced and honed in the West that the original domain vanished from our awareness. Intellect and intelligence become IQ, the oral cultures become the cultures of the primitive or the preliterate, the oppressed become the proletariat, social change becomes development. After a while, people begin to forget that IQ is only a crude measure of intelligence and some day someone else may think up another kind of index to assess the same thing; that social change did not begin with development, nor will it stop once the idea of development dies a natural or unnatural death.

In the following pages, I seek to provide a political preface to the recovery of a well-known domain of public concern in South Asia, ethnic and, especially, religious tolerance, from the hegemonic language of secularism popularized by the westernized intellectuals and middle classes exposed to the globally dominant language of the nation-state in this part of the world. This language, whatever may have been its positive contributions to humane governance and religious tolerance earlier, has increasingly become a cover for the complicity of the modern intellectuals and the modernizing middle classes of South Asia in the new forms of religious violence. These are the forms in which the state, the media and the ideologies of national security, development and modernity propagated by the modern intelligentsia and the middle classes play crucial roles.

To provide the political preface I have promised, I shall have to first describe four trends which have become clearly visible in South Asia during this century, particularly after the Second World War.

The first and most important of these trends is that each religion in South Asia, perhaps all over the southern world, has split into two: faith and ideology. Both are inappropriate terms, but I give them, in this paper, specific private meanings to serve my purpose. By faith I mean religion as a way of life, a tradition which is definitionally non-monolithic and operationally plural. I say 'defini-

tionally' because unless a religion is geographically and culturally confined to a small area, it has as a way of life, in effect, to turn into a confederation of a number of ways of life which are linked by a common faith that has some theological space for the heterogeneity which everyday life introduces. Witness the differences between Iranian and Indonesian Islams, two forms of Islam are interlocking, not isomorphic, in relation to each other.

By ideology I mean religion as a sub-national, national or cross-national identifier of populations contesting for or protecting non-religious, usually political or socio-economic, interests. Such religions-as-ideologies usually get identified with one or more texts which, rather than the ways of life of the believers, then become the final identifiers of the pure forms of the religions. The texts help anchor the ideologies in something seemingly concrete and delimited, and in effect provide a set of manageable operational definitions.

The modern state always prefers to deal with religious ideologies rather than with faiths. It is wary of both forms of religion but it finds the ways of life more inchoate and, hence, unmanageable, even though it is faith rather than ideology which has traditionally shown more pliability and catholicity. It is religion-as-faith which prompted 200,000 Indians to declare themselves as Mohammedan Hindus in Gujarat in the census of 1911; and it was the catholicity of faith which prompted Mole-Salam Girasia Rajputs to traditionally have two names for every member of the community, one Hindu and one Muslim. It is religion-as-ideology, on the other hand, which prompted a significant proportion of Punjabi-speaking Hindus to declare Hindi as their mother tongue, thus bringing the politics of language to bear upon the differences between Sikhism and Hinduism and sowing the seeds for the creation of a new minority. Likewise it is religion-as-ideology which has provided a potent tool to the Jamaat-e-Islami to disown the traditional, plural forms of Islam in the Indian subcontinent and to create disjunction between official religion and every day life.

Second, during the last two centuries or so there has grown a tendency to view the older faiths of the region through the eyes of evangelical Anglican Christianity and its various offshoots—such as the masculine Christianity associated with nineteenth-century missionaries like Joshua Marshman and William Carey, or its mirror image in the orthodox modernism propagated by the

likes of Frederick Engels and Thomas Huxley. Because this particular Eurocentric way of looking at faiths gradually came to be associated with the dominant culture of the colonial states in the region, it subsumes under it a set of clear polarities; centre vs. periphery, true faith vs., its distortions, civil vs. primordial, and great traditions vs. local cultures or little traditions.

It is a part of the same story that in each of the dyads, the second category is set up to lose. It is also a part of the same story that, once the colonial concept of the state was internalized by the societies of this region through the nationalist ideology—in turn heavily influenced by the western theories and practice of statecraft—the nascent nation-states of the region took upon themselves the same civilizing mission that the colonial states had once taken upon themselves *vis-a-vis* the ancient faiths of the subcontinent.

Third, the idea of secularism, an import from nineteenth-century Europe into South Asia, has acquired immense potency in the middle-class cultures and 'states sectors' of South Asia, thanks to its connection with and response to religion-as-ideology. Secularism has little to say about cultures. It is definitionally ethnophobic and frequently ethnocidal, unless of course cultures and those living by cultures are willing to show total subservience to the modern nation-state and become ornaments or adjuncts to modern living. The orthodox secularists have no clue to the way a religion can link up different faiths or ways of life according to its own configurative principles.

To such secularists, religion is an ideology in opposition to the ideology of modern statecraft and, therefore, needs to be contained. They feel even more uncomfortable with religion-as-faith—which claims to have its own principles of tolerance and intolerance—for such a claim denies the state and the middle-class ideologues of the state the right to be the ultimate reservoir of sanity and the ultimate arbiter among different religions and communities. This denial is particularly galling to those who see the clash between two faiths merely as a clash of socio-economic interests, not as a simultaneous clash between conflicting interests and a philosophical encounter between two metaphysics. The westernized middle classes and literati of South Asia love to see all such encounters as reflections of socio-economic forces and, thus, as liabilities and as sources of ethnic violence.

Fourth, the imported idea of secularism has

This is an extract from *Mirrors of Violence*, Veena Das (ed.), OUP, 1990, Rs. 225.00

become increasingly incompatible and, as it were, uncomfortable with the somewhat fluid definitions of the self with which many South Asian cultures live out. Such a self, which can be conceptually viewed as a configuration of selves, invokes and reflects the configurative principles of religion-as-faith. It also happens to be a negation of the modern concept of selfhood acquired partly from the West and partly from a rediscovery of previously recessive elements in South Asian traditions. Religion-as-ideology, working with the concept of well-bounded, mutually exclusive religious identities, on the other hand, is more compatible with and analogous to the definition of the self as a well-bounded, individuated entity clearly separable from the non-self. Such individuation is taking place in South Asian societies at a fast pace and, to that extent, more exclusive definitions of the self are emerging in these societies as a byproduct of secularization.

A more fluid definition of the self is not merely more compatible with religion-as-faith, it also has—and depends more upon—a distinctive set of the non-self and anti-selves (a neologism analogous to 'anti-heroes'). At one plane these anti-selves are similar to what the psychotherapist Carl Rogers used to call, infelicitously, the 'not-me'—and to what others call rejected selves. At another plane the anti-selves are counterpoints without which the self just cannot be defined in the major cultures of South Asia. It is the self in conjunction with its anti-selves and its distinctive concept of the non-self which together define the domain of the self. Religion-as-faith is more compatible with such a complex self-definition; secularism has no inkling of this distinct, though certainly not unique, form of self-definition in South Asia. For, everything said, secularism is, as Madan (1987) puts it, a 'gift of Christianity', by which he presumably means a gift of post-medieval, European Christianity to this part of the world.

It is in the context of these four processes that I shall now discuss the scope and limits of the ideology of secularism in India and its relationship with the new forms of ethnic violence we have been witnessing.

II. The Fate of Secularism

I must make it clear at this point that I am not a secularist. In fact, I can be called an anti-secularist. This is because I have come to believe that the ideology and politics of secularism have more or less exhausted their possibilities and that we may now have to work with a different conceptual frame which is already vaguely visible at the borders of Indian political culture.

When I say that the ideology and politics of secularism have exhausted themselves, I have in mind the standard English meaning of the word 'secularism'. As we know, there are two meanings of the word current in modern and modernizing

India and, for that matter, in the whole of this subcontinent. One of the two meanings is easily found by consulting any standard dictionary. But there is difficulty in finding the other, for it is a non-standard, local meaning which, many like to believe, is typically and distinctively Indian or South Asian. (As we shall see below, it also has a western tail, but that tail is now increasingly vestigial, at least in the popular middle-class cultures of South Asia.)

The first meaning becomes clear when people talk of secular trends in history or economics, or when they speak of secularizing the state. The word 'secular' has been used in this sense, at least in the English-speaking West, for more than three hundred years. This secularism chalks out an area in public life where religion is not admitted. One can have religion in one's private life; one can be a good Hindu or a good Muslim within one's home or at one's place of worship. But when one enters public life, one is expected to leave one's faith behind. This ideology of secularism is associated with slogans like 'we are Indians first, Hindus second', or 'we are Indians first, then Sikhs'. Implicit in the ideology is the belief that managing the public realm is a science which is essentially universal and that religion, to the extent that it is opposed to the Baconian world-image of science, is an open or potential threat to any modern polity.

In contrast, the non-western meaning of secularism revolves around equal respect for all religions. This is the way it is usually put by public figures. Less crudely stated, it implies that while the public life may or may not be kept free of religion, it must have space for a continuous dialogue among religious traditions and between the religious and the secular—that, in the ultimate analysis, each major faith in the region includes within it an in-house version of the other faiths, both as an internal criticism and as a reminder of the diversity of the theories of transcendence.

Recently, Ali Akhtar Khan has drawn attention to the fact that George Jacob Holyoake, who coined the word secularism in 1850, advocated a secularism accommodative of religion, a secularism which would moreover emphasize diversities and co-existence in the matter of faith. His contemporary Joseph Bradlaugh, on the other hand, believed in a secularism which rejected religion and made science its deity. Most non-modern Indians (i.e. Indians who would have brought Professor Max Weber to tears), pushed around by the political and cultural forces unleashed by colonialism still operating in Indian society, have unwittingly opted for the accommodative and pluralist meaning, while India's westernized intellectuals have consciously opted for the abolition of religion from the public sphere.

In other words, the accommodative meaning is more compatible with the meaning a majority of Indians, independently of Bradlaugh, have given

to the word 'secularism'. This meaning has always disconcerted the country's westernized intellectuals. They have seen such people's secularism as adulterated and as compromising true secularism. This is despite the fact that the ultimate symbol of religious tolerance for the modern Indian, Gandhi, obviously had this adulterated meaning in mind on the few occasions when he seemed to plead for secularism: as much is clear from his notorious claim that those who thought religion and politics could be kept separate understood neither religion nor politics.

The saving grace in all this is that while the scientific, rational meaning of secularism has dominated India's middle-class public consciousness, the Indian people and, till recently most practising Indian politicians, have depended on the accommodative meaning. The danger is that the first meaning is supported by the accelerating process of modernization in India. As a result, there is now a clearer fit between the declared ideology of the modern Indian nation-state and the secularism that fears religions and ethnicities. Sociologist Imtiaz Ahmed euphemistically calls this fearful, nervous secularism the new liberalism of the Indian elites.

Associated with this—what South Asians perceive as the more scientific, western meaning of secularism—is a hidden political hierarchy. I have spelt out this hierarchy elsewhere but I shall, nevertheless, restate it to make the rest of my argument. This hierarchy makes a four-fold classification of political actors in the subcontinent.

At the top of the hierarchy come those who are *believers* neither in public nor in private. They are supposed to be scientific and rational, and they are expected, ultimately, not only to rule this society but also to dominate its political culture. An obvious example is Jawaharlal Nehru. Though we are now told, with a great deal of embarrassment, that he believed in astrology and *tantra*, Nehru rightfully belongs to this rung because he always made modern Indians a little ashamed of their religious beliefs and ethnic origins, convincing them that he himself had the courage and rationality to neither believe in private nor in public. By the common consent of the Indian middle classes, Nehru provided a perfect role model for twentieth-century citizens of the flawed cultural reality called India. It is the Nehruvian model which informs the following charming letter, written by a distinguished former ambassador, to the editor of India's best-known national daily;

M.V. Kamath asks in his article, 'Where do we find the Indian?' My dear friend and colleague, the late Ambassador M.R.A. Beg, often used to say: 'Don't you think, old boy, that the only Indians are we wogs?' However quaint it may have sounded 30 years ago, the validity of this statement has increasingly become apparent over the years.

On the second rung of the ladder are those who choose not to appear as believers in public, despite being devout believers in private. I can think of no better example of this type than Indira Gandhi. She was a genuine non-believer in public life, dying at the hands of her own Sikh guards instead of accepting security advice to change them. But in private she was a devout Hindu who had to make her seventy-one—or was it sixty-nine?—pilgrimages. Both the selves of Indira Gandhi were genuine and together they represented the self-concept of a sizeable portion of the Indian middle classes. A number of other rulers in this part of the world fit this category—from Ayub Khan to Lal Bahadur Shastri to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Though the westernized literati in South Asian societies have never cared much for this model of religious and ethnic tolerance, they have been usually willing to accept the model as a reasonable compromise with the 'underdeveloped' cultures of South Asia.

On the third rung are those who are believers in public but do not believe in private. This may at first seem an odd category, but one or two examples will make clear its meaning and also partially explain why this category includes problematic men and women. To me the two most illustrious examples of this genre from the Indian subcontinent are Mohammed Ali Jinnah, an agnostic in private life who took up the cause of Islam successfully in public, and D.V. Savarkar, an atheist in private life who declared Hinduism as his political ideology.

Such persons can be dangerous because to them religion is a political tool and a means of fighting one's own and one's community's sense of cultural inadequacy. Religion to them is not a matter of piety. Their private denial of belief only puts those secularists off guard who cannot fathom the seriousness with which the Jinnahs and the Savarkars take religion as a political instrument. On the other hand, their public faith puts the faithful off guard because the latter never discern the contempt in which such heroes hold the common run of believers. Often, these heroes invoke the classical versions of their faiths to underplay, marginalize or even delegitimize the existing ways of life associated with their faiths. The goal of those holding such an instrumental view of religion has always been to homogenize their co-believers into proper political formations and, for that reason, to eliminate those parts of religion which smack of folk ways and threaten to legitimize diversities, inter-faith dialogue and theological polycentrism.

At the bottom of the hierarchy are those who are believers in the private as well as public domains. The best and most notorious example is Gandhi, a believer both in private and public, who gave his beliefs spectacular play in politics. This category has its strengths and weaknesses. One may say that exactly as the category manifests its strength in someone like Gandhi, it shows its weakness in

others like Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran or Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in the Punjab—both of whom ended up trying to fully homogenize their communities in the name of faith. The category can even throw up grand eccentrics. Chaudhuri Rehmat Ali fifty years ago used to stand on Fridays outside King's College gate at Cambridge and chant like a street hawker, 'Come and buy *Pakistan*—my earth-shaking pamphlet'.

These four categories are not neat and in real life rarely come in their pure forms. Often the same person moves from one to the other. Thus, the writer Rahi Masoom Raza, being also a scriptwriter for commercial Hindi films and at home with spectacular changes of heart, comfortably oscillates between the first two categories thus: 'The Babari Masjid and Ram Janambhoomi temple should be demolished. We as Indians are not interested in Babari Masjid, Rama Janambhoomis... as secular people we must crush the religious fanatics.' Only ten months earlier Raza had, with as much passion, said: 'I, Rahi Masoom Raza, son of the late Mr. Syed Bashir Hasan Abidi, a Muslim and one of the direct descendants of the Prophet of Islam, hereby condemn Mr. Z.A. Ansari for his un-Islamic and anti-Muslim speeches in Parliament. The Quran nowhere says that a Muslim should have four wives.' For the moment I shall not go into such issues. All I shall add is that in India we have been always slightly embarrassed about this modern classification or ordering in our political life, for we know that the Father of the Nation, Gandhi, does not fare very well when the classification is applied to him.

Fortunately for some modern Indians, the embarrassment has been resolved by the fact that this classification is not working well today. It is not working well because it has led neither to the elimination of religion and ethnicity from politics nor to greater religious and ethnic tolerance. This is not the case only with us; it has been the case with every society that has been put up to Indians as the model, at various times, of the secular ideal.

Thus, problems of ethnicity and secularization today haunt not merely the main capitals of the world, Washington and Moscow, they even haunt England, the country which older South Asians have been trained to view as remarkably free from the divisiveness of ethnicity and religion. For some 150 years Indians have been told, as part of their political socialization, that one of the reasons why Britain colonized and dominated India was that the natives were not secular whereas the British were. This is given as the reason why Indians did not know how to live together, whereas Britain as a world power was perfectly integrated and fired by the true spirit of secular nationalism. Now we find, after nearly 300 years of secularism, that the Irish, the Scots and the Welsh are together creating as many problems for Britain as are some of the religions and regions for us in India.

Why is the old ideology of secularism not working in India? There are many reasons; I shall mention only a few, confining myself specifically to the problem of religion as it has become entangled with political process in the country.

First, in the early years of Independence, when the national elite was small and a large section of it had face-to-face contacts, one could screen people entering public life—specially the upper levels of the public services and high politics—for their commitment to secularism. Thanks to the growth of democratic participation in politics—India has gone through eight general elections and innumerable local and state elections—such screening is no longer possible. We can no longer make sure that those who reach the highest level of the army, police, bureaucracy or politics believe in old-style secular politics. To give one example, two ministers of the present central cabinet in India and a number of high-ups in the ruling party have been accused of not only encouraging, organizing and running a communal riot, but also of protecting the guilty and publicly threatening civil rights workers engaged in relief work. One chief minister has been recently accused of importing rioters from another state on payment of professional fees to precipitate a communal riot as an antidote to violent intercaste conflicts. Another organized a riot three years ago so that he could impose a curfew in the state capital to stop his political opponents from demonstrating their strength in the legislature. Such instances would have been unthinkable only ten years ago. They have become thinkable today because India's ultra-elites can no longer informally screen decision-makers the way they once used to; political participation in the country is growing, and the country's political institutions, particularly the parties, are under too much strain to allow such screening. Religion has entered public life but through the backdoor.

Second, it has become more and more obvious to a large number of people that modernity is now no longer the ideology of a small minority; it is now the organizing principle of the dominant culture of politics. The idea that religions dominate India, that there are a handful of modern Indians fighting a rearguard action against that domination, is no longer convincing to many Indians. These Indians see the society around them—and often their own children—leaving no scope for a compromise between the old and new, and opting for a way of life which fundamentally negates the traditional concepts of a good life and a desirable society. These Indians have now come to sense that it is modernity which rules the world and, even in this subcontinent, religion-as-faith is being pushed to the corner. Much of the fanaticism and violence associated with religion comes today from the sense of defeat of the believers, from their feelings of impotence, and from their free-floating anger and self-hatred while facing a world which

is increasingly secular and desacralized.

This issue has another side. When the state makes a plea to a minority community to be secular or to confine itself to secular politics, the state in effect tells the minority to 'go slow' on its faith, so that it can be more truly integrated in the nation-state. Simultaneously, the state offers the minority a consolation prize in the form of a promise that it will force the majority community also to ultimately dilute its faith. What the state says to a religious community, the modern sector often indirectly tells the individual, 'you give up your faith, at least in public; we also shall give up our faith in public and together we shall be able to live in freedom from religious intolerance.' I need hardly add that however reasonable the solution may look to people like us, who like to see themselves as rational non-believing moderns, it is not an adequate consolation to the faithful, to whom religion is what it is precisely because it provides an overall theory of life, including public life. For them life is not worth living without a theory of transcendence, however imperfect.

Third, we have begun to find out that, while appealing to believers to keep the public sphere free of religion, the modern nation-state has no means of ensuring that the ideologies of secularism, development and nationalism themselves do not begin to act as faiths intolerant of other faiths. That is, while the modern state builds up pressures on citizens to give up their faith in public, it guarantees no protection to them against the sufferings inflicted by the state itself in the name of its ideology. In fact, with the help of modern communications and the secular coercive power at its command, the state can use its ideology to silence its non-conforming citizens. The role of secularism in many societies today is no different from the crusading and inquisitorial role of religious ideologies. In such societies, citizens have less protection against the ideology of the state than against religious ideologies or theocratic forces. Certainly in India, the ideas of nation-building, scientific growth, security, modernization and development have become parts of a left-handed technology with a clear touch of religiosity—a modern demonology, a *tantra* with a built-in code of violence.

This can be put another way. To many Indians today, secularism comes as a part of a larger package of a set of standardized ideological products and social processes—development, mega-science and national security being some of the most prominent among them. This package often plays the same role *vis-a-vis* the people of the society—sanctioning or justifying violence against the weak and the dissenting—that the Church, the ulema, the sangha or the Brahmins played in earlier times.

Finally, the belief that the values derived from the secular ideology of the state would be a better guide to political action and to a more tolerant and richer political life (as compared to the values

derived from religious faiths) has become even more untenable to large parts of Indian society than it was a decade ago. We are living in times when it has become clear that, as far as public morality goes, statecraft in India may have something to learn from Hinduism, Islam or Sikhism, but Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism have very little to learn from the Constitution or the secular practices of the state. And the hope that the Indian state would give a set of values to guide a Hindu, a Muslim or a Sikh in his daily public behaviour lies splintered around us. The ideology of the Indian state and, for that matter, the dedication of the state may go well with modern and semi-modern Indians, but both pall on a large number of decent Indians who are outside the charmed circle of the state sector.

In sum, we are at a point of time when old-style secularism can no longer pretend to guide moral or political action. All that the ideology of secularism can do now is to sanction the absurd search for a modern language of politics in a traditional society which has an open polity.

Let me spell this out. In most post-colonial societies, when religion, politics or religion-and-politics is discussed, there is an invisible reference point. This reference point is the Western Man. Not the Western Man in reality or the Western Man of history, but the Western Man as the defeated civilizations in this part of the world have construed him. This Western Man rules the world, it seems to the defeated, because of his superior understanding of the relationship between religion and politics. To cope with this success, every major religious community in the region has produced three responses—I should say two responses and one non-response. (These responses have rather clear-cut relationships with the process of the splitting of religions that I have described at the beginning of this paper, in fact, they derive from the process.)

The first response—it is not easy to capture the spirit of the response but I shall try—is to model oneself on the Western Man. I do not want to use the word 'imitation' because something more than mimicking is involved. The response consists in capturing, within one's own self and one's own culture, the traits one sees as the reasons for the West's success on the world stage. Seemingly it is a liberal, synthesizing approach and those responding in this fashion to the West justify it as a universal response. However, one of the clearest identifiers of this response is its insensitivities to the new legitimacies and systems of domination and exploitation in the contemporary world. As is to be expected, modern India and we who belong to it, specialize in making this response. A recent and very neat example of this response is mathematician and philosopher Rajjibhai C. Patel's essay, in which the analysis is almost entirely in terms of the western experience with religion and politics,

and the conclusions are all about India.

The second response to the Western Man is that of the zealot. The zealot's one goal is to somehow defeat Western Man at his own game, the way Japan, for instance, has done in economic matters. This is a crude way of describing a complex response but it does convey that what passes as fundamentalism or revivalism is often only another form of westernization becoming popular among the uprooted middle classes in India and, to judge by some of the Sri Lankan writings on ethnic issues, in Sri Lanka. (A recent newspaper interview of nuclear physicist A. Q. Khan of Pakistan is a copy-book instance of the same response seeking expression in the political culture of Pakistan) In India at least, the heart of the response is the faith that what Japan has done in economy, one can do in the case of religion and politics. One can, for example, decontaminate Hinduism of its folk elements, turn it into a classical Vedantic faith, and then give it additional teeth with the help of western technology and secular statecraft. Thus, it is hoped that the Hindus can take on and ultimately defeat all their external and internal enemies, if necessary by liquidating all forms of ethnic plurality, first within Hinduism and then within India, to equal Western Man as a new *Übermensch*. The zealot judges the success or failure of his or her own religion only by this one criterion.

Historian and Sinologist Giri Deshinkar loves to give the example of a book written by one of the Shankaracharyas on the *Mantrashastra*. The book not merely pathetically justifies the *Mantrashastra* by claiming that its premises are justified by the discoveries of modern science, as if that made the text more sacred, but also the title page of the book says—remember, this is an exposition of an ancient *shastra* by a much venerated traditional religious preceptor, that its author is a B.A., L.I.B. If a *guru* of the world, a *jagadguru*, needs to justify his commentary on Indian sacred texts by referring to his second-rate modern degrees and by seeking endorsement from an alien science, then of course we know where we are and we see every other day full-page advertisements by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in the newspapers, suggesting that Vedanta is true because quantum physics says so.

Such responses are characteristic of the zealot as well as the ultimate admission of defeat. They constitute the cultural bed on which grows the revivalism of the defeated. Japan in a sense has admitted such defeat by deciding to model itself on the West. Once, it probably had other options, as the Japanese scholar M. Kasai would have us believe, but it chose to ignore them and tried to defeat the West at the West's own game. I am not concerned here with Japan's success or failure as an imitation West; I am concerned with the zealot and with the so-called revivalist movements in South Asia, based on the zealot's instrumental concept of religion as an ideological principle

useful for political mobilization and state information.

Usually, modern scholarship tends to see zealotry as a retrogression into primitivism and as a pathology of traditions. On closer look it turns out to be a byproduct and a pathology of modernity. For instance, whatever the revivalist Hindu may seek to revive, it is not Hinduism. The pathetically comic, martial uniform of khaki shorts, which the RSS cadres have to wear, tell it all. Unconsciously modelled on the uniform of the colonial police, the khaki shorts are the final proof that the RSS is an illegitimate child of western colonialism. If such a comment seems trivial, one can point out the systematic way in which the RSS ideology has always drawn upon the semiticizing Hindu reform movements under colonialism, upon the dominant Christian and Islamic concepts of religion (one Book and one God, for instance), and upon the modern western concept of the nation-state. Once such concepts of religion and state are imported into Hinduism, the inevitable happens. One begins to judge the everyday lifestyle of the Hindus, their diversity and heterogeneity, negatively, usually with a clear touch of hostility and contempt.

Likewise, there is nothing fundamentally Islamic about fundamentalist Muslims. As we see in Pakistan today, they are the ones who are usually the first to sell their souls at a discount on the forces which seek to disenfranchise ordinary Muslims on the pretext that the latter do not know their Islam well. And we are today witnessing the same process within Sikhism and Sri Lankan Buddhism too.

There is, however, a third sort of response. It usually comes from the non-modern majority of a society, even though to middle-class intellectuals it may look like the response of a minority. This response does not keep religion separate from politics, but it does say that the traditional ways of life have, over the centuries, developed internal principles of tolerance and these principles must have a play in contemporary politics. This response affirms that religious communities in traditional societies *have* known how to live with each other. It is not modern India which has tolerated Judaism in India for nearly two thousand years, Christianity from before the time it went to Europe and Zoroastrianism for more than twelve hundred years; it is traditional India which has shown such tolerance. That is why today, as India gets modernized, religious violence is increasing. In the earlier centuries, according to available records, inter-religious riots were rare and localized; even after Independence we had less than one event of religious strife a week; now we have about one and a half incidents a day. And more than ninety per cent of these riots begin in urban India, in and around the industrial areas. Even now, in the 1980s, Indian villages and small towns can take credit for having avoided communal riots. (Thus

we find that after four years of bitterness, the Punjab villages are still free of riots; they have only seen assassinations by small gangs of terrorists and riot-like situations in the cities.) Obviously, somewhere and somehow, religious violence has something to do with the urban-industrial vision of life and with the political processes the vision lets loose.

It is the awareness of this political process which has convinced a small but growing number of Indian political analysts that it is from non-modern India, from the traditions and principles of religious tolerance encoded in the everyday life associated with the different faiths of India, that one will have to seek clues to the renewal of Indian political culture. This is less difficult than it seems at first glance. Let us not forget that the great symbols of religious tolerance in India over the last 2000 years have not been modern, though the moderns have managed to hijack some of these symbols.

For example, when modern Indians project the ideology of secularism into the past to say that Emperor Ashoka was 'secular', they forget that Ashoka was not exactly a secular ruler; he was a practicing Buddhist, even in his public life. He based his tolerance on Buddhism, not on secularism. When the moderns say that Akbar was secular, they forget that he derived his tolerance not from secularism but from Islam. He believed that tolerance was the message of true Islam. And in our times Gandhi derived his religious tolerance from Hinduism, not from secular politics.

Modern India has a lot to answer for. So have the cosmopolitan intellectuals in this part of the world. They have failed to be respectful to the traditions of tolerance in Indian society. These traditions may have become creaky but so is, it is now pretty clear, the ideology of secularism itself.

As we are finding out to our cost, the new forms of religious violence are becoming, paradoxically, quite secular. The anti-Sikh riots which took place in Delhi in November 1984, the anti-Muslim riots in Ahmedabad in 1985 during the anti-reservation stir, and the anti-Hindu riots in Bangalore in 1986—all were associated not so much with religious hatred as with political cost-calculations and/or economic greed. The same logic had operated in the case of the riots at Moradabad, Bhiwandi and Hyderabad earlier. Zealotry has produced many riots, but secular politics, too, has now begun to produce its own version of 'religious riots'. As for the victims of a riot, the fact that the riot might have been organized and led by persons motivated by political cost-calculations and not by religious bigotry can hardly be a solace.

The moral of the story is this: the time has come for us to recognize that instead of trying to build religious tolerance on the good faith or conscience of a small group of de-ethnicized, middle-class politicians, bureaucrats and intellectuals, a far more serious venture would be to explore the philosophy, the symbolism and the theology of tolerance in the various faiths of the citizens and hope that the state systems in South Asia may learn something about religious tolerance from everyday Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, and/or Sikhism, rather than wish that ordinary Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists and Sikhs will learn tolerance from the various fashionable secular theories of statecraft.

III. The Heart of Darkness

The last point needs to be further clarified, and I shall try to provide this clarification by putting my arguments in a large psychological and cultural frame. The accompanying table gives an outline of the frame.

Sectors involved	Typical violence	Model for violence	Locus of ideology	Nature of motives	Effective counter-ideology
Non-modern, peripheralized believers	religious war	traditional sacrifice (of self or others)	faith	passion	internal critiques of faith/agnosticism
Semi-modern zealots	riot	exorcism/search for	state	passion and interest	secularism
Modern, secular-rationalists	manufactured riots or 'assembly line' violence	experimental science (vivisection) industrial management	Bismarckian (occasionally Hegelian) concept of state	interest	critiques of objectification and desecularisation

The table admits that the western concept of secularism has played a crucial role in South Asian societies, it *has* worked as a check against some forms of ethnic intolerance and violence; it *has* contributed to humane governance at certain times and places.

By the same token, however, the table also suggests that secularism cannot cope with many of the new fears and intolerance of religions and ethnicities, nor can it provide any protection against the new forms of violence which have come to be associated with such intolerance. Nor can secularism contain those who provide the major justifications for calculated pogroms and ethnocides in terms of the dominant ideology of the state.

These new forms of intolerance and violence are sustained by a different configuration of social and psychological forces. The rubrics in the table allude both to these forces as well as to the growing irrelevance of the broad models proposed by a number of important empirical social and psychological studies done in the fifties and sixties—by those studying social distance in the manner of E. Bogardus, by Erich Fromm (1941) in his early writings, by Theodor Adorno (1950) and his associates working on the authoritarian personality, by Milton Rokeach (1960) and his followers exploring dogmatism, and by Bettelheim (1979). The stereotyping, authoritarian submission sadomasochism and heavy use of the ego defences of projection, displacement and rationalization which went with authoritarianism and dogmatism, according to some of these studies, have not become irrelevant. There are persistent demonologies which divide religious communities and endorse ethnic violence. These demonologies, however, have begun to play a less central role in such violence. They have become, increasingly, one of the psychological identifiers of those participating in the mobs involved in rioting or in pogroms, not of those planning, initiating or legitimizing mob action.

This is another way of saying that the planners, instigators and legitimizers of religious and ethnic violence can now be identified as secular users of non-secular forces in society. There is very little continuity between their motivational structures and that of the street mobs which act out the wishes of the organizers of a riot. Only the mobs now represent, and that too partially, the violence produced by the predisposing factors described in the social-science literature of earlier decades. In the place of these factors have come a new set of personality traits and defence mechanisms, the most important of which are more 'primitive' defences such as isolation and denial. These defences ensure, paradoxically, the primacy of cognitive factors in violence over the affective and the conative.

The involvement of these newly-important ego defences in human violence were also first noticed

in the fifties and sixties. But those who drew attention to these defences did so in passing, for instance, Fromm (1973) and Bettelheim (1979); and from outside the ambit of empirical social sciences there were Conrad (1973) and Arendt (1963 and 1969). Moreover, these early analyses of the 'new violence' were primarily concerned with 'extreme situations', to use Bettelheim's term, and not with the less-technologized and less extreme violence of religious feuds or riots. Even when the violence did not directly involve genocide and mass murders, it involved memories of genocide and mass murders, as in the well-known book by Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich (1984).

Only now have we become fully aware of the destructive potential of the once low-grade but now persistent violence flowing from objectification, scientization and bureaucratic rationality. The reasons for this heightened awareness are obvious enough. As the modern nation-state system and the modern thought machine enter the interstices of even the most traditional societies, those in power or those who hope to be in power in these societies begin to view statecraft in fully secular, scientific, amoral and dispassionate terms. The modernist elites in such societies then begin to fear the divisiveness of minorities and the diversity which religious and ethnic plurality introduces into a nation-state. These elites then begin to see all religions and all forms of ethnicity as a hurdle to nation-building and state-formation and as a danger to the technology of statecraft and political management. The new nation-states in many societies tend to look at religion and ethnicity the way the nineteenth-century colonial powers looked at distant cultures which came under their domination—at best as 'things' to be studied, 'engineered', ghettoed, musealized or preserved in reservations; at worst as inferior cultures opposed to the principles of modern living and inconsistent with the game of modern politics, science and development, and therefore deservedly facing extinction. No wonder that the political cultures of South Asia have begun to produce a plethora of official social scientists who are perfect analogues of the colonial anthropologists who once studied the 'Hindoos' and the 'Mohammedans' on behalf of their king and country.

This state of mind is the basic format of the internal colonialism which is at work today. The economic exploitation to which the epithet 'internal colonialism' is mechanically applied by radical economists is no more than a byproduct of the internal colonialism I am speaking about. This colonialism validates the proposal—which can be teased out of the works of a number of philosophers such as Hannah Arendt and Herbert Marcuse—that the most extreme forms of violence in our times come not from faulty passions or human irrationality but from faulty ideologies and unrestrained instrumental rationality. Demon-

ology is now for the mobs; secular rationality for those who organize, instigate or lead the mobs. Unless of course one conceptualizes modern statecraft itself as a left-handed, magical technology and as a new demonology. Thanks to a few secretly taken photographs, one image that has persisted in my mind from the days of the anti-Sikh pogrom at Delhi in 1984 is that of a scion of a prominent family, which owns one of Delhi's most exclusive boutiques, directing with his golf club a gang of ill-clad arsonists. I suspect that the image has the potential to serve as the metaphor for the new forms of social violence in modern India.

As I have already said, this state-linked internal colonialism uses legitimating core concepts like national security, development, modern science and technology. Any society, for that matter any aggregate, which gives unrestrained play or support to these concepts gets automatically linked to the colonial structure of the present-day world and is doomed to promote violence and expropriation, particularly of the kind directed against smaller minorities, such as the tribals, and the less numerous sects who can neither hit back against the state nor any more live away from the modern market.

Secularism has become a handy adjunct to this set of legitimating core concepts. It helps those swarming around the nation-state, either as elites or as counter-elites, to legitimize themselves as the sole arbiters among traditional communities, to claim for themselves a monopoly on religious and ethnic tolerance and on political rationality. To accept the ideology of secularism is to accept the ideologies of progress and modernity as the new justifications of domination, and the use of violence to sustain these ideologies as the new opiates of the masses.

Gandhi, an arch anti-secularist if we use the proper scientific meaning of the word 'secularist', claimed that his religion was his politics and his politics was his religion. He was not a cultural relativist and his rejection of the first principle of secularism—the separation of religion and politics—was not a political strategy meant to ensure his political survival in an uniquely multi-ethnic society like India. In fact, I have been told by sociologist Bhupinder Singh that Gandhi may have borrowed this anti-secular formulation from William Blake. Whatever be its source, in some version or the other this formulation is becoming the common response of those who have sensed the new forms of man-made violence unleashed by post-seventeenth-century Europe in the name of Enlightenment values. These forms of violence, which have already taken a toll of about a hundred million human lives in this century, have come under closer critical scrutiny in recent decades mainly because they have come home to roost in the heart of Europe and North America, thanks to the Third Reich, the Gulag, the two World Wars,

and the threat of nuclear annihilation. Many modern Indians who try to sell Gandhi as a secularist find his attitude to the separation of religion and politics highly embarrassing, if not positively painful. They like to see Gandhi as a hidden modernist who merely used a traditional religious idiom to mobilize his unorganized society to fight colonialism. Nothing can be more disingenuous. Gandhi's religious tolerance came from his anti-secularism, which in turn came from his unconditional rejection of modernity. And he never wavered in his stand. Note the following exchange between him and a correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune* in 1931:

'Sir, twenty-three years ago you wrote a book *Hind Swaraj*, which stunned India and the rest of the world with its terrible onslaught on modern western civilization. Have you changed your mind about any of the things you have said in it.?'
 'Not a bit. My ideas about the evils of western civilization still stand. If I republish the book tomorrow, I

would scarcely change a word.

Religious tolerance outside the bounds of secularism is exactly what it says it is. It not only means tolerance of religions but also a tolerance that is religious. It therefore squarely locates itself in traditions, outside the ideological grid of modernity. Gandhi used to say that he was a *sanatani*, an orthodox Hindu. It was as a *sanatani* Hindu that he claimed to be simultaneously a Muslim, a Sikh and a Christian and he granted the same plural identity to those belonging to other faiths. Traditional Hinduism, or rather *sanatan dharma*, was the source of his religious tolerance. It is instructive that the Hindu nationalists who killed him—that too after three unsuccessful attempts to kill him over the previous twenty years—did so in the name of secular statecraft. They said so explicitly and declared Gandhi to be an enemy of the nascent Indian nation-state.

It is that very secular statecraft which now seeks to dominate the Indian political culture, some-

times in the name of Gandhi himself. Urban, westernized, middle-class, Brahmanic, Hindu nationalists and Hindu modernists often flaunt Gandhi's tolerance as an indicator of Hindu catholicity but contemptuously reject that part of his ideology which insisted that religious tolerance, to be tolerance, must impute to other faiths the same spirit of tolerance. Whether a large enough proportion of those belonging to the other religious traditions show in practice and at a particular point of time and place the same tolerance or not is a secondary matter. Because it is imputation or presumption of tolerance in others, not its existence, which defines one's own tolerance in the Gandhian worldview and praxis.

That presumption must become the major source of tolerance for those who want to fight the new violence of our times, whether they are believers or not. □

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From a Diplomat's Book Bag

Peter J. Fowler

A conscientious, indeed assiduous diplomat I spend my days reading, writing and talking and my evenings drinking, dining and talking. But the day's reading is only of telegrams and other official material, backed by an endless flow of newspapers and journals. India's free press is a major blessing one would not willingly lose but its sheer volume is daunting. Breakfast starts with six or more newspapers and a quick first glance at Hagar, Laxman and Garfield. Laxman so often seems to capture the political essence that the temptation is to fax it to London, perhaps with a few appreciative glosses to highlight the finer points, and then retire back to bed.

It does not, sadly, ever come to that. Governments do have real and complex business with each other and reports have to be somewhat more articulated in their analysis than the Laxman cartoon. Work, including the Delhi evening social round, interferes heavily with one's proper reading. Happily other factors, such as my new freedom from commuting, work the other way. In England I take the crowded tube to Whitehall. Some determined souls, whether sitting or standing, take books with them and determinedly snatch a few minutes' withdrawal from the routine purgatory into a more interesting and focussed world. But the late evening return still leaves one ready for little more than supper and the oblivion of TV. Here in Delhi I stroll instead through the trees and birdsong of the High Commission compound, soothed by the sounds from hall and tennis courts of other people taking violent exercise. In free evenings Doordarshan, bless it, makes only modest claims on one's time. On balance it leaves more time for books.

Which books, however, have I found most enjoyable or profitable over this last year? A great number inevitably were about India or were by the expanding corps of excellent Indian fiction writers in English, of whom I have especially enjoyed Amitav Ghosh's exuberant earlier novel *The Circle of Reason* as well as *The Shadow Lines*. Some, like M J Akbar's *Life of Nehru* or Inder Malhotra's of *Indira Gandhi* had to be read both as a professional obligation and because I knew the authors, but they fortunately well repaid the effort. Others, like the slowly emerging thirty volumes of the new

Cambridge History of India appeal strongly to the acquisitive and calculating senses since I know that the Indian edition, though not cheap, still costs so much less than the volumes I shall have to buy after we have left India. Of those that have already appeared I have particularly been impressed by the lucidity and judgement of C A Bayley on the impact of colonialism on Indian society from around 1750 and by the magisterial volume by Paul Brass, the American scholar, on Indian politics since Independence. He sees the country as in 'a grave systematic crisis' and as needing fairly drastic remodelling of many of its structures and practices if social disorder is not to grow further.

Given my interest and training in history, and as I first got to know something of India through Calcutta and Bengal, I am indeed fascinated by the rich vein of books on India's and Bengal's history, particularly of the last four hundred years: even more particularly with the involvement, for good and ill, of my own country with the Indian subcontinent. Tapan Raychauduri's *Europe Reconsidered* deals with the stimulation of Bengal's intellectual elite by the western challenge. I wish it had been available when I was posted in Calcutta. I am also easy prey to books which still further stimulate the ever strong urge to spend time driving around the country. *The Forts of India* (by Virginia Fass, Rupa, 1986, £ 30) an expensive coffee table book, revealed to me the extent to which Madhya Pradesh challenges Rajasthan in its extraordinary wealth of sites. Raleigh Trevelyan's *Golden Oriole* (by Raleigh Trevelyan, Viking/Penguin, 1987, \$ 24.95) is a marvelously evocative and direct account of his rediscovery of his childhood in Gilgit and of journeys similarly to uncover the extraordinary two hundred years history of his family in India, including Macauley since he married a Trevelyan. The new two volume *Penguin Guide to the Monuments of India*, (George Mitchell & Philip Davies, Viking, 1989, £ 30 each) although even more expensive, has already reconciled me to its cost, by becoming indispensable. It induces a mixture of pleasure at the range of places yet to visit with anguish at the awareness that one can never get to them all. It remains, however, as yet only an echo of the great Pevsner guides to the English countries which detail every building or monument of interest in virtually every village.

Although they loom so large in my reading, and included marvels, eg earlier gaps in my acquaintance with the works of R K Narayan and Nirad

Chaudhuri, perhaps I should not dwell too much here on books by Indian authors or about India. But I must also mention George Verghese's *Waters of Hope*, an encyclopaedia of good sense and research on the great scope for better utilisation of water resources, particularly in and from the Himalayas. Naipaul's *A Million Mutinies Now* (Rupa, 1990, Rs. 250.00) I have not yet read, having reached the familiar state of having seen so many reviews that the book itself seems superfluous.

What else, not of India, have I read recently; in airport lounges, in the delicious half hour before going to sleep or during weekends when yet more bandhs and other mayhem has disrupted escape from Delhi? Julian Barnes' novel *Staring At The Sun* (Picador, 1986, £ 3.50) I bought at Manali and his *Flaubert's Parrot* (Picador/Pan Books, 1985, £ 4.99) at King's Cross Station and both very different places are now coloured for me by memory of the enjoyment of such atmospheric and verbal brilliance. Peter Ackroyd's massive *Life of Charles Dickens* (Sinclair Stevenson Ltd., 1990, £ 19.95) written with something of Dickens' own energy, is still vivid in the mind, including some vignettes of London's polluted, overcrowded and filthy poorer quarters in the 1830s and 1840s which sound even worse than Calcutta's bustees. Ackroyd has a sharp intelligence and acute historical sense, as already shown in his *Hawksmoor* (ABACUS, 1986, £ 3.95) and *Chatterton* and his biography of T S Eliot (ABACUS, 1985, £ 4.95) managed the technical feat of illuminating the poet's intellectual nature and evolution even when denied the ability to quote from Eliot's works. His Dickens' biography immediately set me to re-reading *Our Mutual Friend*, even though I was already deep in Charlotte Bronte's *Villette*, which I had never previously read, under the impulse of having re-read its predecessor *The Professor* while on leave in England. This combination made a dangerously potent combined dose of early nineteenth century life against which even the turmoil of the anti-reservation stir and clashes over Ayodhya began to seem normal. *Villette* speaks out of a now remote framework of intense protestant and early nineteenth century moral and religious belief. But it is moving in the intensity of its passionate and female intelligence. It was also a bit startling to be reminded, in her criticism of Catholicism in *Villette* (ie Brussels), of Mrs Thatcher's recent fury over the light duplicity and the evasion of stern practical realities displayed by her fellow European Heads of Government at the Rome Conference in late

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October: 'simply not the way in which we are prepared to do business' as she is said to have remarked earlier to M. Delors.

To read several books at once, or rather concurrently, may be a bad habit, reflective of shortening attention spans in the TV age, or some such ailment. But it is well adapted to late night choices for reading in bed and I find it the only way to get through such daunting but rewarding long tomes as the Penguin 'corrected text' of *Ulysses* (by Hans Gabler, Penguin, 1986, £ 7.99) or Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*. Indeed for James Joyce short intermittent doses, taken as sleep approaches, give a special savour to the masterly changes of voice and language. Other books are dangerous at night. I imagined I might have read all of P G Wodehouse, particularly as our youngest daughter is an addict, but when I recently came across one of the master's most joyous works, set in a Dulwich as vivid and unchanging as Narayan's *Malgudi*, it was impossible to stop reading, even after the normal exhausting ration of cocktail parties and a dinner.

One can never tire of Wodehouse, whichever his setting, America, English suburbia or the timeless world of Blandings Castle. But it is easy to tire of other authors with a pronounced individual style and world, however sharp one's original enjoyment. Laurence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet* I may never read again, though in Bombay over Diwali I found myself laughing to the point of tears over one of his little books of diplomatic fables. Iris Murdoch never has less than taut, intel-

ligent and crystalline prose but it was all too easy to believe critical reviews of her latest novel *The Message to the Planet* (Penguin, 1990, £ 5.99). All the more cheering to find, as both I and my wife did, that we were again caught up in the old magic, rather than lost and indifferent in a weave of middle class intellectual discussions and adulteries (to use a distinctly old-fashioned term).

What a lot of novels I seem to recall. Yet Paul Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (Fontana/Rupa, 1988, £ 6.95 & Rs 86.85), which at first I resisted buying, having been disappointed by his previous book, was riveting in its range of insights and, to me, new historical statistics to demonstrate how economic and demographic factors had underpinned political and military change. The reviews mainly focussed on the final chapters and the concept of 'imperial overstretch' as applied now to the United States' in relative decline'. But it was the earlier chapters, particularly those on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that I found most interesting. The chapter on the Soviet Union of Brezhnev reflects the criticism common when the book was published but did not, of course, predict anything like the speed of collapse and change since. Bhikhu Parekh's *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform* is another book that fully gripped my attention by a combination of acute historical writing and contemporary relevance. Gandhi's debates with orthodox Hindus on caste and social issues make fascinating reading against the turmoil over job reservation and Ayodhya.

I'm running out of really memorable recent reads. This is partly through temporary amnesia, but also because some books, however much they live up to their reputations, like *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez Picador, 1978, £ 4.99) and *Love in a Time of Cholera* (Picador), I find I shall have to re-read before they leave more in the mind than a succession of images and senses of time and place. Also, perhaps as a sign of middle age, I do find much of my reading is re-reading (a tendency to easy amnesia is useful here, particularly in books with a plot and an ending). Much of it also is in languages and literatures acquired from earlier postings. One of the bonuses of a diplomatic life, and one for which I feel most grateful, is that it plunges you into another country's life and its books. But for this I doubt I should ever have learnt German to enjoy eg Theodore Fontane or enough Portuguese (just) to appreciate the world of Eca de Queiroz; both great novelists who provide not only delight but irreplaceable insight and sympathy for their respective worlds, the flat region of woods and lakes north of Berlin, and late nineteenth century Lisbon.

It is cheering that however much one reads there will always remain so many other good books, new and old, to read and re-read. But, a last thought, is enjoyment of Indian writing in English enough to still professional guilt at not having learnt enough Hindi or Bengali to read those literatures in the original? I fear not. □

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A Good Read

Renny Smith

MAY YOU BE THE MOTHER OF A HUNDRED SONS:
A JOURNEY AMONG THE WOMEN OF INDIA

By Elisabeth Bumiller

Random House, USA, 1990, pp. 306, \$ 19.95

Elisabeth Bumiller came to India as the wife of the *New York Times* correspondent in 1985. She had a number of major adjustments to make. She had been a journalist for the *Washington Post's* Style Section since she graduated from college six years earlier, so she had to adjust to being an unemployed dependent. And then, of course, she had to adjust to India. It was as if she was "... free falling in space with nothing to hang onto and no point of reference."

Ms. Bumiller writes that before moving to India she had little experience with poor people despite her "vague concerns about the poor and homeless." She had never needed to confront poverty or think about the system that created it. Her job, in fact, was writing about the rich in a well-read and well-respected society section with substance. There is no comparable section in Indian newspapers. "Style" began as a women's page but evolved into a first-rate source of vital nuance for our capital's news. Boring bureaucrats and politicians are turned into real, live human beings in its pages.

Because of this background, it was natural for Elisabeth Bumiller to use women as her "way in" to India. It was familiar territory and, like the rest of us who arrive in the subcontinent for the first time and are astounded, she had to get some sort of grip on her new environment. She not only believed that the women she met had lives which illustrated important facets of Indian society, but she also introduced us to women whose stories need to be told, like Roop Kanwar who either did or did not commit sati willingly.

We foreigners who live in India see statistics and read stories in Indian newspapers which describe the difficulties many Indians face. The reason we like this book is that it presents the people, not just the facts. We meet the mothers, trapped in the demands of society, who opt for female abortion or infanticide. We hear their point of view. In our horror at what they are doing, we don't hate them. We sympathize.

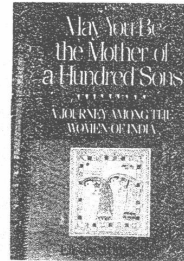
Ms. Bumiller rightly points out that "the typical

Indian woman, representing about 75 per cent of the four hundred million women and female children in India, lives in a village. She comes from a small peasant family that owns less than an acre of land, or from a landless family that depends on the whims of big farmers for sporadic work and wages. She can neither read nor write, although she would like to, and has rarely traveled twenty miles from her place of birth... sometimes she does not know the existence of her own village panchayat or governing council but even if she does, she is rarely aware that there is a place reserved for women members because only men attend the meetings... she believes she catches colds from evil spirits which lurk in trees... her occupation is chiefly field work for which she receives... half the wage that a man receives for the same amount of work." Ms. Bumiller goes on to explain that husbands in India rarely consider housework "work" and asserts that no American woman who struggles with family and career can ever completely imagine what that means in India.

The author spent some time in villages and, like ex-Peace Corps Volunteers, probably developed her respect and affection for India in the villages. Her natural habitat, however, is in the verbal snapshots she does of Ela Bhatt, Kiran Bedi, Rekha, Aparna Sen et al, who allowed her to interview them for this book. Like the urban, educated, outraged, troublemaking Indian women we all know who are trying to make a living and maybe change some things, many of these women keep on pushing the system to be a little more accommodating. She also paints a pleasant portrait of a middle-class housewife who is perfectly content with everything as it is and enjoys running the house and going to kitty parties. It would have been easy for someone of Ms. Bumiller's generation to patronize the housewives but she doesn't. I think she likes them all.

I liked them, too. In fact I have been surprised at the difference in the response to this book between foreign and domestic readers. Domestic readers think it is a book about India. It's not. It's a book about getting involved with India. We foreigners know that you can't write a book about India. People ask: "Is there a book I can read before my visit?" and we say "hah!" and ask them what they're interested in. Even then, they get a bibliography.

Indians don't seem to realize what a profound effect their country has on visitors. Some retreat to



a completely sheltered existence in their embassies in New Delhi and never "go to India" at all. I am constantly being asked if I like India. *Like India?* India is much too big for "like"—what a question!

The book reminds me of my own first foray into the subcontinent which took place in Karachi. I had been studying at Columbia University's School of Social Work. I was a bride. I didn't have nearly the mileage Ms. Bumiller did, but at least I was already interested in the problems of people who are severely challenged by their environment. My basic ideas weren't quite up to the reality of Karachi, however. I thought that handicapped children should be put in special classes until they could be "mainstreamed." I didn't expect them to be earning their living outside the main market. Luckily a Pakistani fellow-student of social work helped me to understand the forces that produced the problems and kept them from being solved. She helped me not to be afraid of working toward a better situation for vulnerable people. Ms. Bumiller's book appeals to all of us who have learned to live and work in a very different culture.

Besides, it's a good "read." Her writing is lively and the sincere interest in the people on the page is contagious. She's irritating, certainly. Such statements as "Indian life is ordinary, American life is bizarre" seem designed to annoy. But on reflection, they just show the author's inexperience. Now that she's lived in a third country she probably realizes that everyone's life is pretty bizarre. I suppose the Indian reader gets as tired of their visitors' interest in sati as we get of our visitors' interest in drug addiction, but we have a problem and there is no point in sulking if someone notices it—especially if they talk directly to the people who are most affected by it and are working to change it. □

Renny Smith: Married to a US Foreign Service officer in 1963, she has been posted with him to Pakistan, Nepal, The Central African Republic, Belize, and India (three times). Having despaired of pursuing a professional career in social work and being a foreign service wife at the same time, she bit off more than she could chew by joining the U.S. Foreign Service herself by exam in 1981. She is presently here as U.S. Consul (protection and welfare of American Citizens) and Refugee Officer. She has two kids (hum do, hamare do). One is in college, the other works for Ralph Nader on environmental issues. They are just as addicted to India as she and her husband are.

Women Themes: An Exploration of Experience

Makarand Paranjape

THE SLATE OF LIFE: AN ANTHOLOGY OF STORIES
BY INDIAN WOMEN

Kali for Women, New Delhi, 1990, pp. 163,
Rs. 60.00

This is the second anthology of short stories by Indian women published by Kali for Women, an emerging alternative forum in the male-dominated world of Indian publishing.

As such, this is a welcome effort, providing a perspective from the woman's point of view. Given the professed ideology of the publisher, what should a reader expect in such a collection? Supposedly, women readers ought to find positive role-models in the characters/authors or just seek solidarity with the experiences of fellow women; and men ought to draw educative lessons about the ill-effects of the patriarchy. But does the collection really aim at or achieve such an effect?

The first thing that attracts the reader to the book is its cover, designed by Meera Dayal. It looks like a woodcut, showing in the foreground a woman with a straight face, weeping tears of blood. Out of her head sprouts a new leaf which resembles the logo of Kali for Women, the publisher. Surrounding her are male figures of authority and tradition, three Hindu pandits and a maulavi. The total effect, in red, black, and white is arresting.

Despite the radical image of the publisher and the self-conscious political stance of the book, one cannot call this collection feminist, in the Western sense of the word. There is no frontal attack on patriarchy in these stories, but instead a quiet, strong exploration of woman's experience in contemporary India—in the conventional roles of wife, mother, daughter, also as servant, prospective bride, young girl, old woman, widow, and peasant. Besides gender, the themes of the stories impinge on class, caste, social customs, and genealogy. The collection is well-edited overall, though the names of the editors have been withheld. The

Makarand Paranjape is a Reader in English at the University of Hyderabad.

ten stories included claim to represent some of the best writing by women in Malayalam, Tamil, Assamese, Oriya, Urdu, Gujarati, Punjabi, Hindi, Bengali, and English. This anthology would work well as a text book in a Women's Studies or a literature class.

The collection opens with an excerpt called "Grandmother's Letters," from Meena Alexander's *House of a Thousand Doors*. This is an autobiographical piece in which the author tries to piece together the story of her grandmother through the latter's letters to her husband. The grandmother emerges as a strong, sensitive, caring individual, whose memory gives sustenance and identity to the author. However, the story has serious flaws in its chronology. The grandmother is shown giving a public lecture a day before Gandhiji's Salt Satyagrah (2). Then she is made to go to jail for two and a half years (3-4). Soon after her release, she marries the author's grandfather, who himself goes to jail. The letters show that she now has a child (the author's mother). The grandmother's letters to her husband start in January 1929 (5). Clearly this is impossible because Gandhiji's Salt March started on the 12th of March in 1930. The whole chronology is askew by at least four years. There is another mistake on page 6 when the last Qutub Shahi (sic) emperor is shown to have gone mad in response to the British invasion. This is clearly impossible because the Qutub Shahi dynasty ended in 1687 with the capture of Golconda by Aurangzeb. And this was much before the British came to the Deccan. Speaking about errors, Meena Alexander's year of birth has been erroneously given as 1957 in "Notes on Writers" (160); actually, it should be 1951.

Wajida Tabassum's "Hand-Me-Downs," which was featured on TV, moves towards a powerful if slightly exaggerated climax. The servant girl avenges herself on her mistress by sleeping with her would-be husband; this way, her mistress will now have to live with the servant's hand-me-down. The reversal is ironic, but also disturbing. The servant, it seems, uses her sexuality to take revenge, but the bridegroom, the male, is still the consumer. The servant is still a sexual victim. Her victory is merely personal and has no effect on the oppressive and exploitative gender class relations shown in the story.

"Lata" by Binapani Mohanty, which was also shown on TV, does show a silent woman speaking out at last. The end is powerful. Lata, abused and

reviled by the village to which she has returned with an unknown father's child, at last points to the men who raped her. One of them is the father of her child, but not one owns up. The entire village is shamed into silence. Lata, triumphantly, turns to her son, giving her entire love to him.

Rajee Seth's story, "Against Myself" shows a difficult relationship between a journalist husband and a wife who aspires to be a writer. In the end, disgusted by her husband's indifference, Ruchi, the heroine, burns her manuscripts. The psychological exploration of the characters is sensitive here, but the overall motivations seem to be confused. The plot is also somewhat flabby. The end is irresolute and weak, with the heroine unable to decide whether she wants to resist the "split" in her character that her husband is supposedly responsible for or to accept it and him.

◆
Despite the radical image of the publisher and the self-conscious political stance of the book, one cannot call this collection feminist, in the Western sense of the word. There is no frontal attack on patriarchy in these stories, but instead a quiet, strong exploration of woman's experience in contemporary India

◆
K Saraswathi Amma's story "The Subordinate" is a near tragedy, ending with bloody death. The mother sacrifices her daughter, killing her instead of letting her be sexually abused by the Commissioner of temples. This is the same man who, many years ago, had fathered this very daughter after an affair with the narrator. The story rides on several subtle ironies: the narrator is a sweeper in a Krishna temple; the Commissioner's name is Gopalan; and it is on the Janmashtami day that the narrator was deflowered and it is again on this day that she kills her daughter rather than give her up to Gopalan Nair. The modern day Krishna turns out to be a monster while Parukutty, the silently suffering, but noble narrator almost becomes a tragic heroine. The irony, however, is that the only "solution" that she finds is to kill her daughter to save Gopalan Nair from committing incest.

"Dead End" by Ajeet Caur is the story of a terrorist sheltered by a young woman whose brother has been supposedly killed by terrorists. In the end the mother comes out of the house screaming, "Don't kill him! Don't kill my little one!" as the security forces fire on the wounded terrorist. To the mother, there is no difference between her dead son and the terrorist.

I like the next story in the collection, "Counting the Flowers" by Chudamani Raghavan. Four adults, mainly two males—boy's father and the girl's—bargain over the future of a young, beautiful, sensitive woman, while she counts the nagalinga flowers on the tree outside her window. In the end, it turns out that the boy is lame and all the preceding haggling appears even more sordid.

Indira Goswami's story, "The Offspring," has a touch of the gothic. A rich, lower caste zamindar wants a child by a widowed brahmin woman to continue his lineage. The woman aborts the foetus because she doesn't want a lower caste child. In rage and madness the man digs out the abortion. I find this story confused in its intention and full of contradictions. What the author wishes to emphasize is not clear—whether it is the sexual exploitation of the widow, the caste prejudices of the village, or the greed of the priests, or the farmer's obsessive desire for a son—or all of these.

"Crushed Flowers" by Dhiruben Patel is another effective story about a young girl who is oppressed by the elders because she is different, because everybody likes her, because she smiles at everyone. The story shows how even the spontaneous innocence of a growing child can be anathema to a hidebound society.

This collection, . . . suggests two possibilities. First that Indian writing by women is yet to be radicalized, that there should be more consciousness-raising so that issues of gender and class are more sharply defined in fiction . . . Or, these stories suggest that the Western model or career graph of feminism need not be duplicated in India, . . .

◆
The last story, "Aunty" by Bani Basu, is, in my opinion, the best. The Aunty that everyone took for granted is sent away to a charitable old people's home when her brother dies. The children of the

brother then regret their foolishness and cruelty—this is the first twist. But instead of finding her and then everyone living happily ever after, they discover that they cannot identify the old woman from among the assembled people in the home. With her hair cropped, and in the drab ashram garb, "Aunty" has become dehumanized and depersonalised. The conclusion is superb because it is not clear whether "Aunty" refuses to be recognized or if she has been sent away to another branch of the ashram or if she is no longer an individual, no longer distinguishable from the other women, who after a life of giving, end up on the refuse heap of society.

This collection, if it is representative suggests two possibilities. First that Indian writing by women is yet to be radicalized, that there should be more consciousness-raising so that issues of gender and class are more sharply defined in fiction as they are in the West. Or, these stories suggest that the Western model or career graph of feminism need not be duplicated in India, that in India we are closer to a kind of "womanism" than the confrontational and separatist feminism of the West. Perhaps, the truth is somewhere in between these two possibilities. □

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There are Translations and Translations

Mrinal Pande

BAZM-E-ZINDAGI : RANG-E-SHAIRI

By Firaq Gorakhpuri

Bharatiya Jnanpeeth Publication, 1990, pp. 260, Rs. 70.00

MODERN HINDI POETRY

Compiled & Edited by Vidyanis Mishra

A Garutman Book in association with Allied Publishers Ltd., 1990, pp. 151, Rs. 120.00 (hard-bound), Rs. 60.00 (paperback)

In cultural matters in the post 70s, the overshadowing dominance of Delhi may be perceived with justifiable bitterness (and some envy) by writers in other states of India; but there is a silver lining to this cloud. With its well-endowed academic publishing houses, and institutes of research, Delhi is becoming a clearing house for literature being produced in various Indian languages. This started first with theatre. Any good play written in any Indian language, would, within a few months become available in Hindi translation not only to students of theatre in the National School of Drama, but also to amateur theater groups, who would then translate it into their regional languages and stage it there. Thus Girish Karnad's *Tughlak* first won national acclaim in its Hindustani *avatar*, directed by Ibrahim Alkazi for the NSD. Similarly many of Badar Sircar's plays attracted the attention of theater lovers in their translated versions, before becoming hits on the Bangla stage.

So while the political arena resounded with 'Down with Hindi' slogans, Hindi as a medium of translation went on spreading Indian literature democratically across the country. Languages build their bridges in spite of chauvinists and politicians. While the former were busy throwing their weight about in official meets (and failing miserably in either forming a single good translation cell in the Ministries, or in compiling and codifying the necessary terminology); down-south the latter supported the anti-Hindi lobby that was tearing Hindi

Mrinal Pande, a writer in Hindi, is currently editor of Saptahik Hindustan, New Delhi.

signboards, and burning Hindi books. All this while eminent politicians (including some—Chief Ministers) sent their sons and daughters to take special classes in Hindi en route to Bombay's filmworld, and everyone went to Hindi movies and sang their hit songs outdoors in picnics and indoors within their bathrooms. So ironically, as Hindi lost its grip as the Brahmin literary court language nurtured in Prayag and Varanasi, Hindi writing began producing a vigorous, colloquial, and regional literature. Since similar things were happening simultaneously in other Indian languages, while the politicians and vested interest groups clashed serious literary journals began translating from Indian languages, and presenting lovers of literature with brilliant gems of creative writing from all the fourteen languages. This task was ably supported by the Sahitya Akademi journals. Unfortunately they did not bring similar vigour into boosting up their low circulation. This and the abominably low rates they paid their translators, kept this activity limited.

Lately the Bharatiya Jnanpeeth has given the process a further impetus by publishing selected writings of eminent Indian authors in the form of a series of books that include some reprints of old classics as well. Beautifully produced with a simple preface by the translator, and occasionally with excerpts from the writer's own assessment of his life, his writing and his times, the series should be a collector's item. A lot of love has obviously gone into selecting the writings and translating them. These five volumes of writings by Jnanpeeth award winning authors Sachchidanand Ram Rai (Oriya), Dinkar (Hindi), Firaq Gorakhpuri (Urdu), C. Narayana Reddi (Telugu) and Kusumagraj (Marathi) are a salient proof

of the strength of Indian writing today. They also prove that in translating from one Indian language to another, a good translator can salvage most of the flavour of the original. It was sheer delight to read that arch-baiter of the 'Panditai' (demagoguery) of Hindi, Firaq, in the Devnagari script. He is the supreme example of the Hindu sensibility finding its poetic objective correlative in the Urdu language and enriching both in the process. "He who has read this collection, has found the diamond of my poetry" said Firaq of *Bazm-e-Zindagi, Rang-e-Shairi*, the collection, which presents the best of his poetry written over a period of some fifty years.

Firaq cannot be said to have been unaware of the broad canvas of his genius, and was in fact much given to extolling his genius and the lack of it in the fellow Hindi



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poets of his time. But such assertions were almost always reserved for his intellectual or critical acumen: he seldom had a kind word for himself as a human being. In the original preface to the first edition of the book he presents a relentless portrayal of the awesome frustrations of his early days that cast long shadows over his entire life. Admittedly Firaq was prone to hyperbole (if not outright mendacity) and never more than when speaking of his own excesses and shortcomings, but it is a superb piece of self-analysis and confirms that on all sorts of ways, some straightforward and some devious, Firaq asked to be treated as a child. Those who knew him in Allahabad will verify that he awakened a protective, parental impulse in the people closest to him. With his puckish sense of humour and dishevelled appearance, his taste for the fantastic and his repeated bouts of drinking, he simultaneously stirred the affections and tried one's patience. But he remains always an undeniably great poet and synthesier of Indian sensibilities. One is indeed grateful to Jnanpeeth for reprinting this beautiful volume.

All that is translated, however, is not transmuted to gold. Translating is tricky business, especially when Hindi poetry is sought to be transcreated in English by non-Hindi speaking translators. The Garutman compilation of modern Hindi poetry (compiled and edited by the eminent scholar Vidyanivas Mishra) that includes translations by Leonard Nathan, James Mauch, Martin Helpert., H.M. Guy, Josephine Miles and W.M. Munary, prefaced by two perceptive and fairly detailed introductions to the Hindi poetry writing scene by the Late Shri M.S.H. Vatsayayan 'Agyeya' and the editor, Shri Mishra, fails to deliver the promise held out by the erudite prefaces. For one, relatively weak poets like Shambhunath Singh, Kesari Kumar, Malti Parulkar have been for no visibly valid reason, bracketed with stalwarts like Agyeya, Nirala, Shrikant Varma, Raghuvir Sahai and Kunwar Narain. (Critics Ramvilas Sharma and Prabhakar Machve too, eminent as they are, do not entirely merit inclusion as poets in anthologies). This makes for a rather uneven scene which is made bleak further by bad translations. Nirala's

immortal poem "Thoonth" (The Dead Tree) is called 'Stump

'A mere stump
All foliage gone.
Done with making.'

Witness the original :

Thoonth hai yeh aj?
Gayee iski Kala,
Gaya hai Sakal saj!

Those who can read and understand Hindi would be glad the fiery Nirala is not around anymore or Mr. Halpern may have added to his vocabulary some hefty four-letter words in Baiswadi dialect as well.

Occasionally one comes across some somewhat better translations like "Sharadiya" (Ramvilas Sharma), but by and large the volume disappoints. □

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A Conceptual Exercise in Political Economy

Eric Gonsalves

WATERS OF HOPE

By B.G. Verghese

Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd & Centre for Policy Research, 1990, pp. 446, price not stated.

Waters of Hope by George Verghese is introduced in the author's preface as a broad conceptual exercise in political economy rather than a scholarly treatise. Nevertheless impressive scholarship is there, and that too in a form that can be both easily read and assimilated. This book should be kept on any list of recommended reading for any one responsible for development, be he or she a politician, bureaucrat, technocrat or intellectual in any developing country. This is not just because water management is basic to development, but rather because the reader is gently educated to realise that development must be viewed in a totality even by specialists.

Policy for one area must take into account its special needs and technical requirements, but the policy makers must avoid putting on blinkers. The present approach of every sector fighting for the maximum resources and the devil taking the hindmost could well harm the long-term national, and even sectoral interests. The book provides several interesting illustrations of the problems created by this approach. Experts will probably take issue with some of the conclusions reached by the author. They may even be justified. But there can be no doubt that without an overall consensus on the broad policy approaches, we could easily lose the way and the momentum. Verghese's proposition goes further in that he suggests to us that we might be better off if we take this approach beyond national frontiers, and apply it using natural geographic boundaries such as planning water management on the basis of connected river basis. The reviewer's personal view is that the entire world is moving inexorably in this direction. Unfortunately South Asia has still to wake up to the reality.

Land has been man's basic resource. With the present population pressure, it must be put to optimum use. But land without water is barren.

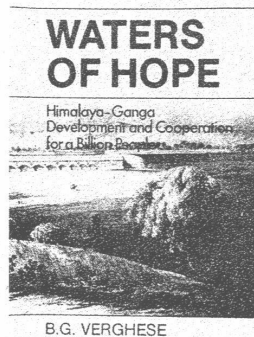
Eric Gonsalves, a retired Indian Foreign Service Officer, is currently director of the India International Centre, New Delhi.

Says Verghese: "Agriculture is the foundation of the economy throughout the Basin, with irrigation as the leading input." In this book we learn that water management is not just a matter of agriculture and irrigation; it also provides fundamental infrastructure such as power and transport; and it is crucial to health and the environment too. Further, fish in the rivers provide food. Obviously, water management requires a multitude of interlocking disciplines. The book brims with ideas in many fields which need to be examined carefully. It also becomes clear that there is need for re-evaluation of existing economic priorities. For instance, more development and greater use of inland waterways and coastal shipping could well be wiser than continuing to follow the pattern of channeling investment largely to build rail links which was started to suit the British investor.

The background is given in considerable depth. Geology and geography lead us into economic and social history of the basin from ancient times to the present day. Earlier patterns of management of land, water and the rural economy has left their legacies and constraints on the behaviour of local communities and the administrative authorities.

Their continuing validity needs to be carefully reviewed in the light of the very changed circumstances obtaining today, such as the burgeoning needs of a vast and growing population, more democratic and participatory political systems, and the quantum jump made in the fields of communication and technology. It would be presumptuous for a non-expert to endorse or decry the many suggestions that flow from Verghese's fertile mind. However, it is self-evident that they should be considered with as much care as has gone into their formulation. The inherited wisdom of irrigation methodology certainly needs to be reviewed. We cannot afford to be dogmatic about the desirability of large dams, command area development or small watershed management schemes, etc. What is needed is flexibility in decision making depending on the circumstances of the situation. Similarly, we must preserve forests and pastures to safeguard the environment and our animal resources. But a balance has to be struck between the competing needs of cultivation, forests and pastures. As the author says, "Environmental prudence and care is the path of wisdom in water resource development as in all other forms of sustainable development. Not eco-fundamentalism."

Indian plans and planners had a well-deserved high reputation. Today they appear to have become prisoners of their past success and the built-in bureaucratic controls. Long and constant wrangles over priorities and plans and resources have resulted in the violation of one basic law of economics, namely that time wasted is money



The fragility of the Himalayan ecology and rapid environmental degradation in the plains pose a threat to national and regional well-being. Superimposed on these are newer concerns with global warming. Environmental conservation must therefore be an essential part of land and water resource development. The submergence of habited and fertile valleys or forests behind dams and the displacement of populations raise a number of deeply emotional issues involving complex economic choices. Often tribal people may be affected. Should they remain untouched? There are no easy solutions and no single answer. Verghese deals with these problems in some depth and attempts to dispel a number of popular myths.

—From V.A. Pai Panandiker's Foreword to Waters of Hope

The Ganga, Brahmaputra and Barak (which becomes the Meghna in Bangladesh) share a sprawling interlinked basin spread over five nations: Bhutan, Nepal, India and Bangladesh, and China's Tibet to the North of the Himalayan divide. It is home to some 480 million people, just under one in ten of humankind. Its extensive alluvial spread, rich water resources, plant-genetic diversity, and phenomenal hydro-energy potential locked in gravity makes it one of the greatest natural resource regions anywhere, yet, sadly, it encompasses the largest single concentration of the world's most poor, wretched heirs to once-proud civilisations. This paradox of abject poverty in the midst of plenty is not merely startling and depressing, but politically unacceptable. It merits searching inquiry.

—From B.G. Verghese's *Waters Of Hope*

spent which can never be regained. Moreover, economic priorities have become subordinate to politics to an inordinate extent. Although axiomatic, it is time we learnt to appreciate good and efficient management, prompt and timely decisions, rational and cooperative policy making, and an overall policy consensus. What we can do without is pandering to political and populist pressures. There is need for a public debate on this subject so that the common man appreciates as he has learnt to do in many other countries that democracy does not survive on rhetoric and the ballot box alone. Economic and social empowerment is as important as political empowerment, especially for the underprivileged.

The book leads up its central thesis, namely that we need to do all this at the international level as well as at the national level. The alternative is to beggar ourselves and our neighbours. Of course, everyone would endorse this proposition. The difficulty, as always, lies in the implementation.

George Verghese is quite right in his indictment that all the concerned governments, India, Bangla-

desh and Nepal, have shown lack of vision. Their priorities and interests do clash and there is need for conflict resolution. Still they have pursued national interest in so narrow minded a manner that agreement has been virtually impossible and the mistrust generated has spilled over into the overall relationship. Moreover, costs have escalated, and increasing demands have made agreement more difficult. His suggestions for an overall solution taking into account water, energy (including gas), Calcutta Port and transport management are eminently worthy of consideration. There can be no magic formula. Every workable solution has to be a compromise between the optimum requirements of each nation. To quote from the book, "It is this wisdom that must prevail over any more wasted years of strife. To exchange the prospect of cooperative synergism for a zero sum game would be a barren alternative."

Environmental degradation in Nepal and India calls for early action in both their interest. India may be able to put all the water in the Ganga to good use. But she cannot do so in conscience.

Bangladesh cannot use all the water that comes down the Brahmaputra. The rivers do form one economic and geographic entity. Hence there is an overwhelming case for a quick decision on the works necessary to utilise the waters. The proposal for a barrage at Jogighopa with upstream dams and a link canal to Farakka is still probably the most economical and feasible proposition. But if this is not acceptable, solutions can probably be found by seeing what variants are acceptable. The central question is the attitude with which all concerned approach the problem. There has to be urgency, willingness to see the other's point of view and a time frame established for reaching decisions. Similarly, if we take up the Kamali and Pancheswar projects now, admitting that there are lessons to be learnt from the mistakes made by both sides over the Kosi and Gandak projects, we might well get better results. This is now more likely with the new regime installed in Nepal. Although this falls with a much longer time-frame, one must hope that one day we can bring China also into such overall arrangements.

One cannot put it better than the author has: "The Himalaya-Ganga-Brahmaputra-Barak region constitutes an interactive mountain-plain system that is home to more than a tenth of mankind. Every imperative therefore to tap more fully its vast unexploited potential within a frame of sustainable development. The world too has a high stake in such a well-conceived integrated programme designed to uplift the marginal man in what remains the largest concentration of global impoverishment despite being blessed with great gifts of nature. Opportunity beckons. Seize it." □

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On the Relevance of Book Fairs

RAVI DAYAL

Like anyone who enjoys reading and seeing collections of books, I relish the prospect of visiting a book fair, no matter how humble it is. It is wonderful to be amidst a larger range of books than is normally available in most bookshops. As editor, designer and seller of books, and, generally, as one who has been associated with the publishing profession for over 25 years, I have not only enjoyed participating in several book fairs, but also found them to be instructive and, usually, profitable.

The best known book fairs in India are, of course the Delhi World Book Fair, which has been held every alternate year since 1971; the National Book Fair, which is rotated amongst various cities in different parts of the country in years when the WBF is not held; and the Calcutta Book Fair, held annually in India's most astonishing city. In addition to these, however, many more fairs are periodically held in different regions of the country, often for specialized categories of books or specific language groups, and sometimes focussing around the interests of conferences and specific academic disciplines. Apart perhaps from the last category, all the fairs in India are open to the general public and, unlike in the major book fair in Europe (e.g., at Frankfurt, Bologne, London), physical stocks of books are sold to individual and institutional buyers throughout the duration of a fair. European fairs, such as that held annually at Frankfurt, are primarily occasions for publishers to sell rights to each other, and business is not intended to be done with the public. In India, however, the scene is very different: publishers do comparatively little business with each other; and not only publishers but booksellers, too, have stalls at our fairs, which generally take on the character of a *mela* where the vast throngs of visitors are not necessarily interested in books, even if they have an engaging time with books as an unavoidable background.

But the *mela* character is all to the good and should be warmly welcomed, even if it makes the Indian book fair very different from the original western models. In a country where illiteracy abounds and mass literacy is a young phenomenon, the more exposure that people—even the unlettered—have to books, the better. The sight of books of all kinds, and particularly reading material for children and neo-literates, will surely act as catalysts for those who wish to become literate but have not yet been able to do so. Adults with children, who may have given up regular reading, often get back to the world of books and ideas a by-

Ravi Dayal was formerly the general manager of OUP and now runs his own publishing house called Ravi Dayal Publishers.

product of trying to make their offspring book-conscious. What with lectures by authors, discussions about books and publishing that usually accompany our fairs, the atmosphere at our book fairs is usually more civilized than that in the world outside them, and it can only be beneficial for our citizens, frequently coping with maddening social conditions, to be reminded that India is not only a hotbed of political skulduggery and general wickedness, but also a considerable generator of ideas and serious thought, as manifested in the books it produces. The books that a society produces often embody the best in it, and it is salutary for all of us to be reminded periodically of the range, creativity and depth of India that continues unabated, despite the daily turmoil of our environment. As most of our fairs also have a substantial component of imported books (mostly fairly high-minded ones, as imports are meant to be restricted largely to educational and technical books), a visit to a book fair brings the Indian public face-to-face with ideas emanating elsewhere in the world, too.

Thus, book fairs are effective supplements for our educational and intellectual system at all levels. In a society where libraries are scarce and inadequate, and proper booksellers mostly restricted to the larger cities—and that, too, inadequately—book fairs play an inestimable role in bringing books to vast numbers of people who would otherwise have little access to them. They are, as a whole, extremely relevant for a society seeking to educate itself and to raise the level of freedom, thought and debate within its ranks.

But book fairs are also meant to serve the purposes of the publishing industry and book trade. In the West the fairs are primarily intended to serve professional interests. How far do our book *melas* and *hats*, so different from those in the West, serve publishers and the book trade? It is sad that the selling of rights (the bread-and-butter of Frankfurt and Bologne) occurs so rarely at Indian fairs: given the many languages in the country, and the enormous scope that this gives for negotiating the lease of translation rights, this lacuna is surprising and the opposite needs to be developed.

Our fairs are also extremely exhausting, and sometimes disproportionately expensive, for the participants. The fairs go on for rather longer than in the West and, as the emphasis in India is on selling physical stock, most participants transfer a fair proportion of the contents of their warehouses to the fair ground, and need to replenish their stalls regularly if sales are good. The costs of such an operation are high, and the overheads in manpower expenses heavy (apart from rising rents for stall space). Each stall needs to be manned not only by PROs, salesmen, packers and invoicers, but also by a team of chowkidars to regulate the hordes who visit the fairs and, alarmingly, sometimes try stealing books. The Delhi World Book Fair has mercifully found a home within the well-regu-

lated permanent structures of the Fair Ground, but most other book fairs in the country are held in improvised campuses of tin, plywood and gunny. The visiting crowds are welcome, but, as they thicken, so does the dust. Few books that survive a book fair are in mint condition thereafter. They have been handled by many people and become dog-eared; they will be dust-laden; and should it happen to rain over our improvised tin-and-gunny campuses, the books will also get soaked. Our fairs thus present participants with some unique hazards and situations that cause damage and loss.

This said, however, few publishers wish to stand aside and ignore the more important book fairs. The sales are often very good, particularly in years when library grants are abundant; and when library grants are scarce, a book fair enables publishers to sell directly to individuals and thus, to some extent, offset disappointing sales to institutions. The visiting crowds thus have their virtues, for many in them have wallets specially filled for the occasion. Judging from the growing participation at our major fairs, including international participation, it seems clear that they have demonstrated their usefulness to the book trade.

The fairs are educative for publishers, too. Most publishers are usually cordoned-off from the individual buyer, as they normally distribute their books through booksellers rather than directly to individuals. Our fairs provide publishers with the opportunity of facing the end-consumer directly; of assessing an important component of the market; of observing the sort of books individuals buy or reject; the reasons for their doing so, and of studying the interests of a public. Both as an editor and someone involved in managing a publishing house, I have found that most fairs give me several insights both into marketing possibilities and also about books that need to be published. Editors, who sometimes tend to hatch bright and unreal ideas about publishing possibilities while sitting behind desks have a fine, convenient opportunity of learning about their markets through attendance at fairs. Repeated inquiries from visitors to a stand for a particular kind of book can trigger off a worthwhile publishing possibility, just as repeated rejection of particular books on display can demonstrate the flaws in an available list.

Even those involved in producing and designing books can learn much from a fair. Access to books produced all over the world gives ideas about design, paper and binding materials and underlines the need for improvement in the presentation of one's own books in order to compete satisfactorily (assuming one does not work for a government publishing house that is normally oblivious of the need to improve or compete).

Thus our book fairs are highly relevant: they are fun, they educate and reassure a public; and they are, by and large, not only profitable for the book trade and publishers, but also instructive. □

Children's Book Fair, New Delhi—A Report

VIJAYA GHOSE

The lawns of India Gate have been the favourite haunt of children-related fairs. This time the Children's Book Fair which normally starts on 14th November to coincide with Chacha Nehru's birthday was postponed by a fortnight thanks to the political disturbances in the country. On 1st December, however, the Fair was inaugurated by Minister Raj Mangal Pandey and concluded on 10th December 1990.

The Fair is a reasonable indication of what children are reading these days. It is also a fair reflection (no pun intended) on what is available for children today. This year's Book Fair participation has been on a relatively smaller scale. Perhaps some of the smaller publishers did not want to risk an investment that may not have paid dividends. The overall effect therefore is one of compact space that can be easily covered by both adults and children with ease. Among the salient features of the Fair is the virtual absence of good fiction by our writers even though stalwarts like OUP did brisk business despite that. The preferences of the buyers seem to bear out this hunch of the publishers.

I remember as a child when we visited a Book Fair, we always, but always, made a beeline for the fiction shelves. And we'd spend hours browsing through books on ghosts and goblins and school-girl/boy stories, adventure and mystery. The child of today is more keen and sees what can be used as supplementary reading to zoology, chemistry, computers and allied subjects. So stiff is the competition at school and college level that children are hard put to get past their immediate curriculum, leave alone 'frivolous' things like story books.

OUP representative, Mr. Mazumdar, who was present at the Fair defended the presence of books like *Kitty & Rover* (they must be a century old at least!) and said they continue to be in demand by a great many schools both English and vernacular medium. Why not books by Indian authors with Indian themes, I ask.

"Where are the Indian authors?" he says "No one has approached us, certainly not for fiction." Authors, please note. But OUP is known for educational publications and in that field they are superb.

High on the list of sales are their dictionaries—

Vijaya Ghose is a freelance writer and has been associated with book publishing for the young for several years.

standard reference for all schools. Dictionaries come in all sizes and all prices, ranging from Rs.30 to Rs. 225. Most popular among the dictionaries is the Concise Oxford which sells no less than 60,000

copies a year. Their Advanced Learners' Dictionary sells over 75,000 copies.

If these figures are impressive, it is their school atlas which comes out on top. 3,00,000 copies of the

Excerpts from an interview with Arvind Kumar, Director, National Book Trust

Why is it there isn't a sense of tradition in children's literature in India?

It's there in Bengali which has a marvellous heritage of literature for children. Tamil Nadu has it to an extent but in translation somehow they sound awful. The thing however, is to make available what we have and as many people as possible. Therefore the need for translation into regional languages.

Would you say the emphasis on reading preferences has changed over the years from story books to supplementary text book material? Children were picking up books on zoology and computers rather than story books?

Everyone knows that children today read and know much more than we did at their age. Partly that's because of the electronic media. But I don't think that children read something to the exclusion of another. The main thing is to get them reading. And someone who picks up a book on computers is just as likely to pick up a story-book. Those who don't read, don't read at all.

How can we popularise books?

Book Fairs are of course one way of doing it. But we need to go beyond that. In foreign countries, there is collaboration between a writer in one country, an illustrator in another and the publisher in the third. Why can't we do that within the languages in our own country? That way, we can produce quality books at competitive prices.

Why is it that some publishing concerns close down? Thomson Press comes to mind at once. Despite beautiful books, they just couldn't sell.

Well, how were they marketed? You can't produce beautiful books and keep them in beautiful show rooms. You have to sell books like ice-cream and carpets. You have to reach the people, not vice versa. In the old days, books were sold door-to-door in *thailis* and trunks. Some books were left with prospective buyers for a couple of days to see if they wanted to buy them. Marketing is crucial to survival.

What are future plans for popularising reading?

We are working towards promoting children's literature since NBT was designated as a nodal agency. We are also planning a national centre for children's literature but that may take two or three years more. We are identifying good books of 89-90 published in various languages. We'll bring out an annotated illustrated catalogue of these publications basically for people/publishers all over the country to know what came out in the last two years. This may again need translation in other languages. We are also trying to identify prize-winning titles from all over the world. That's a long, time-consuming process. I think in six months we'll have the titles of some of the finest books in the world available for translation. We are also working towards inviting the exhibition of select books from all over the world put together at Bologna. That will probably be seen at the 1992 10th World Book Fair.

What about neighbourhood libraries?

Actually we have been working on the idea of setting up readers' clubs. In the beginning in schools but later on, all over. The idea is that book reading and things connected with books becomes a regular thing. In Kerala the education ministry has written to over 2000 schools. Rajasthan, of all the other activities provided, was most interested in readers' clubs.

atlas are sold every year through schools.

Frank Brothers, among the oldest in the text book trade in India have improved the quality of their books enormously. But their unique innovation has been to go in for book-related activities. Their jigsaw puzzles are almost as good as foreign ones. The pictures are pleasing and attractive and most important the edge-cutting is smooth. Jigsaw puzzles have the virtue of developing observation powers through intricate colour and design matching powers. The buyers here seem mainly interested parents—interested and enlightened—who seem to look beyond the immediate school-curriculum enhancement.

Another factor that is very much evident at this Book Fair is the vastly improved quality of books coming from government publishing houses. Leading them all is The National Book Trust. Perhaps the largest of all the stalls, NBT had displayed its books in a tastefully set-up bamboo and cane decorated stall.

Parents with very young children would find the NBT pre-primary books an answer to their prayers. Small booklets very tastefully designed with purely visual content by some of the best artists in the country help the child to make up/read a story through pictures. Books are graded for age groups. Here is where some of our best writers for children find a place for their creative writings. And of course, as in all government undertakings, the books are translated into all major Indian languages.

NCERT input into Book Fairs has always been substantial. This year too they displayed their text-book expertise in several titles in all subjects—arts and science. This is not the place to go into the content of the books but certainly their get-up is still unattractive and boring. NCERT is certainly one organization that sells despite itself. After all when sales are guaranteed without any competition worth the name, where is the need for improvement?

But improvement is certainly evident in some other publishers. The Children's Book Trust, which had always produced fairly cheap books is now bringing out well-designed and attractive books. CBT is among the two or three publishers who are sticking their neck out for creative writers for children in English and the regional languages. Their series for the 10+ with attractive illustrations is a good buy. Again, the paper and the quality of printing has also vastly improved so we no longer get smudges for illustrations and here at the CBT stall, story books, particularly the pocket book series were doing very well. Thanks to the *Association of Writers and Illustrators for Children*. (AWIC) which is a subsidiary of CBT, almost all creative writers have been published by CBT. Notable among them is Arup Kumar Dutta whose first story *Kaziranga Trail* is still a best-seller that has been turned into a film.

CBT's *How They Work* series (though it didn't seem to attract children) has been very well put together. Even adults can get a clear look at the working of a car or a telephone. Glossy covers, legible point size and clear illustrations certainly make things easier to understand. Very good value for money.

The other commercial publisher (CBT is a publishing house subsidized by a Trust) who has deliberately branched from purely text-book publication to stories for children is Dr D. Jain. Very young in this field, the publisher had long felt the need to stimulate the child's imagination with good story books. And though it means a dent in the profits of text-book publication, Dr Jain has struck to his commitment. Ratna Sagar's collections of short stories are among the best available. Their 'Cursive Writing' series is also probably the best on graded writing. It has been specially devised and put together by Dr Jain, a former professor of Linguistics.

One factor that emerged quite strongly at the Fair was the fact that publishers were not cutting

cost on paper, printing and most important of all, design and illustrations. It is heartening to note that illustrators today are a privileged lot who can usually command the price they ask. Certainly demand far outweighs supply.

Yet another factor was very much in evidence at the Fair—the proliferation of audio cassettes. From nursery rhymes (alas, most of them like Jack & Jill and their ilk) to stories, to math—all kinds of cassettes were available. And they were popular if the visitors to the stalls were any indication.

Few people realize that games and puzzles are among the best stimulators of the mind. Perhaps because there has not been a great demand, puzzles for children have been virtually non-existent. But at the Fair was the House of Puzzles, a Calcutta-based firm who did brisk business. A great deal of the response was thanks to the excellent demonstration of the puzzles by C. Guha who put together and took apart puzzles with the ease of a past master. Their Chinese puzzle which is nothing but tangramas was lapped up by children and parents alike. Logic, deduction, observation, perseverance but above all, fun—is there anything puzzling in that?

The Fair without doubt was very successful. Though, area-wise, it was smaller, the stalls were well designed. There was enough space for the children to move about and browse through books. It again emphasized the fact that children are the decision-makers when it comes to buying something for themselves.

The theme of the Fair was 'Gift a Book'. This is the brain-child of Arvind Kumar, Director NBT. Very much a publishing man, Arvind Kumar is totally dedicated to popularising the reading habit. "But the Fair is something more than just books," he says. "We want it to be a total experience, a creative experience." With this objective, the Book Fair also had special activities for children—story-telling sessions, puppets, films, etc. □

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Annual subscriptions for individuals will be Rs 40.00
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National Book Trust

Jaya Vasu

For most people, book fairs are annual events where one can browse through a wide collection of books, buy a few, read them at leisure and forget them forever. What lingers on, perhaps in a few minds, is the sheer joy of reading, the essence of something shared, the feeling of something discovered. In the bargain, what probably fails to be noticed is the organisation that presents this delightful fare, year after year—the National Book Trust (NBT).

An autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Human Resources Development, the NBT was conceptualised and started in 1957 by the visionary, author and statesman, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The erstwhile Prime Minister believed that only an atmosphere of learning and knowledge could generate the forward looking and dynamic nation that he envisaged. Thus, then, the focus shifted to books, and on the NBT lay the onus of inculcating the book-reading habit. A tall order one might say, and as challenging and abstract as the "scientific temper" concept of the late '80s, but all the same, the NBT rose to the occasion.

In the initial years, the NBT's emphasis was on publishing. Under the visionary chairmanship of Dr. V.B. Keskar and the dynamic direction of the then director, K.S. Duggal, the NBT published books in new and unchartered areas. The *Nehru Bal Pustakalaya* series for pre-schoolers and children below the age of 15, and the *Aadan Pradan* series for promoting literary works of Indian authors in their own language and in the translated version, were among the landmark products of those years.

In course of time, other series too were added, keeping in mind the needs of changing times. With an increasing number of new learners the series for neo-literates was born. To keep alive the rich traditions of the country, the India series was evolved. But more importantly, to provide attractive and exciting reading material to the children of this country, the Children's Book series was expanded.

Today, NBT has been able to draw the talented to children's books. Illustrators like Pulak Biswas and Mickey Patel have brought alive for many Indian children the colourful world of birds, animals, folklore and fairy tales. Since a major part of NBT's works revolves around translations—as a norm, the Trust publishes every book in 13 major

Indian languages—in some languages, only NBT books are most reasonably priced reading material available to children!

But the NBT is not one to rest on its laurels. Says Mala Dayal, the editor of the children's series, "No one can say that enough is being done for children's reading—but then, that typifies the Indian book scene in general". Recognising the lacunae in book publishing, the NBT has moved into text book publishing, an area it has generally avoided. Even here it is only those areas where standard reference material is not available. But more importantly, the NBT's concern has centred around pricing. As a rule, most of NBT's publications are priced less than Rs. 50.00. For instance, among NBT's new titles are *Jarosanko House* by Prem Chand at Rs. 5.50, *Garden Flower* by Vishnu Swarup at Rs. 30.00 and *Folklore of Tamil Nadu* by S.M.L. Lakshman and Chettiar at Rs. 21.00. Attributing such unbelievable prices to the fact that their print order of about 45,000, is large—the advantage accrued by publishing a title in all the languages—Dr. Arvind Kumar, the NBT's director says: "Though we do not go in for expensive production, we try to bring out books as beautifully as possible". Pre-empting criticism he adds: "Our pricing certainly covers publishing costs and there is no element of direct subsidy."

Government organisations can thrive or wither under misdirection, a fact proved by the NBT experience. Long term employees recall an era under Krishna Kripalani, "when nothing ever happened". This was also the period of adverse media publicity for the Trust.

Fortunately, NBT has outgrown that phase under more committed leadership and over the years has also received a sense of direction. While book publishing still continues to be one of the important aspects of the Trust's activities—so far, over 4,500 titles including translations have been brought out—the focus today is on promoting the book-reading activity and providing assistance to outside publishers. Notes a NBT source, "While the government believes that it can achieve impossible things, here's a government organisation that recognises the fact that it has limitations—it cannot do everything".

Notable among programmes of providing assistance to publishing is the Subsidy Scheme. Subsidy is available for books in English, Hindi or any other regional language for which there is a definite need, and which relates to areas in which

books of acceptable standards are either not available, or so expensively priced that they are beyond the reach of the majority of the students. Financial assistance is also provided to private publishers and voluntary agencies producing quality books for children. Further, assistance is also provided for producing specialised books on subjects such as medicine, which would be used as ready references or acceptable text-books by Indian universities.

However, among all the Trust's goals, challenge lies in evolving "book mindedness." For this Book Fairs, permitting interaction between buyers, sellers, authors, illustrators at national, regional and global level are a regular feature.

While it is difficult to estimate the quantum of actual business generated—by NBT estimates, the Ninth World Book Fair in Delhi resulted in about Rs. 6 crore worth of transactions—what is more important are the spin-offs over a time-period.

At a certain level, the fairs are successful. They draw the curious and expose them to a wide variety of reading material and result in sales for publishers. But they fail at another level, because of what does not occur. "What should be happening is the buying of book rights—between publishers in one language and another—but the concept is new and hasn't taken off," says Dr Arvind Kumar.

A small beginning has, however, been made when NBT organised a "Hall of Rights" at Pune and is about to repeat it at the coming Jaipur Book Fair. Here a list compiled by the NBT with a brief description of the book, and details regarding copyrights clearly spell out to publishers those works available for translation in various languages. So far, a list of about 700 titles in 10 languages has been finalised for the Jaipur Book Fair. And this compilation is likely to grow. "We still have time", adds Dr. Kumar, pointing out that "it's not merely a matter of finding available titles—but also that of getting 'good' titles".

If the Book Fairs are the apparent evidences of NBT's operation, there are other schemes that tackle the book-reading habit at grass-root level. Seminars, information campaigns, the National Book Week. Of all these programmes, one that holds promise most is the reader's club. Conceptually, the reader's club envisages the extension of the National Book Week as a year-long programme, where debates, discussions and interactions about books can take place. "Going by the response so far, this is one programme that is likely to bear long-term results," says Dr. Kumar.

Thus, the list of NBT's activities runs on. However, viewed against the background of literacy levels in the country, NBT's accomplishments seem perfunctory. But it's a small foot forward. As more and more Indians take to book-reading, one can only see the NBT hand. □

Jaya Vasu is a freelance writer.

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Dear Editor...

Please be kind enough to allow us to have taken this opportunity to write to your good selves after having come across your Jan/Feb issue in Cre-A bookshop in Madras.

We found *The Book Review* fulfilling a long-felt need amongst serious readers of Indian publications in India.

We wish to be a part of your valued subscribers.

H. RANJEET, Madras

I may perhaps suggest that you consider starting a section in *The Book Review* to bring together like-minded people with literary/artistic/academic/intellectual tastes through pre-paid box number advertisements. That would, if effected, obviously add some amount to the corpus of funds you are planning to accumulate apart from the service (of communication) you would be rendering to interested human beings.

K.V. SUBBARAM, Haryana

The reviews in your journal are of a very high standard and I have read your issues with great interest.

MRS L. KALBAG, Popular Prakashan, Bombay

I read your appeal to create a sizeable corpus fund to enable the continued publication of this journal. It is only one of this kind in India with high standard, both in content and editing.

SUNANDA PATWARDHAN, Pune

I do indeed continue to get *The Book Review* and indeed have just received the latest copy. It was tantalising to read the two letters from the prisoners in the central jail at Hyderabad pleading for free subscriptions without any editorial comment as to what your response was likely to be. Can this be expected in the next issue? I think we should be told.

P.J. FOWLER, New Delhi

I have received the copies of "*The Book Review*" regularly by the way of post with lots of thanks.

I am very happy to go through your magazine. Also convey my heartiest regards and thanks to editorial-advisory board members and special-sincere regards to you.

I am very glad that after all I am a prisoner for life sentence. Even though you response my letter and arranged the magazine, "*The Book Review*" for free of cost regularly as a special case. In this matter I am really proud of you.

The authors are to be congratulated upon the care and interest they have taken to make useful articles, book-reviews and interviews. It enhanced the value of the magazine and well collected information forward simply superb. I hope the magazine give many hours of reading pleasure and knowledge both to me and the book lovers.

In last I would always remember your help anticipating your early favourable cooperation. As I am languished in the jail.

P. SIVASANKAR, Hyderabad, A.P.

Vinay Lal, reviewing Bhasham Sahni's *We Have Arrived in Amritsar* (September-October 1990), says: "This is the first full-length volume of his stories to appear in English translation. . ." Not quite. Writers Workshop published Sahni's *The Boss Came to Dinner & Other Stories* in 1972, translated mostly by Jai Ratan.

P. LAL, Calcutta

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French Studies in Urban Policy: A survey of research
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This anthology traces the evolution of urban policy as an academic discipline and places the dynamics of this policy in its socio-political context. Orient Longman Ltd, 1990, Rs. 110.00.

Improvising Empire: Portuguese Trade and Settlement in the Bay of Bengal - 1500 - 1700
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A volume of interwoven essays which is the first substantial modern treatment of the Portuguese in the Bay of Bengal. Oxford University Press, 1990, Rs. 215.00.

Empire and the English Character
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An entertaining work which explores how the ideal of imperial rule was formed and how it left its mark upon the character of those Britons who, by birth or education expected to form part of the imperial ruling class. IB Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1990, price not stated.

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Growth of Indigenous Entrepreneurship: The House of Garwares
V.S. Patwardhan
This book tries to examine the secret of the phenomenal Garware success by throwing light on B.D. Garware's personality, his motivation and uncanny business sense. Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1990, Rs. 200.00.

Public Policy and Economic Development: Essays in Honour of Ian Little
Maurice Scott & Deepak Lal (Eds.)
The contributors, all well-known economists, pro-

vide great insights into policy making for developing economies. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1990, Rs. 275.00.

■ ART & CULTURE

Culture, Communication and Social Change
P.C. Joshi
The volume poses some provocative questions concerning the new challenges emerging for India in the realm of culture as the twenty-first century draws nearer. Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd, 1989, Rs. 250.00.

Festivals, Fairs and Fasts of India
Shakti M. Gupta
This work presents a vivid account of as many as 172 festivals of all religious communities of India which makes it encyclopaedic in its thrust and coverage. Clarion Books (associated with Hind Pocket Books), 1991, Rs. 585.00.

Mahabharata In Performance
M.L. Varadpande
A fascinating story of the many forms this great Indian epic has taken during the course of its long history. Clarion Books (associated with Hind Pocket Books), 1990, Rs. 345.00.

Phedre en Inde
Jean Christophe Bailly
A lively account of the performance of *Phedre* at Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal. Plou, 1990.

■ MANAGEMENT STUDIES

Corporate Success and Transformation Leadership
P. Singh & Asha Bhandarker
The book argues the case for putting the leaders in economic institutions, the corporate world and the government through a process of corporate success, organisation building and transformation. Wiley Eastern Ltd., 1990, Rs. 240.00.

■ SOCIOLOGY

Divine Passions: The Social Construction of Emotion in India
Owen M. Lynch (Ed.)
The contributors to this volume help dispel some of the west's persistent misconception of Indian emotional experience. Oxford University Press, 1990, Rs. 225.00.

Mirrors of Violence: Communities, Riots And Survivors in South Asia
Veena Das (Ed.)
A pioneering effort to study riots as a common urban phenomenon within the huge and ethnically diverse communities of the subcontinent, within some of the major cities of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Oxford University Press, 1990, Rs. 225.00.

Muslim Women In India: Political & Private Realities - 1890s - 1980s
Shahida Lateef
Examines the role of Muslim women in society in terms of current practice and attitudes. Kali for Women, 1990, Rs. 160.00.

The Deus of Cincvad: A Lineage and the State in Maharashtra
Laurence W. Preston
An innovative study of the power of lineage in India across two centuries which examines some of the traditional social structures which transcended so successfully the political upheavals of British rule. Cambridge University Press in association with Orient Longman, 1990, Rs. 225.00.

■ LITERATURE

Kavita Asia: An Occasional of Asian Poetry, Poetics and other Reflections
Ashok Vajpey (Ed.)
The inaugural issue which features poems, essays, notes, reviews and reflections from China, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey and India. Asia Poetry Centre, Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal, 1990.

My World - Tabish Khair; Single Woman - Tara Patel; The Serene Flame - Makarand Paranjape; The Attic of Night - Anna Sujatha Mathai.
New Poetry under Rupa's Creative Writing Series; 1991, Rs. 40.00 each.

The Inscrutable Americans
Anurag Mathur
New fiction from Rupa, 1991, Rs. 40.00.

■ MILITARY HISTORY

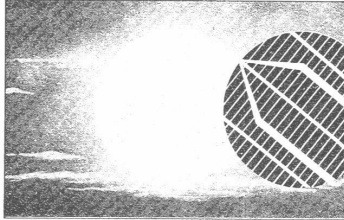
The Indian Army - Lt. Gen. Mathew Thomas (Rtd) (Ed.); Indian Army After Independence - Maj. K.C. Praval; Military Leadership in India: Vedic Period to Indo-Pak Wars - Maj. Gen. Rajendra Nath (Rtd.).
A rich collection focussing on a splendid institution which has stood as a glowing symbol of valour and sacrifice. Lancer International, 1990, Rs. 650.00, Rs. 400.00 & Rs. 450.00 respectively.

■ LAW

Humanitarian Law
R.C. Hingorani (Ed.)
The second edition of the felicitation volume published as a tribute to Professor Jovica Patrnocijic, the founder of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law. Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd, 1991.

Mulla's Principles of Mohamedan Law
M. Hidayatullah & Arshad Hidayatullah
The nineteenth edition. N.M. Tripathi Pvt. Ltd., 1990, Rs. 80.00.

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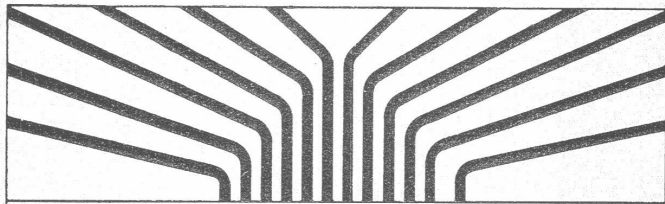


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