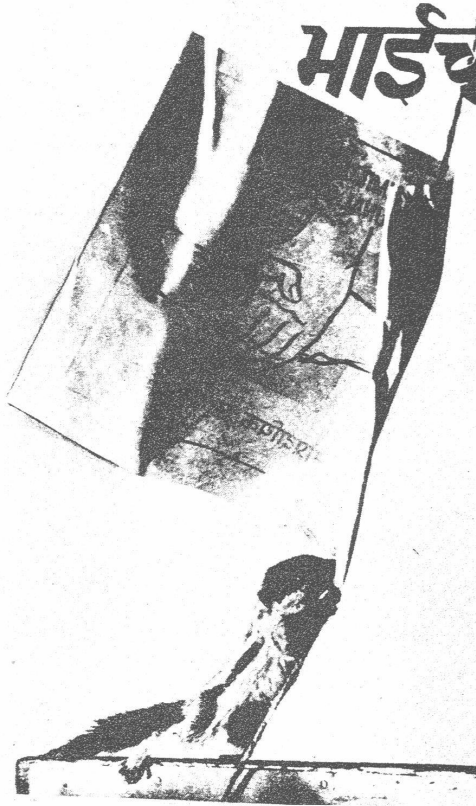


THE BOOK REVIEW

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1990

VOLUME XIV - NUMBER 5



भाईचारा

मेरा जन्म हुआ था भाई
कितनी ही सदियों पहले,
कोई मुझको कहे एकता
कोई भाईचारा कह ले।

मेरे ही बूते वीरों ने
आजादी की जंग लड़ी,
मेरी ही ताकत से डर
अंग्रेजी सेना भाग खड़ी।

आज अगर ये देश सलामत
है तो मेरे ही बल से,
आज अगर मैं मर जाऊँ तो
ग्रह युद्ध होगा कल से।

आओ भारत देश के वीरो
आ मुझको आजाद करो,
आओ मेरे बंधन तोड़ो
अमन को फिर आबाद करो

महमन

(सफ़दर)

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Dear Friend,

The Book Review has now completed fourteen years of publication. In spite of its specialized character, there is a very real demand for it among students, scholars and book lovers throughout the country. The journal has sought, in addition to reviewing books in English published in India, to focus attention on the work being done in the regional languages.

The Book Review has since its inception in 1976 been run purely through the voluntary efforts of its founder members and friends for financial and managerial support. With the journal now having secured for itself a niche in the book world, the time has come to place its management and financing on an institutional footing. A Trust has now been set up to administer the journal.

We would need a sizeable corpus of funds to be able to pay for the publishing of the journal from the interest which would accrue. Therefore we envisage the following scheme for the collection of funds: One-time donations of a minimum of Rs. 500/- from individuals and Rs. 5,000/- or more from cultural and philanthropic organizations, and business houses which have shown interest in promoting literary and cultural activities.


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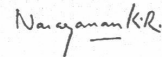
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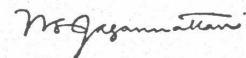

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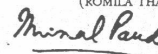

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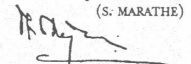

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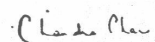
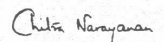
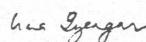

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The Contextual Man

N.S. Jagannathan

INDIA THROUGH HINDU CATEGORIES

Edited by McKim Marriott

Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1989, pp. 209, Rs. 250.00.

This book is the result of a growing conviction during the seventies and eighties among serious students of Indian sociology that the social realities of India and other South Asian nations cannot be seriously explored or adequately understood wholly with the help of paradigms developed elsewhere. As Dr McKim Marriott argues in his introduction, categories developed by western scholars are rooted basically in their own culture and therefore "rarely fit Indian definition of reality". It is therefore indispensable to develop a new ethnosociological theory for understanding Indian culture.

As he puts it, "constructing in theoretical social science for a culture requires somewhat more than providing a meaningful cultural account: it requires building from the culture's natural categories a general system of concepts that can be formally defined in relation to each other; it requires developing words and measures that can be used rigorously for description, analysis and explanation within that culture; and it especially requires deductive strategies that can generate hypothesis for empirical tests in order that the science may criticize itself and grow. It requires doing all this in terms that will be analytically powerful enough to define all the major parameters of living in that culture without violating the culture's ontology, its presuppositions or its epistemology".

This is a daunting enterprise in itself but Dr Marriott has assigned himself in his introductory essay the further task of a cross-cultural translation of the indigenous categories into "metaconcepts" familiar to Western social science, both for a better understanding of the culture studied and for comparative purposes. The approach is somewhat analogous to what J B Carman calls in his study of Ramanuja the "phenomenological approach" to religion as developed by Kristensen and Van der Leeuw of the Netherlands. (*The Theology of Ramanuja*: Yale University Press, 1974).

N.S. Jagannathan, a journalist of repute, is advisor to the Indian Express group of newspapers.

The term is somewhat misleading at first sight, as the Greek word *phenomenon* means "appearance" which would suggest that the phenomenologist student of religion is an outsider and a mere observer. But Carman's exegesis makes it clear that the approach really involves first, trying to understand the religion studied in terms of its own traditions, semantics and belief structures and then applying "one's own religious concepts and categories, not in order to evaluate but in order to understand."

Scholars have often discussed Indian texts (like the Mahabharata) as if they were loose-leaf files, rag-bag encyclopaedias. Taking the Indian word for text, grantha (derived from the knot that holds the palm leaves together), literally, scholars often posit only an accidental and physical unity. We need to attend to the context-sensitive designs that embed a seeming variety of modern tale, discourse, poem, etc.) and materials. This manner of constructing the text is in consonance with other designs in the culture. Not unity (in the Aristotelian sense) but coherence seems to be the end.

From A.K. Ramanujan's Is There an Indian Way of Thinking?

How useful is such a procedure in ethnosociology? In his preface to this book Dr Madan has rightly warned that "the subject is too serious for *obiter dicta*." Even so, greatly daring, one could venture the view that it is a methodology easier to apply to the realms of pure ideas like theology than to social behaviour. And it does seem, at least to one lay reader, that Marriott's endeavours have produced a Procrustean bed on which Indian social reality, particularly in its contemporary manifestations, cannot lie comfortably.

Basically, Marriott's is a geometric model accommodating several mutually supportive combinations of Hindu concepts. The *Pancha Bhutas* or five elements in the field of physics, *tridoshas* or three humours in the field of medicine, the three-fold character typology of *Satva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*/gunas in psychology, and the schema of human aims, the *purushartas*.

There is no space—nor in all candour, do I have the equipment—to discuss here the details of this ethnosociological configuration. Those interested may have to explore these recondite matters themselves. Many of the other essays in the volume have attempted to use—or in turn provide material for the "constructs" developed by Marriott. These micro-studies do contain interesting insights into Indian social behaviour but their main interest is for theoreticians in ethnosociology.

Marriott's strenuously self-conscious attempt as an "Outsider/Insider" to get under the skin of

Hindu categories is in some contrast to Insider/Outsider. A K Ramanujan is infinitely more relaxed playing around with these categories in the highly readable "informal essay" seeking to answer the question whether there is such a thing as an Indian way of thinking. The rest of the review is devoted to a detailed consideration of this study.

All cultures, argues Ramanujan, have their ideals, and though individual or group behaviour may not be wholly or always in conformity with them, conduct is unconsciously conditioned by these ideals. But what distinguishes Indian (Hindu) behaviour is that the cultural ideals under which it operates are "context-sensitive" rather than "context-free". These are concepts that Ramanujan has borrowed from one of his several academic disciplines, linguistics. Quoting Frits Staal, he says that what Euclid was to European thought, Paanini was to Indian, and postulates "Grammar is the central model for thinking in many Hindu texts".

The Hindu passion for classification and taxonomy (a priori rather than empirical) derives, he argues, from its concern with "the logic of classes, or genera and species or *Jaati*." It covers the whole gamut of human experience—"seasons, landscape, times, qualities (gunas) and their material bases, tastes, characters, emotions, aesthetic essence or *Rasaas*, which are basic to the thought-work of Hindu medicine and poetry, cooking and religion, erotics and magic. Each *Jaati* or class defines a context, a structure of relevance, a rule of permissible combinations, a frame of reference, a meta-communication of what is and can be done."

A context-sensitive, location-specific, particularised ethics rather than universal categorical imperatives has been the intellectual and practical continuum in which all Indians consciously—and in more recent centuries, unconsciously—behaved, until, still more recently, some, consciously began to adopt and self-consciously to practise context-free ethics and behaviour under "alien" influence.

Ramanujan illustrates the difference between the two mores with telling quotations from Kant, Hegel, Manu and Gautama. Take for example, the question of the truthfulness of Indians that vexed, among others, Lord Curzon. Despite the unqualified Upanishadic injunction, *Satyam Vada*—speak the truth—Manu has laid down that "At the time of marriage, during dalliance, when life is in danger, when loss of property is threatened, and for the sake of a Brahmana," truth is expendable. (A

Tamil proverb in the form of a maxim permits (enjoins?) one to tell a thousand lies and bring about a marriage!) Manu also said, "whenever the death of a man of *any of the four castes* (emphasis added) would be occasioned by true evidence, falsehood was even better than truth". Macaulay's criminal jurisprudence and his Evidence Act are still fighting a losing battle in our courts against this injunction internalised long ago by Indians.

Against this relativistic ethics, Ramanujan poses Kant's stern formulation: "Act as if the maxim of your action were to become through your will a Universal Law of Nature". A different aspect of the Hindu View of Life is encapsulated in Hegel's perceptive observation quoted by Ramanujan: "We (Europeans) say 'Bravery is a virtue; the Hindus say, on the contrary, 'Bravery is virtue of the Kshatriyas."

Ramanujan also notes two other peculiarities of Indian (Hindu) thinking: One is "the metronomic view of man in nature—man in context—in which what he has he becomes". "The sacrificial horse", says Ramanujan—in the manner of Gertrude Stein's "A rose is a rose is a rose—is the universe is Prajapathi... In sacrificing and partaking of it one is sacrificing and partaking of the universe itself". Tamil folk-wisdom embodies the same principle in the ironic comment on the priest's parsimony in making a votive offering to an icon of Vinayaka made of jaggery with a bit of the jaggery chipped off from the icon itself! (Incidentally, the literalness of the ritualistic symbolism should dispel the disingenuous claims made by orbiting Gurus merchandising abroad "spiritual" India as opposed to the "materialistic" west.)

The other attribute of Indian (Hindu) mode of thinking and feeling is the notion that "the microcosm is both *within* and *like* the macrocosm, and paradoxically also contains it". Ramanujan invokes in this context the concept of "*Kosas*" or "Concentric nests". As with many Hindu notions, this concept has many applications and reverberations. Applied to an ethical code, it envisages a *Sadharana Dharma* or common (universal?) ethics that encompasses within itself an *Ashrama Dharma* (conduct appropriate to one of the four stages of life like *Brahmacharya* etc.) *Swadharna* (conduct that is right for your station, *Jaati* or class), *Swabhava* (given nature) and *aapaddharma* (conduct appropriate—permissible?—in times of extremity). As Ramanujan wryly comments, after these context-conditioned *Dharmas* are scooped out, little is left of universal categorical imperatives!

Ramanujan gives many examples from Indian aesthetic theory, physiological and pathological first principles in Hindu medicine (*Doshas*) and psychological typology (*Gunas*) as well as from real life of an over-arching mind-set that is context and location specific. It is indeed an overwhelming case he makes for the proposition that the non-universal ethical categories legitimised by law-givers like Manu are of a piece with an entire mode

of thinking and feeling embedded in the racial memories of Indians (Hindus).

My purpose here is not to evaluate but to grope toward a description of the two kinds of emphases. Yet in each of these kinds of cultures, despite all the complexity and oscillation, there is a definite bias. The Buddha (who said 'when we see a man shot with poisoned arrow, we cannot afford to ask what caste he or his enemy is) also told the following parable of the Raft: Once a man was drowning in a sudden flood. Just as he was about to drown, he found a raft. He clung to it and it carried him safely to dry land. And he was so grateful to the raft that he carried it on his back for the rest of his life. Such was the Buddha's comment on context-free systems.

From A.K. Ramanujan's
Is There an Indian Way of Thinking

However, one must mildly demur at Ramanujan's unqualified use for the purposes of his argument the five-fold taxonomy of early Tamil aesthetics as exemplified in the *Sangam* poetry (circa 3rd century BC to 3rd century AD). The so-called *Aintinai*s or the five-fold loci are a brilliant literary device assigning appropriate emotions for a five-fold physiography and associated landscapes, flora and fauna: Hills referred to as the *Kurinji Tinai* (after its uniquely associative flower are for fulfilled love. *Paalai* (arid region) is for unrequited longing, often as a result of involuntary separation from one's lover and so on.

It is indeed "an eco-system of which a man's activities are a part" and an inter-penetrative continuum of human emotion and its ambience. But there is no equivalent to this detailed and rigorously applied taxonomy of locales and emotions in Sanskrit (or indeed in later Tamil poetry). So, this particular contextualisation is strictly speaking (early) Tamil rather than Hindu, if only because it has no presence in Sanskrit literary theory which, otherwise is extremely taxonomic, with its eight *rasas* (crystallized emotions) and six-fold typology of heroes and heroines etc.

A society so completely permeated by a tyrannical contextualisation has however two escape routes. One of them is provided for in the age-old schema of ultimate ends (or *purushartas*) itself. The other is the more recently born protestant ethic and theology, the *Bhakti* movement. *Moksha*, the ultimate objective of man prescribed by every school of Hindu philosophy is quite simply a release from context-conditioning into, literally, freedom.

The other road (*marga*) to freedom from context-controlled conduct is *Bhakti* "which denies the very need for context. *Bhakti* defies all context-

tual structures: every pigeonhole of caste, ritual, gender, appropriate clothing and custom, stage of life, the whole system of homo *hierarchicus* ('everything in its place') is the target of its irony". However, as often happens in India with "alien" influences, *Bhakti* also was quickly co-opted into context-sensitive orthodoxies, as is evident from the fact that the *Srivaishnavas* of the South—who whom Ramanujan and I are two—are among the most context-conscious Hindus!

Ramanujan has some pertinent observations on the vicissitudes of the imposition of "context-free" cultures on Indian (Hindu) mores. The Indian Constitution's attempt to "de-recognizing" by law distinctions immemorably internalised by this psyche has had some weird consequences. The indestructibility of the context-conditioned mores of behaviour is only all too tragically evident in the current turmoil over the Mandal Commission's report. Less traumatically, there have been varying degrees of co-option, short of total absorption or assimilation, of the two systems.

Ramanujan quotes some amusing examples of de-contextualisation by fiat. His list could be enlarged by others from their own experience. For example, M G Ramachandran's resolve to eliminate caste from public consciousness expressed itself in attempts to erase caste suggestions in street names. This has led to some bizzareries like the earlier "Brahmin street" becoming just "Street"! On the other hand, mutual accommodation of the two cultures is to be seen in non-antagonistic contradictions like avoiding the *Rahu Kala* for launching industrial ventures and heart warming customs like having turmeric smeared on computers and typewriters as part of worshipping one's tools on *Ayudha puja* or *Visvakarma* day.

The key question still remains. After two centuries of continuous osmosis, if not an even deeper inter-penetration, of a context-sensitive and a context-free culture, is there a new, third, "Indian" way of thinking? Only an inconclusive answer is possible. There has perhaps been a more or less uneasy accommodation of the two cultures in the Indian psyche but no displacement or ejection of one by the other. (Maybe—changing the metaphor—some anti-bodies have been created?)

Such inconclusiveness is exasperating to those who do not have the Keatsian "negative capability". Like Blake whom Ramanujan quotes as an example, Keats also is a counter-culturalist in the Western tradition. His formulation of "*negative capability*" (which he invokes to praise Shakespeare) is worth quoting, "the capacity to be "in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without an irritating reaching after fact and reason". There, if you like, is as accurate a description of the Indian (Hindu) way of thinking as you are ever likely to get. But then, as the old colonial curmudgeon is supposed to have said in exasperation, "Everything you say about an Indian, the opposite is also true"! □

Towards Psychological Deterrence

Bharat Wariavwalla

BALANCE OF POWER IN THE NUCLEAR AGE

By Rikhi Jaipal

Allied Publishers Ltd., 1989, pp. 208, Rs. 125.00

There is no point in arguing with history, the noted historian, Sir Lewis Nemier, once said. The book should not be read from the standpoint of the present. None thought the Soviet empire (in East Europe) would disintegrate so suddenly and swiftly. The crumbling of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 has ushered in a new world, which obviously the author could not have anticipated at the time of his writing. The two foremost adversaries, the United States and the Soviet Union, have now concluded important arms control agreements, which a few years ago would have seemed impossible. Today it is politics, entente between them, that very largely determines the Soviet and American strategic policies. Cold War is now history.

The book is cast in the coldwar setting and therefore should be read in this context. A former diplomat who had much to do with the debates on the issues of arms control and disarmament in the UN, Rikhi Jaipal, now addresses himself to these issues as a scholar. The book admirably puts together his "thoughts", as he says in the preface, on such issues and concepts as balance of power, stability, deterrence, the the UN and its failure in settling disputes between states and Soviet-American arms control negotiations. The last two chapters are on our nuclear policy and foreign policy (the foreign policy under Nehru-1) and they are greatly disappointing because here he writes as spokesman of the government and not as a discerning scholar.

It is the treatment of such concepts as balance of power and balance of deterrence, strategic stability, etc., that puts this book above many such works. Most Indian diplomats are not in the habit

Bharat Wariavwalla is a Senior Research Associate at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses and before that, he was visiting senior fellow at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi where he worked on the State, Market and Democracy project. He is a frequent commentator on international affairs, and has contributed articles to the Los Angeles Times, Die Zeit, a German weekly and in the Indian press.

of writing or seriously reflecting on their diplomatic experiences, and those few who have generally write anecdotal accounts which they call memoirs. To call them memoirs is to debase this great genre of writing, so well exemplified by such persons as Guicciardini, Metternich, De Gaulle or Kennan.

Jaipal examines the large questions of power, diplomacy, balance, stability, etc., which have preoccupied the practitioners and theorists of statecraft ever since the modern state system was born with the conclusion of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. His analysis is informed by his overriding concern for peace. His basic values are unequivocally stated in the book: adherence of nuclear weapons, revulsion at what Thomas Schelling used to call the diplomacy of violence, strong disapproval of the great powers' frequent resort to use of force and consequent undermining of the UN role in peace keeping. He greatly values humane diplomacy, and believes it can be creatively used to preserve peace in the nuclear age.

The possessors of the weapons of mass destruction are caught in a unique strategic dilemma; how to use them politically and psychologically so as not to use them militarily.

His selective historical examination of the European diplomacy of the past three hundred years leads him to believe that the traditional "balance of power system was sophisticated, relatively stable, and more equitable in relation to the present imbalance of terror." (p.18). The classical balance of power system was stable at times (between the second peace of Paris, 1815, to the outbreak of World War I,) but it was greatly oppressive. What Henry Kissinger called "a hundred year peace" in his superb work *A World Restored*, rested on an oppressive socio-economic status quo, maintained by force. Three of the five concert powers, Prussia, the Hapsburg Monarch, and Czarist Russia, often intervened to put down domestic unrest in various European countries. Granted that the balance of power system maintained peace in the nineteenth century, what about the eighteenth century? It witnessed only four years of peace, or to

put it more correctly, absence of large scale conflicts.

I wish somewhere the author had distinguished between the classical balance of power system and the contemporary balance of deterrence system. The former is a mechanical system in the sense that power (mostly military power) is roughly balanced between the antagonists; the latter is an entirely psychological phenomenon in the sense that nuclear deterrence rests on the threat of extinction. The possessors of the weapons of mass destruction are caught in a unique strategic dilemma; how to use them politically and psychologically so as not to use them militarily.

The author cuts through long, complicated Soviet American arms control and disarmament negotiations and comes straight to the heart of the matter. It was their antagonistic political relationship that blocked progress in US-USSR arms control talks. This has now changed and the prospects of major arms control measures being reached are indeed bright.

Jaipal defends to the hilt our nuclear policy. Scepticism, subtlety, careful sifting of data, which he applies to his analysis of Soviet and American policies, completely disappear when it comes to our nuclear and foreign policy. Indian government's statements and explanations are taken to be true. Thus he says that our "peaceful nuclear explosion was "nothing more than a test conceived and conducted exclusively for peaceful purposes." By way of evidence that we had no other purpose in mind other than the exploitation of nuclear energy for civilian purposes, he cites our decision to refrain from conducting any more tests of the kind we undertook in May 1974. And he rejects the proposal for making South Asia a nuclear free zone on the ground that the region cannot be isolated from Eurasia, a region in "Which the nuclear weapons States (China and US) have intricate systems of military and political alliances." (p. 149)

This is standard Indian position expressed on countless number of occasions by Indian officials and large number of journalists and academics. It has convinced few outside the country. I wonder how our decision not to have any more PNEs could be taken as a proof of our "commendable self-restraint" and benign intentions. The Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, Dr Raja Ramana, was stressing all along in 1974 the need for several tests. Why did we refrain from having more PNEs? Out of fear of Western pressures (our aid dependence) or because of our benign intentions? The former consideration is more likely, but the latter one is surely a fabrication. Anyway now the country is well set on the course to be a nuclear weapons power, despite official claims to the contrary.

Despite this major flaw, the book sensitively explores the problems of statecraft in the nuclear age. □

Alleviating Rural Poverty

H. Venkatasubbiah

PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT: PEOPLE AND COMMON PROPERTY RESOURCE

By Kanchan Chopra, Gopal Kadekodi and M.N. Murty

Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1990, pp. 163, Rs. 145.00

CHANGING FOCUS: INVOLVING THE RURAL POOR IN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

By David Watson and Richard Holloway

Oxford and IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1989, pp. vi+177, Rs. 125.00

The authors of the first of these books are faculty members of the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi, two of them professors and the third, reader. It is a case study of rural development, specifically of people's organizations in the management of common property resources such as village forests, grazing lands, rivulets and watershed drainages. The case chosen by the authors for the study is the work done in this field in the Sukhomajri village in the lower Shivalik range of the Himalayas in and around the catchment of Sukhna lake of the city of Chandigarh.

The authors have set out in detail the data, methodology and results of the 'Sukhomajri model' and have not attempted to generalise. On the contrary, they recognise that "from the history of societies it is not easy to set up new institutions to replace or even supplement the older ones, least of all in a society ridden by inequalities of class and

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caste". A long history of governmental intervention, and collapse of local institutions, have in a way atrophied the quality of self-help on the part of rural populations.

The vast increase in population and consequently the magnitude of needs has complicated the problem. Where resource development has so many facets of land, water, livestock and financial resources, support from government of other outside agencies is of course needed but these should be 'catalysts' to what the authors call participatory management and should not become substitutes for it. On the other side, rural people must develop a sense of community property. They are often so individualistic as to commit theft of community property (p. 38).

The authors also recognise that market forces, like urban markets for rural products and migration to urban centres for wage employment, have made participatory management feasible. But on "integration of people along with other agents of decision-making, namely, government, technology and social and cultural institutions alone can lead to a total concept of development (p. 143)". There are of course many rural development programmes that have been tried and still in force over the past 35 years, since the Community Development Programme of the fifties, but these do not look at man as a development entity. The authors conclude: "Most of the recent improvements in the planning process, such as the introduction of Integrated Rural Development Pro-

gramme and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme, still treat man in isolation as an individual (a poor person, a labourer, as one below

the poverty line and so on), and not as part of a social system of planned decision-making. Sustainability of such programmes is being questioned again and again. The participatory approach can be an alternative" (pp. 143-44). This is a cautious approach. Perhaps, to begin with, some Sukhomajris can be added to existing programmes all over the country.

The book is an interesting study in micro-development economics and should attract the attention of planners and development administrators.

Changing Focus is more in the nature of a guidebook on methodology for officials and non-governmental organizations engaged in field work for rural development in Third World countries. It is based on Indonesian experience. It consists of 136 pictures (including 12 cartoon posters) and 12 questionnaires for field visits. The pictures also have questions and notes for trainers listed against them. Many of them are aimed at removing misconceptions on the part of trainers about poverty and its effects. Since the authors have personal experience of anti-poverty work in Asia and Africa the book is bound to be very useful to fellow field workers. But it is in English. It is not clear if it is available in other languages, so that non-English-speaking social workers can also benefit from it. □

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Managing the Market

Badar A. Iqbal

REGULATED MARKET IN A RURAL ECONOMY

by G.N. Murthy

Ajanta publications, New Delhi, 1989, pp. 321, Rs. 200.00

Rural India constitutes 67 and 37 per cent of India's total employment and national income respectively. However, farmers have been facing the problem in marketing their produce. This phenomenon has been due to defective marketing practices and lack of professional approach to marketing. In this direction, the Central Government has been taking pains to establish regulated agricultural markets for the development of the rural economy.

The need to have such markets was conceived with the hope of weeding out the existing market practices in rural economy on the one hand and on the other hand to make all out efforts for creating and inducing the proper environment of orderly marketing. Since the establishment of regulated agricultural markets, some improvement has been witnessed in the existing marketing conditions. However, it is generally observed that there has been a wide gap between promise and performance which requires an in depth analysis of performance and root causes responsible for such a state of affairs. The book under review is a modest attempt in the said direction.

The study which is an outgrowth of author's doctoral thesis consists of eight chapters, a select bibliography and an index. It evaluates the performance in regard to various facets of rural marketing, namely, physical performance, financial performance, price efficiency and competitive conditions. Added to this, the study further reviews objectives of regulated markets and also highlights the extent to which the interest of farmers is protected and safeguarded under the scheme of regulated market.

In his foreword, Professor J. Satyanarayana, a professor of commerce at Osmania University, Hyderabad, opines that the study is painstaking and makes considerable contribution towards better understanding of the various facets related to the problems of management, finance, costs, prices and farmer-trader relationship. Satyanaray-

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ana rightly brings out that while the financial performance of some of the regulated markets was unsatisfactory, the Warangal regulated market built up an accumulated surplus of nearly one crore rupees over a period of ten years (1972-1982). This is a striking feature and needs an overall review of the performance of those markets whose performance is unsatisfactory.

❖

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❖

In his introduction, the author traces the origin of the concept of regulated market in the rural economy of India right from 1928 (Royal Commission on Agriculture), 1932 (Central Banking Enquiry Committee). Thereafter, he reviews the existing literature on the problem of regulated markets in the rural economy of India. He quotes many important studies—Uma J. Lele (1971), Holmes (1969), Moore, S.R. (1973), Kulkarni B.D. (1977), Subba Rao (1978), Barbara Harris (1980) and Prasad, S.R. (1982) on the subject. However, studies quoted in the book are old. Recent studies on the subject have not been taken note of. Since 1984 when this doctoral thesis was originally submitted there have been many important studies on the subject, which if included, would have increased the academic value of the book.

Chapter I deals with the organization and working of regulated markets in Andhra Pradesh which include a critical analysis of the evolution and growth of regulated markets and organizational pattern at the level of marketing department. However, data used in the analysis is too old (1932) and will serve a limited purpose.

'Regulated Markets in Warangal District—An Overview' deals with the organizational structure of regulated markets at the district level (micro-level) and also highlights the profiles of the market in the district in a detailed manner.

Chapter III is devoted to trends in physical performance—market arrivals/volume of business transacted—which is an important indicator of the physical performance of a regulated market in a rural economy. The chapter includes a discussion on commodity coverage, composition of arrivals, time pattern of arrivals, growth of arrivals and inter-relationship between arrivals and production, prices, amenities, competitive conditions, regulations and the attitudes of the farmers in the disposal of their produce.

In regard to financial performance (Chapter 4), the study gives a detailed account of sources and uses of Market Committee Fund and also analyses trends in income, expenditure and surplus of the regulated marketing in the district. Added to this, discussion on the application of tools of financial controls (budgets, financial rules, accounting procedures and audit) in the management of regulated markets is provided. The entire discussion is based on the financial statements of the concerned markets.

Chapter V brings to light the nature of competition prevailing in the regulated markets of the district and also highlights the extent to which they differ from the ideal conditions. Farmers' perceptions reveal that competitive conditions do not exist in all the regulated markets in general and small markets in particular. In order to improve the situation, a few respondents suggested the involvement of cooperative marketing societies on large scale in agricultural marketing, providing incentives to small traders and increasing their competitive strength. However modalities of such schemes are the missing links in the chapter.

The Chapter entitled "Evaluation of Objectives I" deals with the establishment of market yards, dissemination of market information and the democratic functioning of Mcs of regulated markets which are sine-quo-non of their successful working in the rural economy of India in general and Andhra Pradesh in particular.

"Evaluation of objectives II" analyses the performance of regulated markets in fulfilling the objectives pertaining to the regulation of market practices, rationalisation of market changes and the settlement of disputes arising in the market. It also gives an interaction of the views of major constituents (farmers, traders and members of Mcs) of regulated markets.

The study concludes with an analysis of chapter-wise conclusions and suggestions. The nature of conclusions and suggestions is logical and would serve as valuable reference material. The most noteworthy feature of the study is the interaction of primary and secondary data which is a rare approach in such type of studies in recent times. □

Barriers Broken

A. Narayanamoorthy

PRODUCTION RELATIONS AND AGRARIAN CHANGE IN TAMILNADU

By Venkatesh B. Athreya, Goran Djurfeldt and Staffan Lindberg

Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1990, pp. 336, Rs. 250.00

The book under review is based on an in-depth survey of 367 agrarian households in south India. It contains nine parts viz, Introduction; Methods; Ecology; Changing Land Relations; Labour Relations; Identification of Agrarian Classes; Usury and Credit; Economics of Scale or Advantage of Class; and Summary and Conclusion. It gives a detailed reference list.

The book systematically compares two ecotypes in Indian agriculture: rained cultivation and irrigated agriculture. The main aim of the book is to make a systematic comparison of different agrarian ecotypes (tank irrigation, canal irrigation, well irrigation and dry farming) which are considered as infrastructures for different relations of production. The authors have made an empirical investigation based on an on-going debate on production relationship (p.15).

In the introduction, the authors deal with the aim of the project, the choice of study area, the history of valleys and plains, wet area and the dry area condition. The authors investigated the caste structure of both ecotypes systematically. They found "landless proletariat of untouchables characteristic of the wet ecotype, has no real counter-

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part in the dry one" (p.27).

The second chapter is devoted to methodology (methods of analysis). The authors have developed a new technique of analysis. They have also given models for the selection of villages, and quantity and quality methods of data collection, formula for the sample selection which will be useful for researchers.

In the ecology chapter they have focussed on climate, soils, etc. which determine land use and cropping patterns. Though it centers on radical political economy, it also explains intensively land salinization and its impact on yield and soil nutrient (p.56). The crop pattern between wet and dry villages has differed entirely. They explored the reasons for such variations. The use of High Yielding Varieties (HYV), and Locally Improved Varieties (LIV) have been explained neatly. Interestingly, they found that there had been significant variations in yield between HYVs and LIV (pp 77-78). It is also pointed out that about 50 to 75 per cent of the cultivated area has been occupied by the HYVs. They have also explained the impact of the use of fertilizers and pesticides on yields stability and land condition (p.88).

The study goes on to deal with changing land relations, landownership, tenancy, changes in the distribution of land, etc. The authors found that the ownership structure was extremely polarized in the wet area, while there was much less inequality in other ecotypes (p.122). Likewise, the magnitude of landlessness is high in the wet area and low in the dry one.

In the chapter on labour relations, for the sake of simplicity, the scholars have first considered only two forms of labour as predominant: family and hired. Permanent farm servants constitute a minority of the wage labour force in both ecotypes and they are used by farmers mainly as a substitute for family labourers. (p.118). Daily wage labour is common in both ecotypes. But a significant

difference is that gang labour prevails in wet areas. They have also discussed the other major categories of labour viz., family labour classified cropwise and also according to ecotypes, which is a novel method.

The Chapter on Identification of Agrarian Classes, deals with conceptual problems relating to definition of class, relations of production and class, relation to agricultural labour market, reproduction of the family and the farm. It deals with the surplus criterion of class. Poor peasant or semi-proletarians are defined with a simple formula. Mathematical definitions of the surplus criterion are also explained clearly. The authors have developed a new quantitative methodology to study agrarian class relations.

The usury and credit chapter analyses both institutional and non-institutional loans. About 50 per cent of all credit in both ecotypes come from the institutional sources. Importantly 80 to 90 per cent of the population is indebted in both areas (p.246). Purposes of borrowing, mean debt and median rate of interest per household by class and ecotype have been explained elaborately.

Chapter eight is devoted to economies of scale or advantage of class. The authors conclude that land size is not necessarily the best measure of scale. Intensity of cultivation and class status of cultivating households play an important role in determining the productivity. And more importantly ecological and historical specificities of farm economy play an important role in the determination of productivity.

Finally it gives briefly chapter wise summary and conclusion. On the whole, the book provides highly useful material on agricultural economics which will be helpful to researchers, planners, policy makers, students of agriculture as well as economists. □

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Treasuries Of Perennial Joy

A. Ranganathan

SELECTED LETTERS OF
ANANDA COOMARASWAMY

Edited by Alvin Moore, Jr. and Rama Poonambalam Coomaraswamy

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, and Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1988, pp. 479, Rs. 250.00

SELECTED LETTERS OF ROMAIN ROLLAND

Edited by Francis Dore and Marie-Laure Prevost

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, and Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1990, pp. 139, Rs. 125.00

“I forgot to say” observed the great English poet Byron, “that one of the great pleasures of reading old letters is the knowledge that they need no answer.” Indeed great letters make not only interesting reading but also help in exploring fascinating areas in the fields of biography, literature and history. Again just as Leslie Stephen termed autobiography the most fascinating branch of literature, so could one argue that private letters constitute an equally fascinating branch of autobiography. Furthermore, it is well to remember that letter-writers include some of the greatest scientists, artists, men of letters, statesmen and military generals.

Specifically great letters shed light on the main currents of history. Indeed we can perceive the dawn of history through the letters of Saint Paul; similarly we can understand the age of the Renaissance through the letters of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo; again we can witness the great revolutions of history through letters—the French Revolution through the letters of George Washington, Thomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson; also we can catch glimpses of twentieth century history through the letters of Jawaharlal Nehru and Winston Churchill. And we can understand the fundamental basis of traditional thought through the letters of Ananda Coomaraswamy.

Great letters are not merely a source of histori-

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cal illumination, but could also be viewed from a number of vantage points. The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), has brought out two memorable collections of Letters: *Selected Letters of Ananda Coomaraswamy* and *Selected Letters of Romain Rolland*.

In her perceptive foreword Kapila Vatsyayan Director, Indira Gandhi Centre for the National Arts, New Delhi, writes that “to fulfil the need for renewed research for the whole, as also to stimulate further work with this free and catholic approach which is not imprisoned in the walls of ideology, the Kala Kosa Division of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts has initiated a programme of publication of works of critical scholarship, reprints and translations.”

Kapila Vatsyayan goes on to say that the IGNCA “has chosen as one amongst its various programmes to reprint or translate works of writers, scholars, creative artists from all parts of the world who have searched for perennial sources and who have created bridges of communication between and amongst diverse traditions, civilizations, cultures and different orders of time—the path finders. . . . The first volume of the *Selected Letters of Ananda Coomaraswamy* reflects these concerns and commitments from one vantage point. The *Selected Letters of Romain Rolland* is the second in the series of letters of men of vision and reflection, creativity and socially responsible action.”

Coomaraswamy’s treasury of letters highlights the power of creative thinking in the spacious perspective of the tradition. Coomaraswamy’s ability to switch from science to art history and again from art history through religion on to metaphysics revealed a type of the universal mind that was possible only to one whose mind was cast in the mould of the Renaissance and Post-Renaissance artists like Leonardo da Vinci, Galileo and Goethe. However, viewed in historical perspective, it is clear that Coomaraswamy is, in a sense, the Renaissance Man in reverse; whereas the Renaissance was in many respects a process of secularization, the great importance of Coomaraswamy is that he was seeking to reaffirm the sacred nature of art and human crafts and activities within traditional cultures both of East and West. Just as S.H. Butcher described Aristotle’s *poetics* as the criticism of “a Greek summing up Greek experience,” so could Coomaraswamy’s work be regarded as the contribution of a post-Renaissance figure summing up pre-Renaissance experience.



Ananda
Coomaraswamy

The remarkable thing about these letters is that each of them is a sort of “mini-essay” put forth in relatively easy language. Despite this, they cover almost every major line of thought that is developed in his published works. Those who would seek an introduction to the writings of Ananda Coomaraswamy could do no better than to start with this book.

From Preface to *Selected Letters of Ananda Coomaraswamy*

Coomaraswamy regarded autobiographical writing as “a vulgar catering to illegitimate curiosity.” Yet Coomaraswamy’s Letters have been felicitously described by Whitall N. Perry as “the why and wherefore of Coomaraswamy’s thought processes.” Also as Eric Gill wrote to Coomaraswamy; “You hit bloody straight and bloody hard and bloody often.” This volume contains Coomaraswamy’s letters to a variety of men and women—his contemporaries, art historians, historians, literary celebrities, philosophers, Buddhist monks, Sanskritists and science historians. The collection includes such famous names as Hermann Goetz, Eric Gill, Schweitzer, Aldous Huxley, T.S. Eliot, Muirhead, H.G. Rawlinson, Northrop, Needham, I.B. Horner, E.R. Dodds,

The Coomaraswamy corpus is truly impressive. Interestingly, the nature of Coomaraswamy's achievement in the field of art criticism recalls the shaping of the Auden sensibility in the field of modern English poetry. For the relationship between the earlier revolutionary poetry of Auden and his later theological poetry is reminiscent of Coomaraswamy's migration from the state of Indian Nationalism into the shores of the Perennial Philosophy. And just as Auden's poetics flashed through *Beowulf* and *Troilus and Criseyde* to the contemporary English poets, so was Coomaraswamy's aesthetic imagination shaped by works ranging from *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Shakespeare's Plays and Milton's *Paradise Lost* to Ashvagosh's *Buddha-Carita*, *Lankavatara Sutra* and Anandavardhana's *Dhvanyaloka*.

Let it be noted at the outset that Coomaraswamy cannot be lumped with those swamis East or West, or like types, who peddle a bogus "spirituality" that is vague, delusory and deceitful. I believe further that Coomaraswamy had no designs on us in the West except to return us to the sources of our own wisdom.

Ray Livingston in his Preface to his *The Traditional Theory of Literature*

Again Coomaraswamy's contributions to the traditional theory of literature derived from the perennial streams of literary symbolism, aesthetic sensibility and aphoristic insight, entitle him to be ranked among the major figures in the history of literary criticism. To cite an example, Professor L.C. Knights' suggestive essay *King Lear as Metaphor* links Coomaraswamy's gloss on Hsieh Ho's concept of "Yun" in *The Transformation of Nature in Art* to the central thesis of Prof. Martin Foss' seminal work *Symbol and Metaphor in Human Experience*. As Professor Knights has shown, Coomaraswamy's comparison of the Indian "dhvani" with the Chinese "Yun" suggests not only the concept of reverberation but also highlights the metaphoric process defined by Martin Foss as "a process of tension and energy." For Coomaraswamy's profoundly original interpretation of "dhvani" as the verbal noun "sounding" rather than the noun "sound" is present both in *Dhvan-*

yaloka and in Chinese aesthetics. And the appositeness of this concept resulting from the energy to hold in tension the apprehension of meanings in *King Lear* to Coomaraswamy's explication of "an echoing in the heart of the hearer" is a key to Professor Knights' understanding of *King Lear* as "a moving image of life... that sets in motion those powers of apprehension through which we simultaneously become aware of, and make our world."

Commenting on Coomaraswamy's philosophical and literary writings as well as the letters included in this volume, Mr Alvin Moore, Jr brilliantly argues that "a master of the language like Coomaraswamy can compensate for the undoubted deficiencies that centuries of secular usage have allowed to creep into what is now the world's premier international tongue." Here biography, history, inter-disciplinary scholarship and creative writing, derived from a profound attempt to understand the manifold meanings of sacred art, converge to form a new Coomaraswamy sensibility—at once literary and metaphysical. And this sensibility is relevant to the shaping of the English idiom in the twentieth century. For Coomaraswamy's mind was a perpetual chrestomathy which synthesized the different confluences of art, religion and literature, into a luminous prose of universal significance.

Coomaraswamy's letter to Hermann Goetz dated January 22, 1947, which is not only a gracious acknowledgement of the 1947 Goetz essay (this essay was sent by Dr Goetz to Coomaraswamy before it was published) but also an explication of Coomaraswamy's shift of interest from descriptive iconography to the seminal nature of iconographic development deserves to be quoted in this context: "You connect my change of interest from art history to metaphysics with age and no doubt that is in a measure true, though I would perhaps rather say 'maturity' than 'age'. However, I would also like to explain that this was also a natural and necessary development arising from my former work in which the iconographic interest prevails. . . I could not, of course, be satisfied with merely 'sociological' explanations since the forms of the traditional societies themselves can only be explained metaphysically."

Coomaraswamy had an eye for detail, which made him a delightful letter-writer. Here is a description of Rajasthan in his letter (written on October 10, 1910) to Sir William Rothenstein "You must really go to Jodhpur to see the people. . . I should also recommend a night for a few hours at Ajmere to see the marble pavilions on the edge of the lake. Shah Jehan must have been a supreme artist—everything he had to do with is marvellous, and his reign marks the zenith of Mughal Art." And here is an extract from a letter to a friend which was written at a different level of perception: "I cannot, of course, agree with you that East is East and West is West, as was said by Kipling, of

whom the late F.W. Bain remarked that "Hindu India was for him a book sealed with seven seals." There is, indeed, a gulf dividing what is 'modern' from what is truly Oriental; but that is not a geographical distinction, or one that could have been recognized before the fourteenth century." Elsewhere he wrote in the same strain: "You speak of your metaphysics as Western. You might just as well call your mathematics or chemistry Western. Such distinctions cannot be made."

Coomaraswamy's letter to Aldous Huxley is truly a vignette: "Regarding art" observed Coomaraswamy, "I do not myself see that Mayan art is devoid of sensuality. As for stylistic performance or change; one must, of course distinguish style from iconography; the latter can persist indefinitely, and even long after its reasons are no longer understood, the former always changes, so that even in what seem to be the most static cultures, works of art can be dated on stylistic grounds, if we know enough. There is no inherent necessity for iconographic change, because the forms maybe correct; accordingly in a living tradition one expects Plato's new songs, but not new kinds of music." It is our sensitive rather than our intellectual nature that demands novelties; for the intellect, originality is all that is required." And characteristically, Coomaraswamy broke a lance with George Sarton who commented favourably on *The Transformation of Nature of Art* in a letter dated November 4, 1934: "You must not give me credit for the passage you approve of, in quite the way you do—I am 'dogmatic', in the technical as well as in the pejorative sense of the word, according to which latter sense you employ it. I regard the truth, in other words, as a matter of certainty, not of opinion. I am never expressing an opinion or personal view, but an orthodox one; I cannot say "I think," or "it seems to me."

In a letter to Dr Goetz dated November 1, 1944, Coomaraswamy argued that "the 'gulf' between East and West, while it is a present fact exists only as between the Modern West and the Surviving East." Small wonder that Coomaraswamy was greatly attracted by Blake, whose ethereal illustrations in his Prophetic Books are reminiscent of mediaeval manuscript illustrations.

The letters reveal Rolland's deepest perceptions of the arts, and a delicacy of inter-personal sensitivity, that is profoundly moving. After reading only a small selection of these letters, one feels one has touched the man; just as it is clear that the man had touched and been touched by those with whom he was corresponding.

—From Kapila Vatsyayan's Foreword to Selected Letters of Romain Rolland

Just as the first volume of the IGNCAs containing the *Selected Letters of Ananda Coomaraswamy* highlights the epic grandeur of the Perennial Philosophy in its manifold aspects, so does the second IGNCAs volume of the *Selected Letters of Romain Rolland* reflect the various dimensions of the East-West Cultural Dialogue which began with Ampere. Indeed it may be recalled that Andre Marie Ampere (1775-1836), a celebrated French mathematician and physicist who was the first to propound the electrodynamic theory, wrote to Victor Marie Hugo (1802-1885), an eminent French poet, novelist and dramatist that "Indian Culture will occupy the attention of our century and those following as much as Greek culture occupied the sixteenth century."

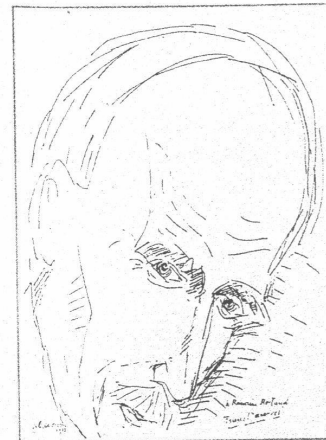
The East-West Cultural Dialogue to Romain Rolland—who, incidentally, got the Nobel Literature prize in 1915—was essentially a concern of the inner self, contributing to a spiritual quest which lifts the mechanics of living above bovine existence in order to give meaning to life and confidence to new adventures of the mind. "Swami Vivekananda's words" proclaimed Romain Rolland "are great music, phrases in the style of Beethoven, stirring rhythms like the march of Handel choruses." And in his Introduction to the first edition of Coomaraswamy's *The Dance of Shiva*, Romain Rolland commented: "I do not suggest that Europeans should embrace an Asiatic faith, I would merely invite them to taste the delight of this rhythmic philosophy, this deep, slow breath of thought."

The letters are so arranged and so inter-related in the wake of the admirable editing of Francis Dore and Marie-Laure Prevost, that one is able to perceive three themes. One can note Romain Rolland's understanding of the "stirring rhythms" of Indian thought in his letters to Rabindranath Tagore, Kalidas Nag, the French Association of the

Addressed to a wide range of correspondents from Leo Tolstoy to Albert Schweitzer, Paul Seippel, Pastor Louis Ferriere, and Barbusse, the theme of 'oppressive violence of human society as it exists at present', is the unifying thread. The correspondence with Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore and Gandhi represents this gradual transition, from intensity to a quiet fluid probing into the nature of man, the creative process and the place of the socially responsible citizen in the modern world, along with an inner life of reflection.

At no time was he an ivory tower intellectual. he was concerned not just to create art, but how to live his life. And it became even more apparent in his later equally impassioned stance against the rising tide of Nazism in Europe and in support of the Indian struggle for independence.

—From Kapila Vatsyayan's Foreword to Selected Letters of Romain Rolland



**Selected Letters of
Romain Rolland**

Friends of Orient, Amiya Chakravarty and Leo Tolstoy. Similarly one can understand the Rolland conception of India's "rhythmic philosophy" in his letters to Madeleine Slade (affectionately known as Mira Behn) and Dilip Kumar Roy. And Rolland's conceptualization of the theme of "oppressive violence of human society as it exists at present" is indicated in his letters to Albert Schweitzer, Paul Seippel Henri Barbusse, Raimund Eberhard, Louis Ferriere and Mahatma Gandhi.

This publication is a fitting climax to the Festi-

val of India which concluded in January 1990. For it is well-known that the Indo-French Cultural Dialogue, visualized by Ampere and begun by Anquetil Duperron's Latin translation of Dara Shukoh's Persian translation of the Upanishads entitled the *Oupnekhat* and sustained by the travelogues of Bernier and Tavernier, Dubois' sociological document *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, Toru Dutt's transcriptions entitled *A Sheaf Gleaned From French Fields* and the Gandhi-Roland Letters—is a continuing process. □

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We regret that the agitations/bandhs in Delhi have seriously affected normal functioning resulting in the July/August and September/October issues of The Book Review being inordinately delayed. There have been complaints of postal malfunctioning. Subscribers who have not received their copies, please intimate us to enable us to replace the missing number.

Bilingualism and the Creative Writer in India

Mridula Garg

This review article is based on the lectures delivered by the author at a seminar organised by the Centre for South Asian Studies, UCLA, Berkeley, and Wheaton College, Norton, Massachusetts, in April this year.

A creative writer is like a lonely traveller, who travels along the path of existing reality but with his eyes fixed far ahead. He tends to see the bifurcations and the by-passes before the main road. Not only that. He has the audacity to venture into them. He sees all that is happening in the obscure pathways but more than that he sees all that may possibly happen at a future point of time; all that could have happened in the past and all that has not happened but should. In other words, he sees a reality that he himself creates which does not lie parallel to the existing reality but at an indeterminate and changing angle to it.

Every artist creates in accordance with his personal vision. It may or may not be close to a conceptual idea already expounded by someone but it can never be identical to it.

The fact that a writer grasps reality in its multi-faceted form is true of all cultures. But it acquires an almost desperate quality in India, where the social reality is not merely multi-faceted but vitiated and corrupted by the historical process. If we dare face the truth we have to acknowledge that there is no distinct civilization to which we can claim to belong today, unless we say that we are the inheritors of a synthesis of the Western and the Indian civilization. But to say that is to believe in a lie. Every thinker and writer knows it to be a lie. There can never be an absolute or perfect synthesis of two diverse cultures. All it can at best produce is an attempt at synthesis, which releases two or more equally strong pulls. Pulling the country and the people in opposite directions, it exercises a constant strain on the social fabric and national cohesion. The affluent have the means to propagate their culture. But being rootless, they are unable or unwilling to do so. The others who are rooted do not have the means. They have also been taught to envy the rootless for their affluence, so they become as unwilling as they are powerless to absorb the prosperous minority in their fold. We know that we live not in one but two Indias. One is scientifically conscious, technologically ambi-

Mridula Garg is a prolific writer in Hindi and English and has published several novels, collections of short stories and plays.

itious, rich, well equipped and ostentatious. The other is primitive, poor, devoid of the basic amenities of life and fatalist. One is eager to rule nature, indulging in an untrammelled rape of the environment, new rich style. The other is totally at the mercy of nature and constantly subdued and punished by it. One is rootless and clings to material goods to gain some modicum of stability. The other is firmly entrenched in the earth and does not have the wherewithal to seek translocation in fresh pastures. Yet it is the rooted who are forever being uprooted and forced to migrate and become refugees, because of the greed of those who chose to be rootless in the first place.

This is the reality that a writer in India has to face. And it is this reality that has given rise to a forced bilingualism, which makes him choose between writing in English or his own mother tongue. First let us see what bilingualism is and why I say it is forced. There is a vital difference between being a linguist and being bilingual in the Indian context. To know two or more languages by choice is one thing and to be forced to know two by the exigencies of history is quite another. There are more than 21 languages in India but most people are content to know only 2. Of these only one is the language of the majority in that linguistic group; the other is always English. During the British rule it was learnt out of administrative necessity; now out of the desire to earn one's bread with extra dabs of butter away from those who do not have enough bread. The educated minority, which includes writers, constantly uses the unlettered majority as the dominant character in its creative work. But it does not participate in its struggle to subsist in an economically and politically hostile world. The rootless minority cannot survive culturally without continuous reference to the very people it rejects and oppresses. The majority, on the other hand, cannot survive economically without making compromises with the minority whom it envies but cannot understand. There exist, then, two distinct cultures, two sets of values and two divergent standards of living in confrontation and compromise. The pull of the alien culture strengthens itself mainly by the economic power it commands; while the pull of the slowly eroding old culture derives its strength from the sheer numbers that belong to it; the long history that has bred it and the depth of the roots that attach it to mother earth. Even if the erosion of the old culture continues unabated, it will take ages for the process to be completed. It would then leave behind a vacuum,



Mridula Garg

not a cohesive social entity.

So the two cultures continue to exist without synthesising. One feeds on the other and at the same time negates it. The opposing pulls actually disrupt rather than nurture the process of synthesis.

Under these circumstances, a writer has two options open to him. One, to create a reality where the opposing pulls of actual life are smoothed out and a synthesised culture arrived at. It may then be projected as the Utopian resolution and ways and means demonstrated for attaining the seemingly impossible ideal. The other, to recognise that it is impossible to synthesise without producing a vitiated synthetic culture. In that case, he would have to reject the present day reality and explore a number of options as its alternative. To do that he will have to take the readers into confidence. He will have to offer them not a ready-made solution but ask them to come with him on an arduous and sometimes inconsequential exploration of paths, which they have to find for themselves, at least some of the time.

These two options arise from two different ways of looking at reality. They produce two different kinds of literature. I would like to call them literature of the spectator mentality and that of the participant mentality. Most Indian writing in English is of the spectator mentality. Most, not all. Let us see why?

The pressure to learn English comes not only from the desire for social prestige but also because most higher, scientific and technical education uses it as its medium. It is logical to try to learn it from early childhood in primary schools to cope better with the demands made on its knowledge later in life.

Whenever a plea is made to impart higher or technical education through the mother tongues in India, it is said that English has to be used because enough technical teaching material is not available in the other languages. But no such literature can become available because all those capable of writing it have been educated via English and consider themselves proficient in it.

A time has come when no original work can be done in the mother tongues because the technically trained people are not taught through them. And they cannot be taught through them because no original work has been done in them. Those who say that the government should first provide teaching material before allowing the use of the mother tongues betray the stagnation of their minds. The government can only provide translations of the English works which are already in use and not original works. That will serve no purpose as far as the ability to think innovatively is concerned.

The use of the mother tongue has to be introduced at the earlier stages with progressive upgrading to higher stages of education, if we want to motivate a continuous flow of thought.

Generally speaking, we can say that bilingualism gives rise to two disadvantageous situations. First, it divides the people by creating an artificial barrier of language and hampers free flow of equal opportunity to all. Second, it encourages imitation and obstructs innovation and original thought. It does so in an insidious manner by penetrating the psyche of the child. If it was an onslaught on the adults, it could at least be identified and opposed. But it is the child who is the victim. It creates a divide between his emotional affinity with the immediate world around him and the opportunistic expediency dictated by his guardians. In the process it strikes at the root of the future flowering of original thought.

Language should come to the child like air to be breathed and imbibed with unconscious ease. Learning the spoken language is not conscious education for him but a part of growing up like crawling, walking, cutting teeth and uttering the first word. From that first utterance till he knows enough words to give expression to a variety of feelings, words surround him like the buzzing of common household mosquitoes. He learns them with the effortless and joyous sense of being one with his environment. The process leaves him free to experiment with thought, feeling and logic. He does not have to expend his early fund of curiosity and memory on consciously learning a language.

If, however, his early schooling is to be through English, he has to chain in his curiosity and shift to learning a language which is not even close to his mother tongue in idiom and syntax. English requires not only a different grammar but a totally different pronunciation. Even before he has learnt to enunciate clearly, he is expected to make sounds totally alien to his grasp of the way people around him speak. Not only that, he has to come to terms with a new awareness. There is a feeling of anxiety and inferiority associated with learning this language that gets conveyed from the parent and the teacher to the child. They are themselves unsure of knowing or speaking it correctly. But they want the child to speak it faultlessly for in it lies the hope

of economic and social advancement. The stress is on learning, speaking and writing "correct" English though no one knows exactly what is "correct."

The creative writer's plight is not very different from that of the child. He is faced with a situation, where each accuses the other of speaking and writing incorrectly because, at heart, everyone nurses a secret anxiety that he himself may prove incorrect. The greatest fear of the experts of the language is that they may be guilty of "Indian English." Worse than the wife committing adultery. But nobody quite knows what is Indian English. All too often have I been told by critics, publishers and translators that we must take utmost care to avoid Indianisms. I have never understood this admonition. If Indianism is to be avoided,



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how can an Indian write? Why should he write? What is Indianism? Is it not the essence of one's expression as an Indian? Is it something the grammarian or the philologist can dictate or is it an undefinable feeling, a way of life, an expression of one's being in its diverse avatars? One person's Indianism may be quite different, even contradictory, to another's; yet both can be the true expression of their Indianness. Without this Indianism in language, which is the expression of Indianness, what is Indian writing worth? Let us say, writing is a love child born out of the ecstatic union between intense experience and passionate expression. The admonitions of a chaperon for correct behaviour may lead to an abortion or stop conception altogether but it can never bring about the joyous birth of a unique being.

Experience is always attached to the soil, so must expression be. There is no such thing as a

pan-world work of literature. We all know there is no work that can even be called pan-Indian or pan-American, at the time of its creation. A writer has to draw upon his own experience or at best a finite perception of the reality for his creation. Every literary work is rooted in the individual writer's geography and history.

Shorn of the intimate minutiae of experienced reality, an idea is just an idea. It cannot become a work of art or literature, unless living beings play it out in life. No living being can exist without history and geography. Even an idea needs words. A work of literature needs language and it is the only tool the writer has. Language is not a scientifically arranged or erratically chosen jumble of words but the receptacle of the essence of the mores, feelings, passions, sensibility and culture developed over centuries. It is the expression of the identity of a writer, both individually and as a being operating in a definite social and historical milieu. He need not accept this milieu. He may be in violent revolt to it. But he has to operate from within it. To express his revolt, he needs a language that immediately conveys the special meaning associated with the words he uses in his particular historicity. Hence the English an Indian writer uses can never be anything but Indian English, at least a writer who is not reconciled to being an exile. A language can cope with feelings of revolt, it usually thrives on it, but not with bewilderment. Confusion of meaning between the written word, with its historically acquired connotations and nuances and the sensibility of the writer can only lead to a crisis of identity. So the only real choice an Indian writer has is between writing in Indian English or his mother tongue.

We must remember that a crisis of identity is distinct from a search of identity. A search indicates positiveness. It leads to the forging of new ideas into a coherent body of thought through experimentation with new forms, themes and value systems.

It is synonymous with a desire for change, which may lead to active rebellion or a gradual veering away from conformity. The search degenerates into confusion and bewilderment when the visions of the past, the present and the future get fragmented in a manner that there is no hope of integration between them. The crisis comes when one is sucked into the whirlpool of borrowed ideas, adapted themes and stolen experiments. It makes no difference then, whether one uses a language, one was forced to borrow under social, economic and political pressure with an inherent sense of inferiority and inexpertise i.e. English. Or the language one had grown with but was taught to despise as inferior by inuendo or outright condemnation i.e. the mother tongue. In both cases, one is assailed with a sense of inferiority and inadequacy which results either in bravado or apologia. In either case, it leads to a collapse of the

roots of identity. Not sure where to begin the search, one gives it up altogether.

But not writing. Writers are resilient beings. They do not give up writing easily. Some thrash around in the thickets of confusion but manage to have brief bursts of vision. Some conjure up paths out of the dreams of old and pierce the darkness with the light of their vision. But such people are few and far between. Most of them stop looking and assume there is no way out. In fact as soon as one stops looking, there ceases to be a way out. Once the area of darkness is accepted as a given state, people can feel only two things, nostalgia and hopelessness.

Nostalgia is for a past they do not fully remember or comprehend but would like to, in order to overcome their sense of inferiority before other writers in other cultures. They set out to fashion the past on the basis of half-remembered snatches of reality experienced in early childhood. It is built upon by reading the works of people, who had also never experienced it but had been fascinated by what they had in turn read. They fondly imagine that they would have been happy in that twilight world of dreams had they gained access to it. Or not abandoned it in early childhood. Such nostalgia is usually overdone, the whole passionate exercise being an escape from the acceptance of a loss of identity. This is most assiduously cultivated by those who write in English, from Raja Rao to Anita Desai. But it is not their sole preserve. We have enough writers in Hindi, who keep crying for the loss of an ideal village community that never was. One has only to read Premchand or Sarat Chandra to realise that the ideal village never existed. One manifestation of this nostalgia is an increasing use of the local dialects in the making of Hindi fiction. The young writers who claim direct descendency from Premchand tend to pick their characters from the villages or the city slums, where the migrants from the villages live. But since their knowledge of their lives stems from a distanced point in time and space, they substitute or supplement it with a heavy dose of the dialect.

The use of the dialect is nothing new. It has been used right from Fanishwar Nath Renu (*Maila Aanchal*), Krishna Sobti (*Zindaginama*), Himanshu Joshi (*Kagar ki Aag*), Manjul Bhagat (*Anaro*) to Mrinal Pande (*Patrangpur Puran*), Abdul Bismillah (*Jheeni-Jheeni Beeni Chadariya*), Sanjeev (*Panv Tale ki Doob*) and a host of upcoming writers. But the reach and depth of the writer's participation in the lives and times of his characters is different in each case, not only in degree but in kind. Whereas Renu and Bhagat live the lives of their protagonists, Bismillah remains largely a reporter as do young writers like Shivmurti, Suranjan and many others.

The test I apply is to translate the story into a simple everyday Hindi, (I concede that it can be done only partially) and then see whether it could still move me or was it only the dialect weaving an exotica. On that basis I can say that while *Patrangpur Puran* remained just as fresh without the

dialect, *Kagar ki Aag* lost most of its novelty. Chitra Mudgal's stories *Bhookh* and *Lane*, Punni Singh's *Morcha* or Sailesh Pandit's *Vande Bhagwati* would have been more communicable and effective without the overdose of the dialect, which was a deterrent rather than a help. In Manjul Bhagat's case, while the touches of the dialect add to the credibility of *Anaro*, in some of her other stories e.g. *Guldipahariya*, its use detracts from the effectiveness of the narrative.

It is interesting to note that English phrases are now being used quite as often as those from other dialects in the Hindi text, even when the characters are all Indians. Unfortunately but not surprisingly the phrases used are, more often than not, bookish, unnecessary or overworked cliches so that they

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subtract rather than add to the power of the narrative e.g. "Don't kill me with kindness (*Ganit Gyan* by Raji Seth—cliche). "Excuse me, please, whether bus number triple six is gone" (*Ramsajivan Ki Premkatha* by Uday Prakash—bookish though used by a girl who had studied in England!). "She is shocked. It will take time to recover, poor child!" (*Ek Asamapt Katha*, Sumati Ayyar—unnecessary use of English.)

There is nothing right or wrong in the use of dialect per se. But it has both a positive and a negative side.

On the positive side, it leads to an enrichment of the Hindi language. One may well consider English as "it is spoke" in India, a kind of dialect, perchance of the elite. But it gets assimilated into

the Indian consciousness only when it is Indianised by the so-called illiterate or semi-educated masses. They also manage to absorb it into the local language without breaking its rhythm or undermining the aesthetic quality. Sharad Joshi gives an interesting example of how 'nervous' has become 'nurbhus' in Bihar and 'Hindised', shall we say, to become part of Bhojpuri. "Kaahe nurbhusai rahe ho" (why be nervous) does not allow the word 'nervous' to break the fluidity of the sentence. Whichever dialect we use, it makes a positive contribution to literary evolution and even a particular work, in that it enlivens the language and helps in establishing the geographical location of the characters.

But it has a negative aspect which must not be lost sight of. It is this side which tends to gain an upper hand, when the writer operates in a vitiated reality. Most present day writers remain content with the superficial display of empathy for the so-called silent majority, expressed through speaking their dialect. They do not try to go deeper. They fail to explore their psyche or the complexity of their reality and also to experiment with content and form. One reason for their complacency is the unfortunate fact that most Hindi lecturer-cum-critics are quick to hail these writers as socially conscious spokesmen of the silent majority. It is not silent really, only we do not care to hear it long enough to penetrate its words and reach a deeper understanding.

We would do well to remember that Premchand, the father of socially committed realism in Hindi literature himself wrote a simple Hindi, uncluttered with consciously chosen dialect terms. Nor did he switch from one dialect to another with each of his characters. They were allowed to express differences in traits, social standing and location within more or less the same language. There were differences of nuances, etc., naturally and a use of a less or more educated form of dialogue but not total dependence on dialect.

The conscious use of the dialect often breeds a false sense of satisfaction at being a rebel. Whether the writer is actually one or not will depend upon whether he suffers from a real or affected sense of hopelessness and disillusionment.

What then is the difference between genuine and affected disillusionment? To my mind it is of vital importance in the making of literature.

True disillusionment is always first and foremost with oneself. A protestation of disillusionment with everything and everyone else but oneself is an affectation.

Affected hopelessness suits those who are afraid of participation. Nirad Choudhery, Naipaul and Ved Mehta are masters of this genre. Others follow in their footsteps. But it is not the monopoly of those who write in English. The Hindi writers practise it just as well. The only difference is that while Hindi writers bemoan the loss of values and national character in the present generation; the writers in English see it in all the generations from

the beginning of time, in the dark continent of Asia. Or shall I say brown continent. Particularly those who are happy exiles in safe havens of affluence. They try to pretend that they are different. But they do not fool anybody, least of all themselves. That is why they have to borrow the form for the expression of their hopelessness from the West, which has made quite an art of it since World War Two. A genuine feeling of disillusionment with values and oneself has a way of bouncing out of the pit by producing experimental art in its search for something different and new. Hopelessness and hope move in cycles like the Keynesian economic cycle of booms and depressions. We have always known it in India. But it is not very fashionable to behave according to what one has always known. Affectation of disillusionment on the other hand, pulls one further into the pit by the weight of imitative forms, clichéd idioms and borrowed themes without style that it imposes upon its exponents.

The question then comes full circle to that of the writer being a participant or a spectator. Most Indian writing in English, I feel is of the spectator variety. All one can say of the literature in the mother languages is that at least some of it is participatory in nature. The dalit literature of Marathi is a case in point. But there are other such

works e.g. *Itiwrata* (novel by Jagdamba Prasad Dixit) or *Anayaaas* (novel by Yogesh Gupta). There are also a large number of novels written on the middle class women by women writers e.g. *Anaro* (Manjul Bhagat), *Tatsam* (Raji Seth), *Beghar* (Mamta Kalia), *Aapka Banti* (Mannu Bhandari), *Ek Apni Zamin* (Chitra Mudgal) and so on, in which the writers participate fully in the lives of their protagonists.

I believe that the more one shifts from being a bystander to a fellow traveller, the more meaningful is the literature one creates. That is my value judgement. Each of you is free to make your own. That is the whole point of literature. Everyone is free to interpret reality according to his or her personal vision. Come to think of it, every novel, story or drama is in some way a distortion of reality because it is based on a personal and limited experience and vision of reality. But it is this personal intensity of experience and its interpretation according to a distinct world view which ultimately makes us understand the total reality. There is nothing paradoxical in it. The readers (society) get an intense and participatory knowledge of the total reality by absorbing a number of personal accounts of it, some of which cancel and some reinforce others. The greater the participation of the writer, the deeper is the participatory

understanding of the reader.

In conclusion, I want to emphasise once more that there is a crucial difference between choosing to write in a language other than one's mother tongue like R.K. Narayan or Manoj Das in Jayant Mahapatra and being forced to do so because of extraneous factors. The difference is the same as that between knowing two languages equally well and not knowing either well enough to dispel feelings of anxiety about its use. There have been any number of writers who have written in both English and French, from Samuel Becket to Raymond Federman. Similarly there are Indian writers who write in two Indian languages like Bengali and Hindi or even in English and one Indian language by choice and are equally fluent in it. But even in the case of a writer of Tagore's repute, the English versions come nowhere near the Bengali works in lyricism and power. A few bilingual writers in India may also be competent linguists. But they are rare. The large body of them write with some degree of anxiety, which hampers a free flow of creativity.

What is the solution of the problem of bilingualism? I guess we will either have to settle for an Indian English that can be picked up by everyone or regain pride in our mother tongue. Otherwise the scenario is bleak. □

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Masooma A. Khan

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Born in Aligarh to Syed Sajjad Hyder and Begum Nazar Sajjad Hyder, both well known writers of their time, Qurratulain was educated at Lucknow's Isabella Thoburn Women's College. She obtained her Master's degree in English Literature from Lucknow University. She glided into a literary career even while a student. Her first short story was published in *Humayun* when she was barely sixteen and she has moved only in one direction—forward—since then. Her first collection of short stories was published in 1947, its title being *Sitaron se Aagey*. It was followed by her first novel *Mere Bhi Sanamkhan* in 1949. Another novel *Safeena-e-Ghame-Dill* and a book of short stories *Sheeshay ka Ghar* followed in 1952 and '54 respectively. In 1958 she published a successful translation of Henry James, *Portrait of a Lady* under the title *Hum Hi Chirag, Hum Hi Parwanay*. By this time she was already established as a good writer but her name spread far and wide with her trail blazing novel *Aag ka Dariya* in 1959. Since then she has produced successful and phenomenally popular novels like *Kaar-e-Jahan Daraaz Hai Aakhir Shab ke Hamsafar*, *Roshniki Raftar* and *Gardish-e-Rang-e-Chaman*. There

Masooma A. Khan teaches in Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, and frequently contributes articles to newspapers and journals.

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Aag ka Dariya is a panoramic chronicle of the history of the Indian subcontinent from ancient to recent times. She evolved consistently after this novel and her abundant talent revealed itself in a distinct, fresh and unique experiment each time.

Qurratulain Hyder has a panoramic imagination. The canvas of her novels is vast. Even within the scope of one plot long geographical distances are covered. Gifted with a high intellectual level, she is sensitive, informed and aware. Not only is she extremely well read but also very alive to the real life around her. Issues emerging out of contemporary social problems dominate her work. We all know that the world is becoming a smaller place everyday and a cosmopolitan order is fast emerging. The novels of Qurratulain Hyder present it to the best. Problems of secularism and communalism are treated by her as human occurrences, she knits such themes in the fabric of her narrative without getting obsessive about them. Her characters are close to life, vividly realized through skillful presentation.

Qurratulain Hyder is often charged with delving deep into a particular kind of nostalgia for a decadent kind of life. However, it is not a limitation. Her plots incorporate the life of the upper classes in a convincing manner. She speaks of her own experiences honestly. In her scheme both the elite and the underdog are worthy of equal attention as they form a part of her narrative structure. A sense of history is an integral part of her collective achievement. She infuses serious themes with humour, irony, nostalgia and melancholy by turns. Remembrances of past and present surface again and again in her novels.

Meeting Qurratulain is full of surprises. She has agreed to meet you after expressing her weariness having given so many interviews to papers who have not exactly presented her well. But by the time you settle down to talk, all your apprehensions about meeting a highly strung, sensitive and formidable personality melt away.

Qurratulain Hyder is informal and friendly. She is a great talker in the sense that she has interesting things to say with effortless ease. She talks about herself, yes (that is what you have gone there for) but she is not pompous or obsessive about herself and her work. There is a kind of energy about her, a certain informed grace which you cannot label "old world charm" because she is full of exuberance and her outlook on life is mod-

ern. Talking to her about subjects literary, one cannot help noticing what a human person she is. She breaks the conversation to go and switch on the T.V. for her woman servant Bua's favourite "Chitrahaar" at 8.00 P.M. She is interested in you as a person, too. In fact she dislikes being taken as a writer, "because I don't think of myself as a writer first. Why can't I be taken as a human being first? Some people give themselves too many airs and much importance as writers. They sit and give statements, propound philosophies and pontificate over everything. I don't like projecting myself, that is why I don't go to T.V."

Once the interview is over, the conversation continues. She shows you some rare and interesting artefacts and tells how, and where she acquired them. She is interested in a lot of things—people, places, books, happenings. You can well believe it when she says, "Ask my close friends, my relatives, if I discuss my work with them and they'll say no. There is so much more going on in the world." Contrary to popular belief, she is not a loner. She is a gregarious person and likes to meet people. Gifted with a photographic memory, she finds it helpful to store images and record events which are manifested in her writings as she goes from strength to strength.

Q. *What are your views on contemporary Indian Literature?*

A. This is a vast subject and it is impossible to make a brief comment on it. Indian Literature is not just one entity. India, with its rich and diverse culture and numerous languages has produced excellent literature. Collectively, Indian literature is dynamic. It is modern. It is contemporary. There are so many good writers today. We are proud of people like R.K. Narayan and so many others.

Q. *How about writers like Ved Mehta and V.S. Naipaul?*

A. They write basically for a western readership. They cater to a certain kind of market by ridiculing India. They make fun of their country and culture so that their works sell.

Q. *How will you place Urdu fiction in world literature?*

A. I cannot give a general answer to this question.

To start with I have no inferiority complex vis a vis my culture, language or literature. Evaluating one literature in terms of another calls for comparison. It is not fair to compare literature of two or more languages which are totally different in their cultural background, imagery and style and then say which is better. Then you get to know other literatures through translation. Now, you just cannot translate a poet like Meer Anees into English. Urdu poetry just cannot retain its unique characteristics if translated into English or any other European language. In my view translating Ghalib and Iqbal into English is impossible. In fiction too the

difference of idiom remains. What is effective and powerful in the original often makes no impact when presented in another language.

- Q. *Are Urdu writers today concerned with contemporary issues and social problems?*
- A. Urdu writers have always been involved with relevant contemporary issues from the very beginning. Socio-political problems have always been part of Urdu literature from the 19th century down to the present times. Urdu writers have been sensitive to, aware of and fully involved with problems of their times. Poetry and fiction have both been used as effective mediums by them. For example in prose the entire Sir Saiyad groups, younger generation of M.A.O. College, Aligarh, Prem Chand and then the Progressive Writers—they have all contributed to the production of serious and meaningful literature in Urdu. Even a cursory survey of Urdu literature will prove it to be a true mirror of its time.
- Q. *What are the issues that disturb/attract you in the context of the present times?*
- A. All contemporary issues interest or disturb me as they do every thinking person. But what really disturbs me at present is the ever rising communalism. I'm specially concerned about the increasing communalism among the educated. Another thing that upsets me specially is violence, increasing violence.
- Q. *It is widely known that you have inherited a literary legacy from your parents but what are your independent sources of inspiration?*
- A. Everybody asks me this question but it is difficult to answer. Identifying my independent sources of inspiration is not easy for me. In writing there is no 'modus operandi'. You have ideas, you have imagination and a talent for expressing them effectively. I write as a matter of course, it comes naturally to me. However, I do not depend on writing for a living. I have always worked for a living. In India you cannot survive on your writing. There is no question of earning your living through writing here as in the west. In other countries a best selling author would be a multi-millionaire but in India we do not have a royalty culture, especially in Urdu.
- Q. *The characters in your novels are life like. Do you fashion them on actual people or are they totally imaginary?*
- A. Creative process is complex and cannot be explained in a few words. Perhaps it cannot be explained at all. You get some of your characters at the take off point from actual people you have met, or seen or heard about. Many of such characters become composite during the progress of the work. However most of my characters are totally imaginary. The life-like quality of my characters often makes people ask me this question. Why I don't give credit to the writer's imagination and the ability to create

characters? This is ridiculous. There is such a thing as a writer's imagination and creativity. Why do these people think that every character is based on real people including the author himself or herself.

- Q. *Do you treat your characters impartially in the sense that you take equal pains on the presentation of male and female characters?*
- A. Naturally. I take equal interest in my characters, male or female. But a novel is not a piece of real life. I place and present men and women impartially. However, I agree that in my novels I treat women more sympathetically because women usually get a raw deal in life especially in our society.
- Q. *What has been the role of critics and readers in establishing your position as a top novelist in Urdu?*
- A. Personally, many progressive critics from the word go denounced me. My very first short story written when I was about sixteen and published in 1944 was attacked for a very silly reason. It was the time of the Progressive Movement and there I was writing about the upper class instead of the peasants. How could I write about the peasants when I knew nothing about them? Some critics have always been against me. Others, the pseudo-intellectuals are ever ready to find fault with my work. There are others who have no real understanding of fiction.
- Reader response to me has always been overwhelming. That is what matters. I have been a trend setter in the writing of fiction. I am aware of having influenced generation after generation of sensitive writers and readers during the last forty years.
- Q. *There was a controversy over the freedom of expression sometime ago. Could you comment on the government censorship and authorial freedom?*
- A. I certainly do not approve of any curbs on the freedom of expression from the official government agencies. But there is such a thing as self censorship. Writing is a responsible occupation. You cannot incite people in the name of freedom of expression. For example, one should not write to incite communal passions, or propagate other negative ideas and attitudes. One should not attack religion or religious personalities. Obviously you cannot go around writing and propagating porn, or dishing out tracts on fascism and other obnoxious attitudes, can you?
- Q. *Following the Jnanpith Award you have been interviewed by all major publications in India. Sometimes your comments were distorted and you were misquoted. Would you like to comment on it?*
- A. Yes. I had a stream of young journalists visiting me following the announcement of the Jnanpith Award. However, it made me sad to see the copy some of them produced. They were enthusiastic but they ended up writing totally nonsensical things which could only be attrib-

uted to the falling standards of journalistic ethics. For instance I talked to the *Sunday Observer* correspondent Alka Singh in my study as it was too hot in the living room. As it happened a lady who had arrived from Aligarh was taking a nap on a camp cot in the room. Now, Alka Singh merrily reported that I lay on the camp cot as I answered her questions. I think it was a very stupid thing to say. She also said that I had received the Padmabhushan award. How could I ever say I got a Padmabhushan when I have not? There were many other misrepresentations in other papers but I can't recollect them now. Yes, the biggest howler was in a Hindi magazine where the headlines screamed "Aam Aadmi Mera Vishay Kabhi Nahin Raha" (Common Man Has Never Been My Subject) when I have made no such assertions.

I also got very irritated with correspondents who would harp on the facts of my being a Muslim and a woman. They would ask me questions on Salman Rushdie, Kashmir Problem and Shah Bano case for no other reason except that I was a Muslim. Not only did I not answer these questions but also gave them a piece of my mind.

- Q. *Would you comment on the scope of your latest novel, Chandni Begum?*
- A. *Chandni Begum* has been published. It is the story of contemporary Lucknow—Lucknow of the 1980s. The theme is basically the possession of land. Present day political situation is the setting of my narrative. The central character is a victim of circumstances. It is a long novel—about 425 pages.
- Q. *Has your work been translated into other languages? Do you consider translation a satisfactory alternative to the original or do you think that the original work suffers through translation?*
- A. Actually prose generally lends itself to translation easily but my novels are not easy to translate because of the Urdu idiom and subtle nuances of the language and also because of the dialect I often use. Much of the original flavour evaporates through translation. I like to translate my own work into English but I have made no efforts to get my work translated into other languages as I am bone lazy. Also I do not give too much importance to myself as a writer. A European novel translated into English retains its original freshness because it pertains to a common culture. If you are part of the same culture, ideas are easy to convey and easy to translate into another language. In my view, Indian literature will suffer through translation because of the diversity of idiom and varied local culture even within the country. Urdu and Persian poetry definitely suffer through translation because the allusions in them appear exotic and strange to the alien reader. □

Qurratulain Hyder

An Interview with Sukrita Paul Kumar

This is an extract from *Conversations on Modernism* published by Allied Publishers Pvt. Ltd.

Sukrita Kumar: A lot of thinking and writing has been done by philosophers and literary critics on the specific experience of "loneliness" of a creative artist. I should like to begin our discussion by focussing your attention on the peculiar sense of loneliness that you may have encountered by virtue of the fact, that not only are you a creative writer, you also happen to be writing in Urdu in India—a language which has a comparatively limited readership here and therefore you may be pushed into a greater sense of exclusiveness. It would be interesting, I feel, to have your response to this—how conscious are you to this 'situation' of yours and have you done any thinking on this subject? Do you have any specific experiences related to this feature?

Qurratulain Hyder: You have asked two questions, one is regarding the loneliness of the creative writer. Though this may sound rather pompous, let's face it, it is very much there. It has always been there with an artist anywhere in the world. A writer writes in isolation. The loneliness of a western writer of course brings in a sociological aspect.

SK: . . . that perhaps we can take up later.

QH: Yes, we are not concerned with that now. You have got another point—the loneliness of a woman-writer. Well, a woman writer, whether in the West or here in the East is more or less in an identical situation. In the East perhaps, it's slightly worse. And then, to make it even more accentuated, you say, loneliness of a woman writer in Urdu. That makes the question more loaded, and, to top it all, a woman writer's loneliness writing in Urdu in India. Ah—well, perhaps it is not really all that bad! Writing in Urdu in India makes no difference because writing in Urdu in Canada, Pakistan or anywhere else, according to me, would not change the situation. And then, a woman writing in Urdu in India or a man writing in Urdu in India would also be the same. In Urdu, women as you may be knowing, have been writing for the past hundred years. You know that the first woman novelist wrote in the same period as the first man-novelist. The point is—a woman writing self-consciously—

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that again is a situation common to women all over the world.

SK: But don't you think that there's bound to be a difference, since it'd certainly matter to what cultural context the writer is related to. George Eliot or the Brontë sisters had to pose as *men*-writers if only to conceal their female identity to escape the critical bias against a woman's writings in nineteenth century England. Till about fifteen-twenty years ago, the situation in India was perhaps the same. Wouldn't the evaluation of your work de-

are generally not attentive to what is happening in fiction. There is a clear-cut neglect of fiction by the critic. No serious critical focussing has ever been done on fiction in Urdu. My own writing suffers from that.

SK: As a writer, then, you are fully conscious that your works are not getting an adequate and proper appreciation. And if there is appreciation, it may not be for the right reasons due to the non-serious approach of the critic.

QH: Yes indeed, there's just a general "hoo-hoo" and "ha, ha".

SK: Does that carry you into an exclusiveness of sorts. . . ?

QH: No, I don't feel that at all. I am not an isolationist nor am I a celebrator of loneliness. That is not my problem at all. My only concern is that my work suffers from the lack of any active and lively literary give and take—you know, a literary life, as it were. There is a general indifference. I don't mean that I need critics. . .

Educated in India and abroad, Qurratulain Hyder was associated in important capacities with the Daily Telegraph, London; The Imprint and the The Illustrated Weekly of India, among others. Also, she served as broadcaster for the Urdu Services, B.B.C. and as Adviser to Chairman, Central Board of Film Censors. Besides being Visiting Professor at Aligarh Muslim University and Jamia Millia Islamia, she has given extension lectures at the Universities of Chicago, Texas, California and Arizona. She was given the Sahitya Akademi Award for her collection of short stories Patjhar ki Awaz and her novel Aag ka Dariya has been published in all the fourteen national languages by the National Book Trust.

pend till a few years ago on the fact that you are a woman writer, and, would that result into any self-consciousness that you may have experienced or you may have to get rid of while you are writing. . . may be in selecting the theme of your creative venture or the taking of a particular stance.

QH: In Urdu, it may come as a surprise to many, there has never been a kind of segregation of man and woman in literature, as you may expect in a society based on the principle of segregation. I think we must understand this peculiar phenomenon at the outset. There have been women writing fiction and there have been women writing poetry. There was a slight male chauvinistic patronization at times—which one may encounter anywhere in the world. It was, I think never that emphatic and the woman did not get affected enough to be disturbed as a writer. She didn't have to worry at all. For instance, my own mother started writing at the age of thirteen or fourteen and there was no question of any criticism, as there would be in the case of a woman coming out of *purdah*—a woman would be writing even romantic short-stories or novels.

As for me, what I am perturbed about is not this self-consciousness, but the fact that critics in Urdu

SK: to survive as a writer. . .

QH: Yes, nor do I need the critics' certificates. Only, I feel bad about the neglect that fiction suffers from.

SK: In that, do you think that the creativity of the fiction-writer gets affected. . .

QH: Yes, indeed. The wrong kind of approach and the group mentality and group politics which promote bad and mediocre literature can do a lot of harm. I have mentioned, a number of times, really outstanding writers in fiction in my writings and interviews. Many people have not even heard of them but there's never a follow-up. No-one asked me who they were, what they wrote etc. In Urdu, there is a strong tendency to attach one's self to a single writer. For example, a critic would start, what he calls specialising on one writer, say, "Premchand"—he'd go on writing about him, his characters, the bulls in his fiction, his village. Everything else in literature is of secondary importance. His total devotion to Premchand blinds him to everything else. Another one may be devoted to Iqbal, and yet another to perhaps "modern poetry". I think this is an easy way out.

SK: Do you think we could perhaps explain this tendency by trying to understand the complexity

of the Indian society wherein each great writer constitutes a category in himself. There is a diversity, or rather the diversification of concerns and the multiplicity of perspective available to this society through its rich heritage and tradition, the exposure to a variety of cultures and religions down the ages on the one hand, and on the other, the reception of the high technology and "progress" oriented modern civilization. In the west, there are movements and categories to classify the writers (Primitivism, Naturalism etc. and literature of cruelty, of silence and so on); while here, it becomes far more difficult to "group" writers.

QH: But what I'd like to emphasize strongly is the lack of original thinking in critical writing here. It's so repetitive. I can close my eyes and repeat to you from the word "go" that the Progressive Movement began in 1936 and till today they are busy writing reports rather than criticism, producing more or less surveys. This goes on year after year. There is no criticism worth its name and their thinking is so confused. For instance, what a group of writers, made such a "ho-ha" about ten years ago when the so-called abstract writing and symbolic writing was being done, today the same people are condemning it. There was supposedly a revolution in Urdu fiction and all earlier writing was rejected as backward and stupid. A lot of bad stories were recognized as *real* intellectual thinking, real inner life etc. All those cliches were used for stories which were not even riddles, for, riddles can be much more interesting. The same critics who had promoted that kind of writing are now condemning it. The point is that there is no clear thinking and perhaps there is no clearly developed critical faculty.

SK: Shall we take up another point of discussion? It's a known fact that your father, Sajjad H. Yaldrum was himself an established short-story writer writing in the conventional style before the emergence of the modernistic techniques or perspectives. A generation later, you have been producing a very different kind of fiction, both long and short. Would you accept that there's "progress" in literature and that you've taken the short story ahead? Or, is it just the question of how the writer confronts his own reality and gives his own kind of fictional representation to his experience?

QH: I think there's definitely "progress" in literature which is after all influenced by the progress or the advancement of the human mind. For instance, the philosophical probe into the concept of reality or say the discovery of the theory of relativity; writers who were writing prior to this would have a different world view. The general advancement of knowledge is bound to affect the sensibility of the writer. My father's generation was reading Tennyson and my generation was brought up, as it were, on T.S. Eliot and that itself makes all the difference. Of course great literature would always be great irrespective of the age it is produced in. As Hazlitt says, the writer captures the "spirit

of his age"; it does not matter what technique he might use.

SK: There are more and more tools available to comprehend the various dimensions of reality now, and, the writer with his ingenuity finds newer modes of creative expression. I am reminded here of the frustration of some of the western writers such as Samuel Beckett, with the inadequacy of language vis-a-vis the expression of the creative experience. And this, mind you, is with the English language where there has been a tremendous emphasis on development in as far as the science of the language is concerned. Urdu has not had more or less developed hand in hand with the human psyche. Despite that or perhaps because of that, the "cacophony" produced by the "explosion of words" and the "language revolution", some writers are striving towards the "Literature of silence". There is a lack of faith in the semantic potential of the "word". I wonder if you take a similar position as a writer in Urdu?

QH: No, that is not my problem at all. Urdu is so rich. There is a tremendous range of meanings around each word in Urdu. I shall in fact not be able to cope with one single area of expression—a single dialect.

What concerns me, or rather disturbs me, is the gradual deterioration in the use of the language. I'm very bothered about the purity of language wherein lies its beauty. I feel upset when I hear unwieldy Hindi being used on the Doordarshan because Hindi is also a beautiful language. And they use ungainly expressions like *Mausam chipachipata rahega*. Well that's against the aesthetics of the language.

But as a writer in Urdu, I don't feel the inadequacy of the language at all because I am aware that the Urdu language has a lot to offer.

SK: Well, the linguistic theoretician should take the cue from this and help evolve the science of the language if only to make it retain its purity. It is, however, heartening to see your faith and confidence in Urdu and its potential power of expression.

Having gone through some of your works, specifically the well-known novel *Aag ki Dariya*, it is striking to see your perceptive concern for history. You make 'large expanses of time', huge chunks as it were, of history available in the 'present' in the novel. Tell me, when you are writing a short story do you feel constricted in any way because the form of the short story does not allow one to spread out over that kind of length of time?

QH: Yes, but I think many of my stories dwell over a long period of time. Some are about the whole life of a character, some about the life of a family. They tend to cover a number of phases of a life-time, not just one little piece, or facet.

SK: I find that your novels carry very poignant points of "stasis" and it gives me a feeling that you are far more comfortable writing a novel. I wonder if I could ask you as to what prompts you to choose

the form of the short story then? Is there any theoretical position that you may take as regards the form you choose to write in...

QH: I think this whole business of theory... for me it doesn't mean anything. You write because you feel like writing... there's an idea you want to express.

SK: But sometimes the writer does make a conscious effort to understand intellectually the form he's choosing...

QH: May be they do, but for me, I have been basically interested in history and I have been using it in my fiction...

SK: How do you respond to this idea of annihilation of history, a modernistic approach to dissociate the "present" totally from the sense of history and to avoid any signification of the images presented by the author. Alain Robbe-Grillet's works are an example of such a presentation, where the writer tries not to interfere at all between the image and the reader, setting, as it were, an "illusion of immediacy". The harmony of the structure comes through the continuum of images...

QH: All these techniques and theories etc... they don't mean anything to me. What I feel interested in, I spontaneously write...

SK: Well, I think we are trying to egg ourselves on to determine what exactly you are interested in and how your specific point of view may be different from the others. Also, since the technique is bound with the theme, reflection on one aspect would yield clues to the better comprehension of the other.

QH: I have been trying to explain to many people over and over again that technique comes *naturally* while one sits down to write. One does not have to consciously think about it. *It just happens*: With a musician, it is different. He has a *raag*. Though he may take a different variation, the constraints of the *raag* have to be adhered to. For me it is different. For me, mostly some little scene, an image from my memory starts me off. And then the technique gets evolved by itself. For instance my recent novel *Gardish é Range Chaman*. I remember a scene... my mother was a pioneer of sorts in education and was very happy to meet educated women, particularly if a lady would go "abroad" to study. Well, there was a lady who came to Lucknow as an inspector of schools. My mother and I went to see her. Hers was a house hidden in a garden with thick huge trees. There were two ladies there, two middle-aged, unmarried sisters and the younger one, quite good looking was the Inspector who'd been to England. Now, at that time this was quite a novelty. I'm talking of the 30's. On the mantelpiece inside the house, there were some little ceramics. Strangely, we were told by the older woman that they were made by her when she'd joined an Arts School in England while she was chaperoning her younger sister in that country. Now that scene remained in my mind. I never met them again... Here were two

ladies, simple folks from the middle class Muslim family, who were they and what happened to them, I don't know. But that scene stayed with me. And much later over the years, I started off with this novel with two ladies in a house in Lucknow. But they are mother and daughter. They've been to England; the younger one is a doctor and the mother says "I did those paintings when my daughter was studying". You see, this is how for a writer, anything like that is a starting point. I didn't sit down to work out the theme or the technique. I just started writing and the plot developed, the characters got going. I called it a semi-documentary novel because I brought in a lot of real people. . .

SK: This is interesting to see how a small image or a little happening got developed into a huge novel. Actually to come to think of it, even a casual reader notices the use of the visual in your stories. It's cinematic, this concern for the *image* and also, the play that takes place in the handling of time, going back and forth and the use of the montage. . .

QH: It's cinematic as well as the fact that I indulge in a little bit of painting too, so, the concern for colours, too.

SK: One notices that your use of the stream of consciousness technique mingles with the narrative style. I think writers in this sub-continent have adopted this practice rather than the use of the pure stream of consciousness as handled by Virginia Woolf. There's the linear sense of time and there's then the dive *into* time.

Shall we perhaps move on to another question? I'd like to draw your attention to your contemporaries in Urdu. How do you respond to them? In as far as critics and readers are concerned, there's hardly any give and take between the writer and them. But what about your fellow-writers? Do you feel particularly curious about some and do you specifically get attracted or influenced or even disturbed by some? And do you discriminate between the writer from the West and the one writing in Urdu? There are some writers who seem to be working isolatedly, deliberately not reading their own contemporaries.

Qurratulain Hyder: Oh, that'd be very sad. Not only do I read my contemporaries with interest, in fact I have been translating some of them into English. It'd be carrying one's smugness a bit too far, not to deliberately read one's contemporaries.

SK: There's at times a total dependence or a parasitic following of the other. Or at times there's a complete indifference or apathy; I'd say both are equally disturbing.

QH: It'd be silly to be like that. You are in fact enriched by looking around. There are four or five very significant writers in Urdu who've been actively writing as my contemporaries and I always read them.

SK: Could I have a statement by you on how you would define modernism?

QH: It's very difficult because what you call modernism today—well, Shakespeare also may have

called himself modern as compared to, say, Chaucer. Modernism is very relative. In the nineteenth century, say from Baudelaire onwards, they were moderns—people writing in the earlier period, in the period of regency. . . well, Pope was modern in his times.

SK: Let me be a little more specific. In the early twentieth century, there was a kind of a cultural crisis in the West. The overall climate of doubt, a breakdown of faith in the context of industrialization, a scientific probe into reality and a questioning of some fundamental, established ideas in religion which led to a collapse of the "old" and the "conventional". That was just not adequate or appropriate any longer. The fragmented human psyche groped for the "newer" forms of creative expression to match the new thematic concerns. All this has been broadly termed as "modernism".

QH: The conventional forms were shaken and broken even earlier in France in the late nineteenth century. It came to us much later. But I'd not relate our situation with that because then we'd appear such Rip Van Winkles or merely imitative. In Urdu, T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland* was translated in about 1935 while it was written much earlier. Baudelaire was introduced in Urdu about a hundred years later than his times as a "modern" poet of France. The point is, when we use the term "modern" we automatically relate it to something as having come to us from the West. SK: But, don't you think, that "modernism" in the West the writer's consciousness even in the East, particularly in India where the British had entrenched English as a common language for communication.

QH: But you know that even in our painting, Amrita Shergil who became our first modern, was doing what had been done much earlier in Europe. So when we talk of "Modernism" in India, . . .

SK: . . . In the fifties. . .

Qurratulain Hyder: Oh, fifties?! Well, don't ask me! What is it . . . introspection, representation of inner life. . .

Sukrita: The same kind of concerns which one finds in English literature in the early twentieth century.

QH: Quite right—but then it's delayed action that one notices here. I am certainly not part of it. In fact, I started all this—monologue, interior monologue, stream of consciousness, abstract thinking, in the forties when I was a teenager. So, I am a pioneer which is of course not acknowledged. My short stories in *Sitaron Ke Aage* would bear me out. They demonstrate all those ideas which writers of the second generation in Urdu are trying to do. I did all that in my second year of graduation. All this is old hat for me. I've been through it long ago. And I did it unconsciously, not as a part of a fashion.

SK: As a writer who's reviewing what you did so many decades earlier, even if some of those modernistic characteristics were developed thirty or

forty decade later in our context, what I'd like to determine is whether you think, something was added to what had already happened. Or is our modernistic literature a mere borrowing? Did you yourself feel that you were writing under the influence of such and such writer? Did say, the inner compulsion of the Urdu writer in the forties and fifties determine his literary techniques? However, the "new writer" hadn't yet come to be his own. The historically important happening, the Independence of the country, hardly seems to have inculcated a spirit of confidence and freedom. In fact it is the gruesome phenomenon of the Partition of the country that captured the sensibility of the writer. The "modern" short-story, I'd say acquired its maturity in Hindi and Urdu in sixties and seventies. Partly, the reason for this would perhaps lie in the fact that the *form* of the story is itself not indigenous.

QH: I don't know what you mean by the "mature short-story". In fact, Manto and Ahmed Ali have been producing great short-stories in the thirties.

SK: I think very few writers seem to have located an essentially native voice in as far as the representation of the "modern" (with its already specified connotation) spirit is concerned. In the fifties, for instance, there's clearly artificial insemination of ideas from abroad. The "existential", the "absurd" were being talked about amongst the intellectual elite and short-stories were being woven over the Western philosophic base. The short-story, therefore, appeared to be a sky-scraper precariously balanced without a foundation. A lot of experimental writing was being done. It's only in late sixties that the 'Modern' emerged as an evolved sensibility. Writers such as Ram Lal, Bedi, Joginder Paul, Surendra Prakash and some others wrote in their identifiable voices.

QH: How do you say that Ram Lal found his identifiable voice?

SK: Well, his form, no doubt, is partly conventional in the fact that he uses the narrative technique but what is particularly noticeable is the creating of an "atmosphere", the universe of the short-story through that plain style with a kind of certitude and confidence.

QH: . . . Ram Lal is a good writer in the narrative form. He makes just a comfortable reading and is, what you may call, a "natural" writer. Joginder Paul has been doing a lot of experimental writing, however.

SK: The kind of hallucinated realism that one witnesses in the Latin American writer Garcia Marquez, don't you think, is much closer to the way we perceive reality here than say, the modernistic perspectives yielded by the modernistic writing from the West?

QH: Shall I confess to you, I have not been able to get around to reading Marquez and the other South American writers one hears so much about these days. . .

SK: Well, that's all right. It's just that I was struck

by a kind of orientalism that it seems to project.
QH: It's a rage these days. The business of writing consciously, you'll be surprised to hear this. . . I was in Sweden recently for a Seminar. A Professor read a bit from the Penguin reproduction of my novel *Aag Ka Darya* (I'm quite sick of this novel and try not to mention it). Well, what he said, set me thinking about my total lack of interest in what I do. He read one chapter and said that I wrote a "total novel" much earlier than this American writer. And I didn't know what this "total" novel is, and I of course didn't even know about Marquez. Well, that apart, I feel shocked with the fact that our critics are not examining fiction in the way a new piece of writing is taken up elsewhere in the world: Our fiction suffers from a total neglect and the whole critical effort is concentrated on Poetry.
SK: Also, critical perspectives are generally drawn from the West—"structuralism", "deconstruction",

I.A. Richards and so on. Surely, our literature could dictate its own critical canons and norms.
QH: Our critics seem to have nothing original to say. They go on quoting . . . this has been happening for the last forty years now. A long string of words and very little genuine analysis, jumbled and obscure thinking!
SK: Actually there is a discernible, logical development of the modern short story, a clear sense of the indigenous tradition that can be critically evolved. Our native myths and archetypes have gradually got assimilated in this literary form and our traditional modes of writing, *Katha*, *Dastan* etc., have eventually got amalgamated with the New Short-story. I wonder why, very few critics, seem inclined to sort this out and establish the reality of the modern Indian short story. In the West, what happened rather abruptly in the early 20th century English literature, slowly took its

roots and blossomed in the Indian soil with different hues and shapes.
QH: I should think that the fundamental problem with our critics is that they don't read at all. What do they read—some new critical books borrowed from the British Council or the U.S.I.S., from where they read up some new sensational stuff and then they start quoting left and right. Once they get important posts and chairs in the universities, then all they've to do is repeat themselves.
SK: Would you say that the power to dictate critical standards is rather misplaced?
QH: The big names that begin to control the readership of literature have done a lot of harm to the cause of good literature.
SK: Well, we've had a very free and open discussion on some fundamental problems regarding the creation and assessment of modern fiction. Thanks indeed for your uninhibited expression. □

An Insidious Phenomenon

P.C. Chatterji

THE VCR AGE: HOME VIDEO AND MASS COMMUNICATION

Edited by Mark R. Levy

Sage Publications, 1989, pp. 274, \$16.95

This is the first study of how a new device in electronics is entering the home and affecting individuals and society. Five years ago when the editor of this book sent an article on home video to a communications journal it was returned with the comment that it was not evident that VCRs were more important socially than pop up toasters! The fact is that the penetration of VCRs into homes in the past five years has been faster than the growth of TV viewing in a large number of countries, not only in the western world.

The present volume is divided into four parts. The first section deals generally with the diffusion of VCRs with particular reference to the USA and Britain. The second enquires into whether owners are making the fullest use of this new gadget; many do not seem to know the capabilities of their new found toy. The third part examines the psychological needs which the VCR fulfils; is it information, entertainment or what else? The fourth

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and final part deals with the cross-cultural influence of video.

Is video an extension of the existing technology of mass communication such as TV and film or is it an entirely new device which heralds a new form of communications. The authors contend that video is an extension of TV and film viewing. The important difference is personal choice. The individual can record programmes from the mass channels and view them later to suit one's own convenience. This is the foremost use of the VCR. Secondly, one can build up a library of cassettes of one's own, as one has a library of books. Thirdly, one can make a video of family events, such as marriages, birthday celebrations and the like. It is clear that the first two uses of video basically make use of what is available on TV and on films to suit personal tastes. The third is an extension of existing technology for the benefit of the family.

If VCR penetration has been high in the USA and western Europe the third world has not lagged far behind. The authors contend that more than half of TV households in the south-east Asian countries own VCRs and considerably a far greater number do so in the gulf states. The reasons for VCR penetration in the third world seem to be as follows. For example, if the number of TV channels is limited, the people go for video. If the film industry is undeveloped, as in Pakistan, that is another incentive to invest in a VCR. On a visit to Karachi a few years we found that Indian films which had not yet been released in the home

country had been seen by our friends. In the third world generally, copyright is not respected and this has led to a great deal of piracy and financial loss to the film industry.

One interesting fact which VCR use has brought out is the avoidance of commercials. Advertisers assume that when a programme is viewed the intervening commercial ad is also seen. In practice, however, the audience do not pay attention to the ad, people leave the room or just don't attend. The VCR has proved this. Studies show that in playback on VCR, the commercials are avoided by what is called zipping. This phenomenon, which started as a trickle a few years back has swelled and as of now, one third of viewers avoid commercials.

The largest number of programmes for video are produced in the USA and are distributed internationally. Is this phenomena leading to cultural imperialism? The answer is not simple. Audiences do not swallow the message intended by the producers, which may include propagating a particular set of values. People both accept and reject messages from their own point of view. Nevertheless it is interesting that in the years before glasnost, the Soviet authorities expressed the opinion that VCRs were a danger to the security of the state. Customs officials were to ensure that VCRs were not smuggled into the Soviet Union.

VCR penetration in our country has been growing rapidly. This can be gauged from the fact that video distribution shops have proliferated. In the large cities such shops are to be found in every locality, big or small. In small towns and wayside villages video parlours have come into existence where it is stated that pornographic programmes are shown. Unfortunately accurate data is not being collected on the VCR phenomenon and its impact on Indian society at different levels. □

From the Jalasagar to the Concert Platform

Indira Menon

BHATKHANDE'S CONTRIBUTION TO MUSIC

By Shobhana Nayar

Popular Prakashan Pvt. Ltd., Bombay, 1989, pp. 362, Rs. 200.00.

Amir Khusrau, the scholar-musician of the 13th century wrote that Indian music was "so difficult and so refined that no foreigner could totally master it even after 20 years of practice." With its roots in the Vedic period, our music has evolved over the centuries to a level of sophistication, abstraction and theoretical complexity that makes Khusrau's remark an understatement. It has remained a living art form, despite some ups and downs, due to the practitioners of the art who have sustained and nurtured it, and the great intellects whose unending quest for a scientific musical system has given it a unique place in the world of music. "Endaromahanubhavulu, antariki vandanamu" sang the saint-composer Tyagaraja. "There are many great souls—my salutations to them all"—no doubt referring to those who had enriched "sangitajnanamu" (the knowledge of music).

One of the brightest stars of this galaxy was Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande (1860–1936) whose contribution to Hindustani music forms the subject matter of the book by Shobhana Nayar. A Renaissance man *par excellence*, Bhatkhande appeared at a time when much was happening at the socio-political level and the country was poised for a cultural rebirth. For over a century the music of the North had gone underground, taking refuge in the small courts and mansions of the petty Rajahs, Nawabs and jagirdars, following the decline of the Mughal court where it had been cultivated to a degree of excellence. The musician had come down in the social hierarchy though he did not suffer much economic hardship as he was well looked after by his patron. The science of music had all but disappeared, the ancient Sanskrit treatises lay buried and forgotten as no one seemed to have any use for them.

Geographical isolation and difficulties of communication between regions led to the emergence

of the "gharana system" in which each region produced its special style of music pioneered by a rarely gifted musician, which soon became a jealously guarded family secret to be passed down from father to son following a strictly oral tradition. The rivalry between the gharanas prevented any interaction between the musicians or sharing of their rich repertoire. Music thus became the close preserve of a few, to the exclusion of the general public. Only those who had access to the courts could enjoy the rare privilege of hearing the great ustads. Only their sons or close relatives were given a full-fledged musical education. Other disciples were given only a fragmentary education for which they had to slave all their lives.

What the gharana system did, however, produce was a rich variety of styles which we can still hear today. It was also based on the *guru-shishya parampara* which we feel so nostalgic about as only that close rapport between the teacher and the disciple can bring out the full flowering of talent. One gets the impression of the author coming down rather heavily on the gharanedar musicians. Except for a brief acknowledgement of their contribution to the development of different styles, there does not appear to be an objective assessment of these custodians of our ancient heritage.

Today, when every respectable musician attempts to trace his lineage to some gharana or other, one wonders whether, in an uncertain political milieu, the gharanas were not really cultural oases which spawned some of the finest musical talent in the country. That Bhatkhande acknowledged their greatness is evident from the fact that he sent his best disciple, Pandit Ratanjankar, to Ustad Faiyyaz Khan for advanced training. Also, when he set out on his odyssey into the world of music, it was to these musicians he turned for practical demonstration. With the advent of the radio and the electronic revolution the system has got diluted and is on its way out and we shall be the poorer for it.

The gharanas had kept the art alive but the theory of music that had evolved over the centuries, shaped and moulded by intellectual giants like Bharata, Matanga, Sharangadeva, Ahobala and Shrinivasa, had ossified. Music had become largely intuitive, imparted without knowledge of the basic foundation and unquestioningly accepted. What Bhatkhande was faced with, in other words, were a thoroughgoing musical system as expounded by the ancients and a highly evolved living art which had developed its own momentum and moved away from traditional theory. He therefore decided to weld them into a new system by applying traditional concepts with some modifications to the music that was currently in vogue. This basic dilemma that he faced and the manner in which he set about resolving it forms the core of the book and has been very competently handled by the author.

The colossal task that Bhatkhande set before himself could not have been undertaken by a

It was Bhatkhande, who, for the first time, made it known to the public in the North that there were two distinct systems—the Karnata and the Hindustani and that the nomenclature of the *shudha* and *vikrit swaras* of these systems were different from one another. Even in South India itself these facts were little known and it was after Bhatkhande's publications that the attention of people in the South was drawn to them.

His exploration of the ancient theory from the *granthas* helped to solve diverse, mysterious and baffling theories of music as expounded by the old scholars. But for his efforts the music of the past centuries would have passed into oblivion. His formulation of the present day theory bore the stamp of his genius—an imaginative mind, balanced with rationalism and sanity—which made the study of music easy for the future generations.

—From Bhatkhande's *Contribution to Music*

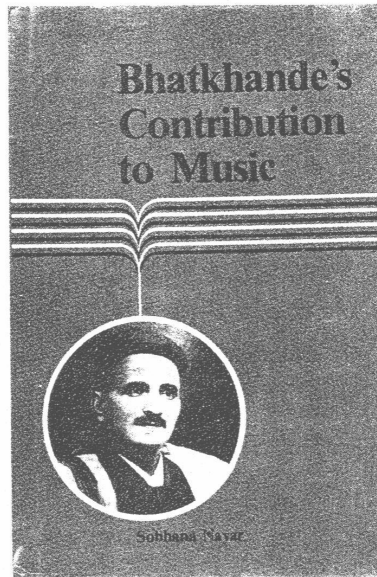
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lesser mortal. In a chapter devoted to a discussion of the mental make-up of this amazing individual, Shobhana Nayar reveals the determination, perseverance and charm that went into the making of his personality. He was fighting against heavy odds in the form of inertia and vested interests and needed all these qualities and more to create order out of chaos.

The sixth chapter deals with the evolution of our musical system as emerged from Bhatkhande's researches into the ancient Sanskrit treatises. As the author unfolds the saga of the building up of our musical scale, note after note, one gets carried away by the sheer romance of it. The shruti-swara relationship and the methodologies followed by the various musicologists to define it are brought out in a lucid manner and should be of great benefit to a student of music. Having delved deep into these treatises, Bhatkhande decided to eschew what was no longer relevant for his purpose of codifying contemporary music, while at the same time drawing heavily from them wherever he felt the need. When musicians of repute demonstrated a deviation from traditional theory, he modified the theory to fit the living art.

The next step was to classify the ragas and their parent scales. The redoubtable Venkatamakhi of the 17th century had worked out all the permutations and combinations of the twelve accepted swaras and formulated a 72-scale *melakarta* system which has been the foundation of Karnatak music. Of these only a little more than one-fourth have so far acquired the status of ragas. (There have been attempts at composing in these 72 melas which is really an exercise in futility as melas bear the same relation to ragas as a scaffolding to a building and not even the voice of "MS" can breathe life into them.) Bhatkhande, who was familiar with the Venkatamakhi system, observed that at that point of time ten major scales covered practically all the ragas, *janaka* as well as *janya*, that were currently in vogue in Hindustani music. These ten *thaats* and the ragas derived from the received detailed treatment in his books. The author shows how after patient investigation, the scattered fragments of Hindustani music and theory crystallised to form a rational corpus of music, accessible to all. This was achieved with the willing (sometimes reluctant) participation of the leading musicians and musicologists of the North and South whom he managed to get together at the conference table and arrive at a consensus on controversial matters. Being a good singer as well as composer, Bhatkhande was acquainted with the practical side of music and could not be accused of being an ivory-tower musicologist, though he did have to face criticism from several quarters.

The most severe criticism was levelled at his attempts at devising a notation system for Hindustani music. Notation was anathema to our musi-



The extraordinary genius of Bhatkhande, combined with rare qualities like profound scholarship and discursive brilliance, incisive and extensive vision, tactful and persuasive handling of persons including musicians, was totally harnessed in the service of music. This was a dedicated soul wedded to music.

From S. Mutatkar's Foreword to Bhatkhande's Contribution to Music

cians and with some justification, for notation is a little suited to Indian music as are keyboard instruments. Indian music is highly individualistic with the emphasis on *manodharma* or improvisation and it is not possible to adopt a fool-proof notation system for it as in Western music. It is the subtle nuances and embellishments that bring out the sublime beauty of our music, which, Bhatkhande himself admitted, cannot be expressed through notation. The *gandhar* of Durbari Kanhara, for eg, lies outside the purview of accurate classification and when sung by an artiste like Gangubai Hangal, becomes a spiritual experience defying analysis. Similarly, the *nishad* of the Karnatak Kalyani, though not a maverick note, when sung by T. Brinda of the Dhanam family, acquires an indefin-

able quality. Notation cannot create a great musician any more than the script of a play can produce a great actor; but they are both necessary to give him a clear idea of the basic structure of the raga/play and make him word perfect. Bhatkhande's aim was precisely this, as in the absence of any kind of written music, the student often did not understand what he was singing. Notation was also meant to serve the purpose of preserving the vast repertoire of compositions he had so assiduously collected from the various gharanas, employing every kind of stratagem. But his efforts brought more brickbats than roses. Says the author: "When he imparted the lessons in notation, writing it on the blackboard, it created a commotion in the music world."

Bhatkhande's achievements were indeed mind-boggling. With a computer-like brain, he managed to collect, collate, classify and codify our music and make it available to the public through his prolific writings. By shifting our treasured heritage from the *jalsaghar* to the concert platform, he did a great service to society. For this he needed to be not merely a visionary, but also a practical man of action, an entrepreneur. Chapter 9 of Shobhana Nayar's book gives an interesting account of his pioneering attempts at holding music conferences where great minds could meet and interact.

This brings me to the first question that comes to mind after reading the book. There was another luminary at that time, fired by the same kind of zeal, and who undertook work that was, surprisingly, complementary to that of Bhatkhande. This was Pandit Vishnu Digamber Paluskar, the founder of the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya. Did the two Vishnus (as they are affectionately referred to) ever think of joining forces and working in tandem? While a whole page has been devoted to the "other" Vishnu as a contemporary, there is nothing to indicate the relationship between these two crusaders in whose lives one can find so many parallels.

The other disturbing question is whether Bhatkhande's great dream of democratizing classical music has really been fulfilled. Can we afford to sit back with complacency and say that Bhatkhande restored Indian classical music "to its present position of pristine glory" and leave it at that? Would not a postscript about the present scenario be in order? When one hears of a stampede at a Rock Festival, and sees a college hall emptying out at the stroke of the recess bell leaving the SPIC-MACAY artiste angry and humiliated; when one sees the whole nation drugged by a shrill, lisping falsetto from the film world; and when one thinks of the modern patrons of classical music like the Sangeet Natak Academy... one wonders whether all is well with Indian classical music and whether we have preserved the rich legacy left by "Chaturpandit" Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande. □

A Disjointed Pastiche

Indu K. Mallah

THE TEMPLE OF MY FAMILIAR

By Alice Walker

Penguin Books in association with the Women's Press, 1989, \$4.99

When a writer has produced a book of the calibre of *The Colour Purple*, her next book is in danger of being an anti-climax, and this is exactly the case with *The Temple of My Familiar*. A book which the author calls a romance of the last 500,000 years is certainly an ambitious undertaking. Walker plays havoc with the novel-form in this book—in fact, one wonders whether it can be classified as a novel at all—there is no clear-cut plot, no story-line, no central character. But contemporary writers are constantly breaking away from the novel-form, and Black American women writers are no exception. Walker's own earlier novel *The Colour Purple*, is written in an epistolary form.

The central themes of this book are colonialism, oppression, religious imperialism, and exploitation, traced across time and space through the characters—Arveyda, a musician in search of his past, Carlotta, his Latin American wife, who lives in exile from hers, Suwelo, a Black professor of American History, Fanny, his ex-wife and granddaughter of Miss Celie of *The Colour Purple*, Lissie, a 'vibrant creature with a thousand pasts.' The author weaves myth and metaphor, legend and history, time and space, with inter-personal relationships, to create a complex web, at once tensile and shimmering, which quivers in every part, when one point is shaken. Impelled by the past, fate, lost scruple, illusion and disillusion, the characters perform the linked figures of their destiny.

Commenting on religious imperialism, one of the characters says: "My father had long since lost his faith; not in the spiritual teachings of Jesus, the prophet and human being, but in Christianity as a religion of conquest and domination inflicted on other peoples. . . the white man, in his dual role of spiritual guide and religious prostitute, spoiled even the most literary form of God experience for us. By making the bible say whatever was necessary to keep his plantations going, and using it as a tool to degrade women and enslave Blacks."

There are many links and similarities to Eastern philosophy and thought: "We had begun to see, in

Africa—where people worshipped many things, including the root-leaf plant, which they used to cover their houses—that 'God' was not a monolith, and not the property of Moses, as we'd been led to think, and not separate from us, or absent from whatever world one inhabited."

The author weaves myth and metaphor, legend and history, time and space, with inter-personal relationships, to create a complex web, at once tensile and shimmering, which quivers in every part, when one point is shaken.

Colonial oppression is traced across the exploitative centuries to the Africa which had already been raped of much of its sustenance, and whose people had been sold into slavery. Millions of whose trees had been shipped to European countries to make benches and altars in those grand European cathedrals, and whose minerals and metals mined, and its land planted in crops for the benefit of the foreign invaders. . . . Many of whom viewed the Africans themselves as having no right to be in Africa, since it was the plan of the white people to take over the continent, the Africans represented merely, the 'Burdensome responsibility of genocide.'

Racism, as it exists currently in the U.S.A. is summed up succinctly by Fanny: "There is the maddening illusion of freedom without the substance. It's never solid, unequivocal, irrevocable. . . . Black people have the oddest feeling . . . of forever running in place."

Using the idiom of mythology, legend, and folk-lore, which is so much a part of the African tradition, Walker explores and explodes several myths, including that of Perseus and Medusa. According to her, Medusa is Isis, Goddess of Egypt, the Great Mother, The Keeper of the Earth, the Black Madonna, and Perseus symbolizes the white male world destroying the black female Goddess/Mother tradition and culture of Africa. She goes one step further, and suggests that Athena, the Greek Goddess, is really the metamorphosis of Isis. In a startling reversal of roles, Walker suggests that white people are really insecure, and are envious of Blacks, and that at one time, both Whites and Blacks lived together in Africa, but that the whites were forced to leave because their pale

skins could not take the sun. "The white man worships gold because it is the sun he has lost." She goes even further and suggests that the white man is sick, and that allowances must be made for him.

There are frequent references to 'dream memory' so reminiscent of Jung's collective unconscious, particularly by Miss Lissie, who can recall all her previous incarnations, and by Ola, Fanny's father, who tells his daughter:

"Have faith that what is in your consciousness can be communicated to the consciousness of all. And is, in many cases, already there." This again, would seem to be an African tradition, and is closely linked to myths and legend, as evidenced by the work of many outstanding Black writers and poets—Chinua Achebe and Kofi Awoonor, to mention two. According to them, myths are what give African literature their stamp of uniqueness—they provide a process of the Black Africans as a people—which informs them of their Africaness. That they are, in fact, "the memory of a community."

One has the feeling of being given an all-embracing, holistic over-view, which spans both time and space. Miss Lissie reminisces about living in forests that seemed to cover the whole earth, playing under trees like cathedrals, and of consorting with her animal cousins; in one of her previous incarnations.

Walker provides some sensitive philosophical and psychological insights into the racial question, inter-personal relationships, and into the human, and universal condition. These are scattered throughout the book, and surface particularly in 'The Gospel According to Shug', one of the articles of which says: "Helped are those whose every act is a prayer for harmony in the Universe, for they are the restorers of balance to our planet. To them will be given the insight that every good act done anywhere in the cosmos welcomes the life of an animal or a child."

The author's 'womanism', to replace the extreme 'feminism' also comes into play. As does her pride of identity. In short *The Temple of My Familiar* conforms to the general format of Black Literature, particularly Black Women's literature. There is the Quest theme—the search for a meaningful identity, the attempt to sustain one's self-dignity in a world of growing alienation, absurdity, and moral decay, and the need to nurture one's self-esteem in a hostile social climate. The psychological reaction to centuries of racial persecution comes across strongly, and in places, touchingly. One of the characters reflects sadly that it was perhaps the tears and sweat of all the suffering people of the earth that made the ocean salty.

But in spite of all this, *The Temple of My Familiar* fails to convince not only as a novel, but as a coherent statement of any kind. Isolated pinnacles of brilliance, however authentic, do not make a composite, literary whole. The over-all effect of the book is that of a disjointed pastiche. □

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Exploring the Human Psyche

Vinay Lal

WE HAVE ARRIVED IN AMRITSAR AND OTHER STORIES

By Bhisham Sahni

Translated by Jai Ratan

Disha Books, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1990, pp. 228, Rs. 60.00

Although Bhisham Sahni is known to many Indians as the author of the novel *Tamas*, subsequently televised as a serial, to Hindi readers his name has long been familiar as a writer of short stories. Eight collections of his short stories have been published over the last three decades, and here and there one encounters one of his stories in English translation. *We Have Arrived In Amritsar*, however, is the first full-length volume of his stories to appear in English translation, and it leaves little doubt that Bhisham Sahni is a modern master of the short story.

The work of the Sahni brothers, Bhisham and Balraj, has in the public imagination at least been linked to the theme of the partition, and the blurb at the back of *We have Arrived in Amritsar*, perhaps just as much as the title, gives the erroneous impression that this collection of stories is likewise set against the backdrop of the cataclysmic events of 1947. The partition serves as the theme of only two stories, and even here Bhisham Sahni is more interested in exploring the processes by which communalism takes hold of men's minds, and the psychology of human relationships at times of acute stress, than in 'what happened'. It is a motley crowd of working men, middle-class housewives, domestic servants, and some rather more unusual characters, that fills the pages of the remaining eleven stories. At one moment we find Sahni writing about a Chinese monk in India; then we encounter a thief and his victim, locked together in a bizarre relationship, in surroundings that can only be described as Kafkaesque; and elsewhere the nature of political opportunism, with its crass reliance on votes and promise of power, and its failure to even recognize—much less respect—the realm of the sacred, is vividly brought to the fore.

Whatever the broad canvas to which Bhisham Sahni applies his strokes, his stories express two central concerns, the first posed as a question, and the second perhaps as an article of belief. How far is man free to act as he will, endowed with the agency to shape his world, and how far is he a mere

puppet on strings, a grain of sand blown hither and thither by the fury of the storm? The lives of Sahni's characters are marked by a continual tension between destiny and freedom, between the large forces which appear to leave us powerless and our own desire and will to achieve. Sahni, insofar as he is represented by the philosophically-inclined narrator, inclines to the view that the outcome of this struggle between freedom and restraint is a foregone conclusion: our decisions are made for us. "One's course in life is decided by one's poverty, one's limitations or inclinations", he writes in the story "The Only Way"; "One never chooses; one just gropes along blindly" (p. 209).

This didactic voice would surely have agreed with Schopenhauer that though one can will, one cannot will to will. Yet the young woman in this story, abandoned by her brahmin husband, and subsequently left to fend for herself in the big city, is despite a lame left leg at last able to take the resolute step to stand, literally and metaphorically, on her own feet and thus defy those forces of destiny which seem irrevocably poised at the edge of victory. Likewise, the eponymous protagonist of "Radha-Anuradha", takes the bold step of eloping with her lover to prevent her father from marrying her to an old widower. In Sahni's stories, the didactic voice of the narrator, which would have us believe that the range of human action is circumscribed, is frequently at odds with the courageous behaviour and spirited actions of ordinary women and men.

The tension between freedom and restraint in Sahni's stories is equalled only by the tension between speech and silence. What emerges is a belief in the incommensurability, not only of viewpoints, but of different worlds. Words communicate, and yet they don't: they simply hang in the air. Human communication is pregnant with possibilities, and yet it fears to be fulfilled. No one person can ever fully understand another: a perfect commensurability is not possible; but is it desirable? Chacha Mangal Sain, in the story by the same name, is taken away by his nephew, from the lane in Sabzi Mandi where he used "to live in a room like a hovel", and installed in the comfort of a suburban home. The nephew's wife is scarcely

happy: the old man, recovering rapidly from his ailments, shows himself "in his true colours." He clears his throat noisily, spits all over the place, drinks his tea with a slurp, and takes to gossiping with the servants and neighbours. The wife contrives to keep the drawing room out of bounds for him; gradually he is prevented from leaving the house; and eventually he is confined to his room. Then, one day, he just vanishes. Many months later the nephew returns to Chacha Mangal Sain's neighbourhood, and finds him seated outside on a cot, exchanging remarks with the *mohalla* women, bantering with the boys. The lingering image, as the nephew leaves his chacha, is of three small boys dancing around the old man's cot, "while he lay there brandishing his lathi at them, and making threatening noises" (p. 208).

"Chacha Mangal Sain" is not only a story of how men are set in their ways, constrained by certain habits and modes of thought, or of how the

generation gap is a tangible and visible barrier to communication. Nor can we reduce it to an expression of the conflict between a self-assured modernity and the contentment that adherence to tradition provides. The

Whatever the broad canvas to which Bhisham Sahni applies his strokes, his stories express two central concerns, the first posed as a question, and the second perhaps as an article of belief. How far is man free to act as he will, endowed with the agency to shape the world and how far is he a mere puppet on a string . . .

story is all this, and more: the old man lives in the only way that he knows, and that is his authenticity and the authenticity of the modern world, which may be just another name for efficiency and bureaucratic management, cannot substitute for the authenticity of an old man who knows he belongs in the streets and byways of life, not in suburbia with its sanitized satisfactions.

As the problem of authenticity is a species of the larger problem of incommensurability of different worlds, so is the question of religious intolerance. The Hindu boy Pali, in the opening story of the volume, gets separated from his parents as they leave a refugee camp for India, and is brought up as a Muslim by a childless couple. His biological parents, now across the border, make many attempts to recover him; seven years later they succeed. Once he was circumcised; now a tuft of hair is left in the middle of his cropped head. So is he a Hindu or a Muslim? While the men fight it over, somewhere one woman weeps. Sahni doesn't waste words on religious shibboleths, yet one can scarcely doubt that he would have agreed with Kabir:

*The Muslim's namaz is as different from a Hindu's puja
As a bracelet's gold is from gold in an ear-ring.*

If we knew that the gold in the bracelet differs not from the gold in the ear-ring, would these different worlds be reconcilable then? A more

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To be able to fully explain evil is to provide its rationale, its justification. Ultimately Sahni's stories leave us with the feeling that there is, and will continue to be, something inexplicable and ineffable about human behaviour. Life, in this sense, is something of a mystery, something of an accident—and indeed both these motifs figure largely in many of the stories.

arresting, not to mention chilling, perspective emerges in the story, "We have Arrived in Amritsar". A train is on its way to Amritsar; somewhere along the way, at a wayside station, a Hindu family tries to enter a compartment, but is prevented from doing so by a couple of Pathans. The train pulls out of the station; and no sooner has it left, then the platform becomes a raging inferno. An "oppressive silence" reigns over the compartment, but as it approaches Amritsar, the supposedly effeminate Hindu passenger, hitherto a silent spectator of the Pathans' callous behaviour, hurls the most abusive words at the manly Pathans. At Amritsar station the Pathans leave the compartment, but later, in the dark silence of the night, the Babu does to death with an iron rod a Muslim who tries to enter the compartment at a station. The job is done; the revenge is complete. The Babu smiles his "horrifying smile"; the train carries on.

We know that men are moved by a complex of motives, that passion is uncontrollable, and that the fragile threads by which webs of communication, understanding, and existence are spun can snap at the slightest excess of stress. We think we understand why the Babu acts as he does, but in reality this understanding can never fully be ours, nor ought it to be so. To be able to fully explain evil is to provide its rationale, its justification. Ultimately Sahni's stories leave us with the feeling that there is, and will continue to be, something inexplicable and ineffable about human behaviour. Life, in this sense, is something of a mystery, something of an accident—and indeed both these motifs figure largely in many of the stories.

With the publication of Bhisham Sahni's stories, his work should become more widely known in the English-speaking world. It is only to be regretted that the expertise and long experience of Orient Longman has been put to such poor use in the production of this book. We are told by Jai Ratan that "some" of the translations are the author's own, but any further information in this respect is withheld from the reader. Moreover, such collections should provide, as this one does not, the original title and date of publication of each story. Numerous printing errors, sloppy proof-reading, and poor editing will do little to enhance the reputation of the publisher (see, for example, pp. 47, 68, 87, 95 and 157). Surely Bhisham Sahni deserves better? □

Poems from Kanara and Peru

H.Y. Sharada Prasad

SEELGAVANAGULU

By Shivarama Karanth

SSB Publishers, Bangalore, 1990, pp. 10 + 83, Rs. 22.00

At eighty-eight, Shivarama Karanth has lost none of his power to surprise. Not known to be a poet, he has come out with a book of poems. Earlier this summer he was on a tour of South America with his troop of Yakshagana players. Half way round the world, he had a good amount of time on his hands. His mind was full of new experiences—the awesome sight of the Amazon, outclassing in might the rivers known to history, like the Euphrates and the Tigris, the Nile, the Ganges and the Indus and the Yangtze, the sensation of seeing the Abhimanyu of our mythology trapped in the Inca terraces of the Andes, and the inevitable exercise that people indulge in when in other lands—of taking stock of what we had done with our dreams of freedom. The result was a number of poems, for poetry is a quicker way of saying things than prose. Karanth came back with ten or twelve of these poems. Then, remembering that over the last sixty years, he had written an occasional poem (as distinct from the songs he wrote for his operas) and he hunted them up. An enterprising publisher has published these fifty-seven poems in less than two months in a slender, attractive volume. One wishes the date was mentioned beneath each poem.

The title means poems that rend and cleave. Karanth has always been known for the fire in his eyes and on his tongue. He was one of the few in the Romantic Age of Modern Kannada to remain uninfected by Romantic values. In these poems he uses now a scalpel and now a hatchet to expose the humbug and cynicism in our national life:

*"Vande Mataram" they sing,
They sob after murdering their mother.*

And:

*You need a hundred lives' merit to be born in India,
In this India of Chandraswami and Dhirendra,
and of people who can swallow entire guns.*

Again,

*They lord over you from Delhi
Those who have digested Ashoka and Akbar.*

Nothing very original in thought, perhaps, but translation from our languages into English robs the lines of their tonal force and verbal associations.

The South American poems are fascinating, and not merely for the reason that no poems have been written in Kannada from there. Karanth's encyclopedic mind and sensitiveness deal with a whole continent's agony. The poems do not set out to be satirical. There is a moving one on Inca gold and how the spaniards seized it from a trusting people.

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fected by Romantic values. In
these poems he uses now a scalpel
and now a hatchet to expose the
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national life.*

Among the avowedly satirical poems are a couple which pour scorn on poets who do not employ words to receive and carry understanding but to weave gossamer webs of the supposedly beautiful. There are also parodies of nationalistic songs, recording Karanth's own early infatuations and quick disillusion with the Gandhian movement. But quite a few poems do not rend and cleave, for example the poem about his grandparents who watered the roots of the family tree and the poem of dedication to his mother whose cradle songs come leaping over hedge of his old age. □

H.Y. Sharada Prasad worked in the Indian Express, and was later Editor, yojana. He was Information Adviser to the Prime Minister for over eighteen years.

The Author as Humanist

Readers of Tamil literature need no introduction to Sivasankari. A prolific writer, she has written over one hundred short stories and novelettes, sixty-nine novels, six travelogues and a biography. A committed social activist, her stories reflect her concern for humanity. Convincingly authentic and socially purposeful, the themes are not unfamiliar. Yet, each time we read her books, we learn something new, become a little more compassionate, a little more understanding. In short, we become a better person. Recently, one of her novels, TYAGU: Oru Manithannin Kathai, translated into English by Uma Narayanan, was published by Affiliated East-West (Price, Rs. 80).

Sivasankari is an author who, at one time or another, every reader of Tamil literature reads. Multi-faceted and versatile, no two of her books are alike. Yet each one is so convincingly authentic that one can actually picture them! It is no surprise then that many of her books have won awards, have been made into box-office hits and have been adapted into TV serials.

How does one describe her? Firmly resisting all tags, Sivasankari simply calls herself a humanist. "To me the person Sivasankari is more important than the writer Sivasankari. I will never allow my professionalism to overcome my humaneness, what I feel for people." Which really forms the basis of all her writings. Deeply caring and sensitive, she has the uncanny knack of describing any human feeling just the way it is, and has the ability to place herself, chameleon-like, in any milieu of society, an alcoholic, a drug addict, a poor peasant, there is nothing that cannot fit into her wide canvas. Her portraits are so masterly that whenever they experience pain, so do we. She also brings to life a complex supporting cast of characters in a few swift paragraphs.

One perceives a crusading zeal in all books. Intentionally or not, most of her books carry a message. Should an artistic creation be didactic, an educational tool, as it were, critics are wont to ask. She says simply, "It is never my intention to preach. I write to share my concern. To me writing is always a process of caring and sharing." In that she's perfectly correct. Her novels reflect her concern for society. Unless she is deeply stirred or moved, she never writes. Which is also the reason, perhaps, why her books ring so absolutely true.

Curiously enough, for a student of human nature, Sivasankari never dreamt that she would one day become a writer. And more surprisingly, in her younger days she never was an avaricious reader. It was an ugly incident—one of the crude rituals which persist even to this day—which proved to be the milestone in her life. The injustice of it all made her restless, angry and inconsolable, until she felt that she had to do something. During the small hours of the night, her pent-up emotions found an outlet—in a flood of words, which arranged themselves into a moving short story. She posted it to a popular Tamil weekly and was shocked to hear from the editor almost immediately: "You handle human emotions beautifully.

That's your strong point. Cultivate it." From then on there was no looking back. Today she is the author of more than one hundred short stories and novelettes, sixty-nine novels, six travelogues and a biography. And as she puts it laughingly, "Because I never read much, I developed my own style. My liability became my plus point."

It is the authenticity of her stories which make them so immensely popular. A peerless observer of detail and event and alert to every unique inconspicuous incident which so distinguishes people, her books reflect life. And truth itself. And she avoids easy sentimentality and never turns self-righteous. One doesn't merely recognize bits of oneself in her characters. On reading *TYAGU: Oru Manithannin Kathai* so many people presumed that she had detailed their own lives!

How does she write? Anything can trigger off a story—a news flash, a headline, a stray incident which she witnessed. For Sivasankari the actual process of writing never takes more than a few hours. It is the gestation period, when the idea simmers in the head, slowly taking shape, which takes a long time. Sometimes it takes years for research to be done. She weaves the entire story in her head, with the title of the book, the names of the characters and even their ages firmly etched in her mind. On reading *TYAGU: Oru Manithannin Kathai* Bala, editor of *Ananda Vikatan*, a Tamil Weekly, was shocked. "The novel," he remarked, "was exactly as she had described when she broached

"To me the person Sivasankari is more important than the writer Sivasankari"



the idea of writing the story of an alcoholic to me."

A multidimensional personality in this age of impoverished specialisation, she can write on just about anything in human experience. And present the story from any viewpoint. Readers, however, in their eagerness to lap up anything she writes, often presume that she's always hidden inside her characters. Says she, "I never enforce my personality on my characters. Yes, sometimes there are autobiographical touches. But not always. The decisions my characters make are entirely their own. I may never behave the way they do." Which is what life is really all about. As she puts it, "As an author, I simply present different slices of life."

The distancing herself from her characters speaks of the person Sivasankari who never allows the author Sivasankari to overwhelm her. This is one of the reasons why she is involved in so many other activities other than writing. Like social service for instance. Says she, "I will have no regrets if I don't write tomorrow. But I would be disappointed in myself if I failed as a human being. Life is a team work. I would like to be a part of it and contribute whatever I can towards the betterment of our society."

Today she has carved a well-deserved niche for herself in the Tamil literary milieu. What more does she want to achieve? "Nothing really," says she, "I hope I become a better person. I would like this maturity to be reflected in my writing. That and to die as a human being". □



SIVASANKARI ON TYAGU

How long did it take to write this novel?
Almost eight years.

How did the story take shape in your mind?

I come from an orthodox background. Orthodox in the sense that nobody drank, smoked or gambled in my family. In my first job, I came across people from the so-called cream of our society. I was shocked by their behaviour during the parties. People, otherwise nice and decent, changed completely after a few drinks. They were like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. I wanted to find out why they behaved like that. The research ended in a story.

What kind of research did you do?

I visited AA, I met psychiatrists who treated alcoholics, I read extensively. Tyagu was a result of my concern. A process of caring which I wanted to share.

Letter From Kerala

Paul Zachariah

It is not surprising that I write a letter from Kerala sitting in Delhi, when you consider that twenty-five per cent of all Malayalis live outside Kerala. Modern Malayalam fiction of the post-Independence genre was, for all practical purposes, created by expatriate writers. The nostalgia and alienation of exiles had given it a new edge. Literature was, perhaps, foretelling, as it should, the Malayali exodus into the wide world looking for bread. At least one Malayalam writer—T.V. Kochu Bava, a shortstory writer of remarkable innovative gifts—is caught in the cockpit of the Gulf war today. From Delhi runs one of the most active Malayalam publishing houses, though of a missionary nature: the Atheist Publishers, established by the expatriate writer, rationalist, journalist and social critic, Idamaruku. In Delhi, live three cult figures of the modern Malayalam novel: O.V. Vijayan, Anand and M. Mukundan. The truth is, over the years, unknown to Malayalis themselves, two different Keralas have emerged; one fixed on the map and the other a greater, flexible, mobile Kerala spilling over into every civilized—and uncivilized—corner of the world. It is not accidental, therefore, that when an international conflagration erupts as it has happened now, not thousands but lakhs of Malayalis are caught in it. This is the Malayali diaspora. Only unlike the Jews, it was a creation of the machinations of the Malayali himself in his own homeland; the direct result of a revolution that went sour, corrupt and parasitic. That is another story. What it all adds up to is that a Malayali today can write a letter from Timbuctoo and call it a letter from home. And the chances are that his letter might carry a more balanced view of the situation in Kerala than one from Kerala itself. Because, not only does distance lend perspective and the non-resident Malayali keeps a sharp eye on what happens at home, in the original Kerala there is nothing balanced any more, except the geometrical regularity of rubber plantations and the fanatically long rows of humans on the roads agitating against themselves.

Several districts in Kerala recently attained total literacy. One would expect thus that literature is flourishing there. What is flourishing is publishing. Literature is—no, not dying—in a state of frozen narcissism, “serious” literature, that is. Pulp is flying high, which explains why publishing is prospering. Kerala boasts today of India’s highest circulated and highest read periodicals, both of them mere compendiums on cheap newsprint of

Paul Zachariah is a writer in Malayalam.

instalmentalised novels ranging in topics from Tantric horror to soft porn. “Serious” literature never anticipated the literacy explosion. It did not foresee the hordes of alphabet-hungry neo-literates, especially women, wanting to plunge into the magic kingdom of the printed word. It had remained cocooned in the unnatural safety of the ivory towers of the fifties and the sixties without realizing that it was being steadily edged out by the massively urgent reading needs of a new, bland, indiscriminate generation which cared two hoots for intellectual finesses. Publishers, being entrepreneurs, saw what was coming and they were ready. And dozens of novel-producers were ready. And the people were of course ready. Is it forever true then that meaningful literature cannot reach out to the masses, that it must remain a pocket-borough in the greater kingdom of life? Perhaps it can never bridge the gulf of pulp. But it can at least detach itself from mesmerised postures of self-admiration and look around with eyes that see directly into life.

“Serious” publishing has suffered a great setback—though for other reasons—in the near-collapse of India’s first writers’ cooperative publishing house, the Sahitya Pravartaka Sahakarana Sangham (SPCS-C standing for cooperative). It has been driven to ground above all by that great curse of all cooperative enterprises, bureaucratisation through government nominees. Equally damaging has been factors like unionisation, managerial amateurism and incompetence, infiltration by a-literary vested interests promoted by politicians and that inherent fate of any Malayali institution: United We Fall. In the fifties when most of published Malayalam literature was still restricted to a couple of weeklies, it was SPCS which gave new Malayalam writers unlimited access to the printed book and the bookshop. Not a small matter. SPCS nourished the extraordinary growth of the library movement in Kerala and revolutionised both book-marketing and Keralite reading habits by launching highly successful Home Library Instalment Schemes. Works of the finest Malayalam writers, translations of the greatest works in world literature, path-finding dictionaries, new, authoritative editions of Malayalam classics, all found their way into thousands of village libraries and Malayali homes through this remarkable organisation. But those were the days when it still had not been infiltrated by fortune hunters. The news today is that it lies in shambles—and you certainly can’t blame it on The Neglect of the Centre.

In the meanwhile, an indefatigable senior citizen—familiar to Malayalis by the initials of his name, DC—the man who once guided SPCS into its golden times and who, as it always happens to enterprising minds in Kerala, was bundled out precisely for being enterprising and successful, had made a battling come-back. This grand old man of the Malayalam publishing and literary world—D.C. Kizhakemurri is a writer in his own rights, a freedom-fighter, a vegetarian, an agnostic and a very perceptive commentator on Malayali society—has salvaged meaningful book-publishing from the ruins it had been left in by the slow, ponderous and scandalous decay of the SPCS. One by one, the best of writers have gravitated to DC, though he pays a lower royalty (fifteen per cent as against SPCS’s thirty per cent) and though he belongs to that category of business Kerala’s revolutionary-minded intelligentsia had trained itself to look down upon: private enterprise. In an exploding literary market like Kerala, what D.C. Kizhakemurri did was to publish books as if it mattered—to himself, his readers and his writers. When, during the last World Book Fair, Indian publishing industry, as the small clique of Delhi publishers (mostly of 500-copy, unbelievably priced, often author-subsidised, miscellaneous ‘library’ editions) calls itself, unveiled photographs of its own office-bearers in its Hall of Fame, I thought of D.C. Kizhakemurri and his one-man stand for the revitalisation of a whole literature. But then people in Delhi, though they always call themselves “national” this and “Indian” that, have always been notoriously short-sighted, whether in politics or in publishing. That again is another story.

We have received a number of enquiries about the addresses of *Sarvanam* and *Natrang* which we give below:

Sarvanam

Svaman
Foundation for Dalit Literature
4 Hemang Park, Vejalpur
Ahmedabad 385001
Gujarat

Natrang

Editor: N.C. Jain
I-47 Jangpura Extension
New Delhi 110 014

Sparkling Creativity

Ratna Lahiri

MAUNI

By U.R. Anantha Murthy

Translated from Kannada by B.R. Narayan

Bharatiya Jnanpeeth Prakashan, 1990, pp. 223, Rs. 70.00

The name of 'Samskara' Anantha Murthy is not unknown to the Hindi reader as that laudable translation was one of those rare ones that retained the racy quality of Murthy's narrative style. This collection is an anthology of his short stories.

The attempt of Bharatiya Jnanpeeth in bringing out Hindi translations of eminent literary writing in the regional languages, is indeed worthy of praise. It is important though that the task is not treated cavalierly, and the translations are edited as to readability in the receiving language. Quite often the whole point of the story may be lost to the Hindi reader if this simple precaution is not taken as has happened in some of these stories. Confusion worst confounded is the result when even this redeemable translation is carelessly proof read so as to create impressions not originally intended. In fact, it is the total lack of care in the proof reading stage that has unfortunately plagued this otherwise excellent production of Anantha Murthy's well known short stories in Hindi. Fortunately this reviewer had the English translations of these stories in hand. So it was possible to refer to the English version of the confusing passages for clarification. The average reader in Hindi may not be so fortunate, and then this great writer of Kannada is likely to come through as a very mediocre one through no fault of his! To quote a few examples, *Marnaa* becomes *Maarna*, and *Daadi* becomes *Didi* creating at other places, the verbless sentences acceptable to the Kannada reader but quite unfamiliar to the nature of Hindi irk the reader causing avoidable jarring.

However, bad proof reading and unpolished translation cannot camouflage the sparkling creativity of a writer of the calibre of U.R. Anantha Murthy. Like a diamond covered with dust, the connoisseur can easily see through the true worth of this brilliant writer who takes us through various situations that life often puts us through anyway. We see him sometimes mocking and sometimes sympathetic to the protagonist, who might be one of us, but always uncannily accurate in fathoming the deep unconscious layers that lie

Ratna Lahiri is a creative writer in Hindi and is currently associated with Garutman Books.

within. The reader is taken deep into his own self, torch in hand, step by step, now enlightening this dark corner, now that, always revealing layer by layer, some half acknowledged truth that he always was afraid to admit but always enlightening, always elevating. This magical quality in Anantha Murthy's writings no doubt makes him not only one of the best known Kannada authors, but also a writer to watch out for in the contemporary Indian literary scene. May his tribe increase!

Specially deserving mention in the Hindi version are *Sukha* (Drought) *Maa* (Mother), *Ghatashraddh*, *Kavi ki Poornima* (The Poet's Full Moon) and *Kabhi na samapt hone wali kahani* (The never-ending story). Profound and sensitive stories like *The Sky and the Cat*, *The Sun-horse*, and *The Clip-joint*, do not come through as effectively as their English versions do.

The translator in his introduction to the short story in Kannada traces a brief but incisive history of the genre in the region which is very useful for the student of comparative literature as well as to the reader in Hindi. Bharatiya Jnanpeeth has indeed served the cause of national integration in more ways than one, and one looks forward to their promise of bringing forth more translations in other genres. But they would do well to keep up uniformity in providing incisive introductions such as this one. A complete set of stories for example, from all the creative language areas, would then give a quick glimpse of the contemporary Indian scene in the genre concerned.

Unfortunately the stories are not in chronological order and do not quite reflect the current evolution of the author. A chronological approach would have further enhanced the compilation in that it would also trace the directions in which the author gravitated in different time periods of his creativity. Three stories are from the 1955 collection of Anantha Murthy, the others perhaps should have been dated too.

The first story *Sukha* is very relevant and perhaps comes through as one of the best in translation with the exception of *Ghatashraddh*. An idealist IAS officer who skips one meal a day when there is a famine around, is frustrated in his sincere efforts to bring relief to his district due to the vested interests of politicians who wish to thwart the 'credit' going to the present Chief Minister if the problem is solved. Humanity seems to be of no consideration for anybody, as communal riots flare up in the town. But the people as always come up. Aziz a Muslim rickshaw puller helps save the school-going child of the protagonist. But even as the district Magistrate hands over the kid to his distraught wife, he is reluctantly forced to sign the firing orders the S.P. had been hankering after. *Pravritti* deals with the perennial tussle between the values of the older generation in conflict with those of the younger, money being a reality no one can dismiss as easily any longer.

Sankappayya is a Vedic Brahmin who is reluc-

tant to leave his orange groves even when perennial water shortage has made it uneconomic. The son is determined to join his maternal uncle's hotel in the town. Ultimately even the wife leaves him to join the son, unable to bear the grinding poverty.

Kartika and *Mor* depict the eternal conflicts of a sensitive and creative mind. The pull of the sublime conflict with daily drudgeries, the senseless love-hate patterns and selfish meanness in juxtaposition with ephemeral existence. The message of the seasons changing with unfailing regularity and the conscience-stricken protagonist who is not able to look after his old parents but cannot forget them either. To a large extent, these stories seem partly autobiographical, which can be said fairly often about more than one of the author's works. Anantha Murthy's own background of the *Agrahar* living amidst rituals of grandparents in spite of the continuous bickering with their daughter-in-law, his mother; the beautiful Abbakka who would answer questions when possessed, all come sharply into focus in this story, just like the author's description of his childhood and factors that shaped his creativity during the "Meet the Author" session sponsored by the Sahitya Akademi.

Clip Joint traces the same protagonist from this orthodox value system face to face with a whorehouse situation in the fleshpots of the world. A sensitive portrayal maybe, but perhaps not quite sublime as intended in this translation.

The same may be said of *Ma*—in Hindi translation it comes through as too mushy, too sentimental and the 'mother' sounds like the Hindi film variety. Instead of the intended subtlety, we find the same excessive sentimentality over-powering the finer sensibilities of the reader in some other excellent stories as well. Maybe it lies in the nature of Hindi, which is a factor the translator should have taken into account.

Ghatashradda has been filmed and is well known as one of the best pieces by the author. How often we see the situation repeated even today. The young widow is severely reprimanded by society when she is not able to accept the heavy morality imposed on her but the same society happily accepts the seventy year old father's remarriage to a nubile young girl who must now provide the 'pure' food that the 'polluted' daughter no longer may. In fact so 'polluted' is she that her last rites are performed by the father as she now no longer exists for him.

Mauni expresses old village jealousies and rivalries at its best but there is no explanation of why it has been chosen as the title of the book. A self-respecting person is crushed to submissiveness by vested interests and he dies fighting the system.

One will look forward to other such collections as per the promise of the Director, Bharatiya Jnanpeeth in the prologue. The promised series, to be worth collecting will have to come out in quick succession. So Bravo Jnanpeeth and keep them coming! □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

NUMISMATIC HISTORY OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

By Parmeshvari Lal Gupta

B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi, 1988, Monochrome illustration 26, pp. 225, Price not stated.

Since Cunningham's time, quite a few scholars have written on the coins from Himachal Pradesh but only *en passant*. Mainly the Audumbara coins were known and illustrated by A.K. Coomaraswamy. The significance of coins as an important tool for reconstructing and piecing together the scattered threads of early history of this province has been recognized by scholars in the past ten years. The tedious task of putting together the historical facts in a coherent sequence has been accomplished admirably by Parmeshvari Lal Gupta, the eminent coin specialist of our country.

The author takes into account coins belonging to a fairly long period dating from the Nanda-Maurya period to that of the Delhi Sultans and the Mughals. The canvas is broad enough to cover all the erstwhile princely kingdoms of Chamba, Kangra, Kulu, Una, Hamirpur, Mandi and Simla hills. The coins used as source material for this study are mainly the ones preserved in the collections of Chamba and Shimla museums.

The author has tried to prove that the denomination of Jalandhar corresponds to the entire State of Himachal; this he has done on the authority of Rahul Sankrityayana. But I do not agree with him. It is clearly mentioned in the Bajinath prasasti that Trigarta and Jalandhar, two separate kingdoms, were governed by two different kings and the account of Hieun Tsang nowhere describes Jalandhar as being a hilly tract. The confusion of Jalandhar and Trigarta as being synonymous persists in the author's mind throughout the book. Unfortunately, our literary texts do not indicate precise geographical boundaries of the kingdoms nor exact identifications of diverse tribes. There is need to do further research into this area objectively.

These coins are sufficient testimony of the contacts Himachal had with the plains of northern India through trade and communications during the Mauryan and post-Mauryan period. The discovery of coins from Chamba or elsewhere does not necessarily mean that the Greeks or Persians ruled there. They only indicate that those places were frequented by traders or existed on ancient trade routes.

Quite a few wrong observations need to be corrected. It has been unanimously accepted by all

scholars that the Mahabharata war took place around 3100 BC, and not at the dawn of the Christian era as stated by the author. So far, nothing except Indo-Greek coins, has been found here to indicate that the Indo-Greeks including Menander ruled over any part of Himachal.

The evidence gleaned from the coins has to be corroborated by evidence provided by other sources such as literary works, epigraphs, etc. Most significant from the artistic viewpoint is the evidence furnished by the sculptured figures on the coins. From this viewpoint, the Vishni coins are the most significant. The sculptural style of the figures is a clear indication of the period of these coins. Similarly, some coins such as the Audumbara ones and others feature structures possibly sacred, with tiered roofs. They prove the antiquity of temple architectural style which still exists in this region.

The author has performed the difficult task of piecing together the scattered threads of the history of Himachal State with remarkable skill and fairly convincingly. I strongly feel that these coins have much more to them than the limited scope set by the author for himself. A useful book for students of Himalayan history.

Subhashini Aryan is an expert on Himalayan art.

EXPLOITED CHILDREN IN INDIA

By Sukumar Singh

Published by Shila Singh, 1989, pp. 244, Rs. 35.00

JUVENILE JUSTICE IN INDIA: POLICY, PROGRAMME AND PERSPECTIVE

By S.P. Srivastava

Ajanta Publications, 1989, pp. 302, Rs. 200.00

The problem of the child in the Third World is that it knows no childhood. The Principles embodied in the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of the Child (1959) remain pious hopes. Principle 9 says, "The child shall be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation. He shall not be the subject of traffic in any form. The child shall not be admitted to employment before an appropriate minimum age; he shall in no case be caused or permitted to engage in any occupation or employment which would preju-

dice his health or education, or interfere with his physical, mental or normal development." One wonders what that means to the children of Sivakasi. One also wonders if they know that the Forty Second Amendment to our Constitution has made it the duty of the State to direct its policy towards securing "that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment."

Sukumar Singh has made an in-depth study of the problems of the child in India. He surveys the fields of child welfare, child labour, elementary education and laws relating to child labour. He has obviously done his home-work. Starting from the "Forward" (sic), however, the book is unreadable. Bad English has found conspirators in execrable editing and proof-reading. Considering the wealth of information which the author possesses, however, he would do well to make another attempt. He appears to have got the publishing done himself. He might consider approaching a reputed publisher.

Dr. S.P. Srivastava focuses on juvenile justice, with special reference to the Juvenile Justice Act, 1986. His book is designed to serve as resource material for social science teachers, researchers and child welfare functionaries. The author is of the view that the juvenile treatment facilities are looked upon by their beneficiaries as forms of punitive detention and says that the key issue in juvenile corrections is how to tilt the balance in favour of non-institutional correctional measures. He advocates public participation in the prevention and control of juvenile delinquency and a restoration of the tradition of volunteerism, "which in the past has been the distinguishing feature of Indian society and culture."

Raju Ramachandran, is a practising lawyer in the Supreme Court, New Delhi.

*Readers who have not sent in
their subscriptions for the
year 1990 please do so
immediately as the year is
coming to a close.*

Thank You

Dear Editor...

I have received the January/February 1990 edition of *The Book Review* and I must commend you and your staff for a great publication. The design is fantastic and of course the contents are very good.

If I can be of help in getting your publication known in the United States please let me know. My good friend Nikhil Chakravarty got me to subscribe and support your publication.

HAROLD LEVENTHAL, New York City

I was happy to learn from your letter of May 7 that the Trust has become functional. I enclose my life membership contribution.

Congratulations on the new format. It is excellent.

S. GUHAN, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Madras

I went to the US in Aug '88 and on my return last week for a visit, I found copies of *The Book Review* among my stack of mail. The new format is excellent. It is heartening to note that *The Book Review* has now been established on a surer footing.

SALEEM PEERADINA, Bombay

May I make a request? When I write anything in future for *The Book Review*, would you please treat it as a labour of love? That is one small way by which I can show my admiration for what you are doing.

H.Y. SHARADA PRASAD, New Delhi

I have a request to you. I live in a region which is backward in terms of availability of books. So I find it impossible to get a book unless address of publisher is also given, in which case V.P.P. is possible. Please mention address of publisher in full, whenever it is some relatively uncommon publisher.

C.R. WALIMBE, Shivpuri

We have seen your new format of *The Book Review*. It is very exciting and we look forward to seeing new issues. However, you can use more photographs and illustrations to liven it up.

BIPIN SHAH, Mapin Publishing Pvt. Ltd., Ahmedabad, India

We have established an Afro Asian Book Council (AABC). AABC is based on the New Delhi Declaration which was made at the end of the first Afro Asian Publishing Conference jointly organised by NBT/CAPEXIL during the last Delhi World Book Fair. You may wish to inform your readers about AABC through *The Book Review*. Besides publishers, authors, critics, designers,

printers can also become members of the AABC.

A. MACHWE, Afro-Asian Book Council, 4649, B/21, Ansari Road, Darya Ganj, New Delhi

I enclose a donation of Rs. 500/- to the *The Book Review* Literary Trust. Please send me a receipt.

I enjoy reading *The Book Review* and I look forward to getting the issues.

SRIRAM PANCHU, Madras

My basic suggestion would be not to ask someone to review a book because he has name and fame in some sphere or the other. The two reviews in that issue (March/April) I found most irrelevant were Sharada Prasad on Ingmar Bergman (Prasad missed the entire point of that tortured book), and Gopal Gandhi's review of Vikram Seth's poems—not only is it an agglutination of literary critical and romantic words, but it commits the ultimate sin of showing off in (what is to me) a foreign language, without even the courtesy of a translation.

The Book Review, with warps and all, is the best thing of its kind I have seen in this country. Excuse my querulousness and keep up the good work.

S. KRISHNAN, Madras

Congrats on the new format and the much improved varied collection of reviews. So pleased we kept on with our subscription.

J.P.F. FURST, Shillong

I am prisoner undergoing life sentence in central prison of Hyderabad. I came to know that you have written by you *The Book Review*. I much inclination to reading above the books. But I can't afford to purchase above the book. Because I am confined between the four walls. I humbly request you to kindly send at free at cost by the post. If you would consider my request.

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G. ARJUNA RAO, Central Prison, Hyderabad

LIFE MEMBERSHIP SCHEME

When *The Book Review Literary Trust* was set up in October 1989, we had announced a Life Membership Scheme for individuals on payment of Rs. 500. The response to this scheme has been truly heart-warming and we would like to thank all those who have joined in the scheme and helped us to start building a corpus of funds for the Trust. However, this excellent offer will lapse at the end of December 1990. All the subscription rates, annual and life membership, are to be revised upwards in January 1991. So those who wish to avail of this offer should send in their cheques/drafts for Rs. 500 (plus Rs. 10 towards bank charges) immediately.

Hurry! Offer open only till December 1990!

■ ECONOMICS

Merchants, Markets and the State in Early Modern India-Sanjay Subrahmanyam (ed.). A collection of essays, strongly rooted in primary documentation in Indian and European languages which provides a comparative perspective to historians of India in this period. Oxford University Press, 1990, Rs. 190.00.

District Planning: A Handbook - R.P. Misra (ed). The volume deals with concepts of spatial planning, district planning and revitalising Panchayati Raj. Concept Publishing Company, 1990, Rs. 300.00.

Resources, Institutions and Strategies: Operation Flood and Indian Dairying - Martin Doornbos and K.N. Nair. Forming number four in the Indo-Dutch Studies on Development Alternatives series, this is a companion volume to *Dairy Aid And Development*. The contributors analyse the factors responsible for the growth of the 'Anand Pattern' which has been chosen as the model for institutional intervention under OF and deal comprehensively with the original growth and impact of the Anand pattern of dairy cooperatives, to issues relating to the resource base, environmental implications, and questions of equity and dependence arising in the context of the programme. Sage Publications, 1990, Rs. 295.00.

Waters of Hope: Himalaya-Ganga Development and Cooperation for A Billion People - B.G. Verghese. The author makes an in-depth study of the Himalaya-Ganga-Brahmaputra-Barak-Meghna system straddling five nations and inhabited by the largest concentration of the world's most poor living in one of the richest natural resource regions anywhere. Envisioning a bold new strategy of integrated water resource development within a framework of regional cooperation to correct this extraordinary paradox, the book sounds a cautious note of hope. Oxford and IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., 1990, Rs. 295.00.

Social Expenditure—1960-1990: Problems of Growth And Control - Prepared by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris. Comprises the recommendations of a group of experts to the OECD. Oxford and IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., 1990, Rs. 56.00.

Fiscal Policy and the Poor - Anand P. Gupta. The book seeks to answer some important questions like what the fiscal policy achieved, who bears the tax burden and who gains from government expenditure in India. Oxford and IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., 1990, Rs. 45.00.

The World Bank Annual Report 1990. A growing consciousness of future development strategy is emerging, aimed at sustaining the region's dynamic economic growth over the past decade, according to this report.

Housing and Urbanization: A Study of India - Cedric Pugh. This book is about the possibility of developing accessible, practical and habitable low income housing in India based on the implementation of three constructs—affordability, cost-recovery and replicability. Sage Publications, 1990, Rs. 250.00.

Pricing for Welfare: Petroleum Products in India - Geeta Gouri. The study effectively puts forward a point of view which will be of interest to planners, policy makers and others engaged in the formulation of pricing policies for public sector undertakings, Oxford and IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., 1989, Rs. 35.00.

Project Appraisal and Planning for Developing Countries - I.M.D Little & J.A. Mirrlees. Deals with the economic rationale of social cost benefit analysis in developing countries and outline practice procedures for evaluating investment projects. Oxford and IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., 1990, Rs. 60.00.

Sardar Sarovar Project: A Promise For Plenty - M.T. Pathak (ed.). A compilation of papers by five experts who were associated with the planning of Sardar Sarovar Project in Narmada Planning Group. Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., 1990, Rs. 75.00.

Human Response Development: Exploring Transformational Values - S.K. Chakraborty (ed.). Foreword by Bede Griffiths. At a time when Indian organizations and management are seen to be struggling to strike roots in their indigenous culture and ethos this collection of writings by a score of individuals from diverse walks of life would be immensely rewarding reading.

Wiley Eastern Limited, 1990, price not stated.

Work For Wages in South Asia - Mark Holmstrom (ed.). The book addresses some of the terms on which labour has been employed now and in the past and how the parties to the contract have seen their relationship and acted in consequence. Manohar Publications, 1990, Rs. 200.00.

■ POLITICS AND HISTORICAL STUDIES

Diversity And Dominance in Indian Politics - Vol. I: Changing Bases of Congress Support - Richard Sisson and Ramashray Roy (eds.) This study provides an integrated overview of the functioning of the Congress in different regions of the country while also examining the striking changes which have occurred within the party itself as a consequence of shifts in the political environment over the last three decades. Sage Publications, 1990, Rs. 235.00.

Sikh History and Religion in the Twentieth Century - Joseph T. O'Connell, Milton Israel, Willard J. Oxtoby, W.H. Mcleod & J.S. Grewal (eds.). The twenty-four essays that make up this unique anthology subject the Sikh question to a rigorous critical scrutiny. Manohar Publications, 1990, price not stated.

What is Civilization And Other Essays - Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. Second in the series of the Collected Works of A.K. Coomaraswamy in the IGNC's publication programme, the twenty essays comprising this volume ask fundamental questions which are both piercing and incisive in Coomaraswamy's inimitable style. Oxford University Press & Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi, 1989, Rs. 250.00.

Indian Affairs: The Political Dimension. A.G. Noorani. This volume describes the debasement of Indian democracy in the wake of the declaration of emergency and through the Rajiv Gandhi era. A collection of the author's articles written for newspapers over two decades. Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1990, Rs. 200.00.

Indian Affairs: The Constitutional Dimension - A.G. Noorani. One of the two volumes comprising a collection of articles by the author, this is a critique of the various factors that activate the Indian Constitution. Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1990, Rs. 200.00.

■ INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Economic Consequences of the Gulf War - Kamran Mofid. This study details the catastrophic effect of the conflict on the economies of Iran and Iraq and on the region as a whole, looking in particular at its impact on oil production and exports, foreign exchange earnings and foreign trade, and agricultural performance. The author questions the immediate future of the region, pointing out that regional stability is an essential pre-condition to the process of rebuilding. Routledge, 1990, \$ 30.00.

Independent Namibia: Problems and Prospects - Vijay Gupta (ed.). Starting out with a politico-historical account of Namibia's long drawn out struggle for freedom, the study highlights the problems which independent Namibia faces. Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1990, Rs. 150.00.

■ ART AND CULTURE

Theatre and The World: Essays on Performance and Politics of Culture - Rustom Bharucha. Breaking new ground in perspective and style, these essays have been regarded as landmarks in theatre criticism. Manohar Publications, 1990, Rs. 250.00.

Kalatatvaakosa-Vol. I: A Lexicon of Fundamental Concepts of The Arts - Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan (General editor) and Bettina Baumer (editor). This volume forms part of the series by the same name, and attempts to explore the essence and blossoming of some fundamental concepts. Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1990, Rs. 200.00.

■ SOCIOLOGY

The Human Dimension of Development: Perspectives from Anthropology - Hari Mohan Mathur (ed). This volume attempts both to enhance awareness of what anthropology can do as also to

bring within easy reach papers reflecting anthropological thinking on some contemporary development issues. Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1990, Rs. 350.00.

State and Society in India: Studies in Nation-building - T.K. Commen. The book which presents a bold and refreshing analysis, characterises the Indian polity as constituting a large number of 'nations' and 'ethnics', and the Indian genius as one of gradual transformation, piece meal accretion and cautious reconciliation. Therefore, the author argues that the real task of nation-building entails nurturing pluralism in all contexts—values, technology and culture. Sage Publications, 1990, Rs. 190.00.

■ RELIGION

The Sikh Moral Tradition - Nripender Singh. A refreshingly probing study based on historical evidence of the ethical perceptions of the Sikh Community at the turn of the century. Manohar Publications, 1990, Rs. 250.00.

■ EDUCATION

On Being A Teacher - Amrik Singh (ed.) Dedicated to the memory of Dr. Zakir Hussain. Fifteen teachers come together to reflect on how it feels to be a teacher, problems faced in the course of their careers and how they solved them. Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1990, Rs. 150.00.

■ TRAVELOGUE

The Gilgit Game: The Explorers of the Western Himalayas 1865-95 - John Keay. As with John Keay's *When Men and Mountains Meet*, this is the first narrative account of one of the most intriguing stories of exploration. Oxford University Press, 1979 & published in Pakistan in 1990 by arrangement with John Murray (Publishers) Ltd. for sale in India and Pakistan only, price not stated.

Intrepid Itinerant: Manuel Godinho and his Journey from India to Portugal in 1663 - John Correia - Afonso (ed.) Translation of the Portuguese text by Vitalio Lobo and John Correia-Afonso. The original text of the Mamel Godinho's colourful and fascinating account of his journey from India to Portugal is a travel classic of the seventeenth century. Published in 1665 and enjoying the subsequent Portuguese editions, this is the first English translation. Oxford University Press, 1990, Rs. 225.00.

■ LITERATURE

Cosmopolis - Edited by Ines Reader. Urban Stories by Women. Cleis Press, Pittsburgh, U.S.A., 1990, price not stated.

Daffodils On Fire and Other Stories - Mridula Garg. Published to great acclaim in Hindi first, the eighteen stories in this collection are remarkable for their sensitivity and wit. National Publishing House, 1990, Rs. 100.00.

Myth, Ritual and Shakespeare: A Study of Critical Theory and Practice - Rajiva Verma. Examines the theory and practice of a bewildering variety of 'myth and ritual criticism'. Spantech Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1990, Rs. 200.00.

WB Years and Indian Tradition - Sankaran Rabindran. A critical account of the poet's development in terms of his awareness and understanding of the Indian concept of the Self which has moulded the cultural and philosophical ethos in India. Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1990, 125.00.

■ GENERAL

Information India - 1989-90: Global View - S.P. Agrawal & J.C. Agrawal. The book provides a panoramic view of important events of the last one year. Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1990, 500.00.

■ FOR THE YOUNG

Jawaharlal Nehru - Stephen Ashton. Written primarily for the younger readers, the book is published as part of the British Library's activities to commemorate the centenary of Jawaharlal Nehru. Oxford University Press, 1990, price not stated.

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NEW RELEASES

CHAMBERS POLITICAL SYSTEMS OF THE WORLD

by J. Denis Derbyshire and Ian Derbyshire

Political Systems of the World is a clearly presented guide to world politics. It is divided into three major sections: Part 1 makes a comparative assessment of political systems of government and political ideologies throughout the world. Part 2, the largest section, give a concise and up-to-date description of the different political systems in each of the world's sovereign states. 165 nation states are covered, grouped into 9 geographical regions. The information provided for each country covers up-to-date social and economic data, key political features, current political system in operation and an outline political history.

Part 3 devoted to the world's remaining 55 semi-sovereign states, colonies and dependencies as well as regional and global organisations such as the UN, EEC and NATO.

A fact-filled reference for all students and observers of world politics, the work includes a wealth of tables, data sources, maps and extensive recommended reading lists.

1990 944pp. Rs. 250.00

VALOUR AND SACRIFICE: FAMOUS REGIMENTS OF THE INDIAN ARMY

Gautam Sharma (Lt. Col. ret'd.)

The creation of the Indian Army has been one of the most unique and successful experiments in national integration, though it was not formed by the British for that purpose. That this succeeded was attributed by some to their strong administration and continued presence in India. While nationalism, forces started gathering momentum it was forecast that "without the British officer and British soldier the martial races of the north would once more eat up the people of the south and that there would be complete anarchy and chaos in the subcontinent".

A lie has been given to these forecasts of doom in ample measure during the last four decades after independence and men from Kashmir to Kerala and Gujarat to Nagaland have fought shoulder to shoulder in repelling aggression, at least four times (1947-48, 1962, 1965 and 1971) carried their trail of glory on United Nations peace missions to far-off Congo, Gaza and Korea and helped their brethren whenever natural calamities struck the motherland. For the first time an attempt has been made here to consolidate the stories of valour and sacrifice of these men, many of them dating back 200 years or more.

Among the infantry regiments included are: Punjab Regiment, Madras Regiment, Grenadiers Regiment, Rajputana Regiment, Rajpur Regiment, Jat Regiment, Sikh Regiment, Dogra Regiment, Garhwal Rifles and Kumaon Regiment.

1989 300 pp. approx. illus. Rs. 150.00

THE SECOND MARATHA CAMPAIGN 1804-1805

Diary of James Young

Edited by D.D. Khanna

James Young's Diary is a very interesting account of the Maratha War campaigns. It is valuable as a regimental level account of the various marches, sieges and engagements, and particularly of the logistics and intelligence work of the East India Company's armies of the period. It is even more interesting because of the unusual freedom with which Young puts down his comments on his superiors, military and civilian.

1990 1 + 204 pp. Rs. 175.00

THE HIGHER CIVIL SERVICE IN FRANCE

by S.R. Maheshwari

The last work discussing certain selected aspects of the French civil service was by Ezra Suleiman: *Politics, Power and Bureaucracy in France: The Administrative Elite* published by Princeton University Press in 1974. Another book on the French civil service was by Brian Chapman: *The Profession of Government*, London, Allen and Unwin, 1959. Both these otherwise useful works are dated. Since 1974, there has been no worthwhile work on the French civil services, which makes the present manuscript most timely. Moreover, it is a full dress study of the French civil service and so a valuable work in its own right.

160 pp. Rs. 125.00

PURIFICATION: HISTORY AND PERESTROIKA

by Oleg Volobuyev and Sergei Kuleshov

With perestroika and glasnost, the transformation of social consciousness

in the Soviet Union has acquired a universal and comprehensive character. Before our eyes, the outlines of a new economic, legal and political thinking (on the part of the masses, not just the elite) are taking shape. Vast changes have taken place in the cultural sphere. A fresh look is being taken at foreign policy and military doctrine.

This book takes up an important aspect of the revolutionary 'renewal' going on in what the authors refer to as the alteration of the Soviet peoples' 'historical, social memory'. It is this process that the authors choose to term *purification*—the liberation of social consciousness from falsifications and stereotypes. Dogmas and myths are being done away with.

In itself, a contemplation of historical experience involves serious political and moral considerations. In fact, it is absolutely necessary to know and understand past errors in order not to repeat them. Far from destroying the past the authors attempt to reproduce it in its entirety and dialectical complexity.

In so doing, the authors naturally pay a great deal of attention to what they call the 'stains' which must be removed—dogmatism, false assessments and anonymity in connection with past events.

xxviii + 290 pp. Rs. 150.00

NEW & FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

MAHATMA GANDHI

by Sankar Ghose

This is an illuminating and fascinating study of one of the greatest figures of all times. In making this in-depth study of Gandhi—the man, the politician and the saint—Mr. Ghose has made good use of the mass of new materials that have in recent years come to light about Gandhi and his times. The book, a blend of biography, history and political philosophy, is objective and authoritative and yet eminently readable and stimulating.

1991 viii + 400 pp. Rs. 150.00

OCEAN OF WISDOM: THE LIFE OF DALAI LAMA XIV

by P. N. Chopra

A comprehensive and objective work on the life of the present Dalai Lama based on the available published and unpublished sources. His work attempts to describe the life and teachings of the Dalai Lama in their historical perspective.

The author is an eminent historian. He has a number of works to his credit including the four Volumes of the *Gazetteer of India* which are regarded as the most authoritative work on India and its people. "This book throws the spotlight on the deplorable conditions of life in Tibet. The Dalai Lama's crusade against the Chinese has been brought out tellingly."

1986 169 pp. illus. Rs. 125.00

THE SALT OF LIFE

by Chaman Nahal

This is Chaman Nahal's third novel in *The Gandhi Quartet*, a project he has been working on for the last twenty years. Entitled *The Salt of Life*, this novel covers the most dramatic phase of India's freedom movement when, in 1930, Mahatma Gandhi undertook the 200 mile march on foot from his ashram in Sabarmati to Dandi, a small village near Bombay on the Arabian Sea, to protest against the continued British Raj in India. No other Indian English novelist has undertaken such an ambitious theme before, where the entire spectrum of Indian life from 1915-1947 is presented in unique synthesis of fact and fiction.

1991 572 pp. Rs. 225.00

INDIRA: LINGERING ECHOES

by P.D. Tandon

This book is a highly personal and intimate record of some of the less known facets of a very complex, rather enigmatic personality. Mr. Tandon has woven a well-knit, coherent pattern, mainly from her letters to him and the talks she held with him from time to time during their long and close association in which she has revealed freely and unreservedly, her innermost thoughts and feelings, and her reactions to people and events. Nowhere does Mr. Tandon yield to the temptation of glorifying or glamorising the personality of Indira Gandhi who strode the stage of Indian politics like a colossus for two decades and who "has passed away from mortality to immortality and has taken her rightful place in the valiant assembly of the beloved heroines and heroes of India's legend, history and song."

It was said of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* that he who touches this

book touches a man. This remark may well be applied to Mr. Tandon's book inasmuch as the reader comes into contact here with the living Indira Gandhi, with her real private self, with no pose, no affectation, and no mask that she had perforce to wear sometimes.

Mr. Tandon's book clears quite a few prevailing misconceptions about Indira Gandhi and helps in no small measure in arriving at a proper perception of her real self. As such, the book should prove of invaluable help to Indira Gandhi's future biographers and commentators.

1990 viii + 132 pp. illus. Rs. 90.00

MEMORIES OF A HALF LIFE & FLOWERS OF GRASS

by Rikhi Jaipal

This is an exceptional blend of small doses of autobiography and a larger measure of events, issues and personalities written with clarity, insight and diplomatic restraint. The Japanese invasion of Burma is the curtain-raiser to a varied career in diplomacy full of encounters and incidents. Churchill on decolonisation, Krishna Menon on Hungary, Dalai Lama's flight from Tibet, Nehru's forward policy on the Sino-Indian border, Khrushchev's fall, Shastri at Tashkent, Stalin's daughter's defection, Tito's help in the Bangladesh war and off the record happenings at the United Nations make fascinating reading.

Flowers of Grass is a kaleidoscope of his other half life. His poems express his non-diplomatic emotions in words pregnant with feeling and meaning. They should be read aloud to savour his impressions in their fullness. There are faint echoes of the moods of Maupassant, Baudelaire and Herbert Read. Some have appeared in *Poetry London*, *Poetry New York* and *Poetry Chicago* and Indian journals.

270 pp., illus. In press

A MYSTIC LINK WITH INDIA Life Story of Two Pilgrim Painters of Hungary

by R.K. Raju

Visitors to India have been legion, seeking power and piety, her treasures of art and learning the essence of her thought and philosophy, down the ages. But never before had the Oriental mystique so enraptured persons not of the soil as it did Elizabeth and Sass Brunner. This daughter-mother team of painters were so spellbound by Indian mysticism that they permanently severed their physical bonds with their beloved country. It was by accident that Hungary happened to be the land of their birth. It was an inner voice, summoning them to their spiritual haven in India. It was the call of the spirit of her saints and sages. It was a spiritual home-coming.

Once on the shores of India, a supreme being seemed to guide their voyage of discovery of the Indian ethos, the Indian psyche. R.K. Raju provides a rare insight into their creative energies as a divine power took possession of them—to find expression in resplendent images illumined by Indian spiritualism. They found fulfilment in the veneration of its culture, as their creations unfolded on canvas. They became an inseparable part of the eternal truths that characterize the Indian heritage. They had found their spiritual moorings.

This delightful biography is illustrated with colour and black-and-white reproductions of famous works by the mother-daughter team.

90 pp. with 32 pp illustration In Press

FOUNDATIONS OF LOGIC AND LANGUAGE: STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHICAL AND NON-STANDARD LOGIC

ed. by Pranab Kumar Sen

Written by a group of scholars working at the Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy at Jadavpur University, *Foundations of Logic and Language* investigates a number of issues in syntax, semantics and ontology that are fundamental to the understanding and validation of logic and grammar. These issues concern the possibility of translating sentences of natural language into the notation of classical predicate logic, the nature of grammatical theory, justification of the logical laws that are supposed to validate deductive reasoning, the utility of the very practice of deductive reasoning, the development of non-standard systems of logic resulting from dropping the various assumptions of the standard two-valued logic, the ontological questions raised by the proper treatment of indirect speech, the ontology of possible worlds semantics for modal logic, and chances of reviving the old doctrine of fatalism.

The eight essays, together with the editor's introduction, explore with a rare sweep large areas of philosophical and non-standard logic. Although it is addressed primarily to those who are interested in the foundations of logic and grammar, advanced students as well as experts, the book avoids needless technicalities and is written throughout in a style which makes it accessible also to non-experts and beginners.

1990 viii + 292 pp. Rs. 200.00

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SOME SELECT TITLES IN ENGLISH

■ Books for General Reading

Mulk Raj Anand: CHITRALAKSHANA, Story of Indian Paintings: 1989: Rs. 26.00

A profusely illustrated book which traces the history of Indian painting from the prehistoric rock paintings found in the country to paintings of the British period. The author, a well-known expert on the subject, describes the various schools that flourished in different areas and explains the techniques and materials that were used.

Gijubhai Badheka: DIVASVAPNA: 1990 : Rs. 17.00

The imaginary story of a teacher who paints the picture of a future in which children will enjoy the pleasure of taking stock of the world around the classroom with their teacher.

Arjun Dev: JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: YEARS OF STRUGGLE: 1989: Rs. 37.00

This volume highlights not only Nehru's unbridled temperament, some of his exceptional writings, but also his personal philosophy, his personality, his role in the anti-imperialist struggle and his views on religion, communalism, civil liberty, socialism, and planning.

Shanti Sadiq Ali: INDIA AND AFRICA THROUGH THE AGES: 1989: Rs. 20.00

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