

THE BOOK REVIEW

Rs 40

VOLUME XXVI NUMBER 5 MAY 2002

C. DASGUPTA
Games Nations Play. . . 4

JOGINDER S. GANDHI
**Violence and Its Myriad
Manifestation . . . 17**

AVIJIT PATHAK
**Critiquing Western
Modernity . . . 19**

ANAND KUMAR
**Synthesizing Classical and
Postmodern Literature. . . 21**

GHAZALA SHAHABUDDIN
**Rooted in the Indian
Ecosystem. . . 28**

N.S. JAGANNATHAN
**Intellectualism without
Tears. . . 30**

KEKI N. DARUWALLA
Angst and Epiphany. . . 33

K.G. VERMA
**Inside India—The Bisham
Sahni Way. . . 34**



New From Routledge

POWER, POSTCOLONIALISM AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS : Reading Race, Gender and Class

Edited by **Geeta Chowdhry** and **Sheila Nair**, both at North Arizona University, USA

Power, Postcolonialism and International Relations uses postcolonial theory to examine the implications of race, class and gender relations for the structuring of the world politics. These themes are discussed using a wide range of postcolonial readings and critiques of contemporary issues:

By its innovative use of postcolonial theory, this book offers a new vantage point from which to view issues of global inequality through race, gender and class

0415271606

234X156 mm

336 pp

Hardback

UK Price £60.00

CONSTITUTING HUMAN RIGHTS: Global Civil Society and Society of Democratic States

by **Mervyn Frost**, University of Kent at Canterbury, UK

Global civil society and the society of democratic states are the two most inclusive and powerful global practices of our time. In this book, Frost claims that, without an understanding of the role that individual human rights play in these practices, no adequate understanding of any major feature of contemporary world politics from 'globalization' to 'new wars' is possible. Therefore *Constituting Human Rights* argues that a concern with human rights is essential to the study of international relations

0415272270

234X156 mm

168 pp

Hardback

UK Price £55.00

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE : Critical Perspectives

by **Rorden Wilkinson**, University of Manchester, UK and **Steve Hughes**, University of Newcastle, UK

In recent years, the role of global institutions such as the United Nations, World Trade Organizations, International Monetary Fund and World Bank has never been more important to the lives of individuals throughout the world. This edited book provides critical perspectives on the role of these institutions, and how they use their policies, procedures and practices to manage global, political, socio-economic, legal and environmental affairs

In contrast to previously published books on this subject, this book is organized thematically rather than by institution. Each chapter examines core issues such as labour, finance, the environment, health, culture, gender, civil society, poverty and development.

0415268389

234 X 156 mm

224 pp

Paperback

UK price : £17.99

for further information please contact

ROUTLEDGE - India Liaison Office

Taylor & Francis Group

1011-C, 10th Floor, Indraprakash Building, 21, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi - 110 001

Tel : (011) 371 2131 / 335 1453 Fax : (011) 371 2132

e-mail : routledg@satyam.net.in routledg@ndb.vsnl.net.in



We record with deep grief the passing away of Sarvepalli Gopal on 20 April 2002 at Chennai. An eminent historian and teacher, he was the biographer of Jawaharlal Nehru and S. Radhakrishnan. On the editorial advisory board of *The Book Review* since its inception, Dr. Gopal has helped us to set and maintain the standards of the journal and the Trust's activities. To us at The Book Review Literary Trust his passing is an irreconcilable loss.

Chitra Narayanan

Uma Iyengar

Chandra Chari



Contents

C. Dasgupta	<i>British Foreign Policy 1874-1914: The Role of India</i> by Sneha Mahajan	4	Anand Kumar	<i>Social Movements, Old and New: A Post-Modernist Critique</i> by Rajendra Singh	21
Om Prakash	<i>The World of the Indian Ocean Merchant 1500-1800: Collected Essays of Ashin Das Gupta</i> compiled by Uma Das Gupta with an introduction by Sanjay Subrahmanyam	5	Sumi Krishna	<i>Mental Health From a Gender Perspective</i> edited by Bhargavi V. Davar; <i>Gender and Space: Femininity, Sexualization and the Female Body</i> by Seemanthini Niranjana; <i>Methodology in Social Research: Dimensions and Perspectives: Essays in Honour of Ramakrishna Mukherjee</i> edited by Partha Nath Mukerji; <i>The Myth of Community: Gender Issues in Participatory Development</i> edited by Irene Guijt and Meera Kaul Shah; <i>Culture, Gender and Ecology: Beyond Workerism</i> by M. Nadarajah; <i>Recreating Men: Postmodern Masculinity Politics</i> by Bob Pease	24
Radhika Singha	<i>Dishonoured by History, 'Criminal Tribes' and British Colonial Policy</i> by Meena Radhakrishna	6			
Kamala Menon	<i>Indian Geography: Voice of Concern</i> by Anu Kapur	9			
M. Rajivlochan	<i>Punjabi Saga. 1857 - 2000: The Monumental Story of Five Generations of a Remarkable Punjabi Family</i> by Prakash Tandon	10			
Murari Prasad	<i>India: Fifty Years After Independence</i> edited by Kathleen Firth and Felicity Hand	11	Bharat H. Desai	<i>Animal Laws of India</i> edited by Maneka Gandhi, Ozair Husain and Raj Panjwani	26
Baidik Bhattacharya	<i>A Biography of the Indian Nation 1947 - 1997</i> by Ranabir Samaddar	14	V. Subramanian	<i>Rethinking Green Politics</i> by John Barry	27
Arun Kumar	<i>Inequality in the Global Village: Recycled Rhetoric and Disposable People</i> by Jan Knippers Black	15	Ghazala Shahabuddin	<i>Ecology and Sustainable Development</i> by P.S. Ramakrishnan	28
Archana Aggarwal	<i>Perspectives in Statistical Sciences</i> edited by Adhir K. Basu, Jayanta K. Ghosh, Pranab K. Sen and Bimal K. Sinha	16	Partho Datta	<i>Girija</i> by Yatindra Mishra	29
Joginder S. Gandhi	<i>Building Violence: How America's Rush to Incarcerate Creates More Violence</i> edited by John P. Mary & Khalid R. Pitts; <i>Masculinities, Violence and Culture</i> by Suzanne E. Hatry; <i>Locked in a Violent Embrace: Understanding and Intervening in Domestic Violence</i> by Zvi Eisikovits and Eli Buchbinder; <i>Same-Sex Domestic Violence: Strategies for Change</i> edited by Beth Leventhal and Sandra E. Lundy	17	N.S. Jagannathan	<i>A Hundred Encounters</i> by Sham Lal	30
C.N. Venugopal	<i>The Social Body: Habit, Identity and Desire</i> by Nick Crossley; <i>Understanding Agency: Social Theory and Responsible Action</i> by Barry Barnes; <i>The Business of Social Responsibility</i> by Harsh Shrivastava and Shankar Venkateswaran	18	Laila Tyabji	<i>Truth, Love & A Little Malice: An Autobiography</i> by Khushwant Singh	31
Avijit Pathak	<i>Occidentalism: Modernity and Subjectivity</i> by Couze Venn; <i>Bodies of Thought: Embodiment, Identity and Modernity</i> by Ian Burkit	19	Keki N. Daruwala	<i>Indian Errant: Stories</i> by Nirmal Verma, translated by Prasenjit Gupta	33
			K.G. Verma	<i>Middle India: Selected Stories</i> by Bisham Sahni, translated by Gillian Wright; <i>Madhavi</i> by Bisham Sahni, translated by Alok Bhalla	34
			Sukrita Paul Kumar	<i>Bruised Memories: Communal Violence and the Writer</i> edited and introduced by Tarun K. Saint; <i>Set at Odds: Stories of the Partition and Beyond</i> by Prafulla Roy, translated by John W. Hood	35
			Anjana Neira Dev	<i>...Kali Dances. So Do I...</i> Poems by Usha Akella; <i>The Otherness of Self</i> by Feroze Varun Gandhi	36
			Kumkum Lal	<i>Dancing in the Family</i> by Sukanya Rahman	38

Cover: Indrani Rahman, early 1950's. Photograph by Habib Rahman.

Editors: Chandra Chari Uma Iyengar

Editorial Advisory Board: K.R. Narayanan S. Gopal Raja Ramanna N.S. Jagannathan Romila Thapar Narayani Gupta Meenakshi Mukherjee K.N. Raj V. P. Dutt Mrinal Pande Tejeshwar Singh Chitra Narayanan Ashok Vajpeyi Pulin Nayak

Computer inputs, design and layout: Geeta Parameswaran
Design and Layout Consultants
Tulika Print Communication Services
35 A/1, 3rd Floor
Shahpur Jat
New Delhi 110049
Telephones 649 7999, 649 1448

Subscription Rates 2002
Single Issue: Rs. 40.00 / \$2 / £1
Annual Subscription (12 Issues)
Individual: Rs 400.00 / \$50.00 / £35.00
Institutional: Rs 500.00 / \$75.00 / £50.00
(Inclusive of bank charges and postage)
Life Donors: Rs 10,000.00 and above

Please address all mail to:
Post Box No. 5247, Chanakyapuri
New Delhi 110021
Registered mail should be sent only to
The Book Review Literary Trust
239 Vasant Enclave, New Delhi 110057
Tele+Fax: 91 124 6355500,
(91-635 5500 from Delhi)
email: thebookreview@hotmail.com
cchari@subcontinent.com
uiyengar@hotmail.com

The Book Review is a non-political, ideologically non-partisan journal which tries to reflect all shades of intellectual opinions and ideas. The views expressed by the reviewers and authors writing for the journal are their own.

All reviews and articles published in *The Book Review* are exclusive to the journal and may not be reprinted without the prior permission of the editors.

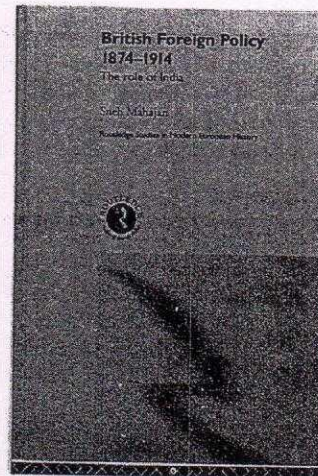
Games Nations Play

C. Dasgupta

BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY 1874-1914: THE ROLE OF INDIA

By Sneh Mahajan

Routledge, London and New York, 2002, pp. 264, price not stated.



The period 1874-1914 was the high noon of the British Empire. London ruled over the most extensive territorial empire in history and India accounted for no less than 85 per cent of these territories. Britain's preeminence in world politics depended substantially on her imperial possessions in the East; yet, as Sneh Mahajan points out, most studies of British diplomatic history pay scant attention to the ways in which foreign policy was shaped by considerations related to the defence of the Indian empire. Mahajan's book fills this lacuna.

The strategic interests underlying British foreign policy had a twofold character. The defence of the British Isles required that no dominant continental power should be allowed to control the Channel ports in Belgium or Holland. The emergence of a dominant power, or a coalition of powers, in the Continent was seen as a potential threat to Britain's security. Secondly, the defence of the Indian Empire required that no European power should be allowed to control the approaches to the subcontinent. A buffer zone of Asian states—Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan and China—were propped up to prevent the expanding Russian Empire from coming into contact with India's borders. Naval supremacy and control over the gateways to the Indian Ocean ensured the defence of the maritime approaches to the empire.

Mahajan argues that there was no threat to the defence of the British Isles in the 19th century and that, moreover, "it is doubtful if Britain had the necessary resources to maintain the balance of power" on the Continent. Throughout the 19th century, she points out, Britain maintained a smaller standing army than Switzerland. Bismarck reportedly jested

.....contemporary records—notes, minutes, correspondence or speeches—do not reflect the centrality of the Indian factor in British foreign policy. What accounts for the silence? Mahajan suggests that official records rarely spell out the general consensus on the national interests underlying foreign policy.

that if British forces were to land on the German coast, he would call out the local police to have them arrested! On the other hand, Britain was constantly preoccupied with the defence of the Indian Empire. Mahajan maintains that "the Indian frontier became a source of ceaseless anxiety so much so that at the end of the nineteenth century war against Russia over this issue, rather than defence of the Low Countries, was deemed the chief problem of British strategy."

Yet contemporary records—notes, minutes, correspondence or speeches—do not reflect the centrality of the Indian factor in British foreign policy. What accounts for the silence? Mahajan suggests that official records rarely spell out the general consensus on the national interests underlying foreign policy. "British statesmen and politicians perhaps merely assumed that there was no need to state the obvious...The underlying consensus that control over India was non-negotiable remained an unstated presupposition in this context and this is reflected in research by historians."

Mahajan shows how the India factor shaped British policy not only in Asia, Africa and the Near East but in Europe itself. She argues, for example, that London's concern over the formation of the Dreikaiserbund—the alliance of Germany, Austria, Hungary and Russia—arose not from considerations of the balance of power in Europe but from fears that it would allow Russia to move her troops from the Polish border to Central Asia. Similarly, "when Disraeli purchased shares of the Suez Canal, when he collaborated with Germany and Austria in 1878, when he occupied Cyprus, when he tried to work for improvement in the conditions of the Armenian Christians, when his government decided to invade Afghanistan; when Gladstone conquered Egypt, when he sent the expedition to Sudan, when, in 1885, he asked Parliament to grant money to fight Russia; when Salisbury signed the Mediterranean agreements, when he exchanged Heligoland with Zanzibar and other areas in East Africa; when Rosebery decided 'to be with the Triple Alliance but not of it', when an expedition was sent to Fashoda; when Balfour formed the Anglo-French entente, when the Liberals formed the entente with Russia, in fact, even when Britain decided to stand by France and Russia in 1914, an important ingredient was the unfringeable will to hold on to India."

Russia and Britain were protagonists

throughout the 19th century. The steady expansion of Russia was viewed with alarm in London for several reasons—all connected with the defence of the Indian Empire. Russia's expansion towards the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf were seen as a threat to the imperial lines of communication with India. Russia's expansion in Central Asia posed a more direct potential threat to the British position in India. The Raj depended on the "prestige" of British arms and this could be undermined by defeat in a border skirmish with Russian forces. Finally, Russia could exploit British vulnerability on India's borders by extracting concessions elsewhere. Tsar Nicholas II boasted, for instance, that he could change the course of the Boer War in South Africa by mobilizing his army in Turkestan. Britain sought to contain Russia by diplomacy, leaning towards the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy in the hope that this would create estrangement between these powers and Russia, thereby pinning down Russian forces in Poland. It was only in the early years of the 20th century that Britain changed its tactics in order to reach an accord with Russia on the limits of the latter's expansion towards the subcontinent. The object of the new Anglo-Russian entente was to keep Russia away from the territorial rim of India.

By this time Germany had emerged as the principal challenger to British primacy. The accepted view is that Anglo-German rivalry was the main theme of British diplomacy after the turn of the century and that the ententes with France and Russia arose from concern over the rise of German power. Mahajan questions the conventional view. She points to the divergence between the conventional interpretation and the historical documents. "If the papers of Balfour and Lansdowne show that they did not understand rivalry with Germany", she argues, "then the logical conclusion has to be that rivalry with Germany was not the main feature of this period. Their correspondence and memoranda show constant concern with the defence of India."

Mahajan emphasizes the continuing Anglo-

Mahajan argues persuasively that Anglo-Russian rivalry—the main feature of British foreign policy in the last quarter of the 19th century—arose primarily from London's concern over the security of the Indian empire. She is less persuasive in her treatment of Anglo-German rivalry in the run-up to World War I.

Russian rivalry in Asia and observes that London maintained its alliances with France and Russia "not only to ward off the threat to the balance of power in Europe but also to preclude the emergence of a situation in which Britain might be called upon to cross swords with Russia." She applies this reasoning also to Britain's decision to enter the World War on the Franco-Russian side. She disputes the conventional view that Britain entered the war in order to prevent a strong military and naval power like Germany to overrun France and occupy the ports on the southern side of the channel. "If Britain stayed out", she argues, "either defeat or victory for France and Russia would have spelled disaster for Britain's standing in the world. In the case of defeat, it was believed that Russia would have tried to secure redress by expanding towards its southeast, towards Britain's Indian Empire".

This well-researched book is a significant contribution to British diplomatic history. It corrects a common Eurocentric bias in many accounts which fail to do justice to the compulsions of imperial defence in the evolution of British foreign policy. Mahajan argues persuasively that Anglo-Russian rivalry—the main feature of British foreign policy in the last quarter of the 19th century—arose primarily from London's concern over the security of the Indian empire. She is less persuasive in her treatment of Anglo-German rivalry in the run-up to World War I. She does not elaborate or substantiate her point regarding British apprehensions that a defeated Russia might seek redress by expanding towards India. She tends to downplay British fears that German dominance in the Continent would constitute a potential threat to the security of the British Isles.

Notwithstanding this qualification, Mahajan is eminently successful in establishing her principal thesis—that in the period 1874 to 1914, "Britain's foreign policy...cannot be situated on a map of Europe". ■

C. Dasgupta, a former diplomat based in Delhi, is the author of *War and Diplomacy in Kashmir 1947-48* (Sage, 2002).

Lifetime Work of a Pioneer

Om Prakash

THE WORLD OF THE INDIAN OCEAN MERCHANT 1500-1800: COLLECTED ESSAYS OF ASHIN DAS GUPTA
Compiled by Uma Das Gupta with an introduction by Sanjay Subrahmanyam
Oxford University Press, Delhi, 2001, pp. xiii+511, price not stated.

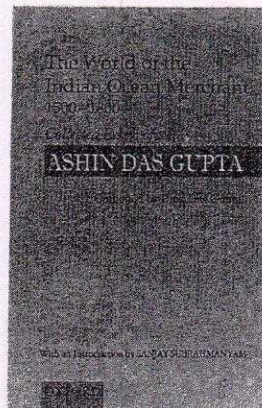
This is a collection of twenty-nine essays by the late Ashin Das Gupta written over a period of over thirty years on the broad theme of the Indian maritime merchant operating in the Indian Ocean in the early modern period. The introduction to the volume written by Sanjay Subrahmanyam situates the lifetime work of Das Gupta in a wider but nevertheless very personal perspective. Das Gupta was widely recognized as a pioneer and a major authority in the field of Indian maritime history defined essentially as the history of trade and traders rather than of the technical dimensions of sailing, ship construction and provisioning and so on. His scholarship and command over sources, combined with a delightful style of narrative, brought alive the world of the Indian maritime merchant in a manner that has few parallels. In so far as many of the essays have now become relatively inaccessible, their being brought together in a volume would be welcomed by researchers and students alike.

Ashin Das Gupta's first monograph *Malabar in Asian Trade 1740-1800* (Cambridge, 1967) was the revised version of his Cambridge doctoral thesis. It was concerned primarily with the transformation in the relationship between maritime trade and politics on the Malabar coast. It dealt extensively with the Travancore kingdom ruled by Martanda Varma and Rama Varma. This was also the period when Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan extended their reach into the southwest coast. Das Gupta's abiding interest in the Indian maritime merchant found its full expression in *Indian Merchants and Decline of Surat, c. 1700-1750* (Wiesbaden, 1979). It was an outstanding book which showed what a careful researcher could get out

of the Dutch company documentation and the papers of private English merchants on the Indian merchants' trade and related activities. The choice of the publisher, however, was rather unfortunate and the book by and large remained inaccessible in India. A recent reprint by an Indian publisher has been able to take care of the problem only upto a point. But long before the publication of the *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat* in 1979, Das Gupta's work on the Indian maritime merchant had become well known through a series of papers in historical journals, *festschrift* volumes and edited collections of essays. These are the papers published both before and after the Surat book had come out that have now been put together in the present volume.

The volume is divided into two parts. The first part comprising fourteen pieces is concerned mainly with general issues while the second deals more specifically with trade and traders operating mostly from Surat or the Malabar coast. One of the early and eventually among the most influential of Das Gupta's pieces "Trade and Politics in Eighteenth Century India" was written in the 1960s and contains an outline of his central argument regarding the decline of the trade between the port of Surat and the Red Sea ports. In its heyday in the seventeenth century, Surat had handled an enormous amount of trade with the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, consisting of the export, mainly of relatively cheaper varieties of textiles and the import, mainly of coined and uncoined silver. It was not without reason that the port of Mocha was described as the 'treasure chest of the Mughal empire'. But in the first half of the eighteenth century, this trade suffered a severe decline. The hypothesis that Das Gupta put forward was that this was linked to the political upheaval characterizing the Mughal, the safavid, and the Ottoman empires during this period. Among other things, the political turmoil in India had made the routes between upper India and Gujarat unsafe for the transportation of goods intended for export from Surat.

A number of important themes run through Das Gupta's writings. In his Presidential address to the Medieval India section of the Indian History Congress in 1974, Das Gupta revived the debate on the Van Leur hypothesis on the peddling character of the Asian merchants' trade. The issue had also been addressed at about the same time but in a different



His scholarship and command over sources, combined with a delightful style of narrative, brought alive the world of the Indian maritime merchant in a manner that has few parallels.

context by Niels Steensgaard in his *Carracks, Caravans and Companies: The Structural Crisis in the European-Asian Trade in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Copenhagen, 1973). One of the main propositions of the Van Leur hypothesis namely that the trade of the Indian Ocean merchant consisted largely of trade in luxury goods was easily dismissed by Das Gupta as being factually incorrect. But about the character of the merchant himself, he tended to agree a good deal with Van Leur. The argument that he put forward was that while many of the Indian Ocean merchants, particularly those based in India, were indeed men of great substance and wealth, they nevertheless suffered from a sense of great insecurity largely because of the nature of the markets that they operated in. This inherent fragility of the Indian maritime merchant irrespective of his wealth or the scale of his operations lent in Das Gupta's view a considerable amount of legitimacy to the Van Leur characterization of the Asian merchant as a pedlar.

A more substantive theme that runs through Das Gupta's writings on the Indian maritime merchant deals with the relationship between the maritime merchant and the state, where he argues that the theory of the Indian ruling classes fattening upon the merchant's profits must be discarded. Another theme he pursues is the participation by nobility and the state officials in the trade carried on from the various major ports of the subcontinent. Das Gupta talks of substantive differences in this regard between the ports of Coromandel and Bengal on the one hand and that of Surat on the other. He also goes into great detail about the mechanics of the Surat-Red Sea trade, bringing out the characteristic features of the maritime merchants engaged in trade on the sector. Some of the shipowning merchants of Surat commanded fairly large resources with the wealthiest among them at the turn of the eighteenth century being Mulla Abdul Ghafur who owned as many as 17 of the total of 112 indigenous vessels listed as operating from the port in 1701.

Each of the essays in the volume bears the imprint of Ashin Das Gupta's scholarship and is a delight to read even if one does not always agree with all of its contents. ■

Om Prakash is in the Department of Economics at Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University, Delhi.

Joining the Mainstream?

Radhika Singha

DISHONOURED BY HISTORY, 'CRIMINAL TRIBES' AND BRITISH COLONIAL POLICY

By Meena Radhakrishna

Orient Longman, 2001, pp. 192, Rs. 435.00

No native place. No birth-date. No house or farm. No caste, either. That is how I was born. In an Uchalya community, at Dhanegaon in Taluka Latur.' Laxman Gaikwad begins his account of growing up in a 'de-notified tribe' by listing the lack of those reference points by which an identity is socially acknowledged. Yet his birth is a fact. It happens in a particular place, within a particular community, which has its own points of orientation to history, territory, and culture. However the point of public reference to it is that of the criminality by caste. This is a community which must relentlessly sustain the net of labour and services around the locality but on terms which suggest that shelter and livelihood are always on sufferance. (Laxman Gaikwad, 1998).

Many books written, around independence and after, on those branded as 'criminal tribes' treat them as objects of pathos, marginalized by poverty and stigma, but also as beings whose values and lifestyle would have to be cleansed so that the mainstream would not discard them. This kind of positivist criminology, in which the environmental factors of social prejudice and economic deprivation are acknowledged, but a criminal and immoral habitus are taken as a given, had an earlier colonial incarnation in the later nineteenth century. Meena Radhakrishna's book is an important exploration of this phase of the colonial 'civilizing mission'.

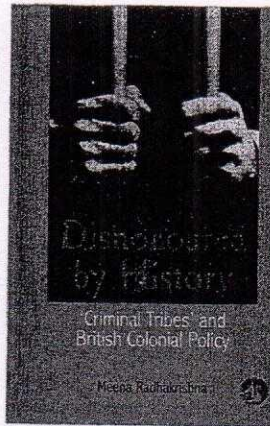
The author follows an approach developed from the 1980s by historians exploring the discursive and institutional process by which the stigma of criminality by birth and occupation was imposed on certain communities. Examining the process against the background of colonial state formation they have argued that itinerant communities were viewed with suspicion because they were difficult to tax and to police, and because the nature of their livelihood seemed to keep them too independent of the hierarchies of sedentary society. The prejudices of settled villagers against wandering bands also fed into stereotypes about their social laxity and criminal inclinations. As the author suggests, the historical literature on European gypsies can give us an important comparative perspective. Leo Lucassen's work describes how the various ambulatory communities in Europe began to be lumped into the category of gypsy from the middle of the nineteenth century. Changes in state power and the professionalization of the

police sharpened the institutional consequences of social stigma (Leo Lucassen 1993). There are interesting intersections of race ideology which may emerge from this comparison. Theories about a common Aryan origin for the people of Europe and North India, had to be reconciled with the idea that the stigmatized gypsies were also supposed to originally hail from India.

Radhakrishna's examination of the criminal tribes legislation in the Madras Presidency focusses on the fate of the Yerakulas, 'a branch of the Koravas', once involved in a peripatetic trade in salt and forest products. For this reader the new and stimulating section of the book is its exploration of the making of a waged work force out of what was described as 'thievish raw material'. This is a story in which some traditional skills were destroyed and others remodelled, new skills were learnt under compulsion but occasionally deployed to advantage. The criminalization of certain communities emerges as an important component of the history of labour and urbanization in colonial India.

The author points out that the earlier colonial explanation for the 'criminality' of such itinerant communities was that crime was a hereditary profession which, in a caste-bound society, they were bound to follow. However, by the later nineteenth century Madras officials were shifting to a socio-economic thesis. They said the penetration of interior locations by roads and railways had deprived the Koravas of a livelihood and made them turn to crime. Radhakrishna stresses that this emphasis on the link between loss of livelihood and crime justified state intervention to 'settle' such itinerant communities. She contrasts this socio-economic paradigm with the prominence of biological and genetic explanations for crime in England. However the criminologist David Garland has argued that Lombrosian criminology, the idea that habitual criminality was the outcome of a defective physiology, had far greater influence in continental Europe than in England.

Communities notified under the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871 had to make themselves available for surveillance through compulsory registration, daily roll calls and prohibitions on movement outside a zone of restriction. Radhakrishna points out that this act was applied in the Punjab and the North Western Provinces but not in Madras Presidency. Madras officials feared it might disrupt the trade of various



itinerant communities, which sustained the all-important salt revenue. One must stress however that in the Legislative Council the 1871 Act was presented as one which would apply to those 'criminal tribes' who did have some identifiable residence, whose migrations were part time. At the time the government was not confident about finding alternative forms of livelihood for communities which seemed to be entirely itinerant.

By the late nineteenth century roads and railways had begun to seriously erode the pack trade. Yet it was not only the march of modernization which put pressure on Korava livelihood but also colonial fiscal policies. Radhakrishna points out that the reservation of forests and wasteland affected Korava trade and craft activity. Colonial famine relief policies were insensitive to their need for fodder to sustain livestock. Koravas were also squeezed out of the carrying trade because Government policies gave the advantage to more substantial grain merchants and larger salt trading companies. A revised version of the Criminal Tribes Act passed in 1911 was applied in the Madras Presidency, affecting 14,00,000 people according to official figures.

The government could also shift 'notified criminal tribes' into special settlements to 'reform' them under a harsh regime of rules and restrictions. The author examines Stuartpuram, one such settlement in the Guntur district, where the Yerukulas were to be coerced into a sedentary lifestyle. This settlement was put under the management of the Salvation Army, a missionary organization. A stretch of unpromising land was divided up into family plots for cultivation, but payment was by a fixed wage. Subsequently when the land turned out to be quite valuable, the Yerukulas were denied permanent rights over it. Instead the 'reform' programme changed into one of transforming them into a cheap and disciplined wage force for a local tobacco factory. The author makes the significant observation that when a path opened out by which the Yerukulas could have joined the mainstream, it was blocked by the rural elites and the administration.

Radhakrishna points out that by the late

nineteenth century the Salvation Army had won considerable influence in English society, as well as financial support from businessmen for its work among criminals and pauperized urban strata. However, even at the time there were charges that the Salvation Army used the pauperized sections of the working classes as sweated and black leg labour for private enterprises and creamed off money from emigration projects designed to relieve the unfortunate. Perhaps this analysis of the Salvation Army as instrument of plutocratic machination against working class assertion in England, and arm of imperialism overseas could have included some 'history from below'. What were the consolations it held out for the Irish migrants, the pauperized element in England, and even perhaps for the 'criminal tribes' in India?

The author proceeds to a very deft analysis of the tensions between the different agencies authorized to exercise surveillance over notified tribes. The Criminal Tribes Act of 1911 expanded the powers of the village headman in the Madras Presidency. However in the 1920s the noncooperation movement and an agitation over service conditions indicated that village headmen were no longer dependable, so the colonial government shifted to a greater reliance on the police. Perhaps this shift had consequences at the ground level, because protests from 'criminal tribes' against police oppression picked up. The rural elite gained from restrictions on a 'criminal tribe' because this created a pool of docile labour, particularly desirable when migration to Ceylon was draining the supply. At the same time landlords were very hostile to any reform programme which might give the 'criminal tribes' secure rights over cultivable land.

Managers who found it difficult to get cheap labour to set up a mine, plantation or factory, wanted to use the Criminal Tribes Act to anchor a permanent, tractable and underpaid work force to their enterprise. Radhakrishna describes this as an instance of indentured labour springing up in different forms. In both cases criminal sanctions were used to restrict labour mobility and prevent wage bargaining. But indenture had at least the semblance of 'contract' and afforded closure after a specified term, though there were many pressures to discourage an exit. Getting a labour force through the Criminal Tribes Act meant an even more comprehensive use of criminal sanctions in the wage relationship, and the term of engagement was indeterminate. The presence of indentured labour kept a brake on the bargaining power of the 'free' work force in the vicinity. In somewhat the same way, the local availability of labour from the 'criminal tribes' and more broadly from the 'depressed castes' gave employers a source of black leg labour when needed. Radhakrishna informs us that in 1931 the Government of Madras opposed any ratification of the ILO convention against

forced labour because it was uncomfortably aware of work forces tied down under the Criminal Tribes Act.

Yet even this coercively structured entry into factory work could be transformed into a niche worth defending. In an absorbing passage Radhakrishna shows how the very permanence of the Korava work force in the ILTD tobacco factory, a product of their dependent situation, vested them with certain skills. These skills became indispensable to the smooth running of the factory, and could be used to negotiate a better deal. Korava children regimented by a boarding school became the preferred work force for the factory.

The author concludes that the category of Scheduled Castes today is 'a creation of the historically disabling caste system' and the category of Denotified Tribes a creation of colonialism. This may have been just a passing remark. But I would suggest that there is a strong case for examining the emergence of both categories in a common framework set up by the politics of caste ideology, colonialism and the inclusions and exclusions through which the Indian nation was defined. As Radhakrishna herself indicates, the subjection of the 'criminal tribes' was shaped not only by the colonial administration, but also by the rural elites, who wanted the 'criminal tribes' to form a tied labour force, like that provided by untouchable castes. She also points out that any low caste and vulnerable section in the vicinity of enterprises using criminal tribe labour, could also be brought under the Criminal Tribes Act.

One could add that the social boundaries of nomadic communities were very permeable to the inward drift of women and children of the lower castes in times of famine. Allegations about kidnapping run through the official arguments for passing the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871, reflecting an anxiety about the passage of children from settled tractable communities into those held to be vagrant, criminal and immoral. When peripatetic communities took up more permanent residence they were usually consigned to the ranks of the resident 'menial castes', something often described in colonial and nationalist ethnographies as a step upwards in civilization. The criminal tribes and the 'depressed classes' were precipitated as one of constituents of the urban labouring poor, or of the work force accumulating around plantations and mines under somewhat similar conditions. Salvation Army settlements in North India came to provide a kind of suburban provisioning and service sector—rough and cheap handlooms, baskets, mats and brooms, eggs, meat and dairy products. This is also the kind of livelihood which low caste camp-followers fashioned at the fringes of cantonments. The Criminal Tribes Act was used to create the sort of 'municipal facilities' for colonial towns which untouchables also provided. For instance, in

The author makes the significant observation that when a path opened out by which the Yerakulas could have joined the mainstream, it was blocked by the rural elites and the administration.

some of the district headquarters in Bihar and U.P., the Maghiya Doms, were hemmed into walled enclosures termed Domrakhanas and made to provide scavenging services, by using the 'bad livelihood' sections of the Criminal Procedure Code, or the Criminal Tribes Act.

The emergence of a political agenda for the 'Depressed Classes' from the late nineteenth century also weaves into the history of the 'Criminal Tribes'. Radhakrishna argues that colonial officials referred to the economic marginalization of ambulatory professions to make a case for state intervention. But they also gave another explanation for why it was British government alone which could assist the 'criminal tribes' to 'merge into the mainstream'. Colonial accounts began to argue that the exclusiveness and caste prejudices of Hindu society restricted the 'criminal tribes' to the most menial and insecure occupations, and compelled them to turn to crime. Sometimes this story of exclusion was pushed back historically from the time of 'caste' into the time of 'race'. Aryan invaders were described as having forced pre-Aryan aboriginals to retreat to the forests and wasteland outside the margins of settled agriculture. Since society was bent on excluding them, British government would have to devise alternative forms of livelihood for them. Gunthorpe's Notes on criminal tribes (1882), had this to say about the Dhers: 'Looked on with greatest contempt, hated by all, and bitterly persecuted at times by the reigning Hindu authorities in past times, the tribe in the Deccan was thrown into a condition of abject want... and it was only the supremacy of the British ... (and) its accompanying just rule, which has allowed these people to assert themselves at all'. This proposition gathered strength as government tried to meet the challenge of nationalist politics in the 1920s. Of his appointment to the Criminal Tribes Settlement Department at Dharwar in 1932, the I.C.S. officer James Halliday recalled that this task was now swollen by the addition of a general mandate for the progress of Backward Classes of all types. 'We had become champions at the administrative level of the Depressed Classes (that the untouchables) in their struggle to escape the toils of their hereditary degradations.' (F.C. Daly, 1928, J. Halliday, 1968) Politically the Depressed Classes found some leverage in this situation. However at the ground level the use of the Criminal Tribes Act against certain communities, and the deployment of the 'bad livelihood' section of the CrPC and informal

roll call against resident low castes suspected of crime, made them into serfs of the local police. The 'respectable' complained that this 'police constituency', was occasionally used to unleash government sponsored disorder. In the reprisals after the 1942 Quit India movement in U.P. there were many complaints that the residents of Domrakhanas had been given licence to loot.

In Guntur, the locality chosen by the author, another common theme may emerge from the terms on which certain Dalit castes drew Christianity into their social and cultural landscape. Perhaps Christianity, however coercively it was introduced to the Yerakulas, came to mean different things to them at different times. Emphasizing the bond at one moment and threatening to sunder it at another seems to have given them some leverage between the Salvation Army, colonial administration and wider society. One of the reasons which the author gives for landlord opposition to the intervention of the Salvation Army was that becoming Christian also seemed to make low castes more assertive. Yet when the author encounters the Yerakulas singing hymns, or finds that they give the Salvation Army a positive role when they reconstruct their past, she attributes this to the effect of cultural rupture and brain washing. This seems too static a conclusion, and surely one which would be uncomfortable for a Christian Yerakula. One catches a glimpse, here and there in this book, of other low caste groups such as the Malas and the Madigas who had also found a place for Christianity in their life. One aspect of resistance is fashioning resources out of new conditions as well, even conditions which may have been imposed harshly and with great cultural loss. And are there contexts in which those at the bottom of the social heap may want some rupture with their past? 'Criminal tribes' were also handed over to certain indigenous social reform bodies by the colonial government. Numbers were becoming increasingly important to the modern terms on which religious community was being politically constructed and represented. Were these other 'civilizing missions' any the less instrumental or judgemental in the way they tried to make these communities conform to mainstream mores?

This brings one to the author's encounter with the way in which Yerakulas today remember their past. This assessment leads her to question the validity of oral sources as means of writing alternative histories. The suggestion is that oral histories can be completely restructured by the violent impress of power, even if everyday life and strategies continuously challenge such power structures. The process by which the Yerukulas were transformed from an itinerant community into a settled work force was such a violent and traumatic one, Radhakrishna argues, that it led to 'a blanking out of the collective memory of the community's past'. For the current generation, the memory

of the past, she concludes, 'is a version that was introduced by the Salvation Army....' It is the researcher then, who must retrieve the more unmediated version, ironically from the written records of those very forces, the colonial state and the Salvation Army, which inflicted this violence.

There are some alternative assessments which the author raises but sidelines. One of these is that Yerukula acknowledgement of a criminal past hints at a locus of potential power. Certainly both peripatetic communities and resident poor and low caste ones are described in official sources as deploying the threat of arson, pilferage, or cattle-poisoning, to secure their claims to service, livelihood, alms, and use of local natural resources. In colonial accounts the wielding of this kind of leverage was described as 'blackmail'. From the late nineteenth century one of the ambitions of colonial policing was to break it down. Yet an image of past criminality may still have its uses.

Secondly, Radhakrishna remarks that the villagers around Stuartpuram remembered the former itinerant activities of the Yerakulas, but they themselves did not. I would suggest that the Yerukulas may have had very good reason indeed for 'forgetting' aspects of their past which could erode their claims on the present. Low social status and a peripatetic profession could mean that claims to residence and livelihood in a particular locality could be challenged. Itinerant communities were often made to reside outside the city walls or the main village site, and violence and arson could be used to make them depart. In 1838, officials in the Madras Presidency were asked about measures to reform 'the habits of the strolling and predatory tribes.' The Magistrate of Guntur said that one section of the Yerakulas were systematic thieves and robbers and could be expelled from the district, because they had no fixed abode, 'they are not an integral portion of the community with which they have become associated for the time, their association is assumed for purposes hostile to the community'.

Here I would like to add that it's not only the marginalization of certain itinerant communities under colonial modernity which provided the justification for state intervention. Colonial officials were equally, if not more, anxious that those suspected of being 'criminal tribes' seemed to be devising their own ways of stepping into modernity. In the Indian police officer Paupa Rao Naidu's account of itinerant communities such as the Lambadis and the Koravas, the pathos of their economic marginalization by metalled roads and the railways is very evident (M. Paupa Rao Naidu, 1905). But in this same pamphlet, and more so in other police ethnographies, there is also a strong anxiety that modernization, in particular the railway system, was giving some new opportunities to semi-migrant and nomadic 'criminal tribes' to escape local controls, disguise their identity and expand the range of

their criminal operations.

It is the intractability with which criminal tribes seemed to reproduce themselves, demographically and culturally, both in the face of modernization and by drawing upon its resources, which became a key argument in asking for harsher legislation. The colonial administration could not possibly police the social antecedents of all those engaging in part-time migration or seeking a niche in the casual labour, services and petty retail sector in towns. However experiments with 'police reform' from the later nineteenth century, and new technologies for recording identity such as anthropometry and fingerprinting, generated the notion that the migrations of those 'known' to be criminal by caste and hereditary profession could be monitored (Singha, 2000). So even the more 'gypsy-like' of the criminal tribes began to be registered under subsequent modifications of the Criminal Tribes Act. For some of those so registered, the migratory impulse was to be sealed off altogether by herding them into a settlement. Sometimes the settlement itself was conceived of as a sort of officially controlled channel to direct the 'criminal tribe' into the modern economic sectors, waged employment and urban life. The goal was that of 'reform', but in ways which would keep them under the eye of the police, which would not in fact allow them to efface their 'criminal' antecedents.

Far from seeking a merciful obscurity, some activists of 'The Denotified and Nomadic Tribes Rights and Action Group' recently petitioned the National Human Rights Commission for a survey of the denotified communities (*Budhan* 4 May 1998). In the colonial period this kind of identification was prompted by a spurt in the ambitions of police surveillance. At this juncture the demand represents a claim on rights of citizenship. Meena Radhakrishna's book indicates her empathy with this project. ■

Bibliography

- Bhattacharya, Neeladhri, 'The discourse and practices of colonial codification'.
Budhan: The denotified and nomadic tribes rights and action group letter.
Daly, F.C. 'Some types of the Indian hereditary criminal', *The Police Journal*, Vol. 1, Jan 1928.
Gunthorpe, E.J., Notes on criminal tribes, Bombay, 1882.
Laxman Gaikwad, Uchalya, *The Branded*, Sahitya Akademi, Delhi, 1998.
Halliday J., *A Special India*, London, 1968.
Lucassen L., 'Harmful tramps', police professionalisation and gypsies in Germany, 1700-1945', *Crime, History and Societies*, 1997, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 29-50.
M. Paupa Rao Naidu, *The Criminal Tribes of India, The History of Korawars, Erukulas or Kaikaries*, Madras, 1905.
Singha, R. 'Settle, mobilise, verify: identification practices in colonial India', *Studies in History*, 2000.

Radhika Singha teaches at the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Earth/People/Social Concern

Kamala Menon

INDIAN GEOGRAPHY: VOICE OF CONCERN

By Anu Kapur

Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 2002, pp. 438, Rs. 995.00

A time has come when there is a need to voice concern about the status of the discipline one loves—geography. This effort of Anu is the best document to begin to review the status of geography in India with the geographers who made it happen. Much of the book is like a travel back in time to the issues and problems that were being discussed and resolved since 1980 to 2000. The well documented chronologically correct listing of the Presidential address from the first Geographical Congress address in 1980 by G.S. Gosal to the 23rd Geographical Congress address of Gopal Krishan not only traces the views of all the Presidents about the status of geography, but paints an interesting and thought-provoking picture of what is to be done. It draws our attention to the vast alternatives that could be geography in India and of India in the years to come. We would now be able to dissent to the major changes being effected in geography education at the school stage, not just voice our concern about the growing marginalization of geography education. Further, to know that what we do not teach is probably more important than what we do (Aijaz) makes it necessary to base our opinions and action on the strength of the arguments of these doyens of Indian geography.

The simple yet deeply sensitive remarks of all the geographers bring the world into focus and remind the readers of the need to think of the earth as one and the people on it as a social concern. What is interesting is the simple unifying oneness about the need to address the issues of human choice, development and removing inequality in the way we relate with our environment and the place around us, in all the speeches whether it be well analysed and systematically stated like in the address of K.V. Sundaram or the terse yet deeply intuitive speech of Aizajuddin Ahmad. What is clear is that social relevance arises not from a philanthropic anxiety over the persistence of such social problems as poverty and squalor, it grows out of a sense of belonging to the people, particularly the class who toil in the fields and the factories and contribute the fruits of their labour for continuance of all research activity.

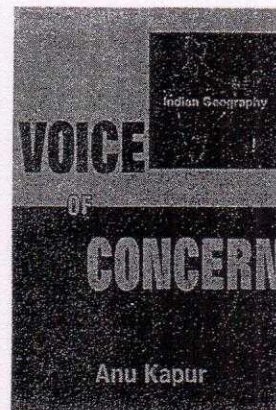
Anu has done an interesting exercise in studying the nature of geographical associations in India particularly the National Association of Indian Geographers founded on April 11, 1978, and the direction that each of its Congress sessions has given to geographical studies. The concern is that all the jobs well

begun, whether they be the commissions on health, peace, and climate change, peter out. The research studies are not circulated or documented and they operate within a comfort zone, choosing topics of research which have precedence in terms of methodology and data sources. It is interesting to see the bar graphs depicting the number of theses on different areas of geography showing a change in areas researched from the urban and land use studies of the forties to the increase in studies on agriculture, resource development and regional planning and regional development.

The concern at the absence of textbooks on even the most elementary courses like Environmental Geography, Biogeography and Resource Geography and the urgent need of NAGI to motivate geographers to take up this task both for the school and university stage cannot be ignored. The need is so urgent that unless it is done on an emergency basis there will be no geography education worth its name left in India.

The need for teachers of geography in schools must be addressed as priority. The paradox is that there are several aspirants hoping to get university and college positions when the demand is in school education. The university and educational research organizations need to prepare materials, open departments of geography and take up the issues of environment related problems so as to motivate students and teachers to study geography.

The final part of the book consisting of the different Presidential addresses and thumbnail sketches of the Presidents of the NAGI brings into focus the role of geography to serve the cause of human welfare by comparing the processes which affect the quality of life in different parts of the earth and also the



The university and educational research organizations need to prepare materials, open departments of geography and take up the issues of environment related problems so as to motivate students and teachers to study geography.

solutions to the problems. Two views on the same problem of migration of Das and Moonis are interesting to compare and understand the meaning of what geographical analysis is all about. Both argue differently but conclude that the linguistic-cultural, the ethno-tribal, the religious-communal tensions are sprouting in the ground fertilized by regional inequities in the development process and are posing a serious threat to the unity and integrity of the nation.

What do geographers need to do? Reddy in his address suggests that geographers need to strengthen their technical base and take a position in the field of environment and ecosystem management. NAGI needs to interface with planners and investors on the utility of geographers and the wealth in the inquiry that they conduct in the areas of land development, urban studies and land classification. Work out refined tools of analysis, says Pathak and use them to cut into the present morass of vested interests in planning and land use. The work of Vaidyanadhan as a fine contribution to geography cannot be missed. An earth scientist who joined the league of geographers with his view that quality must be our logo. The view of Sundaram on what the skills of a student of geography should be is worth implementing when he notes that the skill to be developed are those which will make students reality oriented, environment-sensitive, globally adaptive, professionally innovative and vision driven so as to render them capable of pro-active response to the uncertainty of the times. The role of voluntary agencies and voluntary action where geographers can play an important role is emphasized by K.N. Singh.

The articles on the green revolution development, environment and decentralized planning, geographical perspectives and the process of inequality are insights into issues such as finding spatial organizations for development administration so as to maximize the benefit of our development process.

The arrangement of articles could have been organized by issues. This probably was not possible because of the strict chronology that Anu was following based on the duration of the Presidential term. Barring the typographical errors the book makes fascinating reading for the geographer. ■

Kamala Menon teaches Geography at the Mother's International School, New Delhi.

A Trilogy Reissued

M. Rajivlochan

PUNJABI SAGA—1857–2000: THE MONUMENTAL STORY OF FIVE GENERATIONS OF A REMARKABLE PUNJABI FAMILY

By Prakash Tandon

Rupa, New Delhi, 2000, pp. 664, Rs. 295.00

Memoir, social history, story of a family, first hand account of life in the Punjab, guide providing tips on management and rural marketing are some of the appellations that have been used to describe Prakash Tandon's famous trilogy that has been reissued in the present omnibus volume. Comprising the *Punjabi Century* (first published 1961), *Beyond Punjab* (1971) and *Return to Punjab* (1980) the story of Prakash Tandon's family and his experiences in public life is above all just that, a marvellous set of stories such as could be retold over a camp fire, and that is how it is best read.

Sociologists have used these books for information on the social interaction of castes, the nature of the jajmani system, details about the rites of passages and many other things in the life of a Punjabi family from small town Punjab. They have also used Prakash Tandon's recollections to fill up details about life in small town Punjab. Historians have sought out information about college life and growing up in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Punjab. People concerned with the life of the Punjabi people and culture have picked up stray statements to seek ideas for creating socio-cultural movements. Tandon's observations on the functioning of government institutions have acquired the status of some of the wiser criticisms possible of these megaliths, their inertia-ridden ways and their vulnerability to political pressures. Moreover, his pen-portrayals like that of George Fernandes, one-time trade unionist turned minister many times over, have been reprinted repeatedly in the past two decades on the presumption of being both accurate and well meaning.

Essentially the story that Tandon tells starts with his grand uncle and grandfather and meanders from episode to episode. It imbricates with bits of folk history and folk sociology thus providing us with, in many ways, a record of collective racial memory. Of popular perceptions and widely shared social prejudices, of the way people defined themselves and the world around them. His very first line, "our family were Khatri from the West Punjab countryside", suggests the importance that caste identity continued to play in the creation of self-identification in the minds of men who, in their social experiences, work and exposure to the outside world were otherwise, completely cosmopolitan.

"Sikha-Shahi (Sikh Rule)", Tandon recalls

about the early nineteenth century, "still meant high-handedness in the Punjab. But the Sikh regime was never too repressive, and to us Hindus it was perhaps a welcome change from being inferior citizens under the Moslems" [p. 16]. Obviously, Tandon seems to be unaware of the recent writings of some of the historians of the Punjab who have tried to show Sikh rule to be far more equitable than was the case with the Mughals earlier or the British later. "Local officials were arbitrary and often rapacious, and father told us that people tried to look poorer than they were so as not to attract attention", recalls Tandon.

Tandon was actively involved in activities that had to do with the creation of wealth. With Hindustan Levers, in its various avatars, he was instrumental in making Dalda, a once very popular imitator of ghee made from vegetable oils, a household name. Tandon and his company could be safely held responsible for weaning Indians away from pure ghee and vegetable oils to being avid consumers of hydrogenated oil.

As the first Indian Chairman of the multinational company he moved between protecting company interest, increasing value for shareholders and acting as advisor to the Government of India in various capacities ultimately being part of various bodies making industrial and financial policies. Later he also went on to manage the operations of one of the smaller banking organizations. These experiences made him a firm votary of the idea that the essential task of the government is to govern while its business is to keep out of

Historians tell us that Indians throughout known history have had a healthy respect for wealth. Even Mahatma Gandhi never balked at the idea of being economically well off. Yet in self-governing India the government went out of its way to create policies that restrict hard work, efficiency and the making of money.

...the story of Prakash Tandon's family and his experiences in public life is above all just that, a marvellous set of stories such as could be retold over a camp fire, and that is how it is best read.

business.

He recounts the discomfort caused among our social and political leaders by any effort that could result in the creation of wealth. Historians tell us that Indians throughout known history have had a healthy respect for wealth. Even Mahatma Gandhi never balked at the idea of being economically well off. Yet in self-governing India the government went out of its way to create policies that restrict hard work, efficiency and the making of money.

In a hurry, brought up on a strong diet of anti-colonialism, the Indian technical-hands, as a class did not have much patience with learning the intricacies of running complex, top-of-the-line industrial facilities that had been set up. Tandon narrates how they took over some of the best steel plants from their German, American and Russian mentors. Added to this was an absence of humility to learn, a desire to please superiors at all cost and a general inexperience about production, manufacture and management. Little wonder that such technical hands only created disasters in our steel plants and all other government owned facilities.

Tandon was also associated in the setting up of the now famous Indian Institute of Management at Ahmedabad. In the early years the syllabus at the IIM was light enough to require just about 20 hours of work per week. With useless time on their hands the faculty and students resorted to politicking, a favourite pastime with people in the subcontinent, with all its deleterious effects on the institution and its personnel. Tandon managed to increase the workload for students to 70 hours per week and with the support of the management succeeded in convincing everyone of the value of a heavy work schedule resulting in better performance by the students and corresponding benefits to them in the form of highly paid jobs.

Tandon has brought to us a book that is remarkable in its insights, refreshing in its wit and well, just a very good read. In times when it is increasingly fashionable to be caustic Tandon's simple discursive prose is truly welcome. ■

M. Rajivlochan teaches in the Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Indian Perspectives

Murari Prasad

INDIA: FIFTY YEARS AFTER INDEPENDENCE

Edited by Kathleen Firth and Felicity Hand
Peepal Tree Press, Leeds, 2001, pp.168, £10.99.

A compilation of the papers presented at the international conference in Barcelona (Spain) to mark the 50th anniversary of India's independence in 1997, this anthology is an assortment of perspectives on India yielded by its images in literature, film and the media. The editors of the volume, Kathleen Firth and Felicity Hand, are distinguished academics at the Barcelona University and the Autonomous University of Barcelona, respectively, and are responsible for the current canonicity of Indian English literature in Spanish universities.

Although Indo-Spanish alliance at political and diplomatic levels was for long impeded by the untidy aftermath of the Spanish Civil War and the long spell of military dictatorship—New Delhi did not have a resident Ambassador in Madrid as late as 1965—multi-sectoral bilateral engagement has increased during the last two catalytic decades. The current spurt of interest shown by Spanish students in the works of Indian English writers like R.K. Narayan, Nayantara Sahgal, Vikram Seth, Arundhati Roy and others is proof of this.

The volume is divided into four complementary quarters: 'Female Voices'; 'The Storytellers'; 'Indians Abroad'; and 'India On The Move'. The three essays in the first section discuss the evolution of feminist ideas, the position of women in literary portrayals, the problematic issue of postcoloniality and the counter-canon, as well as matters of location and identity connected to theories of gender and ethnicity with reference to both Indian and expatriate women writers. In her essay 'Finding a New Independence: Indian Women Writing in English' Mary Conde says that although the introduction of English studies in India have recently been historicized and re-sited as part of the imperial agenda the language continues to be an enabling medium for inter-regional interaction after the country's independence. By and large, Indian women writers in English both in India and abroad exude elitism, and their literary enterprise is propelled by the logic of social dynamics. Predictably, their works do not have a specific locus.

Equally, the fiction of Indian and expatriate women writers "anticipates an audience unfamiliar with India" (p.28). Refreshingly enough, Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* escapes these limitations. Western references are germane to the context and the necessary information, not in the least gratuitous, surrounding the indigenous setting are

unobtrusively slipped; the reader makes his way there, with the feel of the landscape and dank atmospherics against his skin.

Looking at anglophone women's writing from another perspective, Elizabeth Russell in her piece 'Location Matters: "Indian" Women Writing Identities at the Crossroads' notes that the notions of identity and race in the context of contemporary women writers are not natural concepts. The space signified by these cultural concepts seem to have been expanded for potential transgression or rubbed out and refashioned into a liminal space to inscribe a reconstructed self into it.

The second part of the book includes essays by C.D. Narasimhaiah, Syd Harrex and Savita Goel. Narasimhaiah underlines the continuity of tradition in a culture in 'Wanted: the Concept of a National Literature for India' and considers it an essential framework of reference for any creditable literary endeavour. He identifies and outlines the contours of a national literature in India's multilingual setting and makes a vigorous plea for translation of seminal and influential texts from amongst various language titles in Indian languages as well as in English, and a dynamic engagement with our indigenous critical tradition. Among the works by Indian English writers Narasimhaiah focuses on Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* and Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri* to demonstrate the distillable Indian reality which makes these books genuinely and overridingly Indian.

Syd Harrex spotlights the characteristic strengths of Narayan as a narrator of the nation in his contribution titled 'Independence, Nationalism and the Rush of Eternity in the Malgudi Chronicles'. He describes Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan as pioneers of literary nationalism in India, and argues that the signifying transactions in their fiction prefigure current postcolonial commitments in Indian English writing. Syd examines Narayan's response to the culture of colonialism in his fiction including his satiric perspectives on modern Indian history. Malgudi has a metonymic relationship with the whole of India and it preserves its Indianness in a timeless way. Further, Syd discerns Narayan's vision of the human condition and certain operative standards as "metaphysical palimpsest" even on minimalistic representation of India in the imaginary town of Malgudi in his later novels like *The Sweet-Vendor*, *A Tiger for Malgudi*, and *Mr Sampath*.

Narasimhaiah's criterion of evaluation is rather heavily weighted towards the need to engage with India's religious and spiritual heritage on the part of an Indian writer. Here is a benchmark for identifying the stamp of Indianness:

Even a hasty reading I did of four books in preparation for a seminar: Bhattacharya's *Mrityunjaya*, Karanth's *Visions of Mookajji*, both winning Jnanapith Awards, Aurobindo's *Savitri* and *Amma Vandaal* or *The Sins of Appu's Mother* (all of which can be read in English) show a remarkable Indianness in the manner in which the great Indian tradition is kept alive in each work. While reading Bhattacharya's *Mrityunjaya* in English translation I noticed continuous references woven into the texture of the work as metaphor, symbol, myth, allusion, analogy from the *Mahabharata*, *Bhagavata*, Buddha, Ramanuja, Chaitanya, Sanjkaradev, the Bhakti poets and the folk tales with considerable approval, whereas in Karanth's work the epics and their outlook on life comes in largely for disapproval, providing what the novelist in his vision considers as healthy correctives to age-old practices. As for *The Sins of Appu's Mother*, from Tamil, it is not a moral exploration but an artistic attempt (I say 'artistic' because, after all, a great work of art is some kind of disguised sermon, fable, philosophy, persuasion) to bring light to the sinner. The light may come either in terms of traditional wisdom or by importing what is borrowed from other sources in the characteristic Indian way (pp.48-49).

However, the anxiety for Indianness sounds excessive when we begin to examine radically secular writers who are not overly obsessed with the need for making any explicit reckoning with their roots and tradition; or a work like Amitav Ghosh's *Shadow Lines*, in which, as Meenakshi Mukherjee notes, "India is neither a metaphor nor a philosophical idea" (Mukherjee 1993:2611). Surely, we need a deviation from a broad conceptual sweep or overarching generalization like the one offered by Narasimhaiah to come to grips with the writers of so multi-form, or what Rushdie describes, 'polymorphous' phenomenon as Indian English literature (Rushdie 1997:50). Yet, on balance, Narasimhaiah's plea for forging closer links between Indian English literature and literatures in our regional languages is vitally valid.

Among the other pieces are Kathleen Firth's 'From India to Canada via Africa: M.G. Vassanji's *No New Land*, Ranjana Sidhanta Ash's 'Remembering India: Homeland, Heritage or Hindrance in the Writings by Women of the Indian Diaspora'; and Felicity Hand's 'Forget India, We're British!' Firth deals with Vassanji's sensitive delineation of the migrant communities on the cusp of cultural transition in Canada in his second novel. Ranjana Ash and Felicity Hand examine the writers of Asian origin in Britain, though with different motivations and along different trajectories of

critical inquiry. The former focuses on the "perceptions and visions of India in the fiction and poetry of selected women writers with an Indian connection"; the latter examines the emerging synthesis of Asianness and Britishness in the works of British Asian writers who are postcolonials with an all-encompassing identity. Both have operative access to empirically dense material. Does the image of India emanating from these writings strengthen an Indian identity? Does it contribute to biculturalism or to a synthesized culture? How does the diasporic view of feminism influence the memories of India in relation to changing gender roles in Britain and in India? Does the Indian connection retain its relevance to the third generation Indian immigrants or Britons of Indian origin?

Notable among the novels that resonate with the readers are Attia Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column* (1961), Kamala Markandaya's *The Nowhere Man* (1973), Sunetra Gupta's *Memories of Rain* (1992), as well as poems by Ketaki Kushari Dyson and Sujata Bhatt. These writers evoke India as a concrete cultural reality whereas the younger generation of Indian women writers in Britain use the Indian connection as a trope for contrived symmetries. Ranjana suggests that the vein of biculturalism seems to be drying up. Evocation of subcultural particularities by the writers associated with the Asian Women Writers' Collective like Ravinder Randhawa, Meera Syal, Rohila Gupta, and Leena Dhingra demonstrates their underlying concern with depicting micro-ethnic identities. With progressive emaciation of the Indian connection we have on the one hand corny expatriate cliché like bland set pieces in Meera Syal's fiction (Tellis 2001:14), and on the other, total fade-out of ethnic inheritance in the current breed of talented writers like Atima Srivastava and Bidisha Bandyopadhyay. However, her conclusion is not fully endorsed by Felicity Hand who follows the same terrain with considerable overlap.

Felicity Hand argues that Indians have contributed to the redefinition of contemporary Britishness and so there is palpable evidence of cultural assimilation. She uses the word 'Asian' as an umbrella term to refer to the people of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin. In her view British Asian writers are postcolonials with an all-encompassing identity: Asian, British and British Asian but they haven't yet lost the urge to articulate their ethnic experience. Statistically, the Britons of Asian descent still constitute a small minority but they are a prominently visible section of the British society because of their enterprise and prosperity. Gurinder Chadha's film *Bhaji on the Beach* (1994), like Hanif Kureishi's *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1986), exposes the internal conflict engendered by the cultural contact between British and Asian traditions

but at the same time it depicts the confidence and security of the younger generation of Asian immigrants who are willing to bear the strains of biculturalism.

The final section of the book deals with India's restorative resilience. The first essay recounts Bengali literary nationalism during India's freedom struggle; the second focuses on the strength and prowess of the Indian media; and the third highlights the phenomenal growth of the entertainment industry in the past fifty years. There was a close nexus between literary nationalism and political ferment in Bengal, which was the cradle of resurgent movements. Daya Thussu takes a brisk survey of the growth and maturity of the Indian media in recent times. The press has enormously expanded since its advent in the country with the *Bengal Gazette* in 1780. In the wake of economic liberalization commercial satellite television has penetrated the masses. The competitive edge lent by private channels has revolutionized Indian broadcasting. More importantly, the massive impact of globalization has not emasculated the Indian media. However, this optimism is not shared by Sara Martin Alegre as regards the representation of India on the western screen. He notes that Indian cinema is out of step with Indian English literature in the West. The portrayal of India in British and American films is downright disproportionate and 'colonialist' compared to combative, vibrant and emancipated literary productions. Admittedly, representation of India on the screens of the West increased in the 1980's and 90's with *Gandhi* (1982), *Heat and Dust* (1983), *A Passage to India* (1985) and *City of Joy* (1992), but for a fair and credible representation of the quality and variety of Indian culture—as also an antidote to misrepresentation—India should find new channels of distribution to bypass American imperialism on the screen.

The editors and the sponsors of this project deserve to be congratulated on putting together a well-produced volume. Since the book is priced too high, a cheaper Indian reprint is needed. ■

References

- Mukherjee, Meenakshi (1993): "The Anxiety of Indianness: Our Novels in English", *Economic and Political Weekly*. November 27.
 Narasimhaiah, C.D. (1999): "Makers of Indian English", *The Literary Criterion*. Vol. XXXIV, No. I.
 Rushdie, Salman (1997): "Damme, This is the Oriental Scene for you", *The New Yorker*, June 23&30.
 Tellis, Ashley (2001): "Expatriate Cliché", *Biblio: A Review of Books*. January-February.

Murari Prasad teaches English in Sana'a University (the Republic of Yemen).

PARAG DAIRY NOIDA



parag

MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

- FIRST VERTICAL DAIRY OF ASIA
- AN ISO 9002 CERTIFIED DAIRY
- HIGHEST MILK PACKAGING DAIRY OF NORTHERN INDIA
- MOST MODERN , AUTOMATED AND COMPUTERISED DAIRY
- HACCP (HAZARD ANALYSIS CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS) CERTIFIED - A FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
- CAPACITY 4 LAKH LITRES PER DAY.

Parag Dairy

(An Autonomous Unit of PCDF Ltd.)

B-219, Phase-II, Noida -201 305

Ph.: 4568014, 4562057, Fax: 4568178-79

E-mail: paragdairy@yahoo.co.in

Switch to Sunshine – Switch to Parag

India's Boswell

Baidik Bhattacharya

A BIOGRAPHY OF THE INDIAN NATION 1947-1997
By Ranabir Samaddar
Sage Publications, Delhi, 2001, pp.342, Rs. 495.00

It could have been an *autopsy* of the Indian nation as well, for what Ranabir Samaddar attempts here, in his own words, is the dismemberment of the 'internalities' of the Indian nation in an attempt to understand the crucial question "what makes a nation a nation". As a continuation to his previous expositions of the 'externalities' of the nation in *Whose Asia is it Anyway? Region and Nation in South Asia* (1996) and *The Marginal Nation: Transborder Migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal* (1999), *A Biography of the Indian Nation 1947-1997* (2001) interrogates the nation's participation with the discrete social formations—or, as Samaddar prefers to call them, 'forms'—that exposes not only the contingent nature of the nation-state but the cultural limits of these formations as well. John Breuilly once located an ambivalent gesture in the formation of national identity since, as he argued, "[t]he leap from culture to politics is made by portraying the nation at one moment as a cultural community and at another as a political community whilst insisting that in an ideal state the national community will not be 'split' into cultural and political spheres" (*Nationalism and the State*, 1982, p. 349-50).

The loosely-constructed cohesiveness of the nationalist ideology, it can quite plausibly be argued, draws its effectivity in a postcolonial situation like India from a similar ambivalence (though Breuilly considered it pseudo-solution of nationalism in defining the relationship between the state and the society). And Samaddar seems to suggest a similarly nuanced political viability of the nationhood through an irreducible dialectics of adequacy-inadequacy—concerning Partition, aborted rebellions, passive revolution, caste, communalism, populism, plebiscite, citizenship, war—where the irreducibility is crucial since it ensures the transformation of the nation into statehood. This dialectic relationship, Samaddar argues, has a political intentionality in a quite phenomenological sense since, [t]he nation's awareness of its own inadequacy leads to a search for revised forms of rule. Ironically, thus, inadequacy is the mark of being adequate. The nation survives because it is consciously revisionist; it is adequate because of its adaptive nature (p. 12).

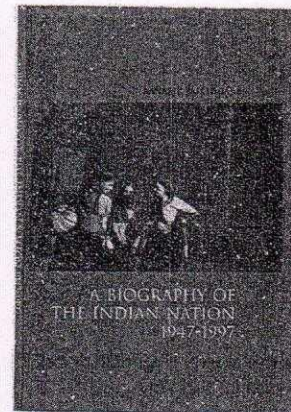
Samaddar's reading of various revolutions, for example, harps on the theme of ethicality in the way they have affirmed and extended the critique of the adequacy of the nation—in the

sense of an articulate awareness—in spite of their failure to revolutionize the peasant-subaltern semantics. Nation's legitimacy is generated not only through a near-total erasure of the promised revolutions like Naxalbari but also through the osmosis of these revolutionary—or, in Mannheim's usage, *utopian*—formations within the nation's bodypolitik: "the revolts of the 1960s and 1970s occasioned the beginning of a range of decisions by the rulers to restructure the polity according to their own perception" (p. 78). The theme of adequacy-inadequacy, first introduced through Partition when the division of the colony bestowed adequacy to the nation by turning the *subjects* into *citizens*, recurs again as the aborted revolutions lead to the nation's adequacy in the form of 'passive revolution'. The passivity, as Samaddar shows analysing the context of Bihar (Ch. 3), displays a structural vulnerability of the nation-state primarily because of the way it has been adapted to produce consensus exhausting the plausibility of *alternatives*; Samaddar argues further that "if the crisis is structural, it is also conjunctural, as the 'intrinsic' [of the mechanic of power] was so due to the eternal vulnerability of the structure to tensions and cleavages generated from struggles and revolts that broke the nationalist consensus" (p. 97).

Samaddar's perceptive exposition of the passive revolution also extends to his nuanced and densely empirical study of post-independence electorate (Ch. 5): while the irreducible historicity of caste and communalism threatens the very existence of the nation, its legitimacy in a postcolonial situation is regained through practices like elections. It is here that Samaddar also introduces the complex idea of citizenry vis-à-vis the nation-state. Within an overtly Gramscian model he interrogates the passivity of populism that validates the "continuously redefined configuration" (p. 210) called nation: elections transform the individuals into citizens and they, as new political units, are deeply predicated upon the existence of the nation-state.

This relationship of reciprocity has further been affirmed and extended in the sixth chapter ('The Nation's Two Subjects', pp. 193-231) where the citizen's identity is caught in a relentless dialogue with its other, the "alien" ("a product of the transborder flow of population, a subject of anthropologists in search of 'special categories'", p.210). The liberal credo of citizenry as the core of the nation-state has severely been challenged with the inflow of immigrants during the period 1947-97, and Samaddar traces the political discomfort as far back as the Partition.

Samaddar's deft analysis rightly points out the murky zones of the citizen-alien relationship vis-à-vis the state, but his narrative fails to take note of similarly indeterminate internal borders that lie at the core of various contemporary political formations dividing the



cohesiveness of citizenry. The exclusivist homogenization, for example, of the citizenry by the New Right—consider RSS spokesman M. G. Vaidya's "This is a Hindu nation", *Hindustan Times*, 20 December, 2001—disrupts the very core of the liberal national framework through ways which are primarily coercive. Samaddar's narrative does not address such issues as to how we are to make sense of the Gramscian model of the nation ('national-popular') in such an ethico-political environment and, further, how we are to reconcile these discrete formations within the superstructure of postcoloniality.

However, the most salutary achievement of Samaddar in this book has been his sensitivity towards the complexity of the issues and events and he has been more than successful in resisting the dangerous contemporaneity of (over) simplifying the narrative or losing the political edge. The point needs to be emphasized in relation with his demystificatory account of the 'home', a much-acclaimed category in the nationalist pedagogy, and the way he shows how certain interpretations of such a category further problematize considerations like women as national *subject* or the idea of *public space* (Ch. 7). The "general problematic of space as a constitutive element in the politics of the nation" (p. 266), in a similarly suggestive analysis, informs his understanding of the recurrent phenomenon of war and its relationship with the national territoriality.

In an almost ethical tone Samaddar seeks a plausible reconciliation of the existing tension in the subcontinent through what he calls "multilogue" or "federal dialogue". This democratizing dialogue, he argues, is perhaps the only way left for a nation in South Asia, desperately seeking legitimacy. There has been, however, one serious omission in the book—the event of Emergency which so decisively settled divergent facets of the postcolonial nation-state and which so specifically went against his idea of 'federal dialogue', receives only one passing reference (p. 94). ■

Baidik Bhattacharya is a research scholar at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Impressions of an Academic Activist

Arun Kumar

INEQUALITY IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE: RECYCLED RHETORIC AND DISPOSABLE PEOPLE

By Jan Knippers Black

Kumarian Press, 1999, pp. xi + 275, price not stated.

The book under review is quite different from what the title implies. When I picked up the book I hoped I would have a better understanding of the causes of growing inequality in the world. However, the book talks about it only anecdotally and describes a capitalist system run amuck in the last twenty-five years—what the author calls the 'Second-Coming Of Capitalism'. The author's attitude is like that of the advanced nations in the WTO, 'take it or leave it'. She often does not explain what may be perfectly clear to her but not to others.

The author calls the book 'irreverent' and feels that there is 'something here to offend almost any reader'. The reviewer found many things to agree with. The irritating thing was the western bias and the inability of the book to live up to the promise of the title. It is not easy reading because of the use of many terms unfamiliar to a reader from the developing world. Like, 'Marketing Snake Oil and Theory', 'Globalization of the Cargo Cult' and 'A Cookie-Cutter World'.

The book comprises many of the author's published articles. Each of the eight parts begins with an introduction to connect the various chapters in that part. The book reads a bit like a travelogue. The author seems to have been wherever action was happening in the last quarter of a century or more. The real issue is what does all this travelling and experience amount to?

Can globalization be interpreted in the limited context of the immediate history? The places Ms. Black visited all have a history which has led them to where they have reached. Globalization as it has evolved in the last 250 years (beginning with colonialism) is the backdrop in which one has to situate the last 25 years. The destruction of the dynamism of the developing world is an essential backdrop to the current crisis in these societies.

Why has capitalism taken on the shape that it has? The decline of the Soviet system and the dramatic change in the post Mao China have eliminated the alternative that the developing world and labour had after the Second World War. This is important to understand the trends visible in the world in the last quarter of a century but the author has dwelt on this theme only in passing.

Capital has gained in this process. Labour has lost out not only because of this but also because of the change in technology and the rise of the services sector all over the world. Even in India today the services sector constitutes 60% of the GDP (Black and White taken

together). It is because of these trends that in GATT (now WTO) the pressure increased on the developing countries in the early eighties and they had to concede new areas of trade to the advanced nations in 1986 in Punta-del-Este in Uruguay. Till the end of the seventies, the West did not exert the kind of economic pressure on the developing world that it has since the eighties. For instance, Aid has been replaced by global capital flow, etc. In the sixties, the World Bank talked of poverty removal but now it is markets all the way.

India is represented in the book as a chapter on dowry deaths. The chapter is not particularly enlightening to an Indian reader and makes one wonder whether other chapters on other countries are also impressions. It is not that the subject is unimportant for Indian society but is it representative of what is going on in India or is it the key issue to understand the inequity (growing) in India or between India and the advanced world? India as the biggest democracy in the world needed to be analysed (in Part V) for what democracy means in a developing nation and what lessons it holds for other countries. Not that the experience of Latin America is unimportant but part V on democracy focuses on the experience of this region. It is not clear that this is the most important aspect of the state of democracy (and its infirmities) in the world.

A lacuna running through the book is its lack of understanding of the current phase of globalization (economic) sweeping the world as a globalization of the elites in the world (including the author and the reviewer). The emotional attachment of the elites with their own people is on the decline, if not absent. Developing world elite are trying to link up with the western elite. So the latter enjoy a hegemony over the former and are able to extract concessions from the former without conceding anything in return. For an Indian academic it is more important to go to Paris, London or New York than to go to Rohtak University. The roots of all this go back to the training received by the elite in the last 200 years and their adoption of a western framework for analysis: There is no independent understanding of their own societies so they cannot conceive of any alternatives. Institutions that they operate with are western in their origin—often not suited to the needs of their countries. But there is no one to question and to suggest relevant changes.

The role of the markets is inadequately analysed. They are based on purchasing power and not on 'one man one vote' or that someone

Globalization as it has evolved in the last 250 years (beginning with colonialism) is the backdrop in which one has to situate the last 25 years. The destruction of the dynamism of the developing world is an essential backdrop to the current crisis in these societies.

is a man or a woman or a child or old. They do not have any values of their own. So, the IMF conditionalities are not for the benefit of the poor nations. That is why they do not take into account the specificities of each of the nations they are recommended to. They are not designed to achieve global equity. Structural Adjustment stands for adjusting the economies to the needs of global capital.

The book is representative of a western perspective. For instance, the author states that 'We escaped the nineteenth century once; we can do it again.' (p. 262) Did India escape the nineteenth century in the way the West did? Did India need a different path (still does)? Linking up of the Indian elite with the western one has meant that many Indian NGOs adopt a western perspective. Such NGOs are unable to even identify with their own people and hardly represent their interests. The author places much hope on NGOs and movements of environmentalists and women for the creation of a new democracy. However, most people heading these groups are more comfortable with their western counterparts than with the people they are supposed to represent. Should it not be a prerequisite for a new democracy that local democracy be strengthened?

Have not women headed the nations of South Asia without making an impact on the position of the women of the subcontinent? If anything, as the book makes out, the position of women has only deteriorated. Mrs. Gandhi headed India during the period when dowry deaths increased dramatically. Successful women in the developing nations have the same values as the successful men—they too exploit wherever they can. This is the central point of capitalism. It exploits as much as it can. Only social movements can act as a check to this exploitation. This requires a new understanding and leaders who will identify with their people, like Gandhi. Those who simply recycle the western paradigm and are more comfortable in the company of their western counterparts cannot perform this role. Ms Black perhaps misses the point that the sub-title applies also to the people she has hope in. For many of them also people are disposable and they also recycle rhetoric. ■

Arun Kumar teaches at the Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

An Economist's View

Archana Aggarwal

PERSPECTIVES IN STATISTICAL SCIENCES

Edited by Adhir K. Basu, Jayanta K. Ghosh, Pranab K. Sen and Bimal K. Sinha
Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2000, pp xiv + 304, Rs. 595.00

The importance of quantitative techniques in research, whether in the social sciences or in the physical and life sciences is well established. Statistical techniques are widely applied in all areas of modern research. As an economist my main area of interest is in the applications for economic data. However, one cannot ignore the increasing use of techniques formerly limited to the analysis of physical and/or life sciences data to social science data sets. Social scientists are usually not concerned with the theoretical details of the statistical techniques they use. The typical researcher in economics, or any other social science, uses least-squares estimators and maximum likelihood estimators for many data sets. He takes for granted the knowledge that they have the desired statistical properties of consistency and asymptotic efficiency. However, the process of developing an estimator for different data sets and refining it so that it has the desired statistical properties, analysing these properties, and then again reviewing and modifying the estimator to improve its efficiency or to estimate a somewhat different data set is a long-drawn out one. Many individual researchers contribute to this process without which much of the empirical work published today would not be possible. This slim volume is a part of this ongoing process of development.

The papers in this edited volume have been selected from the presentations made at the Third International Triennial Calcutta Symposium on Probability and Statistics, 26-29 December 1997. There has been a long gestation period between the presentations at the symposium and the publication of this volume. Some of the papers are perhaps a little dated because of this. The editors have selected twenty-four papers from a total of eighty-one that were presented. The papers cover diverse areas in the statistical sciences. Some of the papers in this volume have also been published in academic journals.

The book begins with a paper on generalized order statistics from the exponential distribution. The exposition is clear and the links to the ordinary r th order statistic and the characterizations of the exponential distribution are easy to understand. This is where I would have liked to turn the page and read some more on order statistics or the exponential distribution. Instead I found the next paper discussing Bayesian techniques in statistical engineering. This zigzag approach continues

throughout the volume. The articles should have been grouped into sections so that readers could easily pick out the papers of interest. The current layout makes for clumsy browsing. The use of urn models to motivate the discussions in chapters four and thirteen make them interesting and easy to understand for researchers in social sciences.

Chapters three and ten of the book present some interesting methods of extending existing statistical techniques to analyse multi stage survey data with special characteristics. Chapter three which discusses the use of randomized response techniques and associated problems should be of particular interest to researchers working with micro data on income and willingness-to-pay models (widely used in environmental economics). Issues related to hypothesis testing in data sets obtained from multi stage cluster sampling are discussed in chapter twenty.

Chapters two, twelve, eighteen and twenty-three all deal with aspects of reliability testing. This is a major research area, with wide applicability, for engineers. Students of statistical engineering will also be interested in the chapters on repairable systems. Models applied in the life sciences are also discussed. In particular, chapters six and eleven of the book present interesting applications for medical data sets. Both papers develop techniques that could be effectively used in areas such as environmental and health economics. Time-series techniques find limited representation in this book as do issues relating to treatment and/or programme evaluation. I would have liked to see some more emphasis on these areas, particularly programme evaluation.

I found this book interesting but poorly organized. As mentioned earlier, this could have been easily rectified by dividing the book into sections or arranging the chapters in some kind of topical order. The broad range of topics covered makes the book interesting to researchers in diverse disciplines and provides them a glimpse of statistical practice in areas other than their own. However, it also makes the book somewhat unfocussed. Some readers may be put off by the meandering nature of the collection. ■

Archana Aggarwal teaches at the Center for Economic Studies and Planning, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS FROM MANOHAR

- DICKEN'S NOVELS IN THE 'AGE OF IMPROVEMENT'**
Sambudha Sen
81-7304-452-X, 2002, 183p. Rs. 400
- STATE, ECONOMY AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION**
Hyderabad State (1724-1948)
Y. Vaikuntham
81-7304-441-4, 2002, 212p. Rs. 450
- 'BEST BLACK TROOPS IN THE WORLD'**
British Perceptions and the Making of the Sepoy 1746-1805
Channa Wickremesekera
81-7304-426-0, 2002, 212p. Rs. 450
- DEVOTIONAL LITERATURE IN SOUTH ASIA**
Current Research 1997-2000
Winand M. Callewaert and Dieter Tailleu (eds)
81-7304-444-9, 2002, 324p. Rs. 700
- THE VOICE AND THE WILL**
Subaltern Agency: Forms and Motives
Guy Poitevin
81-7304-412-0, 2002, 393p. Rs. 775
- COMMUNALISM AND INDIAN PRINCELY STATES**
Travancore, Baroda and Hyderabad in the 1930s
Dick Kooiman
81-7304-421-X, 2002, 257p. Rs. 500
- RSS'S TRYST WITH DESTINY**
From Hedgewar to Sudarshan
Pralay Kanungo
81-7304-398-1, 2002, 314p. Rs. 625
- PAKISTAN**
Nationalism without a Nation?
Christophe Jaffrelet
81-7304-407-4, 2002, 352p. Rs. 650
- PANGS OF PARTITION**
The Parting of Ways (Volume I)
S. Settar and Indira B. Gupta
81-7304-306-X, 2002, 368p. Rs. 700
- PANGS OF PARTITION**
The Human Dimension (Volume II)
S. Settar and Indira B. Gupta
81-7304-307-8, 2002, 358p. Rs. 700
- PORTUGUESE COCHIN AND THE MARITIME TRADE OF INDIA 1500-1663**
Pius Malekandathil
81-7304-406-6, 2002, 324p. Rs. 650
- TRADE AND TRADERS IN EARLY INDIAN SOCIETY**
Ranabir Chakravarti
81-7304-313-2, 2002, 262p. Rs. 500
- KARGIL: BLOOD ON THE SNOW**
Tactical Victory: Strategic Failure
A Critical Analysis of the War
Maj. Gen. Ashok Kalyan Verma
81-7304-411-2, 2002, 227p. Rs. 475
- THE EUROPEAN REPUBLIC**
Michel Foucher
81-7304-430-9, 2002, 151p. Rs. 525
- WOMEN'S IMAGES MEN'S IMAGINATION**
Female Characters in Bengali Fiction in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century
Banani Mukhia
81-7304-410-4, 2002, 167p. Rs. 325
- PERSPECTIVES ON INDIAN SOCIETY AND HISTORY**
A Critique
Hetukar Jha
81-7304-422-8, 2001, 126p. Rs. 250
- SECURITY AND GOVERNANCE IN SOUTH ASIA**
P.R. Chari (ed)
81-7304-438-4, 2001, 197p. Rs. 360
- TRUMPETS AND TUMULTS**
The Memoirs of a Peacekeeper
Major General Indarjit Rikhye
81-7304-409-0, 2001, 256p. Rs. 500

MANOHAR PUBLISHERS & DISTRIBUTORS
4753/23, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002
Phones: 328 9100, 326 2796, 328 4848, 326 0774
Fax: (11) 326 5162 email: manbooks@vsnl.com

Violence and Its Myriad Manifestations

Joginder S. Gandhi

BUILDING VIOLENCE: HOW AMERICA'S RUSH TO INCARCERATE CREATES MORE VIOLENCE

Edited by John P. Mary & Khalid R. Pitts
Sage Publications, Delhi, 2000, pp. 188, \$ 25.95

MASCULINITIES, VIOLENCE AND CULTURE

By Suzanne E. Hatty
Sage Publications, Delhi, 2000, pp. 225, \$ 26.95

LOCKED IN A VIOLENT EMBRACE: UNDERSTANDING AND INTERVENING IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

By Zvi Eisikovits and Eli Buchbinder
Sage Publications, Delhi, 2000, pp. 178, \$ 24.95

SAME-SEX DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

Edited by Beth Leventhal & Sandra E. Lundy
Sage Publications, Delhi, 2000, pp. 259, \$ 24.95

Violence in its myriad manifestations has been at the very heart of intellectual contestation all along human history and especially so since the start of the 'rights' movement in the world, ensuing from the International Covenant of Human Rights in 1948.

All the titles listed above deal with violence in diverse human contexts; i.e. inter or intra-sexual relations inclusive of conjugal relations or in the context of such institutions as prisons and lock-ups where the convicts or the accused may be confined and subjected to demeaning and de-humanizing experiences. All the four volumes have been refurbished by hard-core empirical data, gathered, analysed and interpreted by therapists, theoreticians and 'correction'-specialists. That is why the reported deductions are not mere homilies but rather compel attention, dialogue and re-thinking, necessitating departures from pre-fixed notions—whether of gender, violence or conjugal ties.

The first of the four volumes deals with the theme that there is an intertwining relationship between crime and the way 'criminals' are treated while confined, so that, once confined—more often than not, the vicious cycle takes over, and after-jail life nurtures and exacerbates conditions leading to repeated criminality and confinement. While under incarceration the criminals are rarely—if at all, subjected to the right correctional treatment, making for an after-jail restoration of normal life.

Rehabilitation is seldom a priority in massive prison's expansion. 'Maintain safety and prevent escapes' are the words that many prison wardens use to describe the extent of their mission. (p. xvii)

The book has four sections—The Search for Security', 'Impure Justice', 'Causalities of

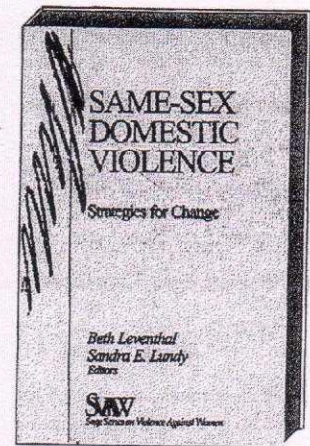
Mass Incarceration' and 'The Crucible of Violence'. The societal obsession with *security* gets reflected in providing very stifling, demeaning conditions in the prisons without providing any genuine correctional opportunities facilitating after-jail rehabilitation of the prisoners. Such a mindset of the law and order authorities is reflected in what the former Massachusetts Governor William Weld had said that life in prison should be "akin to a walk through the fires of hell".

The book provides some sharp insights on the racial bias among the authorities. The central refrain in the book is that justice is flawed because it is badly administered whether vis-à-vis blacks or juveniles. A contributor to the volume also drives home the point that there is an awkward link between the ever-increasing number of those under incarceration and the hugely spiralling correctional industry. "In 1994 alone, direct expenditures on corrections amounted to over \$ 31 billion....." (p.52), the implication being that to manage, run and retain the huge superstructure of correction-related industry becomes the implicit agenda of any political party at the helm at a particular point of time. Power, regardless of whether or not this bears any 'correctional' results. 'Death Penalty: The Ultimate Violence' is a damning critique of the system of justice in contemporary American society with all its inhuman traits and barbarities. For example nothing can be more repugnant than the fact that the profession of life-saviours, i.e. the doctors are called upon to facilitate death and also to witness it compulsorily.

The second of the above volumes presents a heavily gendered perspective on the phenomenon of male-violence vis-à-vis the female. The author argues that the phenomenon ultimately is a product of a mindset formed through the process of cognitive transmutations over the past 2-3 centuries. In particular she talks of the

idea of 'selfhood', 'choice', 'autonomy', 'control', etc. which have eventually resulted from the Cartesian philosophy and the intellectual developments subsequent to that. The ultimate resultant of this historical process is the idea of *self* which in the days of modernity and postmodernity has come to mean "rational, emotionally contained, competent, and in control of both internal and external forces" *imperial self*, with "a voracious appetite for expanding its domain of ownership and its territory of control in a bid to suppress all other competitors and to achieve omnipotence". This narcissistic and aggressive 'acquisitiveness' makes *self* reject all suggestions of dependence as *womanlike*, deserving of a brutal suppression and control. The author also talks of the culture of *violent masculinity* in the American society and its representations in various media-reports, and other art-expression, such as films. The message coming out loud and clear from all these sources is that there is an integral linkage between the perceptions of the people on violence, criminal and the *male* on the one hand, and what is dished out by all these mass-directed expressions, on the other. The book, however, lacks a unitary focus despite being loaded with a large number of scholarly sources, all of which fail to take the argument even an inch beyond the simplistic assertion that there is a relationship between masculinities, violence and culture.

Locked in Violent Embrace, argues that conjugal couples stay together despite repeatedly going through the cycle of physical violence, which in the context of the book is male-to-female violence. The authors have produced this work at the end of ten years of research into the phenomenon of *intimate violence*. The data is obtained by talking to more than 150 couples in a semi-structured manner. The authors are therapists as well, so that their 'practice' background enables them to intensively explore inter-spouse *subjectivities*



Violence in its myriad manifestations has been at the very heart of intellectual contestation all along human history and especially so since the start of the 'rights' movement in the world, ensuing from the International Covenant of Human Rights in 1948.

while engaged in specific situations of reported violence. The book though graphic in field-details affords no effective correctives, nor even a theoretic departure from the existing fund of insights held so proudly by the specialist social workers. Had the authors addressed themselves to the problem in hand through the more traditional *sociological framework*, e.g. that of role-theory, the objectives could have been realized more effectively. Social roles have a compulsion of their own, making them endure despite serious occasional aberrations.

The last book under review is indeed a daring caricature of the phenomenon of violence in the category of interpersonal relationship generally viewed with 'moral repugnance' viz. the domain of homosexual (both lesbian and gay) relationships; the logic of it all being that violence as such is unacceptable despite the stigma attached to a relationship. Such indeed is the measure of moral openness with which our society has come to accept erstwhile moral aberrations. But, as the book reports, the relief to the sufferers of this violence does not come that easily, since both the battered men and women feel acute hesitation in sharing all the details of their experience—whether with the police or with the relief agencies. The book is indeed elegant with snippets of experienced violence from the 'sufferers'; but the police and other relief agencies need to be updated to the new dimensions of cultural reality where what is important to know is not to be judgmental about the *type of sexual relationship but instead to know whether or not it is being abused.*

Physical violence is indeed anathema in the days of human rights consciousness. The books reviewed examine physical violence at different levels and in different contexts. That is what makes the overall theoretical deductions and comparisons impossible. Also, the contributors are mostly interventionists and concerned largely with male-to-female violence; this also sets limits to the range and coverage of the phenomenon. All the same, the collection is very useful for any one wanting to take into account the contemporary thinking and sensitivities on the theme of *Intimate Violence*. ■

Joginder S. Gandhi teaches at the School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Paradigms of Behaviour

C.N. Venugopal

THE SOCIAL BODY: HABIT, IDENTITY AND DESIRE

By Nick Crossley

Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2001, pp. 170, £ 16.99

UNDERSTANDING AGENCY: SOCIAL THEORY AND RESPONSIBLE ACTION

By Barry Barnes

Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2000, pp. 163, £ 14.99

THE BUSINESS OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

By Harsh Shrivastava and Shankar Venkateswaran

Books for Change, New Delhi, 2000, pp. 190, Rs. 250.00

Nick Crossley's *Social Body* is an exploration of a non-dualistic search for understanding social action. The Cartesian way was to look at mind and body as a duality, with little or no correspondence between them. In this notion the mind remained aloof, self sufficient and introspective. In contrast, the body was a bundle of desires, urges and reflexes which was subject to mechanistic or biogenic stimuli. Crossley notes that this dualism has outlived its use. He has drawn heavily on the works of two phenomenologists, namely Gilbert Ryle and Maurice Merleau-Ponty to analyse the mind-body interactions which form the basis of human behaviour. In chapters 1 to 4 he has shown that the two interact in a variety of ways: mind is not something afloat but it always exists in an embodied form. All our physical gestures, reflexes are mentally conditioned. Therefore, there is no isolated existence for either the body or the mind.

The human responses to stimuli vary according to manifold historical and cultural variations. The basic drives such as hunger, sexuality, desire for human company etc., are mediated by meanings, symbols and intentionality. As an aside, it may be mentioned that G.H. Mead (symbolic interactionist), Edmund Husserl and Alfred Schutz (phenomenologists) and Harold Garfinkel (ethnomethodologist) have illuminated the subjectivity in human behaviour, which is not grasped by the positivistic-functionalists in sociology. For Crossley, it is important not to equate mind with brain: the former is a physical structure, while the latter is embedded in a socio-cultural matrix. Likewise, consciousness does not exist as an isolate; it is predicated on the individual as a social agent. In chapter 5 he has shown how the human perceptions are conditioned by the pre-reflective and pre-formal patterns of thinking and feeling. In daily life human beings respond to each other through a natural stance without intellectual deliberation.

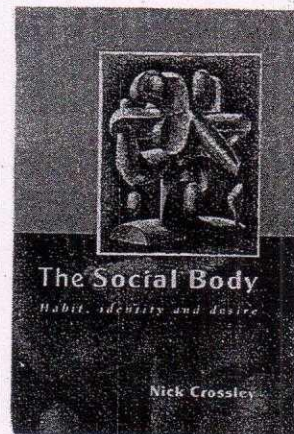
In chapters 6 to 8 Crossley has drawn on Bordieu's reflexive sociology. Bordieu has defined habitus as a subconsciously located set

of mental dispositions, traits, etc. Individuals brought up in diverse types of habitus relate themselves to the world around them in different ways. Socialization is the medium through which values, symbols and attitudes (amiability or hostility) are transmitted to men and women. Besides, habitus is a cultural capital which favours some sections of society by providing them access to power and privilege. However, Bordieu does not contend that habitus limits one's progress; individuals can show initiative in breaking out of its mould. Reflexivity is defined by Bordieu as the human capacity to transcend particularity and reach wider horizons of social action.

The work by Crossley is useful and timely for the reading public. He has revealed analytical skills in presenting the theories of Ryle, Ponty and Bordieu. It is to be hoped that he will expand on the present work and bring out a comparison of different branches of phenomenology and its cognate disciplines. The works of Husserl, Schutz and Garfinkel can provide additional inputs to this kind of work.

Barry Barnes' work *Understanding Agency* revolves around two theoretical issues. First, there has been a longstanding polarization between the two positions: the voluntaristic individual and conformity-oriented social structure. Second, the voluntaristic theories broke off from structural constraints, but at the same time insufficiently recognized the interdependence and reciprocity which are the mainstay of the modern world. In chapters 1 to 4 Barnes refers to the theories of Talcott Parsons, Anthony Giddens and Harold Garfinkel who dealt with the different facets of the relationship between individual and society. Parsons in the early work emphasized the voluntaristic basis of social action: individuals exercised volition in acting out these roles. However, later Parsons treated the voluntarism in muted tones by emphasizing the normative constraints of society on the individual. Nevertheless, Parsons opened up a debate on the freedom of the individual.

Barnes further analysed the constituent



elements of social agency. According to him we can steer between determinism and voluntarism in understanding social action. He holds that human beings are independent with reference to the rules of social structure, but are dependent on others in society for successful adaptation. According to Giddens there is a mutual relationship between social structure (rules and resources) and human agents. The agents draw upon the resources of the social structure to reproduce or transform their own social system. But Giddens has been mainly concerned with the emergence of agency; for an adequate understandings of society we have to focus on social agency. This requires a further recognition of patterns of interdependence.

Bordieu's "habitus" is akin to Giddens' structuration. According to him, there is a mutual relationship between social structure and mental dispositions. The habitus is continuously reproduced in society through individuals. However, Bordieu too stops short of social agency because collective action on a wider scale does not seem to be his theoretic concern.

Further, Barnes refers to the accounting practice in ethnomethodology as outlined by Garfinkel. Human beings give an account to

each other in a social situation not in logical terms but on the basis of shared beliefs and mutual trust. Irving Goffman's susceptibility theory based on symbolic interactionism refers to the way that individual actors appear before the world by "wearing" an appropriate self. In other words, individuals manipulate their presence in the world by dramaturgy. Max Weber differentiated between status and class. According to him individuals have been anchored in status groups upto the present time but class is an amorphous category. Barnes states that this is misleading because class is also infused with networks of cooperation in modern society. Habermas has projected the communication theory as a propositional (intellectual) enterprise but he has not located it in the sphere of practical action. The recent advances in bio-technology have also opened up a debate on the issue of individual freedom.

Barnes is lucid in his style. But due to his positivistic inclinations he has been reticent in using the terminology of phenomenology and ethnomethodology. These theories abound in emic terms such as "intentionality", "epoche", "sedimentation", "eidos", "self-reflection", "indexicality", etc. A judicious use of these terms would have enriched his present work.

Harsh Shrivastava and Shankar

Venkateswaran in their work *Business of Social Responsibility* have outlined the efforts made by India's leading industrial houses such as Bajaj Auto, Tata, Mahindra & Mahindra, IBM, Shriram Industries and Hindustan Lever. These industrial houses among others are responding to the problems facing common people in India, especially the underprivileged sections. These corporate bodies are increasing their engagement in social reconstruction through the deployment of their own resources. To some extent they have relied on NGO's in reaching out to the people. Besides, they are placing some of their own personnel in the voluntary service of Indian society. The authors have affirmed that many industrial houses in India are becoming more people oriented. This book is useful in making the reading public aware of the social dimension of industrialization in India. Globalization and liberalization have thrown up new challenges in Indian society. The corporate houses, as chronicled by the authors, are making special efforts to meet the challenges. ■

C.N. Venugopal is at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Critiquing Western Modernity

Avijit Pathak

OCCIDENTALISM: MODERNITY AND SUBJECTIVITY
By Couze Venn
Sage Publications, London, 2000, pp. 256, £19.99

BODIES OF THOUGHT: EMBODIMENT, IDENTITY AND MODERNITY
By Ian Burkitt
Sage Publications, London, 1999, pp. 163, £14.99

In the prevalent intellectual climate the project of modernity has often been interrogated. It has been argued that modernity, despite its grand promise, has not really proved to be emancipatory. Instead, it is alleged that modernity implies colonial violence, instrumental rationality and technological manipulation. In other words, we witness disillusionment with the politico-epistemological optimism that once characterized the agenda of European enlightenment. No wonder, we find amidst ourselves not Voltaire and Montesquieu, or Comte and Marx—the champions of linear progress and scientific reasoning, but Adorno and Marcuse, or Lyotard and Foucault: the critics who remind us of the discontents of modernity, the darker side of 'progress' and the mode of surveillance in an 'administered

society'. All that legitimizes modernity—scientific foundations, linearity of historical progress and grand narratives of emancipation—gets deconstructed!

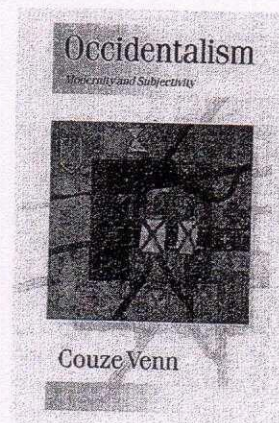
These two books under review can be situated in this intellectual climate because in both these works we see a critique of western modernity. Couze Venn sees "occidentalism" as an integral component of modernity, and examines why occidentalism, because of its hegemonic/colonial ambition, ought to be resisted. And Ian Burkitt sees the principle of duality (mind vs. body) in modernity, reminds us how this duality has denied embodiment and, therefore, caused violence, separation and fragmentation. In a way, both these works—written with a high degree of intellectual sophistication—contribute to the growth of a

critical discourse that interrogates modernity.

To begin with, let us concentrate on Venn's understanding of occidentalism. Venn sees occidentalism in the project of modernity itself. Europe became the master of the world; its modernity became universal; with its 'civilizing mission' it colonized the world. As a matter of fact, occidentalism, colonialism and modernity—all are deeply interconnected.

Occidentalism thus draws our attention to the becoming-modern of the world and becoming-West of Europe such that western modernity gradually became established as the privileged, if not hegemonic form of sociality, tied to a universalizing and totalizing ambition.

In fact, the roots of occidentalism, as Venn sees, could be found in the form of colonial/imperial governance. The colonizers began to



normalize/naturalize their civilizational agenda, and the colonized were told to see the 'intrinsic superiority' of certain knowledges, know-how and practices, for example, modern medicine, techno-science, legislative system and parliamentary democracy. In a way, as Venn says, "Europe learned to depict and shape the world into the image of its fantasy of itself and to make it serve its ends".

The story continues. Occidentalism is reproduced when intellectuals in the Third World regard Euro-American universities as sites of secular salvation, or when developmentalists marginalize local/indigenous knowledge and traditions and celebrate western modernity as the logical culmination of progress. Venn is not wrong when he argues that occidentalism has culminated today in the establishment of global forms of regulation and of the exercise of economic, political, cultural and military power, instituted in apparatuses and NGOs like the World Bank, the IMF, the United Nations, and networks of expert knowledges supported by international bodies, journals and so on.

In this "unique conjuncture of rational capitalism, European colonialism and modernity" Venn sees the growth of the "logocentric subject". This means phallogocentrism as well as Eurocentrism. The phallogocentric gaze reduces women "to the place of lack, lacking the phallus and lacking in reason", while the Eurocentric gaze reduces the non-European "to the not-yet-being of underdevelopment, lacking presence and agency". In other words, occidentalism compelled Europe's 'others' to joining in the long march towards civilization; the difference of the other was silenced and pathologized. Venn, needless to add, is not willing to give his consent to occidentalism. Instead, as he confesses, he sees enormous possibilities in poststructuralism as well as postcolonial theory. He imagines what he calls a "post-occidental, postcolonialist, transmodern future" that would begin not with hegemony or violence, but with "unconditional responsibility for the other".

In the second book Ian Burkitt evolves a sharp critique of the principle of Cartesian dualism (mind vs. body) that characterizes modernity. The implications of this dualism, Burkitt asserts, are disastrous. It leads to abstract/disembodied thinking that denies feelings, emotions and relatedness. It is potentially violent. Furthermore, it reduces the body into a closed machine. The "civilized / armoured" body—an inevitable consequence of modernity—became closed and tightly controlled. In other words, in modernity Burkitt sees not emancipation, but regimentation, surveillance and violence.

Burkitt refers to the contributions of Foucault, Bakhtin and Elias to make sense of the changing "socio-historical relations" that led to the emergence of Cartesian dualism in the seventeenth century. Foucault, for instance, spoke of the 'bio-power'—the way all sorts of disciplinary devices were designed to create a 'docile body' in order to intensify its usefulness and integrate it into systems of efficient economic controls. Moreover, the bio-politics of the population led to the perpetual supervision of the biological processes: propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life-expectancy and longevity. As a matter of fact, Foucault captured the changes in power relations that led to the perception of the body as a machine.

Bakhtin argues that in the middle ages the language of the carnival was still alive; people could have an experience of the lived body that was more direct and unmediated. But during the period of the Renaissance, "bodies began to acquire a private/individual nature, one that was closed off to the world and complete within itself". Sexual life, giving birth, death, eating and drinking turned into private acts and lost their public, symbolic content. Likewise, Elias spoke of "emotional restraints" that began to emerge in the Renaissance period. The emerging norms of conduct meant that, when in public, individuals should not give off any signs of their bodily needs. The body must be concealed behind 'elaborate and decorative clothing'; it became a 'danger zone'.

Burkitt opposes this culture of modernity that emerged with dualism, regimentation and control.

I wish to undermine this division between mind and body and to suggest that, instead, thought is an embodied, social activity. By the same token, I do not want to preserve the idea of the body as a machine whose operation is fixed in place by biological processes, rather, I want to explore the body as a social and natural construction, as a malleable organism which is open to reformation through its location within networks of historically variable social relations.

Indeed, Burkitt imagines "embodied persons" capable of transcending the Cartesian dualism, and relating to the world in a fashion that creates "an ethics of care and responsibility". Because ethical relations, he believes, emerge out of embodiment which gives us a sense of our own physical strengths and weaknesses and how these are similar to those of the others who populate our world.

Both these works enrich our understanding of modernity. It is, of course, true that for many of us, these discourses are not altogether new. It was in 1908 that Gandhi told us about the crisis of modernity in his celebrated *Hind Swaraj*. In our times Ashis Nandy and Partha Chatterjee did develop a postcolonial critique of modernity. Yet, there are many strong defenders of western modernity in the domain of Indian social sciences. Perhaps they need to read these two books, with openness and a dialogic spirit. ■

Avijit Pathak is Associate Professor at the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

BOOKS ON BUDDHISM

EIGHT STEPS TO HAPPINESS

The Buddhist Way of Loving Kindness

GESHE KELSANG GYATSO

The book reveals an inspiring explanation of one of Buddhism's best-loved teachings; practical instructions on how you can transform life's difficulties into valuable spiritual insights; essential advice on how to awaken your potential for limitless love, compassion and wisdom.

ISBN: 81-7822-068-7

Rs. 295



THE BOOK OF BUDDHAS

Ritual Symbolism used on Buddhist Statuary and Ritual Objects

EVA RUDY JANSEN

This book explores the symbolism of the ritual objects that are used on statues and paintings, as well as explaining the ritual meaning of the objects associated with Buddhism.

ISBN: 81-7822-055-5

Rs. 125



THE BODHISATTVA VOW

The Essential Practices of Mahayana Buddhism

GESHE KELSANG GYATSO

A practical guide to the Bodhisattva's way of life; an explanation of the Bodhisattva vows and six perfections; an essential companion for practitioners of *Mahayana Buddhism*.

ISBN: 81-7822-067-9

Rs. 125



THE MEDITATION HANDBOOK

A Step-by-Step Manual, Providing a Clear and Practical Guide to Buddhist Meditation

GESHE KELSANG GYATSO

This book makes you aware and deepens your insight. By following the practical advice given in this book, we can transform our mind, fulfil our true human potential, and find lasting peace and happiness.

ISBN: 81-7822-066-0

Rs. 125



New Age Books

A-44 Naraina, Phase-I, New Delhi-110028

Ph.: (011) 589 5218, 589 5219 • Fax: (011) 579 7221

E-mail: nab@vsnl.in • Website: www.newagebooksindia.com

Synthesizing Classical and Postmodern Literature

Anand Kumar

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, OLD AND NEW: A POST-MODERNIST CRITIQUE

By Rajendra Singh

Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2001, pp. 364, Rs. 550.00

Sociology of collective actions, particularly social movements, is going through a phase of revival due to reorientations in sociology as well as social movements. The invitation of postmodernism has created a new relevance for theoretical projects about the nature of society and various patterns of social behaviours as perceived by sociologists in the last century. On the other hand, the processes of globalization and ethnicization have created a new framework for social movements beyond the nation-states. At this juncture, the contribution of Rajendra Singh about approaching social movements sociologically in the context of postmodernism is a welcome input towards filling the knowledge gap in contemporary social sciences about it.

It is mainly addressed to students of sociology, anthropology, political science and history but the author is rightly confident that the book 'would also be helpful to political practitioners and grassroots workers of voluntary organizations'. It is a very well presented synthesis of classical and postmodernist body of literature on social movements for students and research scholars for two reasons—long association of the author with the subject as a teacher for over two decades and the inputs from three most distinguished scholars of the subject in India today—Professors M.S.Gore, Yogendra Singh, and T.K.Oommen.

For a long time, social movements were presented as a non-routine collective behaviour around issues of community life. They were conceptualized as a disruption of social setting by identifiable groups of persons engaged in purposive action in an interconnected manner over a definite period of time with various stages of existence from inception to conclusion. Located within a conceptual spectrum with 'crowd' and 'class' constituting the two ends of the theories about it, the sociology of social movements provided meaningful insights about a wide range of situations in social life including riots, rebellions, groups revolts, revolutions and ideological movements of the last five hundred years around the world. But the postmodernist perspectives are dissatisfied with the dominant view which considers social movements as a deviation from the established social order. The postmodernists suggest that the social movements are not articulations of unrest and break down. They are in disagreement with the cause (society) and effect (social movements) interlinkages. They assert that the society and movements are expressive continuation and extension of one another. It underlines the need of 'decentring of faith in reason, rationality and Western materialism'. Therefore "The social identity of the human needs to be restored from the reifications of his existence which has been eroded in classical sociology."

Professor Rajendra Singh has succeeded in bringing the modernist and the postmodernists face to face in a systematic manner about understanding social movements through a two part presentation where the first part invites the reader to a conceptual and theoretical journey about understanding society and social movements in sociological writings of last two hundred years. The third chapter about 'The Changing Representation of Society and Movements: From Modernity to Postmodernity, society to Post-society and Sociology to Post-sociology' deserves close attention from scholars of sociology because of its invitation towards the natural sciences. It would have been more comprehensive if the author had given some attention to the call of 'unthinking social sciences' by Wallerstein and others in the Gulbunkian Commission Report. The second part has focused on India and Indian sociologists. It contains an exhaustive survey of relevant writings as well as a good overview of the themes of New Social Movements (NSM) in India. Marginal attention to the methodological issues debated by the social scientists may be pointed out as an unexpected shortcoming of the second part which may be taken care of in the next edition.

The book is based upon 'reflexive-empiricist perspective' and asserts that "Movement and society are two faces of the same coin: the 'social'." It is an endorsement of the larger thrust for taking sociology beyond the classical and neo-classical approaches to recognize the imperatives of postmodernist approach to study social movements. This comprehensive work is like a bridge between the 'old' and the 'new' in the world of sociology of social movement, including India. ■

Anand Kumar is at the Centre for the Study of Social System, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

TULIKA BOOKS

NEW TITLES FROM TULIKA

V.K. RAMACHANDRAN & MADHURA SWAMINATHAN (eds) *Agrarian Studies: Essays on Agrarian Relations in Less-Developed Countries* xxxi+568 pages, Hb, Rs 780

IRFAN HABIB (ed.) *State and Diplomacy under Tipu Sultan: Documents and Essays* xxv+169 pages, Hb, Rs 325

DEEPAK KUMAR (ed.) *Disease and Medicine in India: A Historical Overview* xxiii+307 pages, Hb, Rs 495

AMIYA KUMAR BAGCHI *Capital and Labour Redefined: India and the Third World* xxxi+336 pages, Hb, Rs 575

VIVAN SUNDARAM *Re-take of 'Amrita'* 56 pp., Pb, Rs 400

HIMANI BANNERJI *Inventing Subjects: Studies in hegemony, patriarchy and colonialism* xii+222 pages, Hb, Rs 395

ALICE THORNER (ed.) *Land, Labour and Rights: Ten Daniel Thorner Memorial Lectures* xvi+298 pages, Hb, Rs 395

NOW IN PAPERBACK FROM TULIKA

KUMKUM SANGARI *Politics of the Possible: Essays on Gender, History, Narratives, Colonial English* xlix+504 pages, Pb, Rs 395

GEETA KAPUR *When Was Modernism: Essays on Contemporary Cultural Practice in India* xx+436 pages, Pb Rs 875

IRFAN HABIB *Prehistory* x+78 pages, Pb, Rs 90

OTHER TITLES

ARCHAEOLOGY / ARCHITECTURE / ART

SHEREEN RATNAGAR *Understanding Harappa: Civilization in the Greater Indus Valley* x+168 pages, Pb, Rs 220

GULAMMOHAMMED SHEKH (ed.) *Contemporary Art in Baroda* 296 pages Hb, Rs 2250

ECONOMICS

C.P. CHANDRASEKHAR & J.B.G. TILAK (eds) *India's Socio-Economic Database* vi+472 pages, Hb, Rs 750

UTSA PATNAIK *The Long Transition: Essays on Political Economy* xvi+460 pages, Hb, Rs 595

PRABHAT PATNAIK *Whatever Happened to Imperialism and other essays*, x+244 pp., Pb, Rs 180

HISTORY

MAYA GUPTA & AMIT KUMAR GUPTA *Defying Death: Armed Resistance to Imperialism* viii+283 pages, Hb, Rs 495

IRFAN HABIB *The Economic History of Medieval India* vi+50 pages, Pb, Rs 60

NEERA CHANDHOKE (ed.) *Mapping Histories: Essays presented to Ravinder Kumar* viii+444 pages, Hb, Rs 750

K.N. PANIKKAR, TERENCE J. BYRES, UTSA PATNAIK (eds) *The Making of History: Essays presented to Irfan Habib* x+678 pages, Pb, Rs 450

J.S. GREWAL & INDU BANGA (eds) *History and Ideology: The Khalsa over 300 Years* xxvi+228 pages, Pb, Rs 200

IRFAN HABIB (ed.) *Confronting Colonialism: Resistance and Modernization under Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan* xlviii+206 pages, Pb, Rs 220

K.N. PANIKKAR *Culture, Ideology, Hegemony: Intellectuals and Social Consciousness in Colonial India* xii+212 pages, Pb, Rs 170

IRFAN HABIB *Essays in Indian History: Towards a Marxist Perspective* x+381 pages, Pb, Rs 195



Tulika Books

35A/1 (third floor)
Shahpur Jat, New Delhi 110 049
Phone: 649 1448 / 649 1625
Telefax: 649 7999
email: tulika@ndf.vsnl.net.in

TBR Book Club

Join today and discover how you can avail of fantastic discounts on titles from among the best of Indian publishers.

HERE'S HOW YOU BENEFIT

- No Membership fee. New titles will be on offer regularly. Get your copy of *The Book Review* from the nearest dealer or write to the address below. All you have to do is tick the titles in the box provided, fill the coupon and mail the sheet with your payment.
- 20% discount on all titles on offer
- One year subscription to *The Book Review* at 10% discount
- No extra charges for packaging and postage
- All prices given in bold type are the special CLUB Prices for TBR Book Club members
- This offer is open only to individual subscribers to *The Book Review*.

TITLES ON OFFER

KATHA

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Bhupen Khakhar: Selected Works</i> Translated from Gujarati by Ganesh Devy, Naushil Mehta and Bina Srinivasan	Rs 200	Rs 160
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Home and Away</i> by Ramachandra Sharma	Rs 200	Rs 160
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Ayoni and Other Stories</i> Translated and edited by Alladi Uma & M. Sridhar	Rs 200	Rs 160
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Forsaking Paradise: Stories from Ladakh</i> by Abdul Ghani Sheikh. Translated from Urdu and edited by Ravina Aggarwal	Rs 150	Rs 120
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Translating Partitions: Stories, Essays, Criticism</i> edited by Ravikant and Tarun K.Saint	Rs 250	Rs 200

TULIKA, Chennai

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Aditi and the One-Eyed Monkey</i> by Suniti Namjoshi, illustrated by Bindia Thapar	Rs 80	Rs 64
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Telling Tales From Asia</i> by Cathy Spagnoli	Rs 85	Rs 68
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Storm in the Garden</i> by Sandhya Rao, illustrated by Ashok Rajagopalan	Rs 70	Rs 56
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>That Summer at Kalagarh</i> by Ranjit Lal	Rs 80	Rs 64
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>My Vote Counts</i> by Bindu Bhaskar Balaji, illustrated by Reginald Goveas	Rs 100	Rs 80

RAWAT PUBLICATIONS

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Reconceptualising Caste, Class and Tribe</i> by K.L. Sharma	Rs 425	Rs 340
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Refugees and Human Rights</i> edited by Sanjay K.Roy	Rs 750	Rs 600
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Interrogating Women's Education: Bounded Visions, Expanding Horizons</i> by Karuna Chanana	Rs 625	Rs 500
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Sustainable Development: Economics and Policy</i> by P.K. Rao	Rs 895	Rs 725
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Citizenship, Nationality and Ethnicity</i> by T.K. Oommen	Rs 775	Rs 620

ABHINAV PUBLICATIONS

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Iconography of Buddhist Sculpture or Orissa</i> by Donaldson 1 set, 2 Volumes	Rs 400	Rs 320
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Romance of Raga</i> by Vijaya Moorthy	Rs 1200	Rs 1060
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Introspection for India</i> by V.K. Subramanian	Rs 200	Rs 160
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Some Aspects of Indo-Islamic Architecture</i> by Subhash Parihar	Rs 1300	Rs 1040
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Chittogadh Kirtti-Stambha</i> by R. Nath	Rs 1200	Rs 960

BHARATIYA JNANPITH

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Pehla Girmitya</i> by Giriraj Kishore	Rs 350	Rs 280
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Amrita Preetam: Selected Essays</i> by Amrita Preetam	Rs 300	Rs 240
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Aadibhoomi</i> . Translated from Oriya by Pratibha Ray	Rs 250	Rs 200
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Mahanayak</i> . Translated from Bengali by Vishwas Pati	Rs 365	Rs 292
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Panipath</i> . Translated from Marathi by Nagnath Inamdar	Rs 200	Rs 160

TULIKA, Delhi

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Re-take of 'Amrita'</i> by Vivan Sundaram	Rs 400	Rs 320
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Inventing Subjects: Studies in Hegemony, Patriarchy and Colonialism</i> by Himani Bannerji	Rs 395	Rs 316
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Capital and Labour Redefined: India and the Third World</i> by Amiya Kumar Bagchi	Rs 575	Rs 460
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Land, Labour & Rights: 10 Daniel Thorner Memorial Lectures</i> edited by Alice Thorner	Rs 525	Rs 420
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>State & Diplomacy: Documents and Essays under Tipu Sultan</i> edited by Irfan Habib	Rs 325	Rs 260
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Disease & Medicine: A Historical Overview in India</i> edited by Deepak Kumar	Rs 495	Rs 396

KALI FOR WOMEN

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>This Time of Morning</i> by Nayantra Sahgal	Rs 200	Rs 160
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>My Friend, My Enemy</i> by Ismat Chughtai	Rs 350	Rs 280
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Singer and the Song</i> by C.S. Lakshmi	Rs 400	Rs 320
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>My Girlhood: An Autobiography</i> by Taslima Nasrin	Rs 350	Rs 280
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Borders & Boundaries</i> by Ritu Menon & Kamla Bhasin	Rs 200	Rs 160

RAHDA KRISHNA

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Doosri Kahani</i> by Alka Saravagi	Rs 150	Rs 120
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Gangatath</i> by Inanendrapati	Rs 150	Rs 120
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Trishanku</i> by Mannu Bhandri	Rs 95	Rs 76
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Ghatsradh: Samagra Kahaniyan-1</i> by U.R. Anantamurthi	Rs 75	Rs 60
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Professor Sanku ke Karnamen</i> by Satyajit Ray	Rs 75	Rs 60

STREE/SAMYA

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>In Search of Freedom: An Unfinished Journey</i> by Manikuntala Sen	Rs 450	Rs 360
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Whom Can I Tell? How Can I Explain?</i> By Saroj Pathak	Rs 150	Rs 120
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Nabankur: The Seedling's Tale</i> by Sulekha Sanyal	Rs 250	Rs 200
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>A Question of Community: Religious Groups and Colonial Law</i> by Amrita Shodhan	Rs 350	Rs 280
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>God as Political Philosopher: Buddha's Challenge to Brahminism</i> by Kancha Illaiah	Rs 400	Rs 240

POPULAR PRAKASHAN

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Man Who Divided India: An Insight into Jinnah's Leadership and its aftermath</i> by Dr. Rafiq Zakaria	Rs 350	Rs 280
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Britannica Quizmaster India</i> (Set of 4 Vols.)	Rs 100	Rs 80
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Britannica World of Quiz</i> (Set of 2 Vols.)	Rs 100	Rs 80
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Man from the Sun—The Story of the Kosambis</i> by Indrayani Sawkar	Rs 225	Rs 180
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Husbands and Pumpkins and other stories</i> by Gangadhar Gadgil	Rs 200	Rs 160

RAJKAMAL PRAKASHAN

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Bisrampur ka Sant</i> by Srilal Shukla	Rs 125	Rs 100
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Lucknow ki Paanch Raaten</i> by Ali Sardar Jafri	Rs 85	Rs 70
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Chaku</i> by Maitreyi Pushpa	Rs 250	Rs 200
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Do Panktiyon ke Beech</i> by Rajesh Joshi	Rs 125	Rs 100
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Samay ke Paas Samay</i> by Ashok Vajpeyi	Rs 125	Rs 100

STERLING PUBLISHERS

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya: The Romantic Rebel</i> by Sakuntala Narasimhan	Rs 200	Rs 160
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Masterpieces of Modern Urdu Poetry</i> by K.C. Kanda	Rs 495	Rs 396
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Masterpieces of Urdu Ghazal</i> by K.C. Kanda	Rs 495	Rs 396
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Love Mysteries</i> by Asho	Rs 75	Rs 60
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>My Story</i> by Kamala Das	Rs 90	Rs 70

VISION BOOKS

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Chessmaster and His Moves</i> by Raja Rao	Rs 395	Rs 320
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Musical Journey of Kumar Gandharva</i> by Raghava R. Menon	Rs 280	Rs 224
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Making of India</i> by Ranbir Vohra	Rs 190	Rs 150
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>A Military History of Ancient India</i> by Maj. Gen. Gurcharan Singh Sandhu	Rs 995	Rs 800
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Healing Power of Garlic</i> by Paul Bergner	Rs 110	Rs 88

TBR Book Club

TARA

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Mahabharata I and II</i> Written and illustrated by Samhita Arni	Rs 300	Rs 240
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Hungry Lion</i> adapted by Gita Wolf illustrated by Indrapramit Roy	Rs 165	Rs 132
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Tiger on a Tree</i> written by Anushka Shankar illustrated by Pulak Biswas	Rs 70	Rs 56
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Child Art</i> written by Tarit Bhattacharjee illustrated by children	Rs 175	Rs 140

THE OTHER INDIA PRESS

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Justice for Women</i> ed. by Indira Jaisingh	Rs 160	Rs 128
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Free From School</i> by Rahul Alvares	Rs 100	Rs 80
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Inhuman Rights</i> by Winie Periera	Rs 175	Rs 140
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Transforming of Goa</i> by Norman Dantes	Rs 175	Rs 140
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Organic Farming Reader</i> by Claude Alvares, Vandana Shiva, Sultan Islamil, K. Vijayalakshmi, Korah Mathen, Bernard Declercq	Rs 150	Rs 120

SEAGULL BOOKS

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>In her Own Right: Remembering the Artist</i> <i>Karuna Shaha</i> by Tapati Guha Thakurta	Rs 425	Rs 340
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Captured Moments: A Life about</i> <i>Shambhu Shaha</i>	Rs 400	Rs 320
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Till Death Do Us Part: Five Stories</i> by Mike Marqusee	Rs 150	Rs 120
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Madhavi</i> by Bisham Sahni	Rs 150	Rs 120
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Bruised Memories</i> edited by Tarun K. Saint	Rs 475	Rs 380

MADHYAM BOOKS

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Propaganda and the Public Mind:</i> <i>Conversations with Noam Chomsky</i>	Rs 250	Rs 200
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Globalization Unmasked</i> by James Petras and Henry Veltmeyer	Rs 200	Rs 160
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Profit Over People</i> by Noam Chomsky	Rs 175	Rs 140
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>This World in the Age of Globalization</i> by Ash Narain Roy	Rs 150	Rs 120
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Taming Global Financial Flows</i> by Kavaljit Singh	Rs 250	Rs 200

GYAN SAGAR PUBLICATIONS

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>A Rediscovered History of Gorkhas</i> by Chandra B. Khanduri	Rs 495	Rs 396
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>General and Strategists</i> by Chandra B. Khanduri	Rs 395	Rs 316
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Kashmir: Wail of Valley</i> by M.L. Kaul	Rs 595	Rs 476
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Glimpses of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh</i> Prof. P.N. Pushp Memorial Volume	Rs 350	Rs 280
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Symphony Guitar Book</i> by Rahul	Rs 150	Rs 120

B.R. PUBLISHING CORPORATION

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>India: 50 Years of Independence—</i> <i>Publishing</i> by Narendra Kumar	Rs 225	Rs 180
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Holy Sundarkanda</i> (fully illustrated with original text in Awadhi and English Script, translation in Hindi and English)	Rs 750	Rs 600
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The President of India During 50 Years</i>	Rs 260	Rs 208
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>How They Come to Sri Aurobindo and the</i> <i>Mother</i> (1112 true stories of sadhaks and devotees) in 4 vols.	Rs 1400	Rs 1120
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Vignettes of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother</i> (1141 true stories) in 3 vols by Shyarn Kumari	Rs 825	Rs 660

MANOHAR PUBLISHERS & DISTRIBUTORS

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Pangs of Partition: The Parting of Ways</i> Vol. I & Vol. II edited by S. Settar and Indira B. Gupta	Rs 700 each	Rs 560 each
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Modern Haryana: History and Culture</i> by K.C. Yadav	Rs 600	Rs 480
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Perspectives on National Security in</i> <i>South Asia</i> by P.R. Chari	Rs 800	Rs 640
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Brave Men of the Hills: A History of</i> <i>Anti-British Resistance and Rebellion in</i> <i>Burma 1825-1932</i> by Parimal Ghosh	Rs 400	Rs 320
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The State in Medieval Kashmir</i> by R.L. Hangloo	Rs 300	Rs 240

TBR Book Club

239 Vasant Enclave
New Delhi 110 057

Tel + Fax: 91-124-355500
Tel: 614 2031, 614 0383

- Yes I would like to be a member of TBR Book Club
 Yes I would like to subscribe to The Book Review

Name _____
Address _____

Number of titles ordered
(Tick in the boxes provided) _____

Amount remitted _____

DD/money order/Cheque no. _____

Please make out your cheques in the name of **The Book Review Literary Trust, New Delhi**
Please allow 30 days for processing order (45 days in case of payment by cheque).

SAHITYA AKADEMI

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Nalacartiam</i> by Unnayi Varier	Rs 130	Rs 104
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Tales Told by Mystics</i> by Manoj Das	Rs 180	Rs 144
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Hill Temple</i> (Kannada Poetry) by P.T. Narsimhachar	Rs 50	Rs 40
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Agganna Sutta</i> by Steven Collins	Rs 65	Rs 52
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Sweet Gentle Radiant: Selected poems of</i> <i>G. Sankara Kurup</i> edited by Bhaskaramenon Krishankumar	Rs 65	Rs 52

RAVI DAYAL PUBLISHER

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Final Question</i> by Sharat Chandra Chatterji	Rs 395	Rs 315
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Towards Securer Lives</i> by Mala Dayal	Rs 175	Rs 140
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Civil Lines 4</i> edited by Rukun Advani	Rs 195	Rs 156
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Country without A Post Office</i> (Poems - 1991-95) by Agha Shahid Ali	Rs 100	Rs 80
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Mostly Birds, Some Monkeys and A Pest:</i> <i>Nature In and Around Delhi</i> by Ranjit Lal	Rs 175	Rs 140

D.K. PRINT WORLD (P. LTD)

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Speaking of Dance: The Indian Critique</i> by Mandakranta Bose	Rs 650	Rs 470
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Chanting Narratives: The Living</i> <i>Katha-Vachanai Tradition</i> Edited by Molly Kaushal	Rs 900	Rs 720
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Yantras of Dieties and their</i> <i>Numerological Foundations</i>	Rs 1100	Rs 880
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Minerals and Mentals in Pre-modern India</i> by Arun Kumar Biswas	Rs 1200	Rs 960
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Tibetan Iconography of Buddhas,</i> <i>Bodhisattvas and Other Dieties—A Unique</i> <i>Pantheon</i> by Lokesh Chandra & Fredrick W. Bunce	Rs 5600	Rs 4480

ORIENT LONGMAN

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Anaro and Other Stories</i> by Manjul Bhagat	Rs 225	Rs 180
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Primal Land</i> by Pratibha Ray	Rs 350	Rs 280
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Shock Therapy: Short Stories</i> by Subodh Ghosh	Rs 200	Rs 160
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>People, Parks and Wildlife Tracts</i> for the Times (XIV)	Rs 150	Rs 120
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Hindi Nationalism</i> by Alok Rai Tracts for the Times (XIII)	Rs 80	Rs 64

RATNA SAGAR

	List Price	Club Price
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>An Island of Trees</i> by Ruskin Bond	Rs 44.90	Rs 36
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>A Bond with the Mountains</i> by Ruskin Bond	Rs 44.90	Rs 36
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Tigers Forever</i> by Ruskin Bond	Rs 44.90	Rs 36
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Tales from the Panchatantra</i> by Meera Uberoi and Pulak Biswas (Deluxe Edition - 1999-00)	Rs 125	Rs 100
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Sword of Dara Shikoh and Other</i> <i>Stories from History</i> by Subhadra Sengupta	Rs 44	Rs 36

'Mediating perspectives' in Gender Studies

Sumi Krishna

MENTAL HEALTH FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Edited by Bhargavi V. Davar

Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2000, pp. 427, Rs.595.00

GENDER AND SPACE: FEMINITY, SEXUALIZATION AND THE FEMALE BODY

By Seemantini Niranjana

Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2001, pp.143, Rs.325.00

METHODOLOGY IN SOCIAL RESEARCH: DIMENSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES: ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF RAMAKRISHNA MUKHERJEE

Edited by Partha Nath Mukerji

Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2000, pp. 263, Rs. 225.00

THE MYTH OF COMMUNITY: GENDER ISSUES IN PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT

Edited by Irene Guijt and Meera Kaul Shah

Vistaar Publications, New Delhi, 1999, pp. 288, Rs. 295.00

CULTURE, GENDER AND ECOLOGY: BEYOND WORKERISM

By M. Nadarajah

Rawat Publications, Jaipur and New Delhi, 1999, pp. 341, Rs. 650.00

RECREATING MEN: POSTMODERN MASCULINITY POLITICS

By Bob Pease

Sage publications, 2000, pp. 168, £15.99

There is excitement in the arena of Gender Studies (GS) in India today. Its early trajectory was similar to that of environmental studies (ES): both emerged in the mid-1970s (a period when alternative paradigms were gaining ground) and became more vigorous and focused in the following decade. Both drew core strengths from activism and practice in the field conjoined with concepts and theories which were derived from European and American schools of thought. Subsequently, however, there seems to have been a divergence. ES has gained recognition more swiftly, both as a separate 'subject', and through the incorporation of environmental concerns at various levels of the educational and administrative systems. Institutionalization and absorption into environmental management have, however, brought confinement and a certain distance from the very movements that had brought the need for ES into focus. This has not happened to the same extent with GS.

Unconfined by academia, GS has been 'free' to grow exponentially as a new area of knowledge, with porous boundaries, encroaching eclectically upon other disciplines and owing allegiance to none. It has been relatively non-hierarchical and open to an immense diversity of practitioners, including independent researchers, administrators, activists, and media professionals, of whom some have formal qualifications as gender specialists and others do not. Although separate

women's studies units have been around in some Indian universities for more than two decades, the *disciplinary initiative* continues to be with activists, independent researchers, and autonomous research groups, who draw their sustenance from a commitment to women's lived experience and praxis outside of academia. These groups are also reaching out to the many individual women (and the few men) who are working within masculine academic milieus but are confronting the sexism of their own disciplines through gender-oriented research. The excitement of GS derives from these fertile meeting grounds and the synergies which are changing the very modes of knowledge-creation.

During the 1990s there has been an outpouring of GS work at various levels: action-research, doctoral dissertations, theoretical explorations, seminar reports. The insights and understanding that has evolved from this process have in turn led to critical reassessments of the western approaches themselves. A fine example of such theoretical and methodological innovation is *Mental Health from a Gender Perspective* edited by freelance researcher Bhargavi Davar. The book records a national seminar organized by Anveshi, the Hyderabad-based Research Centre on Women's Studies. It confronts various levels of 'hostilities' in the interstices among different perspectives: of women who have experienced and been diagnosed as being the mentally ill, of the professional male in

psychiatric practice, of the academic social scientist, of women professionals within psychiatry, and of feminists in autonomous women's groups. Contested paradigms exist, sometimes tolerated easily and sometimes not. Much emotional and intellectual energy has been expended on 'mediating' these perspectives, on evolving the tools with which to negotiate the personal, the political and the therapeutic. The result is that this work extends the limits of academic feminism to the standpoint of women diagnosed as mentally ill, and it does so in the context of the gender politics of Indian society, and of psychiatric practice and mental health services in India. It takes us through the vast domain of women's mental health, including the complex issues related to the body, sexuality, reproduction and violence against women. Even as gender is an enduring sub-text in the manner in which mental illness is treated in the clinic, the courts and the media, as Bhargavi Davar (citing Shatruguna 1999) points out, Indian feminism itself is a 'story of mental resilience'.

Not all mentally distressed women are rebels and protesters but, as one of the contributors (Ajita Chakraborty) remarks, mental disorder is in a great many ways a defiant protest against a male world order. Viewing the female body as the battleground of meaning (Janet Chawla and Sarah Pinto) helps to seek out alternative cognitive styles, the knowledges which are 'lived in' and through bodily experiences of customs and ritual. Bringing a feminist perspective to bear on the 'female body of possession' (Kalpana Ram writing of rural Tamil women) raises difficult questions about the terms on which the female body is integrated into social theory, challenges the western roots of existentialism and phenomenology, and suggests that the splitting of subjectivity in possession does not have to be understood as a sign of disease.

Such work gives GS in India its distinct regional flavour, so that it is not a simple transplantation of alien discourses in Indian soil. There is a strong sense of engagement with the field, and a quest to find threads that can weave together the discursive and the ethnographic. For example, Seemantini Niranjana, now an independent researcher, seeks a 'new narrativity' in her book *Gender and Space*. She shows that 'considerations of spatiality can inform the *bodily* practices of women within diverse contexts and settings'. Indeed, on the one hand, the dimension of space has been relatively neglected in sociology and anthropology; and on the other, the domain of the body has been eclipsed in social theories and GS (whose focus has been more on cultural construction to counter biologically determinist approaches). The Kannada terms *olage-horage* does not simply demarcate the physical dimension of inside and outside spaces. The *olage-horage* boundary is unfixed and fluid, linked to processes of sexualization and the governance of female

morality. Space is the medium through which gendered differences are articulated and signalled. Thus, *olage-borage* shows how gendered bodies are circumscribed and focuses on the logic that underwrites wider social processes. Such a conceptualization of space steps across the biology versus social construction discourse; space here is not just a physical form that may be linked up with the social structure but is very much the stuff of which social life is made (p. 39).

Seemanthini Niranjana's richly textured work leads to an emergent sociology of the body; how one experiences the body being mediated through a socio-spatial matrix. She says: 'Such a tracing of the spatial dimension calls attention to the contexts in which subjects live their lives, the arena, events or qualities that mark bodies as female (or male), as well as how the body itself condenses location in a cultural space'. And further, it enables us to 'disaggregate the analysis of gender without necessarily falling back upon the binarism of the body as either culturally constituted or as prior to its cultural inscription'. Spatial/spatializing patterns 'combine the societal and individual planes, where bodily articulations merge into ideas about the socio-spatial world' (p. 126). Refreshingly, *Gender and Space* is not in search of meta-theories, for there cannot be a general theory, only a 'matrix of appraisal' which may vary over time and in different settings. Thus, the study deepens our understanding of gender through the originality of her anthropologically-grounded feminist scholarship.

Works such as *Mental Health and Gender and Space* communicate a conceptual and methodological excitement that one misses in a volume such as *Methodology in Social Research* which too has contributions from different perspectives. Editor Partha Nath Mukherji's comprehensive 'Introduction' to the dilemmas and perspectives of social research neatly draws out three themes: the major social science paradigms (including the 'feminist constructive challenge'); quantitative and qualitative research; and participatory research methodology. It is interesting that the linkages between feminist and participatory methodology are not explored, nor does either figure in the rest of the volume. This is a pity because the discourse on gender issues in participatory development has moved far ahead as is comprehensively reflected in *The Myth of Community* edited by Irene Guijt and Meera Kaul Shah.

In the 'Foreword' to *The Myth of Community*, Robert Chambers says 'During the past two decades, the two powerful but separate movements, of gender and of participation, have been transforming the rhetoric, and increasingly the reality, of local level-development'. This may be somewhat exaggerated by one who is described as being the driving force behind the great surge of interest in Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)

but he is right that the volume offers a 'rich and diverse harvest' of insights. For many in the field of gender and development (including myself), the 'gender naivety' of participatory development is especially worrying, for the language and tools of PRA have now become accepted within 'mainstream' development approaches. Irene Guijt and Meera Shah deal with this upfront. They point out that participatory research and development emerged through trial and error in the field and were influenced by disciplines like agro-ecosystem analysis and farming systems research which were not characterized by gender awareness. At an early stage participatory processes may have challenged dominant power structures, but they have increasingly been treated as 'technical, management solutions to what are basically political issues, including the micro-politics of gender' (p.3). Even-handedly they also draw attention to the ambiguities of GS. They are right in saying that the focus of GS has largely been conceptual with much less interest in developing local methodologies in the field. One of the contributors (Morag Humble) remarks that 'gender and development' is a concept in search of a methodology. I was once present at a workshop at which an Indian gender-specialist presented a gender analysis framework. When asked by a young male fieldworker how this could be applied in the particular context of his project, she said 'that's your problem'; she was not interested!

The contributors to *Myth of Community*, however, are all engaged specialists. Among others, Meena Bilgi, Ranjani K. Murthy and Madhu Sarin (all independent researchers/consultants working in different Indian states) reinforce Helen Crawley's assertion that 'there is nothing inherently empowering for women about PRA as a methodology or a strategy'. How then can the perspectives of gender and of participatory development be mediated? Writing of her own field experience in Gujarat, Meera Shah says it is 'essential to re-orient existing male and female personnel in the necessary skills to identify gender concerns and to work equally with village women and men.' (p. 252). Madhu Sarin says, 'while some PRA methods may be helpful, what is more important is the outside facilitators' clarity of perspective which guides the analysis of the information generated through participatory methods' (p.129). Crawley argues that: 'For participatory approaches such as PRA to be empowering, they must adopt a far more explicit and critical agenda, even if that means rejection by the mainstream' (p.31). In her view, PRA cannot be empowering if it does not challenge oppressive gender-power relations.

Indeed, power is at the crux of the problem of 'mediating perspectives', and I now turn to two very different approaches to gender-power relations, both books having been reworked from doctoral theses. In *Culture, Gender and Ecology*, M. Nadarajah, a senior lecturer in

sociology in Malaysia, valiantly struggles to move beyond the Marxist notion of power, to conceptualize culture as a contested terrain, and to deal with the relational and non-relational forms of power, and everyday forms of contestation and resistance. In *Recreating Men*, Bob Pease, a senior lecturer in social work in Australia, takes an entirely different approach, eschewing theory for an experiential approach, with a commitment to praxis and a participatory methodology. His is a brave book. Bob Pease, who sees himself as a profeminist man, sets the tone at the outset: 'One of the most central issues for women's prospects for equality is whether men can and will change'. He believes that 'men's subjectivity is crucial to gender domination and that changing social relations of gender will necessitate the transforming of men's subjectivities as well as changing their daily practices' (p. 1). Further, he argues that pro-feminist men are not exceptional but are a 'submerged voice' within the hegemonic discourses of masculinity, a marginal group within patriarchy. The book explores difficult questions: How does a man 'live out' a pro-feminist commitment? How does a 'collective pro-feminist men's politics' work? Drawing upon postmodern, critical and feminist perspectives and using the methodological approaches associated with feminist research, the study explores how 'individual men can detach their own subjectivities and practices from the social structures and ideologies of male dominance'. It concludes that challenging patriarchal masculinities is the first step in developing pro-feminist activism of men (p. 136). There are very few male researchers in India working in GS; certainly none to my knowledge who would venture to undertake a reflective study such as *Recreating Men*.

It is only in certain disciplines (notably literature, history, economics, perhaps geography and social anthropology) that gendered perspectives have even permeated university-level teaching and research. Political science, psychology, the biological, physical and applied sciences such as agriculture and medicine continue to be fettered within the old perimeters. As compared, say, to the staidness of ES, even after some 20 years GS in India is still in continuing ferment. This reflects its potential to 'mediate perspectives' and explore new directions. Even as the 'master's tools' are being used to dismantle the master's house, innovative tools are being evolved to build a new kind of house. ■

Reference

Shatruguna, Veena 1999. Foreword in B. V. Davar *Mental Health of Indian women: A Feminist Agenda* (pp. 11-17) New Delhi. Sage Publications.

Sumi Krishna is an independent researcher-consultant in gender, environment and development based in Bangalore.

Welcome Reference Tool

Bharat H. Desai

ANIMAL LAWS OF INDIA

Edited by Maneka Gandhi, Ozair Husain and Raj Panjwani

Universal Law Publishing, New Delhi, 2001, Second Edition, pp. vii + 1048, price not stated.

Cruelty to animals has been one of the attributes of human efforts to establish superiority over nature and all other creatures. In fact animal sacrifices have been intrinsic in the cultural traditions of many communities and religions. As such the issue has sometimes exercised the legal minds and evoked scattered legal responses over the period of years. Yet, anybody who wants to save the animals from such abuses do not know whom to approach, how to approach; how to file an FIR (first information report); how to seek legal remedy to prevent occurrence of such cruelty. There is general ignorance about rights and obligations under the laws of the land. The book under review is a welcome reference tool in an area which is generally ignored in the legal literature as well as teaching and research in the field.

The book is a comprehensive compilation of a wide range of statutes, notifications and other related legal documents pertaining to the protection of animals in India. The book covers central laws, state laws, policies and guidelines issued by both the central, as well as state governments, standards pertaining to animal welfare set by the Indian Standards Institution (ISI), as well as select judgments passed by the judiciary for the protection of animals from abuse.

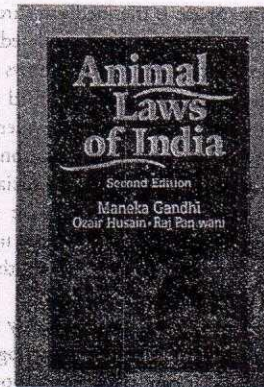
There are 49 chapters in the book which are divided into four parts. The introduction by Maneka Gandhi points out the significance of this book to law enforcement agencies as well as the general public. The first part, comprising ten chapters, consists of the Central Acts and Rules which deal with the prevention of cruelty to animals; registration of performing animals; manner of transportation of animals; registration of cattle premises; manner of capturing animals; control and supervision of breeding and experimenting with animals; protection of wild animals, birds and plants; and other matters connected therewith. This part also contains guidelines for the appointment of Honorary Wildlife Wardens; rules for recognition of zoos; order for prohibiting the sale of animals by zoos; provisions dealing with the manner of handling cattle trespass; rules for the preservation of elephants and the rules for censoring film scenes showing cruelty to or abuse of animals. The editors have also taken care to incorporate the relevant provisions of the Constitution of India, the Indian Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code for the protection of animals; management and handling of bio-medical wastes, including animal wastes; handling of livestock and other animals by railway authorities and avoiding

cruelty to animals on transportation by rail.

The second part contains acts, rules, by-laws and government orders for the preservation and protection of animals. This part includes a comprehensive coverage of relevant animal protection laws of 24 states in India. Various areas covered include cattle preservation; prohibition of cow slaughter; livestock improvement; prevention of diseases to animals; handling issues arising out of cattle trespass; prevention of cruelty to animals; prevention of animal sacrifice; regulation of marine fishing; regulation of cattle fairs; preservation of elephants; as well as relevant provisions of the Police Acts and Municipal Acts for the protection of animals from cruelty.

The third part, comprising 35 chapters, deals with policies, guidelines and notifications issued by the central government, state governments, international non-governmental organizations, which pertain to matters connected with the protection of animals. These guidelines relate to safari parks which are working either as zoos or as an extension of zoos; setting up of deer parks; creation of rescue centers for rescued animals; and disposing carcass of animals in zoos. The IUCN [World Conservation Union] guidelines on the gifting of animals as state gifts and reintroduction of animals provide non-legally binding useful guide for the states.

This part also incorporates judgements passed by different High Courts and the Supreme Court of India, touching upon the prohibition on the use of certain animals for entertainment; prohibition of trade in birds; prohibition of animal sacrifice; control of stray dogs; killing of stray dogs; disposal of dangerous animals; prohibition of cow slaughter; regulation of slaughter houses; custody and cost of maintenance of animals during the pendency of criminal proceedings; restriction on auction of stray animals etc. It also includes notifications issued by various central government ministries as well as some of the state governments for preventing experiments on animals by establishments and making dissection of animals in schools optional. For the convenience of the animal-loving citizens, the editors have devoted a few useful chapters explaining the rights of an informant of the occurrence of an offence against animals, the duty of police to investigate on receipt of a complaint, manner of filing an FIR (first information report), and manner of seeking redress in the courts. The authors have also reproduced the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna



and Flora (CITES) as one of the chapters. Another chapter has been devoted to the Policy Statement of the Government of India for the period 1997-2002 concerning the import and export of animals. The editors have also taken pains to provide answers to a whole range of frequently asked 91 questions concerning the protection of animals, which throw considerable light on the subject.

Of the two chapters in the fourth part, the first lays down the general standard set by ISI for the welfare of animals. Such standards relate to (i) codes for proper housing, transportation, and breeding; (ii) specifications for poultry waters, brooders, poultry incubators, artificial insemination pipettes, egg washing machines, and laying battery cages for poultry; and (iii) recommendations for community milking shed, farm cattle housing, cattle housing for an average farmer, cattle housing for a rural milk producer, loose housing system of animals, and gaushalas and other organized milk producers. The last chapter of the book incorporates the IATA [International Air Transporters Association] guidelines on transportation of animals by air.

The book provides all relevant material for all animal lovers who are concerned with protection and welfare of animals in India. It is a handy reference tool for the academia, practising lawyers, judges, activists, policy makers and others interested in the subject. Still there is room for improvement. First, rearrangement of the chapters will make the book easily comprehensible. For instance, in the third part, the court judgments be clubbed together and can form a separate part or sub-part. Secondly, inclusion of relevant laws in other states not included in the second part of the book, such as Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh will make the book more useful. The editors do have the freedom for inclusion or exclusion of such legislations. But reasons for the purpose such as non-availability or non-existence or outdated nature of the laws can explain any such omission. The editors need to take care to avoid mistakes in the date of central government orders/circulars e.g. sale of animals to circuses [1927 instead of 1987; 172].

Bharat H. Desai is Associate Professor, International Legal Studies Division, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Defining Progress

V. Subramanian

RETHINKING GREEN POLITICS

By John Barry

Sage Publications, London, 1999, pp. 29, price not stated.

The book under review with diverse aspects of political component to the Green movement has detailed discussions on such topics as citizenship, governance, environmental management, anarchism and ecological virtue. The author tries to justify the need for this book specifically relating the conflict between green political theory and green political ideology. He defends the hollowness of "shallow" green thinking as against committed deep "green thinking". The attractiveness of the green version of "sustainable society" is debated with views propounded by a number of experts in the field. Concrete utopian theorizing could be considered as radical as the green movement. The author gives considerable space to define "progress" and asserts that defining "progress" is central to "Green politics".

The activities of deep ecology is defined through a set of eight principles in the chapter dealing with the conflict between 'deep ecology' and 'ecological virtue'. One of the key elements is the welfare of all life forms including non-human ones having intrinsic value independent of human usefulness; one should also appreciate the quality of life rather than adhering to increasingly higher standard of living. Deep ecology thus deals with the totality of environment surrounding human life and not just simple economic terms alone and deals with metaphysics of nature. On the other hand, if green politics has to base itself upon some form of metaphysical footing, science rather than earth centered spirituality may be a better way of going about it. There is no basis in science for holding that the earth and all it contains was created for the human species alone. The ecosystem upon which all life is dependent is beyond human comprehension and the idea of human control over the ecological conditions of life is a dangerous

Green politics can be seen as an attempt to show the internal contradictions of current norms and as an attempt to persuade people of the rightness of an alternative perspective on society's various demands. In this context, the treatment of animals can be viewed not so much as animal rights, but as human duties.

presumption: something we do not understand we cannot control.

The third chapter deals with the ethical basis for green political theory. Green ethical naturalism is cashed out as an ethic for the use of environment as opposed to an environmental ethic. Thus human-nature interaction is of ethical nature. Green politics can be seen as an attempt to show the internal contradictions of current norms and persuade people of the rightness of an alternative perspective on society's various demands. In this context, the treatment of animals can be viewed not so much as animal rights, but as human duties. Within nature, humans are vulnerable to certain categories of non-humans. We cannot stand in the same level of relationship to all parts of nature. For example, trees, unlike snakes or viruses, do not present the same degree of danger to us. Hence our treatment of trees will be different from the way we treat snakes.

The ecological niche for the human species is very wide as can be seen by the success of our species' colonization of the earth's surface. Green politics is not against economic reasoning but rather seeks it to place it within its proper context as one among other modes of human interaction and valuations. Environmental policies which negatively affect human welfare are more defensible than those which compromise fundamental human liberties.

One prominent form of eco-anarchism, bioregionalism, begins from the argument that resolution of ecological crisis calls for greater integration of human communities with their immediate environment with natural rather than human-political boundaries. Bio-regionalists place a premium on the necessity of strong effective sense of community and identity and see the ecological problems we face as due to in no small part to the demise of the community concept. With the decline of the community and the rise of the state, individuals have lost the capacity to govern themselves without the state. Each ecosystem is unique and thus demands a particular way of life. In this way, the community's effectiveness is intimately related to how it interacts with the local ecosystem or bio-region.

The author quotes from literature about global monoculture as demanding "English lawns in desert, orange juice in Siberia and hamburgers in Delhi" without realizing that they are very much real in the present context! Essentially, the eco-anarchists' view is that of a federated community living in harmony with

.... The emphasis on bottom-up, participatory forms of decision-making, together with environmental education, does suggest that Local Agenda 21 can function as one institutional facet of a wider process of democratic ecological governance.

the environment that is the basis of green politics. Any aspect of eco anarchism cannot wish away the state having a key role to for environmental public goods. Thus, the role of the state needs to be considered in detail.

Collective management, manipulation and intentional transformation of the environment are the universal features of all human societies. From the point of view of green political theory, the resolution of ecological problem is not simply a matter of structural reorganization. Green politics tries to alter prevailing attitudes to nature. It is concerned with social-environment relation rather than economy-ecology metabolism. Since the ecological crisis is not just a crisis for society but also a crisis of the society due to contradictions within the society, the author feels economic solutions alone cannot handle environmental problems.

Economic modernization challenges the idea that improvement in environmental quality or protection of nature are inimical to economic welfare but shares the ideology of sustainable development. It is essentially an ideology of public environmental policy. This also implies a virtue based concept of citizenship and some degree of public participation in environmental policy implementation. Given the uncertainty which characterizes environmental problems, any environmental planning will necessarily have to be flexible, be sensitive to ecological feedback and not cause irreversible ecological changes. One of the failures of ecological modernization is its tendency to rely heavily on "end of pipe" solution instead of producing genuine innovation in production to prevent pollution in the first place. State regulation and planning can stimulate environmental invention and innovation. According to the author an ecosystem characterized by diversity, balance and complexity may have to be actively created and managed.

The green political economy is the subject of discussion in the next chapter. The free market environmentalist approaches environmental problems as stemming from a lack of clear, enforceable and tradeable property rights. Typically, environmental problems are held to result from the tragedy of the commons, the overuse of a resource which no one owns (the seas) or everyone owns (state-regulated resources). While market logic may be appropri-

Rooted in the Indian Ecosystem

Ghazala Shahabuddin

By P.S. Ramakrishnan
National Book Trust, India, 2001, pp. 198, Rs. 70.00

Much of the literature used for teaching ecology in India is anchored in examples from the western world. Therefore, it is a refreshing change to find a book on environment that is wholly rooted in Indian ecosystems and the traditional knowledge about them. In *Ecology and Sustainable Development*, P.S. Ramakrishnan, Professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi, puts together his vast knowledge of the ecology of northeastern India to formulate an alternative paradigm of development that is based not only on local ecological wisdom but also sound science. The chapters in the book are organized around distinct themes such as sustainable agriculture, forestry, traditional ecological knowledge and globalization. What binds these chapters together is the author's thesis that an in-depth knowledge of ecology, both traditional and scientific, is central to solving environmental problems and achieving sustainable development. Throughout the text, the author supports his arguments using his pioneering research in the Indian subcontinent over the last twenty years and references to other scientific and popular writing. In the section on agriculture, the author analyses the sustainability of modern agriculture vis-a-vis traditional modes of farming such as shifting cultivation (Jhum). He points out the fallacies in the 'Green Revolution model'

widely ascribed to by technocrats, that we can indefinitely increase agricultural production by increasing inputs of pesticides and fertilizers and utilizing high-yielding varieties of crops. While conceding the role of the Green Revolution as 'first-aid' in times of food scarcity, he points out its problems that are becoming increasingly evident, such as water-logging, soil salinization, chemical pollution and loss of animal and plant diversity. In fact, there has been a gradual decline in agricultural productivity due to these reasons in many parts of Punjab and Haryana where the Green Revolution first began. He demonstrates how in some areas such as the northeastern hills, so-called 'primitive' means of cultivation may be the most sustainable, given the local ecological conditions. For agriculture in marginal lands (as are present in much of India) is not about 'maximising production but about coping with uncertainties in the environment, in the not-so-favourable ecological situations in which they operate. Through vivid examples, Ramakrishnan brings to light the rich heritage of agricultural practices amongst people of the northeastern hills, formed over years of trial-and-error, that have lately been recognized as being far more sustainable than many of our modern techniques. For example, bamboos of certain species that are grown by people in Nagaland

have been found to conserve nutrients such as potassium and phosphorus that are typically scarce in tropical soils. Most marginal farmers grow a diversity of crops which protects them from the vagaries of weather, since in extreme conditions such as drought, some of the farmers' crop would still yield harvests. In hilly regions, farmers allow weeds to proliferate in erosion-prone areas within their fields, for their service of soil conservation has been found to compensate more than adequately for any damage-caused by their competition with agricultural crops. Farmers take advantage of the soil fertility gradient in their fields by growing nutrient-efficient crops on tops of slopes where soils are typically poor in nutrients) and those less efficient, along valleys. The need for redeveloping the multi-species complex agro-ecosystems of the past and reviving the biodiversity-linked traditional ecological knowledge is convincingly brought out in this chapter. At the same time, the author recognizes that many of the traditional methods have been altered to such an extent that they are no longer sustainable, a typical example being the Jhum cycle which has been brought down to five years in some cases, due to pressures of population. In such circumstances, the author advocates a pragmatic mix of scientifically-reserved options and traditional practices for sustainable cultivation. In the chapter on forestry, the author touches upon important issues such as the practices adopted for afforestation and the role of human-modified forests in conserving biodiversity. The ecological problems associated with the widespread planting of exotic species such as eucalyptus and Australian acacia are pointed out. Many of these species have little value for local people as sources of fuelwood, fodder or medicine and even less for native fauna and in general result in impoverishment of forest ecosystems and local economies. The author rightly laments the fact that so far we

are in deciding issues concerning private goods and services, it is not appropriate with regard to public goods, such as environmental quality and protection. For many environmental public goods, for which no market can exist, such as biodiversity protection and prevention of global warming, it is clear that a free market environmentalist approach is fundamentally flawed. That is, there are environmental problems whose nature is such that they cannot be desegregated into component parts which can be solved by exchange on the open market between property holders. Local Agenda 21, which was signed at the Rio Earth Summit (UNCED, 1992) proposed that local authority activity is central in achieving sustainable development. In short, LA21 requires local authorities to consult with

the various 'stakeholders' within their jurisdiction—industry, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, the local community and by 1996 come up with an environmental agenda for the local area for the next century. Local Agenda 21 is close to some of the themes and aims of collective ecological management. The emphasis on bottom-up, participatory forms of decision-making, together with environmental education, does suggest that Local Agenda 21 can function as one institutional facet of a wider process of democratic ecological governance. The author takes up the case of green citizenship in the next chapter. Environmental groups and the green movement have been at the forefront to democratize state institutions. Invoking the authority of science, particularly

ecological science, eco-authoritarianism claims to offer an objective, scientific and impartial diagnosis of the ecological crisis and an equally objective solution. The complex of issues involved in deciding the best way to attain an ecologically rational megalopolis with the environment are such that making decisions about environmental policy will affect more lives and to a greater extent than any other policy area. Both sustainability and sustainable development share a fundamental characteristic of having normative and scientific dimensions. ■

V. Subramanian is a senior Professor in the School of Environmental Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

What Ramakrishnan says is not new to most people and far less to environmentalists and ecologists. What distinguishes the book, however, is the firm backing of all his recommendations and hypotheses by both scientific evidence and local knowledge.

have not been able to develop techniques for restoring degraded lands back to forest, in spite of large sums of money invested in biological research. In this chapter, Ramakrishnan also documents the various forms of forest that are modified by humans for their purposes and points out the important role they play in conserving biodiversity at the landscape level, such as home gardens, sacred groves and secondary forests. These categories of semi-natural vegetation have been found to be significant for biodiversity conservation yet are often neglected by scientists and administrators during the conservation planning process.

An important issue that the author touches on in his book is the ecological impact of globalization, often overlooked in discussions on the topic. One of the problems that he discusses is the loss of traditions related to the nurturing and active production of crop biodiversity by small farmers, due to the propagation of agro-industry-based agriculture ('commodification of agriculture', as he terms it). Another result of globalization is the silent but massive invasion of Indian ecosystems by weeds such as lantana, congress grass and water hyacinth which leave little space for native vegetation and its dependent animal life. Previously insulated ecosystems are now exposed to new plant species from all over the globe, whose seeds arrive with human movement. Some of these that find appropriate conditions locally become weeds, encouraged by the disturbance of vegetation and lack of natural enemies. The author demonstrates how the 'shrinking of the globe', though currently seen as beneficial for economic development, has ominous consequences for biodiversity through such changes, a process he appropriately terms as 'ecological homogenization'.

While the content of the book more than adequately addresses the issues at hand, the quality of production leaves much to be desired. A bit of restructuring, better produc-

tion and skilful editing could have ensured that the book crossed the borderline from casual read to a serious reference text for ecologists and others involved in conservation. The quality of printing of the colour plates and that of the paper, could have been far better. There is also some amount of repetition from chapter to chapter and many of the flowcharts seem unnecessary as they often do not complement the text.

What Ramakrishnan says is not new to most people and far less to environmentalists and ecologists. What distinguishes the book, however, is the firm backing of all his recommendations and hypotheses by both scientific evidence and local knowledge. It is rarely that we find an ecologist who gives so much space to local knowledge, and to socio-economic and cultural issues without losing his grounding in ecological theory. This book has a vital message for Indian scientists: that significant contributions to the development process can be made only if research is conducted within the socio-economic and cultural contexts of Indian society. ■

Ghazala Shahabuddin is an independent researcher and consultant in ecology based in Delhi. She works on issues related to biodiversity conservation and forest ecology and has a special interest in the study and management of human impact in wilderness areas.

Unrivalled Exponent

Partho Dutta

GIRIJA

By Yatindra Mishra

Vani Prakashan, Delhi, 2001, pp.131, Rs.200.00

This is an unusual little book devoted to the famous thumri singer Girija Devi of Benaras. Not a conventional account of a singer and her times but a very personal and affectionate tribute. Mishra has divided his book into three sections. The first is a series of about thirty short [one-page or less] essays on music, aesthetics, literature, the ambience of Benaras, mythology and related topics. Stylishly written and trendy, there is a great deal of play with phrases. The section is densely allusive and attempts to be profound though what it really showcases are the author's own overwrought sensibilities. Mishra's comments make it clear that he is not a trained music critic. That is why he resorts to celebrating his own subjective feelings.

The model is obviously Ashok Vajpayee's earlier book on Kumar Gandharva [also brought out by Vani] and he follows the pattern set by Vajpayee in the second section too, which collects a bunch of poems about Girija Devi. These poems are simply written and easy to read. Mishra's devotion to Girija

Devi whom he refers to as "Appaji" throughout the book comes out strongly in these poems. The third section is the most substantial from the music lovers' point of view. This is a long interview with Girija Devi on her life, music, contemporaries, students etc. The many interesting photographs reproduced have been arranged thematically and inserted at intervals throughout the volume. The production qualities of the book are of a high standard which also comes with an appreciative blurb from Nirmal Verma. Mishra's book is the latest addition to the rich tradition of writing on classical music in Hindi. This includes authors like Sushil Kumar Chaubey on gharanas, Sushila Mishra on the Lucknow tradition, Ibrahim Ali on Amir Khan, Mukund Lath on aesthetics and many others.

Girija Devi is the senior most vocalist from the Benaras tradition of thumri/dadra. One would not hesitate to say that she has practically no rivals today. Part of the charm of her repertoire is the sheer musical command that she has over this genre, especially the genuine



love that she demonstrates for the rustic mannerisms and festive lyrics written around the Radha-Krishna theme. This is an inherent part of this tradition, which when copied by the young, sophisticated and urbane singers of thumri/dadra today fail to evoke the same feeling. She received her training in music from venerable Benaras masters like Srichandra Mishra and Sarju Prasad Mishra. She is well known for her khayal singing too and her repertoire also includes Tappa and other lesser known forms like Gul, Naksh and Prabandhas. Girija Devi is a remarkably brave artist. She together with other seniors like Sitara Devi and Pagal Das took part in the festival organized by Sahmat in Ayodhya a few years ago, publicly taking a stand against communal violence. ■

Partho Dutta teaches history at Zakir Hussain College, New Delhi.

Intellectualism Without Tears

N.S. Jagannathan

A HUNDRED ENCOUNTERS

By Shyam Lal

Rupa, 2001, pp. 535, Rs 395.00

Reeping illiteracy is an occupational hazard for a journalist, particularly, for one who works on dailies. He has little time for books, his quotidian urgencies making it difficult for him to find the time for anything beyond the ticker tape and rival rags. A brilliant editor whom I greatly admire and a very different kind of columnist from Shyam Lal, once settled an argument about the date of Aldous Huxley's *Ends and Means* thus: "It must have come out in the late thirties," he said, "because I remember reading it. And I have stopped reading books after 1940". But Shyam Lal was of a different breed altogether, as bookish as they come. He cut his journalistic teeth in the nineteen thirties, when the "writing journalist" was higher in the pecking order than the reporting one and ideas and literary grace were more important than scoops and contacts. And when he came into his own in the nineteen fifties in *The Times of India*, (when it was still a newspaper and not a product), first as Assistant Editor and later Editor, the celebrated "Adib" Shyam Lal dropped the cynosurus of a pseudonym (which did not deceive those in the know). It had a loyal readership (which included yours truly) for it was intellectualism without tears and the first introduction to post-Marxian agonies in Europe. This book is a collection of some of those stimulating pieces.

In a short review of this kind, there is no space to discuss the details of the astonishing range of these pieces beyond saying that they constitute a serious engagement with the ferment of philosophical ideas of the last fifty years. It is more than the "cultivated reverie" of a civilized man savouring nostalgically the aesthetic graces of the books he has read, like Habrook Jackson's *Bookman's Notebook* or Oliver Wendell Holmes' *Autocrat at the Breakfast Table*, so fashionable in the first half of the last century. Though 42 of the hundred pieces in this book deal with the literati of our times, Shyam Lal's engagement with them is not aesthetic but with their relevance as intellectual signposts of our times.

Shyam Lal himself has succinctly listed his central concerns in these encounters with some of the best minds of Europe thus: "I have tried to provide a certain unity by centring all of them around the theme of modernity." (Nota Bene: not modernism, which is a different kettle of fish.) "Every piece, whether it analyses the reasons which led to the implosion of all soviet-style regimes, diagnoses the ills of a split reason, analyses the flip side of affluence, globalism and consumerism, or explains how science and technology have become instru-

ments of domination, has a direct bearing on everyday life". Explaining the rationale of his pieces on the literary figures of our times and the literary sensibility that informs them, he says, "What is most striking here is the contrast between the erstaz optimism spread by the surfeit of bright images projected day and night by worldwide networks on television channels, and the ennu, anomie, despair and metaphysical anguish to which some of the most sensitive spirits of the age give expression in their work."

Putting a different taxonomy on these pieces, one can discern the unity of these pieces in, first, the pervasive presence of the ghost of Marx, which European intellectuals were trying to exorcise for eight odd years, particularly after the death of Stalin in 1953 and second, the cultural homogenization of the world by American banalities, especially after the collapse of the countervailing seductions of the Soviet-style self-denials. On the first, Shyam Lal makes fascinating reading. The Frankfurt School does not figure in the index but all the shining lights of that School engaged in angry laden revisionism of Marxian orthodoxy are all over the place in the book: Horkheimer, Adorno (heading the index with 12 references) Lucaks (with 13 entries and a whole piece on him) Marcuse, Habermas—and Gramsci of course. The last was not a formal member of the school, having been arrested in 1926 and in jail till 1937, (when he died) but his prison writings published only in the late forties, share the same tone of respectful dissent that have kept Marxist (and in fairness, non-Marxist) exegetists busy since the nineteen fifties.

The second strand in these pieces is the anxieties about the phenomenon of globalization, particularly in its aspect of subversion of older and arguably superior cultures by the sheer force of its technological irresistibility. What once used to be called *Coco* colonization of the world has spread its tentacles deeper, with brand equities such as *Coco* and *Pepsi* Cola, *Macdonald* fast food and *Kellogg* breakfast cereals displacing native equivalents even in communist strongholds and rural India. With the eager embrace by the whole world of the economics of market forces, the juggernaut of a homogenized culture seems well set on its irresistible and irreversible destructive course. Shyam Lal returns to these themes again and again, interestingly quoting often American opinion ranged against the phenomenon. His essay "Tox Americana", is on Lewis Lapham's *Hotel America*, a devastating critique of American life and leadership. Why the metaphor of a hotel to describe modern American life-style? Because "it rebuts every image of a home, a family, personal warmth or neighbourhoodliness. It is hardly the kind of place where anyone can strike roots". Even the benign manifestations of globaliza-

tion are problematical. When the feminists of language has a great deal to do with this. But out history that has made English our own currents in Europe and elsewhere. Of course, knowledge or even interest in the philosophical moorings of Indian cerebrations with little shifted away from the earlier Anglo-Saxon side, it is a good thing that Shyam Lal has adequately dealt with here. On the positive several ramifications all of which cannot be with the Indian reality? This question has is so euro-centric with so little engagement eager audience. In other words, how is it that it have appeared in *The New York Times* as in *The Times of India* and might even have had a more overwhelming. These pieces could as easily that refuses to go away. Its cosmopolitanism is riveting reading but I am nagged by a question whom said that he treats them as shit.

There is no question that the book makes and shabby treatment of his mistresses, one of known but not so his money grubbing greed, breaking contribution to dramatic art, are well strances and because of his undoubtedly path- regime, arguably forgivable in the circum- Brecht. His squallid compromises with the in these pages is of that other icon of our times, Another reputation that comes out in letters journals.

Another reputation that comes out in letters journals. openly discussed by him and others in his sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, was an open book, with even his eccentric private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life men are far uglier than the public faces of As Auden said famously, private faces of public This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. his well-publicized grand vision of ridding nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- The book gives (among other things) the Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. (ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

loves in *The Rock*, Where is the life we have lost in the living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in the knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in the information?

These essays are a record of Shyam Lal's life-long love affair with ideas. The tone is often flirtatious rather than passionate. But it is not all high seriousness. The journalist in him keeps breaking through from time to time and he talks about the feet of clay and hyperactive joins of his subjects. Thus in the piece entitled "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. The book gives (among other things) the "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to his well-publicized grand vision of ridding venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. men are far uglier than the public faces of private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life was an open book, with even his eccentric sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, openly discussed by him and others in his journals.

Another reputation that comes out in letters journals. openly discussed by him and others in his sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, was an open book, with even his eccentric private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life men are far uglier than the public faces of As Auden said famously, private faces of public This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. his well-publicized grand vision of ridding nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- The book gives (among other things) the Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. (ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

loves in *The Rock*, Where is the life we have lost in the living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in the knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in the information?

These essays are a record of Shyam Lal's life-long love affair with ideas. The tone is often flirtatious rather than passionate. But it is not all high seriousness. The journalist in him keeps breaking through from time to time and he talks about the feet of clay and hyperactive joins of his subjects. Thus in the piece entitled "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. The book gives (among other things) the "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to his well-publicized grand vision of ridding venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. men are far uglier than the public faces of private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life was an open book, with even his eccentric sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, openly discussed by him and others in his journals.

Another reputation that comes out in letters journals. openly discussed by him and others in his sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, was an open book, with even his eccentric private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life men are far uglier than the public faces of As Auden said famously, private faces of public This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. his well-publicized grand vision of ridding nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- The book gives (among other things) the Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. (ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

loves in *The Rock*, Where is the life we have lost in the living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in the knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in the information?

These essays are a record of Shyam Lal's life-long love affair with ideas. The tone is often flirtatious rather than passionate. But it is not all high seriousness. The journalist in him keeps breaking through from time to time and he talks about the feet of clay and hyperactive joins of his subjects. Thus in the piece entitled "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. The book gives (among other things) the "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to his well-publicized grand vision of ridding venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. men are far uglier than the public faces of private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life was an open book, with even his eccentric sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, openly discussed by him and others in his journals.

Another reputation that comes out in letters journals. openly discussed by him and others in his sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, was an open book, with even his eccentric private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life men are far uglier than the public faces of As Auden said famously, private faces of public This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. his well-publicized grand vision of ridding nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- The book gives (among other things) the Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. (ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

loves in *The Rock*, Where is the life we have lost in the living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in the knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in the information?

These essays are a record of Shyam Lal's life-long love affair with ideas. The tone is often flirtatious rather than passionate. But it is not all high seriousness. The journalist in him keeps breaking through from time to time and he talks about the feet of clay and hyperactive joins of his subjects. Thus in the piece entitled "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

the world unite, not all of them lose their chains, since the chains are not the same for all of them. When the "greens" of the world unite, as during the Seattle protest, do they have one common enemy or a hundred different ones? At a different level, is the internet the great equalizer it is hyped to be? And is the information overkill it facilitates really better than the slow absorption of relevant knowledge that earlier cultures made possible at a more deliberate pace? As Eliot put it in those famous lines in *The Rock*, Where is the life we have lost in the living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in the knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in the information?

These essays are a record of Shyam Lal's life-long love affair with ideas. The tone is often flirtatious rather than passionate. But it is not all high seriousness. The journalist in him keeps breaking through from time to time and he talks about the feet of clay and hyperactive joins of his subjects. Thus in the piece entitled "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. The book gives (among other things) the "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to his well-publicized grand vision of ridding venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. men are far uglier than the public faces of private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life was an open book, with even his eccentric sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, openly discussed by him and others in his journals.

Another reputation that comes out in letters journals. openly discussed by him and others in his sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, was an open book, with even his eccentric private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life men are far uglier than the public faces of As Auden said famously, private faces of public This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. his well-publicized grand vision of ridding nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- The book gives (among other things) the Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. (ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

loves in *The Rock*, Where is the life we have lost in the living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in the knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in the information?

These essays are a record of Shyam Lal's life-long love affair with ideas. The tone is often flirtatious rather than passionate. But it is not all high seriousness. The journalist in him keeps breaking through from time to time and he talks about the feet of clay and hyperactive joins of his subjects. Thus in the piece entitled "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. The book gives (among other things) the "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to his well-publicized grand vision of ridding venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. men are far uglier than the public faces of private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life was an open book, with even his eccentric sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, openly discussed by him and others in his journals.

Another reputation that comes out in letters journals. openly discussed by him and others in his sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, was an open book, with even his eccentric private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life men are far uglier than the public faces of As Auden said famously, private faces of public This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. his well-publicized grand vision of ridding nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- The book gives (among other things) the Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. (ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

loves in *The Rock*, Where is the life we have lost in the living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in the knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in the information?

These essays are a record of Shyam Lal's life-long love affair with ideas. The tone is often flirtatious rather than passionate. But it is not all high seriousness. The journalist in him keeps breaking through from time to time and he talks about the feet of clay and hyperactive joins of his subjects. Thus in the piece entitled "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. The book gives (among other things) the "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to his well-publicized grand vision of ridding venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. men are far uglier than the public faces of private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life was an open book, with even his eccentric sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, openly discussed by him and others in his journals.

Another reputation that comes out in letters journals. openly discussed by him and others in his sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, was an open book, with even his eccentric private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life men are far uglier than the public faces of As Auden said famously, private faces of public This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. his well-publicized grand vision of ridding nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- The book gives (among other things) the Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. (ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

loves in *The Rock*, Where is the life we have lost in the living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in the knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in the information?

These essays are a record of Shyam Lal's life-long love affair with ideas. The tone is often flirtatious rather than passionate. But it is not all high seriousness. The journalist in him keeps breaking through from time to time and he talks about the feet of clay and hyperactive joins of his subjects. Thus in the piece entitled "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. The book gives (among other things) the "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to his well-publicized grand vision of ridding venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. men are far uglier than the public faces of private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life was an open book, with even his eccentric sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, openly discussed by him and others in his journals.

Another reputation that comes out in letters journals. openly discussed by him and others in his sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, was an open book, with even his eccentric private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life men are far uglier than the public faces of As Auden said famously, private faces of public This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. his well-publicized grand vision of ridding nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- The book gives (among other things) the Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. (ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

loves in *The Rock*, Where is the life we have lost in the living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in the knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in the information?

These essays are a record of Shyam Lal's life-long love affair with ideas. The tone is often flirtatious rather than passionate. But it is not all high seriousness. The journalist in him keeps breaking through from time to time and he talks about the feet of clay and hyperactive joins of his subjects. Thus in the piece entitled "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. The book gives (among other things) the "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to his well-publicized grand vision of ridding venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. men are far uglier than the public faces of private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life was an open book, with even his eccentric sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, openly discussed by him and others in his journals.

Another reputation that comes out in letters journals. openly discussed by him and others in his sexual experiments to test his Brahmincharya, was an open book, with even his eccentric private men. In contrast to Mao's, Gandhi's life men are far uglier than the public faces of As Auden said famously, private faces of public This hypocrisy is of the essence of all tyrants. venial mankind of its propensity to original sin. his well-publicized grand vision of ridding nymphets is in full spate, in some contrast to man's bedroom where his weakness for nubile "lizard on the walls" view of the great helms- The book gives (among other things) the Mao's personal physician for over twenty years. (ended?) Shyam Lal reviews the memoirs of "The Emperor had no Clothes" (pun in-

the linguistic barrier is a real one even for born Englishmen. Many of the thinkers that Sham Lal writes about were closed books for the rest of the world for a long time. English translations of their works became available only long after they had become household names in their own countries. In addition, the notorious intellectual insularity of Englishmen (and therefore, of Indians) was a serious obstacle. Names like Derrida and Gramsci were seeping into British (and Indian) consciousness only in recent decades. But once the breach was made, largely through the intervention of American academia, there was no looking back. Though Oxford ostentatiously refused to give an honorary doctorate to Derrida some years ago, EngLit syllabi had to take note of him, especially after English departments became culture study departments, not always with happiest results. And the writers that Sham Lal has discussed had seminal things to say about the state of our society and culture and it would have been a great deprivation not to have been acquainted with them.

There is still the question of the conspicuous absence of India in Sham Lal's pages. Is it simply that the format chosen for this particular volume was euro-centric? Or that there is some kind of obverse of Saidian Orientalism at work, the colonized mind's eager preference for the exoticisms of the West and for dealing with universal paradigms about the human condition rather than the specifics of the Indian situation? In this salience of his celebrations, he is in some contrast to Giri Lal Jain,

the other star of *The Times of India* of those days, whose contemporaneous columns were read as regularly and as eagerly as Sham Lal's. Giri was a perfect foil for Sham Lal, the latter's cosmopolitanism and obsession with abstract and universal ideas standing out sharply against Giri's Indian —one almost said, Haryanvi—earthiness, and preference for issues rather than ideas.

Again, there is hardly a reference, much less discussion, of any Indian thinker who might have reflected seriously on the kind of subjects that Sham Lal has dealt with in this book. Apart from a passing reference to Kosambi, there is no mention of any Indian Marxist in this volume. Disenchantment with orthodox Marxism and the vicissitudes of its praxis in the erstwhile communist world was a common enough preoccupation in India as elsewhere during this period. But it is true that Marxian hermeneutics in India is not as original or expressed with the same logical rigour or elegance of expression as it is by some of the writers that Sham Lal has discussed. Moreover, the exigencies of Sino-Indian geo-political tangles had made discourse on Marxism and its mutants completely muddled even among intellectuals in the country. Even so, one would have liked to know what Sham Lal thinks of E.M.S Nambudripad and Devi Prasad Chattopadhyaya.

Apart from this, there are any number of ideas floating around about what constitutes the Indian way of thinking. Questions have been asked about the soundness of the non-

Cartesian epistemology of Hindu thought and the communitarian socio-political arrangements (of which caste is but one form) as contrasted with the homo-centric politics of the West and so on. For example, in one of his essays, A. K. Ramanujan has raised the question whether there is such a thinking as a Hindu way of thinking. Ashis Nandy has written extensively on what might be loosely called the civilizational foundations of the Indian society. This has a larger informal space in which intermediations take place in terms of cultural memories and shared local value systems at some odd with the formal structure of the constitutionally legitimized state sphere. One would liked to have had Sham Lal's penetrative and undecieved eye, quick to spot cant or humbug, directed at these.

But this is to be greedy. For what he has given, many thanks.

Post Script: Re-Reading Sham Lal's introduction after the review was written, I find that a companion volume on "Indian Themes" is to come. This renders some of my animadversions in the review on the absence of Indian preoccupations in the book under review wholly misconceived but too late to correct. I apologize for this oversight. ■

N.S. Jagannathan was formerly the editor of *Indian Express* and the *Indian Review of Books*, Chennai.

Telescoping Memory

Laila Tyabji

TRUTH, LOVE & A LITTLE MALICE: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

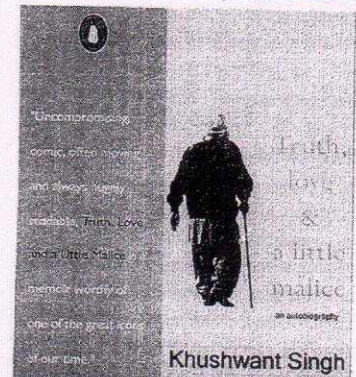
By Khushwant Singh

Viking in Association with Ravi Dayal Publisher, 2002, pp. 419, Rs. 450.00

Appropriately enough, it was thanks to Khushwant Singh that I started writing reviews—more than 30 years ago. When I was 19, he and the Sardarni (as he always called his wife) came to stay with my parents in Tokyo—en route to America to lecture. I was delegated to show them the sights. Very soon this became Khushwant and me abandoning Shinto shrines for sushi bars, taking long walks in the cherry-blossomed parks, talking books, and visiting bookshops for which we both had a passion. I was a voracious reader, and loved the fact that he had the same wide-ranging tastes—reading thrillers, history, poetry and the most *avant garde* fiction with the same eclectic, but also critically appreciative pleasure. He was slightly upset that I hadn't read his novels though I had read his history of the Sikhs. Returning to Delhi, he sent me *Train to Pakistan*, *Umrao Jaan Ada* and *I Shall Not Hear*

the *Nightingale*, affectionately inscribed. With the arrogance of youth, tongue well in cheek, I took their plots and dialogue apart in my thank-you letter. "You should be a writer, not an artist," he wrote back with his usual generosity. Three years later, when we returned to India, he asked me to review books for the *Illustrated Weekly of India*, of which he had just become editor. A typical example of his warm-hearted encouragement of the young, as well as his passionate enthusiasm for people and words.

Reading his autobiography reminds one of how many young Indian writers and journalists owe their start to his encouragement and fostering: M.J. Akbar, Devyani Chaubal, Bachi Kakaria, the tragic Indira Aikath Gyaltsen, Anees Jung, Sadia Dehlavi.... The list goes on. Confident and content in himself, and engagingly aware of both his own talents and



his limitations, Khushwant was totally without that sour, prickly insecurity that mars so many creative Indians. He was always delighted to discover and nurture new talent. He read and publicly acknowledged Govind Desani, Alan Searly, Vikram Seth, Upmanyu Chatterjee, Amitava Ghosh, Geeta Hariharan, long before international laurels brought them national recognition. As he grew older and more vulnerable to flattery and pretty young women, he became less discriminating, ever ready to plug a new book or new writer in his columns.

Khushwant Singh himself has written almost too much! *Truth, Love & a Little Malice* contains no bibliography of his books but they run into a couple of dozen. *Sex, Scotch & Scholarship* is a typical title that sums up their

range and his lighthearted approach to the written word. His works range from a two-volume scholarly *History of the Sikhs* to the ubiquitous joke books, found on every railway bookstall. They reflect the wide scope of his interests: Translations of Urdu and Gurmukhi poetry; *Nature Watch*—a *baramasi* almanac of seasonal trees, flowers, birds and animals, *Umrao Jan Ada*, the translation of a 19th century courtesan's memoir; short stories, a novel on Partition, and another on Delhi that encompasses six centuries; books on religion, the Punjab, and of course women. His columns are even more wideranging and widely circulated.

Shamelessly given to recycling his life and jokes, some of the material in *Truth, Love & a Little Malice* seems déjà vu, almost stale. Writing a biography in one's youth one runs the risk of being accused of hubris; in old age memory telescopes and blurs the past. Portraiture becomes caricature, insights become anecdote, losing their cutting edge through too much after-dinner repetition. Scattered through the book I recognized many figures from my own past. Some, like Krishna Menon and Anees Jung, were wonderfully perceptive and revealing. Others—Amrita Shergill, the H.S. Maliks, Protima Bedi, President Radhakrishnan—I found curiously one-dimensional; sketched to shock, amuse, titillate, annoy, or simply name-drop, rather than rounded with the humanity that so characterizes the author. (Disconcerting too, to encounter my father only in the context of being seduced by the former!) Distance also distorts the weightage of who and what is relevant and irrelevant. In a long life of extraordinary interest, crowded with incident and people, this can be exasperating!

Khushwant's name and fame as a lecherous, immensely successful Sardar has resulted in some curious knee-jerk negative reactions from readers. Some are put off by all that prurient and obsessive reduction of life to *lingams*, others were expecting more sex and belly-laughs, yet others think him a *namak-haram* to talk ill of his friends and the dead. Both friends and foes perused the long anticipated volume in trepidation—furious at being exposed, equally resentful and hurt at being excluded!

Nonetheless, *Truth, Love & a Little Malice* should be read—there is much that is new and exciting and memorable—written with frankness and honesty, however subjective. It's a pity that the bits that have been widely extracted or commented on are either the sexy bits or the Maneka Gandhi/Indira Gandhi soap opera ones. For me the most moving and revealing chapters are his childhood and rite of passage from village kid shitting in the sand-dunes and his indifferent, diffident school days; metamorphosing through his own tenacity and talent into a globe-trotting, sought-after literary lion. They explain so much about the

Khushwant who has exasperated, inspired and endeared himself to us over the years. Solving in part, the riddle of why, amazingly prolific, he writes so much—even now, in his 80s, accepting every invitation to write or speak or attend the most tendentious event; rising at dawn to write and research his subjects.

What is he driven by? Not money, name and fame now, obviously—or even free Scotch! Just an inability to say no, perhaps born out of that earlier self-doubt and insecurity, plus the sturdy Punjabi work ethic he inherited from his rural forebears. The memory of that earlier insecurity—the young boy whose birth his father didn't even bother to record in his diary—explains too his sensitivity and helpfulness to the young, as it does his naïve pleasure in the perks and freebies of his present star status. "I am not an admirer of great people," Khushwant Singh writes in his Prologue; "the few I got to know at close quarters turned out to have feet of clay; they were pretentious, feckless, lying and utterly commonplace". In reality, the farming lad from Hadali has kept his ingenuous delight in meeting the great; easily dazzled, and only perceiving their feet of clay in hindsight.

In a commemorative volume published to celebrate his 80th birthday, an *ex-Illustrated Weekly* staffer wrote of how he used to make his young writers and editors write and re-write their pieces. Sadly, over the years, Khushwant abandoned this iron discipline and says himself in his autobiography that he "does not have the time to wait for inspiration" or "polish up what (he) wrote". *Truth, Love & a Little Malice*, though more polished and plotted than much of his recent prose, has all the faults of its writer—but also his many shining virtues. His warmth, his openness and many enthusiasms, his rambunctious humour, his casual scholarship in many tongues and cultures, his perceptiveness and pleasure in the oddities and inconsistencies of humankind. His simple but firmly held beliefs; his support of the minorities and underdog, his pride in being a Sikh and an Indian, and corresponding despair in our current, corrupt *kal yug*. His sense of family. The flip-side of the coin is also honestly presented—an increasing *laissez-faire* in both life and writing, ambition sliding into complacency at being the top of the second-rank pile; his relish in the perquisites of power and privilege, his increasing reluctance to take a tough stand, the naivety with which he allowed Sanjay and his ilk to over-ride his principles and his judgment. His weak spot for ego-massages and sycophantic praise; the occasional meanness and malice that runs counter to his intrinsically generous spirit.

The genesis of all this, and therefore the core of the book, is the Hadali in which he grew up—evocatively remembered: the sheep shearers and camelherds, sand dunes, brick and

mud houses, fiercely mustachio-d, often violent men with whipcord muscles, the tension and sharing of dual communities—Hindu and Muslim, (Khushwant has had a lifelong soft spot for Muslims) hunting falcons, buffaloes and dung beetles, smoking, acrid camel-dung fires, temperatures rising to 125°F—and of course the women with "their taut, shapely black-nippled breasts as well as their muscular, dimpled buttocks", observed keenly by the infant voyeur, developing into the avid, but never crudely aggressive lechery that was so much a part of his character.

Despite his carefully cultivated reputation as a big, bad womanizer, Khushwant was always a looker and talker rather than ruthless seducer—not entirely because of the stern eye of the Sardarni. His attitude to sex remained that of a schoolboy—sniggering and exchanging scatology, delighted at his own wickedness, loving the shock sensation of using naughty grown-up words, relishing a sighting of a well-shaped flank or plunging cleavage—but basically childlike and innocent. His autobiography is full of salaciously naughty stories about other people, but very few first-hand bedroom revelations. When a visiting Afro-American woman friend showered in his hotel suite and came out naked in a towel to chat with him, the incident is retold at length twice in the book's 419 pages—an indication that it shook and perhaps slightly shocked him. He does love big breasts—but he also genuinely loves and respects women as people.

It is sad that this book's publishing birth pangs, prolonged by a highly unnecessary lawsuit that dragged on for years, have meant that its eventual emergence coincided with the death of Kaval, Khushwant's wonderful, acerbic, loving, tough, compassionate wife. By choice a largely unknown, fiercely independent figure, remaining outside his official social life, she was his anchor and his compass point—providing both a reality check and a centre to his sprawling, multifaceted, incorrigibly gregarious, sometimes less than discriminating life. In his book he says that he might stop writing when she was no more.

I hope he WILL continue to write—fewer pot-boilers and 'Sardar in the Bulb' columns, and more of the real stuff. As his autobiography reminds us, his long life is part of the fabric of an India that is still in the making—deeply relevant at a time when we are still questioning our origins and directions. Too often Indian biography and history ends up bowdlerized, distorted and self-serving—ultimately misleading. The courage to write with truth, love and a little malice adds *mirch-masala* to a life experience and a mind that has still much to offer. ■

Laila Tyabji, a freelance critic, is the Chairperson of DASTAKAR.

Angst and Epiphany

Keki N. Daruwalla

INDIAN ERRANT: STORIES

By Nirmal Verma

Indialog Publications, Delhi, 2002, pp. 521, Rs. 495.00

Nirmal Verma, our leading novelist, has for long deserved a really fine book in English translation. This has now been provided by Prasenjit Gupta, as translator and by Indialog Publications in regard to production values. The *Indian Errant* is really an effortless attempt at the odyssey of the immigrant, an odyssey that seems to take lost individuals from no place in particular to nowhere. The stories are journeys through twilight zones, both in the physical and metaphysical senses. Street lamps cast small lonely pools of light on the roads; protagonists shrink into lonely circles of their own silences. Whether it is a bridge in Prague, a ferry to Ostend, or a basement dormitory, the dialogue takes place between two lonely people, and sometimes three. There's never a crowd. Sometimes the characters seem to relate to each other. Sometimes each seems on his own trip, and what takes place is two monologues between two people. That precisely is the immigrant condition, the incapacity to relate to an alien environment, to enter into a meaningful dialogue. Vistas open up on existential angst. If one is acutely sensitive, what does one relate to anywhere, be it home or away?

Even enlightenment is no holy grail... There is no epiphany waiting for the protagonists, or the reader, at the end. Three people, an Arab, a Brazilian and the nameless narrator (his narrators are usually nameless) live for less than a week in a basement dormitory, awaiting their clearance papers from the ministry. There is a distinct Kafkaesque touch here. The city (Prague?) is not named. One November night the Arab comes in with a woman, Amalia, and requests the other two to leave, for obvious reasons. After a while, they go back, only to find the Arab almost dozing off. The woman is drunk and throws up on the Brazilian's bed. But this twenty-year old Brazilian makes her a cup of coffee from the packet his mother gave to him. She likes the packet and he gives it to her. The Brazilian is unable to make love—it's his first time. She gifts him a scarf and takes him out touring the city, showing him the river, and the islands in it, all of which he was unaware. The story ends with rats rummaging among the cupboards and the Brazilian praying to his mother's photograph. The last lines of the story need to be quoted: "For the first time something had arisen between him (the Brazilian) and his mother... A river... and islands scattered in the middle of the city." That is epiphany enough. Usually you don't even get that much.

The reality at the other end is not only

different and disorientating, but also grimy. (The West, even Venice, holds no fascination for Nirmal). The story in which Venice figures is called "In Another Town." The beer is tepid and the nameless narrator talks of "the sweet, sticky pain of the Chianti." The aria being sung at the St. Mark Square is great though, the voice soaring up and then "bending low like a stalk of wheat." And right enough, he is taken to a whore by a pimp of a boy. It is not just the language that he cannot understand, but reality itself in this city, where the whore invites him for a night in front of a boozing crowd. He goes back to the St. Mark Square, but it is night now, and the boy selling postcards of the Madonna isn't to be found, and "from some far corner of the canal the desolate sound of a motorboat" can be heard. He drinks some Chianti, just as "warm and sticky" as before, but he can't chuck the bottle. "You cannot throw Chianti away. Nor its pain."

The plots, if you can call them that, are so subtle that they are elusive. Actually many stories don't have a plot. They are not supposed to. Nirmal Verma is after all the torch-bearer of the *Nae Kahani*. His stories balance themselves precariously, but still firmly, on the hyphen between physics and metaphysics. Each story is a sort of existential slice of life, or rather a moment in a person's life caught in a twilight zone of lamplight and shadows, of indeterminate emotions, of failure to respond to the challenge of a new environment. The challenge is not understood by the protagonist, so there is hardly any question of coming to terms with it. This is evident in the story "One London Night" (London Ki Ek Raat). The narrator, an Indian, a Black from South Africa (George) and the English Willie don't get employed in a night shift, and go into a pub owned by an Italian. The Indian, who is almost mistaken for a Japanese, is asked by George: "If you were in my place what would you do?"

He laughs. "To this day I don't know what to do even in my own place."

Sure enough he doesn't understand the situation when Willie starts dancing with a girl at a pub, entrancing her escorts, or when the Italian owner begs him first to take Willie away, and later asks him not to move out of the pub, with the girl's escorts waiting to give him a thrashing. So he is almost beaten to death, along with Willie, when he moves out. George, feels guilty and cries because he didn't come to their rescue. They might feel he is a coward, he thinks. The narrator says "now the two of us had suddenly become alone even though we were together... maybe there was



nothing more terrible than this, that two people, even though they were together, felt that neither could save the other, when they felt that not one memory, not one instant of times past could (they) share..." And they could not be partners in "the close aloneness of their present, this passing moment..."

This aloneness haunts his stories—not just the immigrant or exile caught in a strange world, but the soul itself snared in alien surroundings. Characters lack a centre. They drift. The stories are like a river of events caught by a movie camera, but reinforced by strong imagery, and insights that come like revelations. And of course the ambience which sucks you in. Light, or the lack of it, subtly sets the scene, builds up the mood, stroke by pencil stroke. In a way, the stories are mood poems. "When they came out of the buffet, a wan light lay diffused over the darkness, a brown light that winter leaves behind and summer does not swallow." (Their Rooms). There you have them, the shades and the layers of light and murk, subtle impastos, which the reader can savour.

'The Burning Bush' is one of his acclaimed stories, revolving around the issue of identity, but I found it a bit contrived. Nirmal Verma may not be didactic, but there is an implicit undercurrent of morality in what he writes. In 'Guest for a Day' the divorced husband turns evasive when his ex-wife asks why he is not living with the girl who had usurped her place. "He wanted to say something more, about love, about loyalty, about faith and deceit; some large truth, made up of many lies..." but is unable to say it.

His stamp is unmistakable—the deft touch, the understatement, the ambience (always autumnal and twilit) that sucks you in, meetings always with strangers or the divorced, hardly ever with one's own, and the sense of loneliness and loss of the characters who drift like a "stream of crisp, yellow, August leaves scurrying after a bus." Comparison with a Russian great is an albatross Nirmal Verma will have to carry. But he is the nearest thing we have to Chekov.

The translation by Prasenjit Gupta is flawless and the production by Chandana Dutta is of a very high order. It must also be remembered that both the Hindi version and the translation into English of the fourteen stories, are included in this unique volume. ■

Keki N. Daruwalla is a poet, writer and critic.

Inside India—the Bhisam Sahni Way

K.G. Verma

MIDDLE INDIA: SELECTED STORIES

By Bhisam Sahni. Translated by Gillian Wright
Penguin Books, 2001, pp. 244, Rs. 295.00

MADHAVI

By Bhisam Sahni. Translated by Alok Bhalla
Seagull Books, 2002, pp. 68, Rs. 150.00



Elder litterateur Bhisam Sahni, a highly regarded figure, has a substantial body of work—fiction, plays, a biography of his actor-writer brother late Balraj Sahni and nine collections of short stories.

Equally at home in Hindi and Urdu, Bhisamji has considerable following in both. Profusely translated in Indian languages, his fiction has travelled to distant lands. Translation of *Middle India*, his much talked-about short stories by Gillian Wright and a rendition of his play *Madhavi* by Alok Bhalla are welcome additions.

Humanist to the core, as is evident from the stories in this collection, Bhisamji is deeply concerned with the fate of human beings in the social sphere. He extols the basics which bind people in their daily grind—positioned in the central issues of lower and middle class ethos he gives a near total picture of what it means to be someone from that set-up. He unravels a thousand hypocrisies in which life is wrapped up in its myriad manifestations. Localized in a particular set of circumstances each story forms part of a segment of social reality which points towards a certain cleavage, some melody or a specific desperation. The responses of the characters are determined by social, economic and political pressures. What is at stake is the personal, foregrounded as valuable, moral and necessary. Originally from Rawalpindi District of West Punjab (Pakistan) Bhisamji's oeuvre represents pre-Partition, Partition and post-Independence India. His sensitivity to the Hindu-Muslim question gave us *Tamas*, a novel about Partition. It did not stop there. From the tremors he takes up the dimension of the aftermath in 'Paali' and 'Veerò' in the collection. Deeply affected by the historic holocaust he regrets the loss of values and the human cost it entailed. He sifts from the massive debris whatever of value that can be resurrected, however tenuous. It is as though he refuses to accept its finality even though it may mean stepping out of the process of history into the myth of reunion.

A good part of the collection represents the lower and middle-class phenomenon and its gruelling struggle to survive in an inhuman and indifferent social framework—unfree and fettered (Nand Lal's Leela, Toys, Radha-

Anuradha) the victims try hard to break-off the yoke but hardly ever succeed. In their efforts, it is to be noted, there are no signs of protest. There is a lot of fight in them but purely at the individual level. They look for a niche. Caught in the knitty-gritty of life there is nothing teleologically spectacular about them. They are not heroes on a grand scale (*Toys*, *Dinner for the Boss*, *Sparrow*). Women too seem to accept their lot without gender consciousness (*Salma Aapa Straying*). Yet they are examples of authentic goodness and genuine camaraderie in their dealings. There are no signs of gender assertions, they are of the family and for the family.

Following Premchand's tradition in some measure Bhisamji's stories incorporate elements of classic realist text which is constructed on the basis of enigma—information is initially withheld on condition of a 'promise to the reader that it will finally be revealed'. The disclosure of this 'truth' brings the story to an end. Classic realist text thus tries to rub off, efface contradiction and slowly moves towards 'closure'. Expressive realism of the last century and a half in West-influenced fiction particularly in Hindi and Urdu, making a faithful representation of the individual and his environs was the sole objective of realists. To penetrate into the centres of consciousness in its utmost vividness which embodies the conjunction of 'truthful realization' and 'morality', the (fiction)-writers' 'evaluation of life'.

Let us admit that Bhisamji admirably succeeds in his aim. Without exception the stories in this collection have combined the twin traits of 'closure' and 'truthfulness' amply. In 'Radha-Anuradha' and 'Toys' the author exposes the psychology of the lower bourgeoisie and its inherent hankering after security. It is ironic that in both cases the intentions are not evil. They are the class characteristics. The ideology inscribed in the texts, apart from being a faithful representation also shows its contradictoriness. How does a thirteen something girl dishwashing in seven houses twice a day come to know in her father's shanty that she will soon be sold to a deaf and dumb old man in marriage for a sum of seventeen hundred rupees? The plan backfires, the girl Radha elopes with a young man in the

neighbourhood, a bearer in a hotel. She forgoes her earlier means of livelihood and is not welcome even to watch TV in the house of the compassionate Shyama Bibi for fear of getting into trouble. Similarly in 'Toys', a school-going child is subjected to dehumanizing isolation because the parents want to improve their prospects.

Women occupy a fair share of Bhisamji's attention though mostly in subsidiary positions. It cannot be ignored that most of them have no significant impact in drawing the reader to participate in their experience. But they do not form part of the "protest" or "argumentative tradition". Discursivity in these stories follows the stereotypes of a 'sister, mother, wife and a maid servant or sister-in-law'. Conceptualized from a middle class perspective of an educated sensibility, the stories are what in critical practice in the sixties was called 'images of women' criticism. They are seen as objects in a patriarchal order—their destiny dominated by men. Humane and emotional, they have not yet become conscious of their role in history. They are without the social or ideological wherewithal to fight it out. They cannot create alternate voices. Under the strong impact of the male totalizing tendency, they fight their panic and ignorance to ward off pressures in purely instinctive terms. On the flipside is their innate humanity which does the balancing act. When deconstructed as texts these stories bring out the tangled contradictoriness of our social formations.

The question of women is also dealt with in full measure in the play *Madhavi*. Bhisamji goes back to the *Mahabharata* where Madhavi, the daughter of King Yayati is given in gift to Galava Munikumar who has come to him with his request. Having got her he now wants to live up to the image of an ideal disciple of an ideal Guru and exchanges her with three Kings for six hundred white ashwamedhi horses with black ears. The promise of presenting his Guru Vishwamitra with the *gurudakshina* of eight hundred ashwamedhi horses can be fulfilled by giving her also to his Guru in lieu of the last 200 horses. The tale as narrated by Narad in 'Udyog Parva' shows that adherence to one's dharma is the highest gain. By doing all this Yayati's fame spreads far and wide, as a great *daanveera*. Madhavi is made to suffer all kinds of travails. She is a mere pawn in the hands of male power game.

The play *Madhavi* in three acts with a short and succinct introduction by the late Tridev can be categorized as a sister-text to stories in *Middle India* which already explores the imperatives of the gender question. The mythic tale of Yayati presents in sharp relief the place of woman in male hierarchical discourses. Made to succumb to the whims and fancies of her male protectors—father and husband—'Madhavi' with her modern gaze realizes her predicament at the end that she has been only an instrument.

Bhishamji has ideologized the mythic tale. Not entirely free from historical resonance it takes cognizance of the 'contingency of the present' which is to say that it shows solidarity (with its) polemics unable to transgress her passivity. Madhavi slowly and surely realizes her plight. In the face of insurmountable inner turmoil she makes her choice. She breaks loose from the 'charming façade', rejects the 'language of sensitivity' before fleeing into the jungle. One can say that in the last analysis she takes a 'political decision': realization dawns on her that it is a remorselessly all embracing monolithic structure of male dominance. Arguably the withdrawal may not appear to be a sufficient response to a dilemma which tries to choke and repress anger and is a dead-end. Nevertheless it makes a statement on the state of things as they are in the midst of contending spheres of sexuality, culture, power and ideology of mythic India.

One last worrying problem: how to read a text which is still rooted in the classic realist tradition and is unambiguous, undimensional in the era of liberalization. The stories presumably do not show the duality of author as subject and implied, invisible narrator. The

apparent unitariness of the narrative moves invariably towards a single harmonious and authoritative reading. Sometimes it appears that even in the well known stories like 'Paali' and 'Veero' the author had a stance, a message before revealing it to his readers. At all levels the reading of the stories contain elements which tone down contradiction and maladjustments in the text. The writerly text on the other hand is 'open' and plural and indulges in disturbing transgressions. It involves the reader in the contradiction and has no respect for the texts as 'authorial soliloquies'. The new critical practice in the changed scenario avoids looking at the texts as the 'staples of humanist tradition where coherent subject and accessible historical reference guaranteed harmony and orderlines. Bhishamji's *Middle India* and the play *Madhavi* falling in the tradition of humanism, remain highly accessible. Much of the oppositional ire of the text is thus effaced in the process. *Madhavi* moves in the direction of male-female binary certainty which is obviously an authorial conviction.

Gillian's translated version too scrupulously follows the text on these lines: fidelity to the implied author (narrator's) stance closely

observant of the specifics of Indian middle class milieu—its deprivations, desperations, superstitions and bigotry, and above all simple humanity. There are no deviations from the original, it is in tact with references to the Indian earthiness. Gillian Wright assumes liberalism and is well adjusted to the linguistic habits of North India. *Middle India* in translation takes in its stride the colonial other to partitioned psyche and variagated picture of the life of the average Indian in the pre-liberation phase. A sensitive blend of the social and sociological with moments of existential blank, the stories are *ideologemes* in the narrative called India.

Alok Bhalla's enterprise reminds one of the significant work done in translation especially in the classical and mythological fields. Sophisticated and refined *Madhavi* in English makes compelling read. The play moves with dignified ease. As theatre it has successfully reached out to wider audiences. ■

K.G. Verma teaches English at Hans Raj College, Delhi University, Delhi.

Redefining Identities

Sukrita Paul Kumar

BRUISED MEMORIES: COMMUNAL VIOLENCE AND THE WRITER

Edited and Introduced by Tarun K. Saint
Seagull Books, Calcutta, 2002, pp.193, Rs. 475.00

SET AT ODDS: STORIES OF THE PARTITION AND BEYOND

By Prafulla Roy, translated by John W. Hood
Srishti Publishers, New Delhi, 2002, pp. 284, Rs.250.00

B*ruised Memories* is a significant contribution to the project of "working through" not only the memories of violence witnessed in 1947 but also of establishing the need to raise questions and understand the subsequent, ongoing communal strife in the country. On opening the book, one is face to face with "Balle-balle Jawahar Lal", the song captured from the streets of Delhi by Krishna Sobti in the 1950's and presented here with its English translation. The song in fact sets the tone of the book—questioning leadership, highlighting the futility of tearing the country asunder and in that, demonstrating the helplessness of ordinary people.

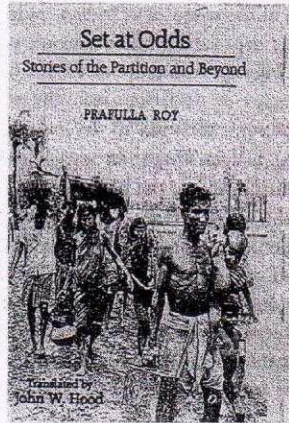
The volume offers critical perceptions, socio-historical analyses as well as creative literature on the theme of violence and communal conflicts covering the half-a century-long story of the divided subcontinent. Stories

such as Bhisham Sahni's 'Take me Home' bring alive poignant moments actually experienced by hundreds of people, young and old, during the days of Partition. The old man on the train yearns for his home and is going mad in desperation. What brings him back to his senses is the sound of his own language when the old woman speaks to him in his mother-tongue, the Multani dialect of Punjabi. He has contacted home! Another story in which language again plays the role of a character, is Mahasweta Devi's 'He Said, Pani'. While *pani* is the Hindi/Urdu word for water used by Bengali Muslims, the word *jal* is the Bengali word for water usually used by Bengali Hindus. "To offer *jal* when someone asked for *pani* was not a punishable offence after all"—the story ends with this statement, identifying the simple truth of vital human connections transcending linguistic differences.

...the translator of these stories, John W. Hood, remarks how many of Roy's stories prove that the worst articulations of the politics of divisiveness are also known to bring out the best in people. The quest for harmony continues and the absurdity of hatred tends to dawn upon many.

Whether it is through the sheer oppression of living in a 'City of Sieges' (title of Bilquis Zafirul Hassan's poem), or the experiencing of the violence of dishes breaking and the "earth quaking" in Nabaneeta Dev Sen's poem 'Dharavi', glimpses of degenerate humanity in action alert the reader. What comes as a discursive point in Amitav Ghosh's essay 'The Ghosts of Mrs. Gandhi' can then well be put into an appropriate context: Ghosh refers to the Bosnian writer Dzevad Karahasan's startling question of the connection between literary aestheticism and the contemporary world's indifference to violence. Precisely when we think of the world, the aesthetic of indifference might create the need, as he says, to "recognize the urgency of remembering the stories we have not written".

The editor, Tarun Saint, does well in recording Dilip Simeon's 'Chronicle of an



Event that Should Never Have Happened' in this volume. Communalized politics unravelled in the Hindi novel *Tamas* evoked both positive and negative forces in people. Simeon's essay delineates the conflict of these forces and shows the triumph of positive conviction. This exemplifies the forms of resistance such literature is called upon to find space even in academic circles when the fire of politically generated communal strife is so live in a society.

In such a socio-political context, a discussion on democracy, secularism, religious fanaticism is indeed welcome. Ketaki Kushari Dyson's analysis of the scenario leads her to the following understanding: "To make secularism safe, we have to make the entire subcontinent secular, and to make the entire subcontinent secular, in the end we have no option but to make the whole world secular". By showing how most of the countries in the world could become subject for "conflict studies" and how, unless checked, a network of interactive parts could keep the fire of the Crusades alive everywhere, Dyson pleads for a comprehensive effort at eliminating mutual ignorance, first and foremost.

Later in the book, the panel comprising Ashis Nandy, D.R. Nagaraj and Harish K. Trivedi, discuss notions of communalism and the question of boundaries, modernity and the communal imagination, as also violence and the imagination. Points of divergences, more than agreement, make this discursive piece useful and interesting, leaving the reader with more than one point of view to mull over!

The strength of *Bruised Memories* lies in the plurality of voices, both creative and critical, that the editor has been able to, so skillfully, bring together. The genuineness of concerns, thoughts and emotions evidenced in most of the selected pieces in this volume keeps the reader engaged throughout.

Profulla Roy's collection of Bangla short stories translated into English, *Set at Odds*, presents a very different kind of plurality. While all the stories here articulate the anguish,

pain, violence of Partition in the Eastern region of the Indian subcontinent, each story deals with the truth of a specific experience within a specific context. Caught miserably in the politics of divisiveness continuously and having to suffer two Partitions within a span of three decades, the people of this region underwent a range of gory experiences of forced dislocation, identity crisis, language problems and communally motivated savagery. Roy's stories focus on ordinary people bearing the brunt of grand historical decisions. With his strong sense of reality and his delicate understanding of human compassion, the author portrays convincing situations rooted in reality in which even in the frenzy of hostility, communal hatred is transcended in, amongst others, such stories as 'The Boatman', 'The Island in the River'.

In his Introduction to *Set at Odds*, the translator of these stories, John W. Hood, remarks how many of Roy's stories prove that the worst articulations of the politics of divisiveness are also known to bring out the best in people. The quest for harmony continues and the absurdity of hatred tends to dawn upon many. But then, stories such as 'The Destination' serve as reminders of the persistence of anti-people forces. Hood's 'Introduction' provides a complete backdrop to these *Stories of the Partition and Beyond*. He contextualizes them in both their political as well as historical framework. The stories evoke a better understanding of the Partition mentality suffered by the multitude of Bengalis this or that side of the border, living with a continuous sense of insecurity and bogged down by different notions of homeland, mother tongue and identity.

The strength of Bruised Memories lies in the plurality of voices, both creative and critical, that the editor has been able to, so skillfully, bring together.

The stories are marked by a refreshingly crisp language and commendable readability. As for the question of fidelity, this reviewer is not in a position to comment, for the lack of accessibility of Bangla, the original language in which these stories were written. But as one reads the translated stories in their autonomy, the sensitivity of the translator becomes self-evident.

It is heartening to have both, *Bruised Memories* as well as *Set at Odds* demonstrate a definite 'quality consciousness' for the act of translation, which after all is crucial in making the well-chosen content of these books engaging for the reader. ■

Sukrita Paul Kumar, translator, critic and writer teaches in the Delhi University.

Two Debut Volumes

Anjana Neira Dev

...KALI DANCES. SO DO I...

Poems by Usha Akella

Authors and Writers India, 1999, pp.58, Rs.75.00

THE OTHERNESS OF SELF

By Feroze Varun Gandhi

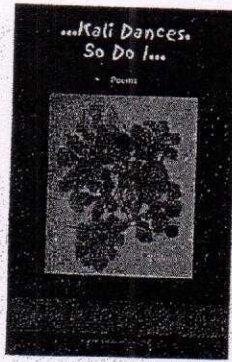
Rupa & Co., India, 2000, pp.96, Rs.295.00

The two books of poetry come from the minds and hearts of poets whose location is as diverse as the expressions of their imagination. ...*Kali Dances. So Do I...*, a slim, 56-page collection of 33 poems arranged in three sections, has a bold red and black cover, with a stick drawing of the triumphant goddess Kali, trampling the male demon underfoot. The poet tells us in the introduction that she has 'used the myth and symbol of Kali as the archetype dominating the times we live in'.

Section I, entitled 'Kali' is divided into two parts: the 'Ascending: Poems of Affirmation' and the 'Descending: Journey to the Motherland'. Part 1 is a personal narrative of the poet's memory of women who strove to assert their individuality and independence; and in all of them she sees "the spirit of Kali seeking victory". As Kali herself enunciates in the opening poem, 'Not Merely in Dakshineswar', "I am everywhere. / I rise on the ash-smear'd corpse of day in victorious black/ when the day's destruction is done, / I reside in the pupil of the eye, I am your sight, / ...See my mark branded on every Hindu woman's forehead".

The next poem 'No' is a collection of 6 cameos of the trials of a young girl "the centre handicraft on display" for the prospective groom and his family to view. She will not repeat the history of her grandmother, aunt, mother and friends, S., B., U. and V., "all the women I know/ who never said 'No'". So she says "No, No, No", "growing taller with each No". Usha reminisces about her two grandfathers in 'Tatagaru' and 'The Other Grandfather' and in both poems the idyllic innocence of childhood is analysed from the adult's more skeptical perspective and she is finally able to "brush away the cobwebs and see the truth". In 'Desecration', Usha retells the myth of the dismemberment of Shakti, and uses this as a symbol of the "daily desecration of the body" by a civilization "that takes its myths literally". In 'Step out of the Fire', she decries the "five thousand years of man's need, his laws, his rules" and warns of the imminent rising of 'a new goddess' from a "culture that has stood on the corpses of women too long".

This very powerful first part, redolent with myth and memory, is followed by one in which time and geographical displacement have created a new perspective. The poet returns the



environment which "bridged (my) dusty way from childhood to youth". Usha seems to share with other expatriate Indian English poets the Janus-faced predicament of being and belonging wherein she is torn between an intense desire to claim India as her own, and an equally urgent need to renounce and repudiate it. As she writes very tellingly in 'Rite of Passage', "it cracked and fissured as the face/ of an eroding tradition,/ the face of a mother growing old/ before her children's eyes,/ a mother who nurtured me into my destiny/ and aborted the embryo of my youthful dreams,/ a mother whose face I am not sure of,/ a veil that hides the enigma that is India,/ I go back, I go back".

The second section of the book entitled 'Dances' is less interesting, as it appears less felt. The poet carries us with her as long as she writes of issues that move her and in a setting that is 'home'. As soon as she moves into the realm of descriptions and failed relationships, her voice is no longer as convincing.

The final section 'So Do I', has a single 8-line poem, 'Begging Bowl'. Usha reveals the duality of her poetic impulse that ostensibly asks for "fame", "applause", "nods" and "laughter", and silently "yearns for Nirvana". Her frequent recourse to Indian images and myths fit very well into her themes and concerns and do not cause the reader to doubt whether their inclusion is driven by the idea of marketing the 'idea of India'. However, readers who do not share the poet's cultural background may sometimes miss the very specific culturally coded references she makes and this would entail a loss of meaning.

From the many-hued images of Usha's collection, we move to Feroze Varun Gandhi's *The Otherness of Self*. The 96 pages are in three colours, black, grey and white. In the first experiment of its kind by a contemporary Indian English poet, the poems are interleaved with paintings by four of the Greats of Indian Art, Anjolie Ela Menon, Manjit Bawa, Manu Parekh and M.F.Hussain.

The poems in this collection are expressions of the bewilderment and anxiety of a young man trying to come to terms with a universe that is chaotic, absurd and cruel. The poet's

search for meaning begins in the first poem 'Wait' where he finds himself in a vacuum, "Praying for charms of chance/...playing with words/like laughter". In 'The Return of Introspection', he finds that "the search for freedom and the search for love/ lie on separate paths/...If there is no new kindness/ let me put/ my bad shoulder to the wheel". The poet finds himself perpetually at odds with the world and expresses his loneliness very poignantly in 'Perhaps I Go in Punishment', where he writes, "It is a long walk/ when men know themselves/ only by name./ Sadly,/ I will be a man any minute now". There are occasional outbursts of frustration at the lassitude of his "still, acceptant self" and he wishes that "anger would start/ to eat me inside/ instead of just threatening" (Cannibal).

My favourite poem in the collection is '...And the World was Surrendered to the World' in which the poet writes of the futility of expectation of change in a world where 'exile' is the punishment for 'daring to be consumed in the feelings of truth'. The final stanza of the poem deserves to be quoted in full for it seems to me to encapsulate the self, which gave expression to this collection. "Those old men/ stranded by everything/ except their thoughts/ are leaving/ And those young men/ stranded by everything/ because of their thoughts/ are becoming old/ the distance that greets the world/ is the same monotonous footfall...From now on time/ will only be watched out of politeness".

The poet's interior explorations lead him to seek solace within himself, but here too he is disappointed and he finds his solitude difficult to bear and says, "being all alone/ is like being in a crowd/ my thoughts trapped in confusion/ like a kite caught in the sky/ Imagine being caught in the sky". In the poem 'Darkness' it is only the maniac in Kafkaesque solitude that can understand the "effluvia of isolation" and "mania/ is the only reprieve".

The preoccupation with death, mutability, solitude and inertia continue through the next few poems until finally in 'Father to Son', the poet brings somebody else into his solitary universe. But here too, the poem speaks of an absence as the poet writes, "I haven't seen you for many years now/ As you hide amongst incense and beads/...As I held you up/ I thought 'Picture perfect'/ but dead/ like the flowers in my room". Caught in the maze of his isolation, the poet has recourse only to words to hold the final darkness at bay, albeit temporarily. It is here that Feroze makes his claim for the immortality and the pristine permanence of art against all the forces, which threaten destruction. It is most appropriate therefore that two art forms, poetry and painting should come together to make a stand against the world, time and death.

The poems, colourful paintings alongside notwithstanding, are unrelieved in their



heaviness of heart and sound. The words do not slip easily off the tongue and broken lines make the eye and the ear pause in hesitant anxiety. The poet has captured the sadness of the modern world very well, but the balance that can come with experience and maturity is missing. The poet's angst and solipsism verge on the obsessive and the unrelieved black he has used to paint his picture of the world is less attractive for its unidimensionality. The colour of the paintings finds no reflection in the poet's thoughts and death and solitude are the dominating motifs throughout.

The first difficulty in reviewing such a book is to separate the writer from his name and background. Secondly, Feroze's poetry can stand on its own merit and does not really need the support of well-known figures to give it credibility. The inclusion of the paintings may have enhanced the value of the book per se, but somewhere literary aesthetics has been compromised wherever the connection between the poems and the paintings is tenuous. Feroze should allow his poetry to speak for itself and only then will he transcend all labels that slot the poet with the publicly known figure. ■

Anjana Neira Dev is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of English, Gargi College, Delhi University and a Research Scholar at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi.

Subscribers Please Note

Those whose subscriptions are due may please send in their MO/DD/Cheque immediately to ensure uninterrupted supply of the journal.

The Book Review Literary Trust
239 Vasant Enclave
New Delhi - 110057

A Three-in-One Biography

Kumkum Lal

DANCING IN THE FAMILY

By Sukanya Rahman

HarperCollins, Delhi, 2001, pp. 158, Rs. 500.00

D*ancing in the Family* is a remarkable three-in-one biography, chronicling the lives of three generations of women, Ragini Devi, Indrani Rahman and Sukanya Rahman. It is also a chronicle of the individual struggle and enterprise that contributed to the revival of classical dance in India.

Spanning a century, the story begins with the birth of Ragini Devi in 1893, and ends with the death of Indrani Rahman in 1999. In the background loom the momentous events of the last century, the World Wars, the freedom movement and the Partition of the country. The shifts of scenes are continental—from America to India to Europe. Nevertheless, Sukanya Rahman weaves and orchestrates the charismatic characters and their movements in this vast canvas of space and time effortlessly and deftly. She even manages to fit the story within the span of a medium sized book.

The life of Ragini Devi reads like a stranger-than-fiction account of a middle class American girl (born Esther Luella Sherman), who believed that she was destined to be an Indian dancer. Once, with audacious extravagance, she even managed to convince a newspaper reporter that she was 'a high caste Brahmin' who had spent much of her time studying the 'invisible dances' and 'inaudible music' of India and Tibet! Yet, she was a serious student and studied the treatises of *Natya-shastra* and *Abhinaya Darpan* with the help of a Sanskrit scholar and also wrote the first

Spanning a century, the story begins with the birth of Ragini Devi in 1893, and ends with the death of Indrani Rahman in 1999. In the background loom the momentous events of the last century, the World Wars, the freedom movement and the Partition of the country. The shifts of scenes are continental—from America to India to Europe.

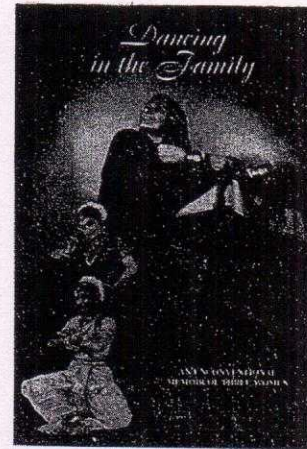
book in English on Hindu Dance, called *Nritanjali* published in 1928.

During her early years, she dabbled with things Indian, and married an Indian, Ramlal Bajpayi, a fugitive freedom fighter. Subsequently, with reckless determination and in pursuit of a dream, she eloped with the poet Harindranath Chattopadhyaya only to reach India in 1930, nursing a baby and a broken heart. Later, with support from friends and patrons, she learnt dance from traditional dancers and became the first woman (certainly the first foreigner) to study Kathakali. With Gopinath and an ensemble of musicians, she toured the country winning laurels. In that age, the English and the 'respectable Indians' looked upon dance as a disreputable art. With her unique status as a foreigner, however, Ragini Devi not only brought out from obscurity dances of the old masters, but also won over a hitherto prejudiced audience. Truly a bridge between the old and the new, she played a pioneering role in making Kathakali known at a national and international level, a contribution that has not received sufficient recognition.

Destiny and a headstrong, capricious and passionate nature made Ragini Devi's life almost a roller-coaster ride. Her adventures ranged from living in snake infested huts of Kerala, being massaged in Kathakali style by men, getting stranded in Paris at the outbreak of the War, making an escape from creditors and smuggling in Indrani into America in a laundry bag.

Indrani Rahman's own life with her mother was a continuous adventure, the only constant factor being the pursuit of dance. She married the architect, Habib Rahman, at the age of fourteen and thereafter led a comparatively even-paced life with a home and a steady income.

With the legacy and experience of Ragini Devi behind her, Indrani stepped into the burgeoning dance-scene of independent India with confidence, and became a star instantly. Those were heady days, a new-found pride in the nation's culture prevailed, hitherto unrevealed traditional dance forms were revived and so when in 1958 Indrani performed the Odissi in Delhi, she held the audience spell-bound by the exquisite grace



and bewitching seductiveness of the style. Indrani's own career highlights included a series of successful performances in front of foreign dignitaries and innumerable dance-tours which were punctuated by intense periods of training with old masters. Those of us who met her and witnessed her performances remember her as a beautiful dancer, a vivacious, gregarious woman always ready to help and promote other aspirants to dance. In the annals of dance history Indrani Rahman would be remembered for bringing to centre-stage the beauty and depth of styles like Odissi and Sattriya, her bold departures from traditional presentations and costumes and her tireless endeavours to better the dance scene particularly in Delhi. What a pity, then, that her death in 1999 evoked hardly a response in the media or among the present day dancers.

Sukanya herself did not feel the same obsession with dance as did her mother and grandmother. Buffeted constantly by the dance of life around her, she only craved the harmonious, normal life of an ordinary child. She went through boarding school, school in Paris, classes in Modern Dance at New York before realizing that her soul lay in her inheritance of Indian dance.

Though their lives were steeped in dance, this is not simply the story of dancers but of two charismatic, extraordinary women. Sukanya's delightful writing gives a body and soul to their stories. Written in candid style, the book is at times funny and at others moving. At all times, it is honest, and it avoids hyperbole and sentimentality. Sukanya may not have reached great heights with her dancing, but with *Dancing in the Family*, she has proved herself to be an excellent writer. ■

Kumkum Lal taught English Literature at Delhi University has a long association with the Indian classical dance, in particular with the Orissi, has researched, reviewed and performed dance.

ECONOMIC STUDIES

Land, Labour & Rights: Daniel Thorner Memorial Lectures edited by Alice Thorner delivered in various cities in India between 1985-2001, reflects the breadth of Thorner's own interests from themes in the social sciences to issues in the fields of public policy and human rights.
Tulika, 2001, pp. 279, Rs. 525.00

Nepal: Missing Elements in the Development Thinking by Gunanidhi Sharma is an insightful account of Nepalese economy.
Nirala Publications, 2000, pp. 232, price not stated.

Inclusive Economics: Gandhian Method and Contemporary Policy by Narendar Pani examines the methodological concerns of contemporary policy making and the primacy Gandhi gave to action.
Sage, 2001, pp. 205, Rs. 380.00

Stateholders in Rural Development: Critical Collaboration in State-NGO Partnerships edited by John M. Riley focusses on a form of collaborative effort between governments and voluntary agencies which appears to be working in practice.
Sage, 2002, pp. 214, Rs. 250.00

EDUCATION

Education and the Disprivileged: Nineteenth and Twentieth Century India edited by Sabyasachi Bhattacharya addresses the issue of unequal access to education from the perspective of how these asymmetries are reflected and to what extent the corrective action taken since Independence bridged the gap between the privileged and the dispossessed.
Orient Longman, 2002, pp. 342, Rs. 550.00

FICTION

Dahan (The Burning) by Suchitra Bhattacharya, an award winning novel, translated by Mahua Mitra is the story of two women's search for justice in a man's world.
Shrishti Publishers, 2001, pp. 265, Rs. 195.00

GANDHIANA

Gandhi: A Sublime Failure by S. S. Gill examines the reasons for Gandhi's many failures as well as the basis for his abiding universal appeal.
Rupa & Co., 2001, pp. 268, Rs. 295.00

GENDER STUDIES

Taboo! The Hidden Culture of A Red Light Area by Fouzia Saeed takes the reader on a journey through the Shahi Mohalla in Lahore through the lives of the people linked to it—the

prostitutes and the pimps, managers, customers, musicians and others.
Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2001, pp. 324, PKR 595.00

Contemporary Feminist Perspectives edited by Meghna Guha Thakurta is an anthology of perspectives and dimensions being addressed in diverse disciplines by feminist scholars.
The University Press Ltd., Dhaka, 1997, pp. 64, TK 120.00

Identity, Gender and Poverty: New Perspectives on Caste and Tribe by Maya Unnithan-Kumar is a study of a poor tribal community, the Girasia, in northwestern India in the context of both self-perception as well as the shifting use of kinship, gender and class relations in the region.
Rawat Publications, 2001, pp. 291, Rs. 595.00

Education for Women's Empowerment: Gender Positive Initiatives in Pace-setting Women's Colleges by Jaya Indiresan analyses what women's colleges are doing for moving beyond access and academics.
Konark, 2002, pp. 495, Rs. 750.00

Speaking Peace: Women's Voices From Kashmir edited by Urvashi Butalia reflects the range of women's experiences in the decade-long conflict through interviews with Kashmiri women, personal reflective pieces and extracts from books and reports.
Kali for Women, 2002, pp. 315, Rs. 350.00

Interrogating Women's Education: Bounded Visions Expanding Horizons by Karuna Chanana situates women in the family and the school as institutions which perpetuate gender inequality.
Rawat Publications, 2001, pp. 382, Rs. 625.00

Women Development Workers: Implementing Rural Credit Programmes in Bangladesh by Anne Marie Goetz compares the experiences and attitudes of women and men development agents in several major micro-finance programmes delivering credit to poor rural women.
Sage, 2001, pp. 443, Rs. 595.00

HISTORICAL STUDIES

The Partition Omnibus: Prelude to Partition by David Page; *The Origins of the Partition of India* by Anita Inder Singh, *Divide and Quit* by Penderel Moon and *Stern Reckoning* by G.D. Khosla with an introduction by Mushirul Hasan.
Oxford University Press, 2002, Rs. 750.00

Architecture in Medieval India: Forms, Contexts,

Histories, South Asian History: Readings and Interpretations edited by Monica Juneja presents an impressive array of historical ideas about India's past that has emerged out of the study of India's monuments from the 19th century onwards.
Permanent Black, 2001, pp. 640, Rs. 1095.00

Reading Subaltern Studies: Clinical History, Contested Meaning and the Globalisation of South Asia edited by David Ludden provides a reliable point of departure for new readers of Subaltern Studies and a resource base for experienced readers who want to review critical debates.
Permanent Black, 2002, pp. 442, Rs. 695.00

The World of Muslim Women in Colonial Bengal 1876-1939 by Sonia Nishat Amin studies the cultural context of modernization of middle class Muslim women in late 19 and 20th Bengal.
E.J. Brill, 1996, pp. 313, price not stated.

POLITICAL STUDIES

Terrorism and Response to Terrorist Threat by Ranjit K. Pachnanda is an interesting and timely study of this modern scourge.
UBS Publishers and Distributors, 2002, pp. 280, Rs. 395.00

Civil Society in Sri Lanka: New Circles of Power by Nira Wickramasinghe explores the various ways in which new international and transnational forces are shaping the developmental state in Sri Lanka.
Sage, 2001, pp. 178, Rs. 395.00

Civil Society: History and Possibilities edited by Sudipta Kaviraj and Sunil Khilnani analyses the concept of 'civil society', one of the most used and abused concept in current political thinking.
Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 330, Rs. 795.00

The Success of India's Democracy edited by Atul Kohli explores the intriguing anomaly of how democracy has taken root in India in the face of a low income economy, widespread poverty, illiteracy and immense ethnic diversity.
Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 298, Rs. 695.00

The Multicultural Path: Issues of Diversity and Discrimination in Democracy by Gurpreet Mahajan argues that multiculturalism having overtaken pluralism as the dominant concept has brought the concern for equality in the public domain.
Sage, 2002, pp. 239, Rs. 280.00

from Oxford...



The Upheaval

Acchev
Pundalik N. Naik
(Translated from Konkani
by Vidya Pai)

In this dramatic novel set in rural Goa of the 1970s, the destruction of nature is mirrored by the degradation of family life and traditional values in the village.

The symmetry of agricultural tasks is disturbed by the arrival of a businessman from outside Goa led by an intermediary, the wily Babuso, lazy and despised in the village, who seduces Pandhari, owner of a well-tilled field, with promises of wealth. Babuso paves the way for the mining entrepreneur to rip out ore from the virgin land, and sets off a series of disasters which not even Rukmini, Pandhari's wife, can safeguard her family against.

The natural beauty of the countryside, described with rhythm and poetic intensity at the beginning of the story, gives way to physical exploitation caused by the arrival of the mining company. Adolescent innocence is transformed into an adulthood of anguish and despair.

Published in 1977 and the first Konkani novel to be translated into English, *Acchev* is a landmark in the history of the language for its amplitude and depth. It illumines peasant life in the Ponda district against the changing landscape of modernity and industrialization, which has

fragmented village communities. The novel is about a traditional agrarian society that lives by myths and unspoken rules, and how it comes into contact with modern mechanized ways of life. It provides insights into the sociological framework of rural Goa at the time of its liberation from Portuguese rule.

0195660390 2002
215 x 140 mm 176 pp. Rs 295



India Development Report 2002

Kirit S. Parikh and
R. Radhakrishna (editors)

The India Development Report provides a comprehensive and contemporary treatment of the major issues facing the Indian economy. This volume, the third in the series, examines: the emerging macroeconomic scene and future growth prospects • food and nutrition security • poverty and agricultural research • social infrastructure • power sector reforms • sustainable urban systems • the control of industrial pollution • financial sector development • climate change • electoral cycles. This report combines academic rigour and objectivity with lucid presentation. It reviews economic growth in India over the past decade, highlights the problems of development, and provides in-depth analyses and policy suggestions on the extent to which economic

reforms have delivered on their promise and assesses what needs to be done next.

0195658833 2002
267 x 205 mm 292 pp. Rs 375



Philosophy, Culture and Religion:

Ethics and Epics
The Collected Essays of Bimal Krishna Matilal
Jonardon Ganeri

A renowned authority in the field of Indian studies, Bimal Krishna Matilal was one of the leading exponents of the philosophical and religious thought of classical India. Bringing together Matilal's huge body of articles, these volumes include previously unpublished essays and reflect the extraordinary range of Matilal's philosophical interests.

The unifying motif of Matilal's work is the study of rational traditions in Indian thought. With his ability to span the divide between the Indian and Western intellectual traditions, he brought contemporary techniques of analytical philosophy to bear upon the issues raised in classical Indian philosophy and, conversely, to highlight the relevance of Indian thought in the modern world.

From analyses of the arguments of classical philosophers to an evaluation

of the role of philosophy in classical Indian society, from critique of western perceptions of Indian philosophy to reflection on the thought of Indian intellectuals like Bankimchandra and Radhakrishnan, the essays collected here examine every aspect of the relationship between philosophical theory and Indian thought.

Ethics and Epics includes sections on Dharma, Rationality and Moral Dilemmas; Epics and Ethics; Pluralism, Relativism and Interaction between Cultures; Ideas from the East; and Concepts in Indian Religions. The companion volume, *Mind, Language and World*, deals with Scepticism and Mysticism; Nyaya Realism; Indian Buddhism; Sanskrit Semantics; and Philosophy in India: Perceptions and Problems.

0195655117 2002
215 x 140 mm 453 pp. Rs 650



Free Trade Today
Jagdish Bhagwati

Based on his acclaimed Stockholm lectures, Jagdish Bhagwati applies critical insights from revolutionary developments in commercial policy theory —many his own—to show how the pursuit of social and environmental agendas can be creatively reconciled with the pursuit of free trade. Indeed, he argues

that free trade, by raising living standards, can serve these agendas far better than can a descent into trade sanctions and restrictions.

Forcefully, elegantly and clearly written by one of the foremost economic thinkers of our day, this volume is not merely accessible but essential reading for anyone interested in economic policy or in the world economy. Professor Bhagwati has written a new preface for this Indian edition.

0195662032 2002
215 x 140 mm 148 pp. Rs 295



Agrarian Studies
Synthetic Work at the Cutting Edge

James C. Scott and Nina Bhatt

This book presents an account of an intellectual breakthrough in the study of rural society and agriculture. Its ten chapters, selected for their originality, encompass various disciplines, diverse historical periods and several regions of the world.

The ten studies recast and expand what is known about rural society and agrarian issues, examining such topics as poverty, subsistence, cultivation, ecology, justice, art, custom, law, ritual life, cooperation, and state action. Each contribution provides a point of departure for new study, encouraging deeper thinking across disciplinary boundaries and frontiers.

0195662164 2002
215 x 140 mm 320 pp. Rs 595

- Kolkata: Plot No.A1-5, Block GP, Sector V, Salt Lake Electronics Complex, Kolkata 700091
- Delhi: 2/11 Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi 110002 • Chennai: Oxford House, 219 Anna Salai, Chennai 600006
- Mumbai: 167, Vidyaganari Marg Kalina, Santacruz (East) Mumbai 400098

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

IBHO - 01/18/0002