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QUEST

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Yeats and Rabindranath Tagore

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Vested Interest in Backwardness

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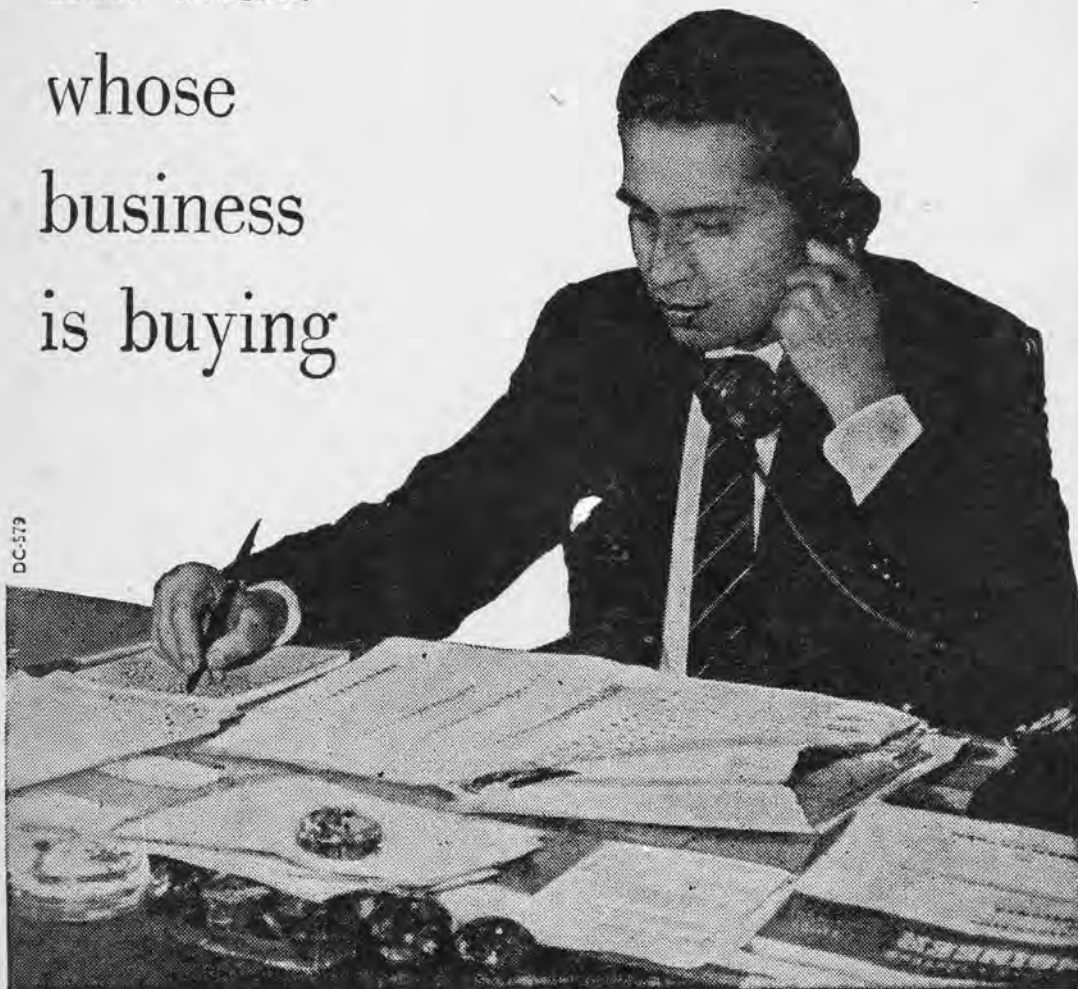
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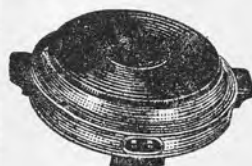
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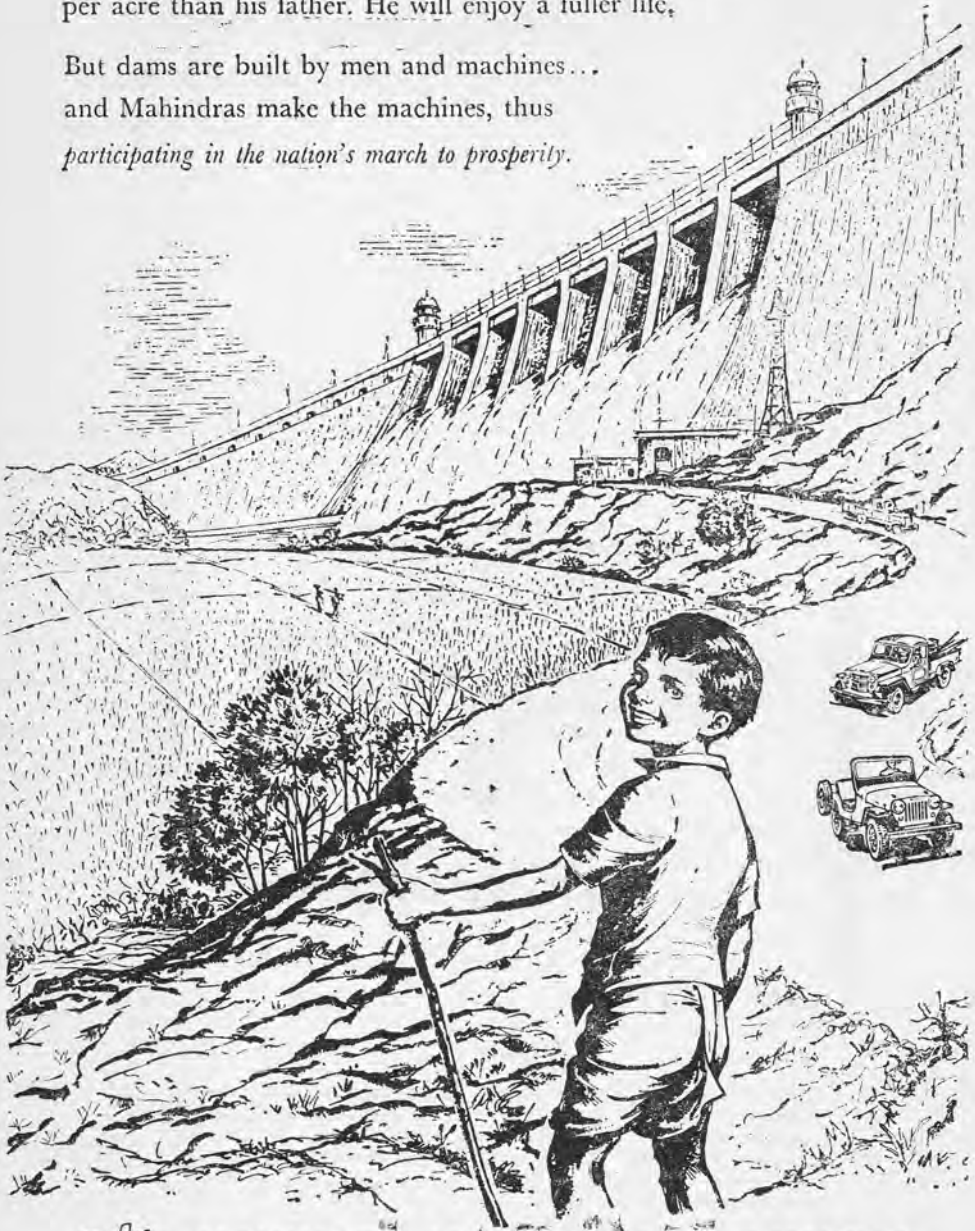
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Yeats and Rabindranath

A Study in Tradition and Modern Poetry

By NARESH GUHA

THE readers of the English *Gitanjali* cannot have missed W. B. Yeats's very important introduction to the poems of Tagore. It came from a man who was a great poet in his own right, and who, evidently, was not playing the polite promoter of an oriental writer. Those who need some kind of critical support to lean on before making up their mind about the stature of a poet, in this case Tagore, proudly refer to that piece of document. But at the same time they are intrigued by the most unflattering statements that Yeats shortly chose to make on the same poet. The relationship that existed between these two poets was of a complex nature. No attempts, however, have been made to explain why Yeats revised his opinion so soon, and yet never could forget the implications of Tagore's achievement. The explanation will involve us in an inquiry into their attitude toward the nature of tradition and its place in poetry.

Yeats and Tagore met for the first time at William Rothenstein's home on June 30, 1912. Rothenstein had visited India the previous year, and briefly met the poet in Calcutta. But though he was sufficiently impressed by the personality of Tagore to want to sketch him at once, he was unaware that his model was primarily a poet, the greatest Indian poet, as a matter of fact, since the time of the epics. None of Tagore's family thought it proper, perhaps, to mention the fact while introducing him. But Sir John Woodroffe, who had been engaged at that time in translating the *Tantras* with the help of Sanskrit scholars, and whom Rothenstein met in Calcutta, might easily have told him. He also did not.

Back in London, Rothenstein's interest in Tagore as a writer was first roused by the translation of one of his short stories. He inquired if there were more, and some one sent him a few of Tagore's poems instead. That started an abiding friendship between the two. Soon after Tagore set out for England where he hoped to recover from the effects of an illness; on the way he translated few more of his poems. Rothenstein sent copies of these to Yeats and two other writers in London to obtain their reactions. The response was surprisingly warm and appreciative. Thus encouraged, he invited a small but influential group of writers and artists, H. G. Wells among them, to meet the poet at his home. Yeats also came and read out a few poems from the manuscript to the select audience. The impact of these poems on everyone present was again unpredictably powerful. The literary world of London was taken by surprise. An important poet had arrived.

Very few people in the West were really prepared for a phenomenon like Rabindranath Tagore, coming from, of all places, India. At best they could understand the arrival of a Swami or an adept of the type 'discovered' and made famous by Madame Blavatsky. But what they found instead was distinctly a poet, speaking a language that was universal. The process of translation certainly impaired the poems a great deal, but enough remained to stir admiration. The English poets were surprised to find no asceticism in those poems, no renunciation, nor any craving for *Nirvāna*. Ezra Pound, more known at that time as a young, brash, American promoter of modern poetry, was so moved with these

poems that, as a foreign editor for *Poetry*, he persuaded Tagore to send some of them for immediate publication in America. The editor, Miss Harriet Monroe, was informed in Chicago: "I will try to get some of the poems of the very great Bengali poet, Rabindranath Tagore. They are going to be the sensation of the winter. . . . W. B. Y. is doing the introduction to them. They are translated by the author into very beautiful English prose, with mastery of cadence."² She therefore capitulated, and *Poetry* published the poems with not too short an introductory note from Pound. A living eastern poet was thus published for the first time in a western literary magazine.

Pound was under the misapprehension that Buddhism was the religion of India, and so of Tagore. In his note he therefore warned the readers that the poems would surely 'destroy the popular conception of Buddhism' which was generally regarded as a religion negative and anti-Christian. 'The Greek shows us,' the note added, 'man as the sport of the gods. . . . The Bengali brings to us the pledge of a calm, . . . a quiet proclamation of the fellowship between man and gods; between man and nature.' And then he solemnly declared that the publication of these poems should be regarded as 'an event in the history of English poetry and of world poetry.'²

Yeats's excitement about Tagore surpassed that of all others. He carried the manuscript of those translations 'about with him for days, reading it in railway trains, or on the top of omnibuses and in restaurants', and he had to close it often lest some stranger would see how much it moved him. Though he was not exactly fifty at that time, did he have this particular experience in mind when he wrote, in 1931, the fourth section of the poem 'Vacillation'?

My fiftieth year had come and gone,
I sat, a solitary man,
In a crowded London shop,
An open book and empty cup
On the marble table top.

While on the shop and street I gazed
My body of a sudden blazed;
And twenty minutes more or less
It seemed, so great my happiness,
That I was blessed and could bless.

The suggestion need not be pushed too far, but there is no harm in drawing attention to this coincidence. Anyway, the lyrics of Tagore displayed in their thought a world Yeats had dreamed of all his life long.³

Shortly after Rothenstein had introduced Tagore to the Literary world of London, the India Society, which included eminent men like Thomas Arnold, Roger Fry, F. W. Thomas (the Sanskrit scholar), T. W. Rolleston, E. B. Havell and others, arranged on July 10, 1912, a reception for the distinguished Indian poet. Yeats presided again, and in his address compared Tagore with Thomas à Kempis, pointing out how Tagore's poems, as compared with the works of that European mystic, were significantly free from a contemplation of evil, and were uttered out of profound joy of life.⁴

When he went to Normandy to spend the summer of 1912 with the Gommès, Yeats carried the manuscript with him so he could prepare an introduction to the first volume of poems by Tagore which the India Society was to sponsor. 'That summer, in the holiday home of Maud Gonne, on the shore of the English Channel at Normandy,' records a younger and minor Irish poet, James H. Cousins, a Theosophist, 'Yeats's chantings of the newly discovered Indian poet's prose lyrics, that were destined to come out as *Gitanjali*, to a small company of guests, including my wife and myself, were like the ritual of a new era.'⁵ In their sensitive reactions to the phenomena of nature and the mystery of the human heart the poems, writes Cousins, seemed no more alien to English than poems of ancient Celtic imagination. They confirmed the theories of the Celtic scholars like Henry D'Arbois de Jubainville who, in the early eighties of the last century, had established

significant parallels between the old Celtic and Indian conceptions.⁵

Maud Gonne's daughter, Iseult, also was deeply moved by the poems and asked Yeats to get her a Bengali grammar and a dictionary so that she might read Tagore in the original⁷. How far she succeeded is not known, but before long she did make a few translations for *The Gardener*,⁸ and also became Secretary to the India Society Library in London. This episode is mentioned because later when she turned down, as did her mother, Yeats's proposal of marriage, Yeats adroitly alluded to her enthusiasm for the Bengali poet in 'Owen Aherne and his Dancers' which was occasioned by his love for Iseult. There the line 'Let the cage bird and the cage bird mate, and the wild bird mate in the wild' is an allusion to Tagore's poem in *The Gardener* which begins:

The tame bird was in a cage, the free bird
was in the forest,
They met when the time came, it was decree
of fate.⁹

One wonders if Iseult had any hand in the translation of this particular poem.

Yeats's introduction to *Gitanjali* does not really reveal the mood of a detached critic, but of one who is profoundly involved in the theme and the achievement of the poet. Tagore impressed him not because, as Yeats's biographer Hone suggests, he looked 'as if he had stepped out of the Vedic age' and might well, therefore, be carrying 'light from the East'.¹⁰ Tagore's 'transformation into a prophet with a practical message for the West' also had nothing to do with the 'intimate instructions' by Yeats at the Woburn Buildings where Yeats lived. Tagore came to the West as a poet, and Yeats thought that he had discovered in him similar ideas and attitudes about politics as about poetry. Intimate talks with Tagore must have revealed to him that their views of nationalism, for example, were not different. Both had an aversion toward bitter nationalistic hatred and terrorism, and therefore, both had to face the suspicion of their countrymen. In his

short communication to *The Golden Book of Tagore*¹¹ Yeats refers particularly to Tagore's novel *The Home and the World*, where he found, he says, 'wisdom and beauty, or both.' *The Home and the World* (1915) can be read as a long dialogue between a terrorist, a nationalist of the type represented by Tagore and Yeats, and a woman who is torn between the pull of these two opposing ideals. The novel raised a storm of controversy in his own country and its spirit is the same as in Yeats's play, *The Dreaming of the Bones* (1919). Both, moreover, had a deep religious instinct, but did not quite profess any particular creed. And both wrote on the heroic past of their respective countries. But the quality that Yeats regarded as most valuable in Tagore was the union in his poetry of sensuous images and deep spiritual apprehension of life. The poems 'seemed to come out of the fields and the rivers and have their changelessness.'¹² Yeats had a similar dream of bringing together the natural and the spiritual world in his poetry and of giving it back to the people. His vision of perfection had come to claim a firm basis in life. It was no longer called the Rose, but was expressed by the phrase the "Unity of Being", that he had first learned from his father. The realization of the ideal seemed to be most difficult, if not impossible, in the European tradition. In Tagore he discovered an ally who had the same sense of the Unity of Being, though in him it was a matter of inheritance.

Yeats's Unity of Being could only exist in a society where 'poet and artist confined themselves gladly to some inherited subject matter known to the whole people,'¹³ and this inherited subject matter naturally comes from the ancient myths and legends of a country. Ireland had a great store of imaginative stories which the uneducated classes knew and sang. Yeats, therefore, had been trying to give them currency among the educated classes. Every new fountain of legends, he was convinced, is a 'new intoxication for the imagination of the world,' and where imagination is untrammelled, the Unity of Being becomes easier to realize. Nature and

God are not separated there by thought, a common myth is shared there alike by the common people and the best imaginative minds, and gaiety and joy remove the constricting sense of sinfulness. One could call this the conception of a classical society that frees the creative mind of the artist. The same need impelled T. S. Eliot to formulate his ideas of a 'Christian Society', and Yeats to conceive of the 'aristocratic society, though, unlike Eliot, Yeats was quite free from the preoccupation with sin to which the modern Christian attitude tends to lead. Yeats's early poems are full of melancholy, but they have little to say about sin. He was never haunted by damnation. His ideal of the Unity of Being was not intended to be achieved by following any religious dogma, but by incorporating in his poetic phantasmagoria the ancient myths of Ireland. And in this attempt he found the living tradition of India seminal.

His dream, he felt, was no longer realizable in the European tradition because of what T. S. Eliot has termed the 'dissociation of sensibility.' 'Since the Renaissance,' Yeats wrote in his introduction to *Gitanjali*, 'the writing of European saints — however familiar their metaphor and the general structure of their thought — has ceased to hold our attention.'¹⁴ This was because spirit and matter were irrevocably separated in their minds, as a result of which nature came to be regarded as evil. Salvation, therefore, was considered unattainable without first discarding nature. Yeats refuses to agree, and the question that he raises is the agonizing question of an artist: 'How can we, who have read so much poetry, seen so many paintings, listened to so much music, where the cry of the flesh and the cry of the soul seem one, forsake it [nature] so harshly? What have we in common with Saint Bernard covering his eyes that they may not dwell upon the beauty of the lakes of Switzerland, or with the violent rhetoric of the Book of Revelations?'¹⁵ Tagore, whom Yeats's Brāhmo friend had introduced to him as a saint, sings, on the other hand, of life's

joy, which is simultaneous with a deep sense of sanctity.

Yeats's stimulating introduction to the poetry of Tagore, thus explains a great deal of the poetic problem of Yeats himself. Tagore's poems stirred his 'blood' as nothing had for years. He found in them abundance and simplicity, innocence and humbleness. His Bengali Brāhmo friend had informed him that as a young man Tagore wrote on 'natural objects', in deep personal sorrow movingly on love, and with maturity on philosophical and religious subjects. This account is partial, since, soon after the *Gitanjali* period was over, Tagore's mysticism was very much modified by more secular interests. But even in *Gitanjali* Yeats noticed and appreciated this poet's intense love of life, and recognized his difference from modern European mystics. When he writes about God, for example, his heart flows outward to experiences of life 'without derogation or condescension,' and fills itself with the circumstances of everyday life. The images of his poetry are familiar. 'The traveller in the red-brown clothes that he wears that dust may not show upon him, the girl searching in her bed for the petals fallen from the wreath of her royal lover, the servant or the bride awaiting the master's home-coming in the empty house'¹⁶ — these are his images of the heart turning to God. When he wants to express the mood of that heart in union with or in separation from God, he again uses familiar images like flowers and rivers, the blowing of conch-shells, the heavy rain of the Indian July, or the parching heat of his tropical land. 'A man sitting in a boat upon a river playing upon a lute' is the image of God himself. In praising this quality of Tagore's poetry Yeats certainly remembered what he himself had written in 1902 about the Celtic element in literature, that once every people of the world believed that all natural things were divine: 'They saw in the rainbow the still bow of a god thrown down in his negligence; they heard in the thunder the sound of his beaten water-jar, or the tumult of the chariot wheels; and when a sudden

flight of wild ducks, or of crows passed over their heads, they thought they were gazing at the dead hastening to their rest.¹⁷

Moreover, since Tagore was nearer to the living tradition of his country, Yeats recognized in him a 'popular poet'¹⁸ of the kind he himself wrote about in 1901. His popularity is not like that of Longfellow, Campbell, or Scott, who had 'unlearned the unwritten tradition which binds the unlettered... to the beginning of time and to the foundation of the world.' Indolent ladies and ambitious students were not his only readers, but a whole people seemed to participate in the symbols and images that Tagore used. Yeats, therefore, called these poems the expression of a supreme culture, remaining all the while 'as much the growth of the common soil as the grass and the rushes.'¹⁹

This dream of creating an imaginative body of popular poetry shared by a whole people haunted Yeats for a long time. Among his contemporaries he chose to recognize this quality in Douglas Hyde's Gaelic poetry sung by mowers and reapers from Donegal to Kerry, and so he wrote in 1924: 'In India... peasants sing the words of the great poet of Bengal without knowing whose words they sing, and it must often be so where the old imaginative folk life is undisturbed.'²⁰ The example of Tagore remained in his mind.

Here, then, was a poet who seemed to have achieved what Yeats himself valued most as a poetic ideal. Tagore, too, asserted in his poetry the Unity of Being, and belonged to a tradition that had 'passed through centuries, gathering from learned and unlearned metaphor and emotion, and carried back again to the multitude the thought of the scholar and the noble.'²¹ Yeats therefore became Tagore's propagandist, and then he and Sturge Moore assisted in bringing out three books, *Gitanjali*, *The Gardener*, and *The Crescent Moon* including by far the best translations from Tagore.

Soon two of Tagore's symbolic dramas also were translated. *The Post Office* was

done by a talented Indian student at Oxford, Sri Debabrata Mukherjee, son-in-law of Yeats's Brahmin friend, Mohini Chatterjee. *The King of the Dark Chamber* was translated by an Indian Civil Service student in England, Sri Kshitish Sen. Yeats's sister published a limited edition of *The Post Office* at the Cuala Press in 1914; and even before the original play was staged in Bengal, Dublin's Abbey Theatre produced the English version with fair success.²² Yeats's introduction to the Cuala edition of *The Post Office* does not suggest that he liked the play too well; perhaps he was already drawing away a little, but considered, all the same, that the construction of the play was perfect, and that it conveyed 'to the right audience an emotion of gentleness and peace.' *The King of the Dark Chamber* was produced at the Little Theatre in London, and Yeats took an interest in the production. It is important to remember this fact because Yeats later came to choose this drama as a point of departure, and wrote a strange variation on the theme of *The King of the Dark Chamber* in one of his last plays, *The Herne's Egg* (1938).

After the great success of *Gitanjali*, for which Tagore was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1913, Yeats seems to have cooled noticeably towards the poet whom he had admired so much only a year before. From Rothenstein's autobiography, and some letters of Tagore, it appears there was some rather unpleasant controversy regarding Yeats's part in the translations done from Tagore which has made him famous in the Western world.²³ Rothenstein refutes the current gossip that 'the success of *Gitanjali* was largely owing to Yeats's rewriting of Tagore's English.' The original of *Gitanjali* in English and in Bengali was in his possession. He could, therefore, affirm with authority. Yeats, he says, 'did here and there suggest slight changes but the main text was printed as it came from Tagore's hand.' Tagore also supports this view in a letter to Rothenstein where he writes that Yeats 'was sparing in his suggestions.' Moreover, he himself was with Yeats during

the revision work, so that changes were made after consultation with him.

Both the detraction and the refutation, it will be noticed, pursue irrelevant patterns of argument. Both the sides seem to have quite neglected the important fact that Tagore's supremacy as a world poet did not depend at all on his ability to compose in English. His Bengali poems were there for comparison, and any sensitive reader could tell it was ridiculous to suggest that the translations improved upon the original Bengali poems. And yet, even his genuine supporters tended to take their stand, as some of them still do, on the 'unaided' achievement of those translations, as if a world poet must prove his stature by passing a proficiency test in English. It is probable that some such misguided judgment encouraged Tagore's western publishers to suppress in the collected edition of his works even the fact that they were translations and not originally written in English.

Those who revised his translations, — as I suppose Yeats, Sturge Moore and Lady Gregory did, — did no more than what any other able collaborators would normally have done. Tagore later spurned all collaboration and had to be on his guard because he was born in a country which 'unfortunately' had cultivated the English language for over a century, and everyone, therefore, expected him to cook the translation of his own work. Yeats may have misunderstood him, and thought that he did want to be known as an English poet, which he did not.²⁴ But the probable misunderstanding over Yeats's share in the translations was not sufficient reason for Yeats's change of attitude towards Tagore. The real reason was intellectual.

Yeats came to realize that Tagore was not a traditionalist of the kind he took him to be. Already preferring the symbolic conceptions of mythological or Purāṇic Hinduism, Yeats had at first supposed that Tagore's poems confirmed his own ideas. But in the lectures the Indian poet was giving his passion for the abstractions of the Upanisads was made amply clear.

Tagore declared that the Upanisads and Buddhism had shaped his life. Yeats, on the other hand, was soon to emphasize that Buddhism and Upanisadic abstractions were at the root of India's downfall. Their real difference, thus, lay in their attitudes toward ancient tradition. Tagore belonged to the reformist group of Hindus known as the Brāhmo Samāj. Though in his poetry he used Purāṇic Hindu myths, symbols, and ideas, which a devout Brāhmo would probably never have done, he did not have Yeats's fanatical interest in tradition. The yoga system or the Tantra, both of which attracted Yeats, left Tagore unconcerned, cold or critical.

It so happened that at about the time Yeats discovered Tagore, the authoritative texts of both Yoga and Tantra reached England. Yeats's interest in spiritualistic phenomena had been already renewed by the end of the first decade of this century. He had begun visiting regularly Séance rooms in London. With Maud Gonne and Everard Fielding he went to France, in 1914, to investigate a miracle, and wrote a long report of their findings which remains unpublished. With the publication of a scholarly edition of *The Yoga System of Patanjali* (1914) from the Harvard University Press, and of the Tantric texts (1913) by Sir John Woodroffe, Yeats could now get an unmodified view of that part of the traditional Indian systems that was not abstract.²⁵ Thus it seems probable that Tagore, in whose poetry he found at one time the ideal union of the cry of the body and the cry of the soul, more and more appeared to him to possess the same love of abstractions that he connected with the Vedantic and later Upanisadic thinking.

One example of this fascination of the Indian poet for the abstract he probably found in *The King of the Dark Chamber*, where the *Ultimate Reality*, even though he is called the King, can never be encountered except in heart's darkness. Yeats never could appreciate this manner of using the term 'darkness' to suggest any profound mystery. Writing, thus, to Olivia Shakespeare on James Joyce and D. H.

Lawrence, he complained that these western writers had 'almost restored to us the Eastern simplicity', but neither did it perfectly, 'for D. H. Lawrence romanticizes his material, with such words as 'essential fire', 'darkness', etc.'"²⁶ It is interesting to note that while God in Tagore, is 'The King of the Dark Chamber' in Yeats He is called 'The King of the Great Clock Tower.' The similarity between these phrases does not appear to be merely a matter of coincidence, but the implications are quite different. One is the result of abstract thinking; the other is a concrete suggestion. Later another Indian, Shri Purohit Swami, was to confirm for him the concrete nature of the other part of traditional Indian thought.

Yeats's first excitement with the poems of *Gitanjali* changed into a critical antipathy probably after the publication of Tagore's lectures on the Upanisads in *Sadhana* (1913). Tagore's poems affected Yeats favourably; his exposition of the Upanisads, coming later, did not please him. He later claims that he also had 'fed upon the philosophy of the Upanisads' all his life, but felt that there was 'an aspect of Tagore's mysticism' that he disliked. With this aspect of mysticism he connected the 'absence of tragedy in Indian poetry.'²⁷ It seemed to him that in their emphasis on the unity in diversity the Indians neglected the contradictions of life out of which tragedy rises. Yeats's own poetry was becoming more and more coloured with a sense of tragedy. Tagore seemed to be 'vague' in his idealism;²⁸ his imagination moved in a rarefied air above or beyond history. Though his own earlier poems expressed a vague desire for a dreamed perfection, and an impatience and weariness with the world, Yeats was however gradually becoming more concerned with human history, with the rise and fall of civilizations. World weariness was being replaced by a passionate affirmation of life. And in this concern with history and civilization Tagore least resembled Yeats who certainly felt that the Upanisadic principles, expounded in *Sadhana*, would take one away

from the continued effort and tireless strife necessary for building and maintaining the standards of a civilization. To Yeats these principles were too abstract and vague.

Sadhana is the collection of a series of lectures that Tagore delivered in 1913 at Harvard University, and later in London, to correct the exposition by the familiar swamis of the traditional heritage of India. He admitted in his preface that the subject matter of the book had not been 'philosophically' treated, nor had it been 'approached from the scholar's point of view.' But, all the same, the lectures were written by one to whom 'the verses of the Upanisads and the teaching of Buddha have ever been the things of the spirit, and therefore endowed with boundless growth.'²⁹ In these lectures Tagore, whose voice was being heard with respect as of the true representative of his country, made some unhappy and hasty generalizations characterizing the civilizations of Europe and India. *Sadhana* begins, for example, with an outright condemnation of the trend of the Greek and the Western civilizations. 'The civilization of ancient Greece was nurtured,' he writes, 'within city walls. In fact, all the modern civilizations have their cradles of brick and mortars.'³⁰ Nature is subdued there as if men were living in a hostile world. One is urged there only to take an intense interest in one's 'own life and work,' thus creating 'an artificial dissociation between himself and the Universal Nature' within whose bosom one lies. Western civilization, Tagore complained, demands the 'ceaseless strain of every nerve,' is acquisitive by nature, and has developed terrible war potentialities. As a contrast he painted the ancient Indian civilization as one that never encouraged the desire to extend one's dominion 'by creating boundary walls around his acquisitions.' Yeats might very well resent this over much simplified generalization. Being a supporter of the heroic age in civilization he became wary of this unheroic interpretation of Indian tradition and emphasis on the quieter ideals in Indian history. Later he came to know, and referred to it

in his introduction to Purohit Swami's *The Aphorisms of Yoga*,³¹ that the heroic age in India ended with the development of the extreme forms of abstract thinking in Buddhism.

Tagore's conception of Reality also, as expressed in *Sadhana*, might seem unacceptable at a crucial point to Yeats. Tagore declared that there is *dvanda* or a clash of opposites in the world, such as 'the positive and negative, the centripetal force and the centrifugal, attraction and repulsion.' So far Yeats would have agreed with Tagore. But then Tagore quite easily dismisses these antinomies as 'mere names,' and affirms that 'they are only different ways of asserting that the world in its essence is a reconciliation of pairs of opposing forces.'³² Yeats was not prepared to put all the emphasis on the final resolution of all conflicts. The combatants, he insisted, must be there to turn the wheel of life. It is true, as *Sadhana* puts it, that 'when at last we find a relation between these two, and thereby see them as one in essence, we feel that we have come to the truth,' but *Sadhana* fails to tell about the techniques of life.

Their attitude towards the body and sex also proved to be different. Tagore's idealism is not as disembodied as it sounds in *Sadhana*; moreover, during the last twenty years of his life he became more and more secular. The fact remains, however, that the body always was an embarrassing subject for him to confront. Avoidance of the body, or of sexuality, is not necessarily typical of India; classical Sanskrit literature and the magnificent procession of lusty, full-blooded ancient sculptures prove otherwise. Tagore, of course, never mentions this part of our glorious heritage, and from his translated works it might seem that even when he is writing on human love he minimizes the body. In one of his poetic dramas, *Chitra*, for example, the heroine is full of remorse that her lover has become a 'prisoner' of her charms. She is a princess, but being the only daughter of the King she had been brought up as a boy and knew no 'feminine wiles for winning hearts'.

She falls in love with the great epical hero Arjuna. The god of love comes to her assistance, and grants her bodily beauty and charm for one full year so that she can win over the hero as her devoted lover. However, when she succeeds, she puts to him a strange question: did he love her real self? 'Whom do you seek?', she asks Arjuna, 'in these dark eyes, in these milk-white arms? . . . Not my true self, I know. Surely this cannot be love, this is not man's highest homage to woman. Alas, that this frail disguise, the body, should make one blind to the light of the deathless spirit! . . . Alas, it is not I, not I, Arjuna! It is the deceit of a god. Go, go, my hero, go. Woo not false good, offer not your great heart to an illusion. Go.' She considers her own beauty as 'borrowed beauty,' and 'falsehood.' Her body is her rival, and she is determined to reveal her 'true self' to her lover.

Yeats could not forget this strange concern of the girl with her real self, and wrote at least two poems, 'The Hero, the Girl, and the Fool'³³ and 'For Anne Gregory',³⁴ repudiating the position, probably with Tagore's drama in mind. Only the last portion of the first poem, written in 1922, was retained in the *Collected Poems* where it is called 'The Fool by the Roadside.' The echoes of *Chitra* are hard to miss in the discarded portion, where Yeats wrote:

The Girl.

I rage at my own image in the glass
That's so unlike myself that when you praise it
It is as though you praised another, or even
Mocked me with praise of my mere opposite;
And when I wake towards morn I dread myself,
For the heart cries that what deception wins
Cruelty must keep; therefore be warned and go
If you have seen that image and not the woman.

The Hero.

I have raged at my own strength because you
have loved it.

The Girl.

If you are no more strength than I am beauty
I had better find a convent and turn nun;

A nun at least has all men's reverence
And needs no cruelty.

The Hero.

I have heard one say
that men have reverence for their holiness
And not themselves.

The Girl.

Say on and say
that only God has loved us for ourselves,
But what care I that long for a man's love?

The dramatic situation is the same as in *Chitra*. The hero is the victim of the girl's charms, but she herself is resentful of the power of the body's beauty. Like her Indian counterpart in Tagore she declares that her real self should have been loved instead. Tagore's hero meekly accepts the girl's exhortations; Yeats's hero demurs. To love one for one's true self is not, he says, humanly possible. Even a nun does not receive reverence for her 'true self' which only God can see. The Fool by the roadside, presumably the poet himself, comments with a sigh and perhaps a twinkle in the eye, that when he is dead,

When cradle and spool are past
And I mere shade at last
Coagulate of stuff
Transparent like the wind,

only then perhaps, may he expect to find the 'faithful love' of the girl's specification.

The young philosophical girl in the poem 'For Anne Gregory' argues in similar terms. To prove that her bodily beauty is ephemeral and, therefore, not worth any homage, she is prepared to dye her yellow hair brown, black, or carrot, and insists that her young man should love her for herself alone. The poet repeats in reply what the hero in the other poem tells the high-minded girl:

... only God, my dear,
Could love you for yourself alone
And not your yellow hair.

Yeats never refused to accept the notion that one's true self is the Universal Self, as the Upanisads tell us. But following his

personal philosophy of the mask he would like to modify it and say 'the world being illusive one must be deluded in some way if one is to triumph in it.'³⁵ Tagore thus came to stand, according to Yeats, for a vision of life 'separated from all that is not itself, from all that is complicated and mechanical.'³⁶ Yeats, on the other hand, more and more emphasized life in its totality. His admiration for Tagore was, therefore, bound to be modified soon.

In their attitude to the supernatural also these two poets were quite dissimilar. Tagore was sceptical about the world of spirits and ghosts. Yeats's interest in the supernatural was serious, because one of his abiding poetic problems was to arrange every human experience, including the widespread belief in the world of 'separated spirits', in a suitable scheme of interpretation of life and the universe. This scheme, he had decided, should keep, on the one hand, a close relation with the 'unwritten tradition' of mankind, while as a 'metropolitan poet' he also could use it symbolically for his purpose. He never wanted, therefore, to explain away popular faith and experience as superstitious, and disliked those who were too intelligent or rational to have this sympathy or understanding. He had heard endless stories of apparitions from his childhood and they had had a great impact on his mind. Later when he came across, in the British Museum, the stories that the Irish writers of the eighteen forties and fifties had written, he was enraged more than pleased 'because they turned the country traditions into a joke.'³⁷ If the Irish writers had enraged him because they made fun of the 'sacred' subject of ghosts and apparitions, an important part of his 'unwritten tradition', he could not have been pleased by the stories of Tagore published as *The Hungry Stones and Other Stories* in 1916.

Tagore wrote his ghost stories with a suppressed smile of apparent disapproval. In the title story (1895) the narrator is an Indian with 'no pretence to knowledge of science or the Vedas or Persian.' In other

words, he is a reformed Hindu, a modern sceptic. His theosophical companion, however, is all ears for any story of visions and apparitions. The story of the fantastic haunted house is told by a smart fellow-passenger on the train who seemed to know everything in the world, from current political developments to spiritualism, and is shown to be especially befriended by the Europeans. The theosophist is convinced from the story that the man "must have been supernaturally inspired by some strong 'magnetism' or 'occult power,' by an 'astral body' or something of the kind." He even goes to the extent of secretly taking down notes of this conversation, and by the end of the journey is completely alienated from his sceptical friend. Another story in the same volume, 'Dead or Alive,' grimly depicts how faith in apparitions could lead to real tragedy. A tenderly loving woman in this sad story finally kills herself to prove that she was no apparition.

These 'new' aspects of Tagore, his lectures on the Upanisadic abstractions in *Sādāhana*, his mockery of theosophical ghosts in *The Hungry Stones*, gradually

turned Yeats away from him, and from modern Hinduism. Yeats's adventures in Indian thought and literature thus came full circle with his association with Tagore. He had rejected Mohini Chatterjee's ideals of Vedantic renunciation quite early in life. Some of the world-affirming conception of mythological Hinduism that had reached him through Madame Blavatsky's Theosophical Society were suggestive and helpful, though the source was not authentic. In Tagore, for the first time, he had found one who was a poet like himself, and who, he supposed, had as his background the ancient tradition of India. But when he discovered that, as a modern Hindu, Tagore had rejected that part in the tradition which supported his own heroic ideals and spiritualistic interests, he went back to the unmodified traditional thought of India which he could now find for himself in authentic texts in translation. And soon after, when he began to formulate his private system of symbols in *A Vision*, it came to be coloured with the Yogic and Tantric systems about which Tagore was silent.

Notes:

- ¹ *Letters of Ezra Pound*, ed. D. D. Paige (New York, 1950), p. 10.
- ² *Poetry*, Vol. I, No. 3 (December, 1912), pp. 92-94.
- ³ Yeats, "Gitanjali" in *Essays and Introductions* (New York, 1961), p. 390.
- ⁴ Prabhatkumar Mukherjee, *Rabindra Jibani*. 4 vols. (Visvabharati)
- ⁵ Abinash Chandra Bose, *The Three Mystic Poets, Rabindranath Tagore, W. B. Yeats, and AE* (Kolhapur, India, 1946). See Introduction, p. IX.
- ⁶ *Le Cycle Mythologique Irlandais* (1884).
- ⁷ Joseph Hone, *W. B. Yeats: 1865-1939* (New York, 1943), p. 281.
- ⁸ This fact is from an unpublished letter from Tagore to Yeats. A copy of this letter is in possession of Dr. Richard Ellmann, the noted Yeatsian biographer and critic.
- ⁹ Rabindranath Tagore, *Collected Poems and Plays* (New York, 1951), p. 77.
- ¹⁰ Hone, p. 281.
- ¹¹ ed. Ramananda Chatterjee (Calcutta, 1931), p. 269.
- ¹² *Idem*.
- ¹³ Yeats, *Autobiography* (New York, 1938), p. 166.
- ¹⁴ *Essays and Introductions*, p. 392. Later referred to as *E & I*.
- ¹⁵ *Idem*.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 391.
- ¹⁷ Yeats, "The Celtic Element in Literature" in *E & I*, p. 174.
- ¹⁸ Yeats, "What is Popular Poetry" in *E & I*, pp. 3 ff.
- ¹⁹ Yeats, "Gitanjali" in *E & I*, p. 390.

²⁰ *Autobiography*, p. 186.

²¹ *E & I*, p. 390.

²² Yeats wrote to Tagore: "The play was very successful with the house, which was quite enthusiastic. I think the performance was middling, the stage clothes worried the players and we had not quite as much time as we should have had for rehearsals but everything went very smoothly. Everyone I had met likes the play." (This unp. letter of Yeats was quoted in a letter from Tagore on May 22, 1913. A copy of this letter was kindly lent to me by Mr. Pulinbehari Sen, Tagore's bibliographer.)

²³ See William Rothenstein, *Men and Memories*, Vol. II (New York, 1932), pp. 299 ff.

²⁴ *Letters of W. B. Yeats*, ed. Allan Wade, (London, 1955), p. 834.

See also Tagore's letter to Rothenstein in *Men and Memories*, III (New York, 1940), pp. 111 ff.

²⁵ I saw all the volumes of Tantric texts neatly arranged in Yeats's home in Dublin, and Mrs. Yeats informed me that his interest in Tantra predates their marriage in 1917.

²⁶ Yeats's *Letters*, p. 807.

²⁷ Hone, p. 491.

²⁸ *Idem*.

²⁹ Rabindranath Tagore, *Sadhana* (New York, 1915), p. viii.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 3 ff.

³¹ Shri Purohit Swami, *The Aphorisms of Yoga* (London, 1938), p. 14.

³² *Sadhana*, p. 96.

³³ *The Variorum Edition of the Poems of W. B. Yeats*, ed. Peter Allt and Russell K. Alspach (New York, 1957), p. 447.

³⁴ *Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats* (London, 1950), 277.

³⁵ Yeats's letter to his father, quoted in Richard Ellmann's *The Identity Of Yeats* (London, 1954), p. 109.

³⁶ See *The Golden Book of Tagore*, p. 296, Yeats adroitly formulates in this short communication the basic difference between Tagore and himself. The communication, however, is usually taken by most readers merely as an unqualified ovation.

³⁷ Yeats, "A General Introduction For My Work" (1937) in *E & I*, p. 53.

Persistence of the Caste System: Vested Interest in Backwardness

By SUBHASH CHANDRA MEHTA

IT is my aim in the present paper to study the impact of various recent trends in the political, economic, social and technological fields on the institution of caste and to see whether the caste system is on the wane and it is just a matter of time before we bury it, or whether it continues to be a dominant force.

Constitutional and Political Factors:

Formally, with the promulgation of the Constitution on January 26, 1950, the caste system lost its basis. The very preamble of the Constitution asserts that the people of India have constituted themselves into a sovereign democratic republic to secure to all its citizens justice, liberty and equality and to promote fraternity. Justice is specifically described to be of three types, not only political but economic and social as well. And equality is not only of opportunity but also of status. Justice and equality, as thus defined, between them strike at the very roots of caste.

The fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution are those of equality, non-exploitation, freedom of religion, culture and education, property and constitutional remedies. Of these, for the purpose of the present study, the rights of equality and freedom alone are pertinent. In guarantee of the right of equality, Article 15 states: (1) The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on the ground of caste; (2) no citizen shall, on the ground of caste, be subject to restriction regarding access to or use of shops, restaurants and public wells and tanks; and (3) the practice of untouchability is forbidden. The right of freedom guaran-

tees, among other things, practice of any lawful calling without restriction. The Constitution may thus be said to have abolished caste and its lingering restrictive and coercive practices, and, on the positive side, to have proclaimed the creation of a society in which inequality of status does not exist.

But, while the Constitution has abolished caste, certain factors have emerged either as a direct result of the Constitution or other political policies, influencing the caste structure. Acceptance of the democratic form of government naturally implies adult franchise. The result of adult franchise has been that many social groups have become aware of their strength and realize that they are in a position to wield power. In the traditional caste system one dominant caste alone had a corporate political existence; the other castes were ineffective. But now all castes large enough to make their strength felt are corporate political bodies. All over India there is evidence that castes, organized to the width of the linguistic region, are politically active and courted by political parties.

Another political factor influencing caste in India has been the lack of organized special-interest groups. Only a small fraction of peasants and workers are yet organized in Indian society and, therefore, there are few outside loyalties to temper the intensity of loyalty to caste. As many potential political elements are not organized, an element of latency in politics is created. The result is that unorganized and generally inarticulate segments find ways of expressing themselves.

The gradual adoption of the system of democratic decentralization has also fanned caste consciousness at village level. Each caste has become conscious of the power it can wield. The members vote on various issues not from the viewpoint of the total community but of exclusive caste interests. On the positive side, however, the establishment of panchayats has helped to bring representatives of all castes together in one organization which ultimately may help in developing a sense of community.

A recent trend affecting caste has been the gradual acceptance of the principle of social justice in regard to those hitherto called untouchables (Harijans). The Constitution lays down as one of the Directive Principles of State Policy that 'the State shall promote with special care, the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people... and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.'

There is no doubt that untouchability is the worst feature of the caste system. If the caste system had not developed untouchability, there might have been many more who would have upheld the system. Untouchability has been abolished by law in modern India. The Untouchability Act passed by the Union Government is applicable to all States. No doubt, legislation alone does not change society and social laws affecting the caste system should be viewed at best as no more than the definition of ultimate objectives to be achieved. Nevertheless they do indicate the goals towards which India is trying to move.

Effect of Economic Development :

It cannot be denied that urbanism and industrialism will ring the death-knell of the caste system. It is a fact that modern factory organization cannot be efficiently

geared to the caste system. In the markets, factories, tea-shops, members of the different castes work and eat together defying the ancient restrictions of commensality and exclusive living.

Increasing efforts for the economic development of the country have also led to the development of transport and communications which tend to minimize the rigidity of the caste system. In trains and buses, in hostels, cinema halls and clubs, people are thrown together irrespective of caste. There are no untouchable travellers. The traditional caste system, with its usages of pollution and avoidance, can, as Dr. Marriott says, only be conceived of as working in 'small packages'.

Another factor which is weakening the caste system is the coming into being of new types of occupations due to industrialization. Apart from this, any individual can take up the study and practice of medicine, engineering, law etc. Recruitment to the Defence Services has been opened to all and no distinction is made between 'martial' and 'non-martial' races. Similarly, other public offices are open equally to all Indian citizens except for certain reservations (which conduce to the break-up of caste) for members of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes.

The extent to which there has been change of occupations can be seen from the 1951 Census which reported that of 5.13 crores of scheduled castes, only 64 lakhs were engaged in occupations that could be described as those reserved for untouchables. The 1961 Census further confirms this reading.

But there is a section which feels that economic development has in some ways increased the solidarity and resilience of caste. 'The development of communications, together with the growth of publication has widened the range as well as the all-India solidarity of caste through the growth of caste newspapers, journals

and conferences. Even the motor car drivers now form a new sub-caste.¹ Srinivas also expresses a similar opinion that while, on the one hand, railways and factories have relaxed rules of pollution regarding eating and drinking and other forms of contact, on the other, the availability of cheap paper has enabled caste disputes to be recorded, and this gives permanent form to rules and precedents which were till recently dependant upon the fallible, therefore challengeable, memory of elders. He adds that several castes in Gujarat have even had their constitutions printed.²

Spread of Education:

Social institutions of the community are always affected by the spread of education. Professor Kuppaswamy studied the attitudes of students in South India and commented that many non-Brahmin youths assert that they look upon the caste system as intolerable and are prepared to abolish it. This opinion is reflected consistently with respect to the three important problems of marriage, dining, and the letting of house. Most of them are also non-conformists in matters of religious practice.³

However, the effects of education should not be exaggerated. The educated may have spent much time in activities outside the sphere of caste, but the more intimate core of their life is influenced by it. One needs only to turn to matrimonial advertisements where doctors, engineers, high government officials, people trained abroad, all indicate their caste and require brides of the same caste. Even 'highly cultured' and 'educated' brides want bridegrooms from their own caste. There are exceptions, to be sure, but they are few. Two classmates of different castes may dine together in a restaurant, but are usually not able to do so in each other's homes.

Sanskritization and Westernization:

To denote another trend, Professor M. N. Srinivas recently introduced the concepts of Sanskritization and Westernization in the study of caste dynamics. According to him 'the caste system is far from a rigid system in which the position of each component caste is fixed for all time. Movement has always been possible, and especially so in the middle regions of the hierarchy. A low caste was able, in a generation or two, to rise to a higher position in the hierarchy by adopting vegetarianism and teetotalism, and by Sanskritizing its rituals and pantheon. In short, it took over, as far as possible, the customs, rites, and beliefs of the Brahmins, and the adoption of the Brahminic way of life by a low caste seems to have been frequent, though theoretically forbidden. This process has been called Sanskritization.⁴ The rigid division of Hindu society into various castes has in a sense accelerated this process because in any hierarchical system there is always a tendency to imitate the customs, habits and manners of the dominant group. It is possible that the very ban on the adoption of the Brahminical way of life by the lower castes, had exactly the opposite effect. The forbidden fruit was the tastier one.⁵ Among the customs taken over were clothing, jewellery, cooking, vegetarianism, teetotalism; at times even the name of the caste was changed. The non-Brahmins not only adopted Brahminical rites and customs but also institutions. Srinivas corroborates this by referring to marriage, position of women, and kinship. 'Among Hindus, there is preference for virginity in brides, chastity in wives, and continence in widows. This is especially marked among the highest castes. The lower have not been very rigid in their sex code, but as the castes rise in the hierarchy, they become more and more Sanskritized and, in sex and

marriage, the code of the Brahmins is taken over. Widow remarriage and divorce are restricted.⁷⁶ By Westernization, Professor Srinivas means the acceptance of the Western cultural ethos and ideas by the caste Hindus and the attempt by them to accept, adopt or imitate British customs and habits. Westernization resulted in increasing the social distance between the upper castes and other lower castes and brought the former closer to the British rulers, which in turn enabled them to acquire political and economic advantages. As the Brahmins were at the top of the social hierarchy, it was possible for them to adopt new practices without being subjected to ridicule.

The lower castes are trying to Sanskritize while the upper castes are Westernizing themselves. When the Sanskritization of the lower caste is complete, it tries in turn to Westernize itself. It may take, let us say, two generations for a lower caste to Sanskritize and then another two generations for it to Westernize itself; that is to say, in the course of four to six generations, a caste, if it is lucky, can go up from the bottom to the top of the caste ladder.

Shift in the criteria for aid:

In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, the Government of India and the State Governments have been giving preferential treatment in matters of recruitment, education, etc., to certain lower castes to bring them gradually on a level with other well-placed castes. The purpose of these measures was to upgrade the lower castes; instead, they sometimes seem to have down-graded the higher ones. Instead of the Harijan becoming a Brahmin, the Brahmin is becoming a Harijan. According to Srinivas 'backwardness and forwardness do not go by caste in modern India—at least not any longer.

The tendency to continue to think in terms of backward and forward castes is producing new tensions and difficulties which may become more intractable in the future.... The country's hope lies in accepting rational criteria of backwardness and in abandoning the tendency to categorize hereditary groups as backward or forward.⁷⁷

He further says: 'An individual's backwardness can be determined by reference to the father's (guardian's) income, educational level and place of residence (rural or urban). When an applicant's father has a small income, a low level of education and is residing in a village, it means that the applicant is backward, be he Harijan, Rajput, Bania or a Brahmin.

'It is necessary to give weightage to one more factor. The children of manual labourers should be regarded as backward as compared to those whose parents do not do manual work. Unskilled manual work should be regarded as more backward than skilled manual work.'⁷⁸

When these criteria are considered together, they give an index of the backwardness of an individual. No doubt, the policy pursued by the Government of India of giving preferential treatment to the low castes is in accordance with humanitarian sentiments, but it also has the effect of making the lower castes look up to the Government for protection. It drives a wedge between the higher and the lower castes.

These are thus some of the important factors affecting the caste system in modern India. It is clear that regardless of the many factors which are supposed to be disrupting the system, it has withstood all onslaughts and is still a strong and tenacious force. To believe that the demon of caste is about to die is to grossly underestimate the social forces that bind a caste group together and perpetuate casteism. It is true that today there is

greater mobility within the caste system than ever before, but that is quite different from having achieved an egalitarian society. While in the past caste had, by and large, tended to be negative (with its emphasis on the restrictive aspects of the social behaviour of the members), the modern trends are only making it more positive by forcing the caste-members to come together and take collective action to preserve their identity.

The Political Role of Caste:

Caste today is not merely a subject of academic research. It has become a problem for administrators, statesmen and the general public. Commenting on the Indian elections, Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan said: "Caste was the only party and ideology which fought the elections. Political ideology or economic programme as such had very little to do with the elections."

The modern political ideas of democracy and liberty throw a challenge to the basic principles of the caste system. The problem is whether a democratic State can co-exist with a society based on caste. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar once said: "Take the Hindu social system and examine it from the point of social utility and social justice. It is a religion which is not intended to establish liberty, equality and fraternity. It is a gospel which proclaims the worship of the superman—the Brahmin by the rest of the Hindu society."⁹ Democracy does not exist merely in its formal institutions. It lives really and truly in the life of the people; it is a way of life. It is not only through the representative assemblies that democracy works but also through the social institutions and actions of the citizens. Caste is one of those social institutions which have always exercised a predominant hold on the public and social life of the Indian society.

Barnes while analyzing American cul-

ture says, "Classical culture fell because Greek and Roman ideals and institutions—utopian philosophy and imperial politics—got ahead of the limited technology, especially in the realm of transportation. Our culture, on the other hand, is gravely threatened because our machines have moved far beyond our social thinking and institutional patterns."¹⁰ Indian society faces this dilemma—but in a far acuter form. Since independence India has embarked upon huge industrialization programmes. In the fields of science and technology she is moving ahead with considerable speed. But the social institutions through which the mechanical facilities are going to be used are old and antiquated. Thinking in terms of caste is so deeply embedded in the minds of the Hindus, and, for that matter the Indian nation, that our entire outlook is coloured by it. Communalism, factionalism and groupism are only manifestations of this basic evil. "Every one of the hundreds of sections into which this nation is divided suffers from discrimination and every group practices discrimination against others. In a homogeneous society, the innumerable acts of injustice which happen every day are regarded as individual faults. In our society they become minority grievances."¹¹ Caste erects a powerful barrier against the emotional integration of the people of India. It divides them into numerous small and hierarchically arranged groups, and a man's loyalties tend to be absorbed by his immediate group.

Caste not only divides Indians into high-born and low-born, but into regional sub-caste compartments. Each of these 3,000 odd regional sub-castes can be described as an extended joint family. 'Beyond this', writes K. M. Pannikar, 'the Hindu in practice recognizes no society or community. This is the widest social group that the Hindus evolved—the bed-rock on which the Hindu social organization is built.'¹²

It is argued that caste provides channels of communication and bases of leadership and organization which enable our rural

masses to participate in democratic politics. But while on the one hand caste has helped in educating the masses in India politically, on the other, it also comes in the way of the growth of a healthy nationalism, which often supplies backward countries with the energy and devotion necessary for rapid development.

Stake in Political Power:

Acquisition of power has become a living reality in the new democratic set-up, and every caste and region wants to acquire as much of it as it can. Since the upper castes often refuse to recognize the achievements of individuals of low castes who may, for example, acquire education, these individuals conclude that mobility on any significant scale must be a group phenomenon. With the limited educational facilities, jobs and promotions at our disposal, every caste group tries to elbow out another for the lion's share of these. It is the economic gain, which is expected to follow the establishment of political power that motivates caste political rivalries, especially when increasing economic opportunities coincide with increased Government regulation in economic life.

There is a growing feeling that not only elections are fought on caste lines and party tickets are allotted on the same basis but also recruitment and promotions are determined on caste criteria. A caste which is politically strong is able to fight successfully for schools, roads, hospitals, electric power and industries in the area in which it is dominant. Every State cabinet contains members from the main dominant castes, and the ministers are expected to be the watchdogs of the interests of their respective castes if they wish to continue in power.

Caste has been able to perform this new role by developing a new form of political activity, the caste association (Sabha). Over the last forty or fifty years caste associations have increased in number and strength. After independence, it has become increasingly apparent that they

would be a central feature of Indian politics for quite some time to come.

Vested Interest in Backwardness:

Indeed, in the Southern States of India, we witness the fantastic spectacle of a competition among caste groups to be included in the list of Backward Classes. Mahatma Gandhi could never have foreseen a time when backwardness, instead of being a disability, would become a description that sections of the Indian population would choose and struggle for, yet this is what is happening, and (among others) the Sociologist Dr. M. N. Srinivas has done well to suggest that it is high time to ask whether we as a nation, can afford to handicap, if not penalize, ability and character in favour of non-rational criteria? There are about 15 crores of people in India belonging to the Backward Classes. About two-fifths of the backward people belong to the Scheduled Castes, a little less than one-fifth to the Scheduled Tribes, nearly two-fifths to the other Backward Classes, and the remainder to the Denotified Tribes. The Mysore Backward Classes Committee (1961), noted: 'The general demand put forward by almost every community was that it was extremely backward and that, therefore, it should be included in the list of backward classes.' The reactions which followed the publication of this report are important indicators to the involvement of caste in politics. The committee had originally excluded the powerful Lingayat caste from the category of backward classes. This was immediately followed by intense political campaigning by the Lingayats, leading within a very short time to their also being listed as 'backward'.

Neither of the two communities in Mysore State, Lingayats and Okkalgas, can now truthfully claim to be politically, economically or educationally backward as a class and yet they want to cling to the privileges conferred by the label. In theory the notification of some classes as 'back-

ward' was supposed to serve the purpose of the Governments, Central and in the States, taking special steps to bring up underprivileged sections of the community to the economic and social levels of the more advanced. In practice, there has been a veritable competition among castes and sub-castes be listed as 'Backward'. The result is that what was intended to be a means of protection of the rights of weak minority groups has in effect become a tool of aggrandisement in the hands of politically dominant, because numerically large, caste groups in many States. Repeated efforts by the Centre to devise a workable set of criteria for drawing up an all-India list of 'Backward Classes' have so far proved unsuccessful. At present, the State lists continue to be used. These vary widely, having been drawn up over the years in response to the particular conditions and political pressures of the States concerned. In Mysore, for instance, everybody belongs to the Backward Class except the Brahmins.

The Government of India has taken note of this very undesirable development not only by deciding not to have any backward classes list of its own but also by advising State Governments that if there is to be any listing of backward classes at all, it should be done in the light of economic rather than caste criteria. Economic criteria, however, are hard to define and apply and any possible formula that may be put forward is likely to bristle with potential anomalies. In any case, representation in the public services has political as well as economic significance and minority groups, whether in terms of language or political vulnerability, have as reasonable a claim to fair representation as economically weak sections of the community. Perhaps the most practical course would be to fix an empirical limit, defined as a certain, relatively low percentage of the population, to the aggregate numerical strength of 'backward classes' a State Government may recognize. This would reduce the opportunities open to the politically dominant castes to misuse it

until such time as it can be abolished altogether.

Administrative Inefficiency:

Writing about increased railway accidents, Touchstone remarked, 'There are today ugly whispers of deteriorating morale among railwaymen as a direct result of some of the staff policies planned and pursued at the highest level. The reservation of 15 per cent of promotions to the Scheduled Castes, in particular, is held to be responsible for extensive heart-burning and discontent. Although 15 per cent may seem only a fraction, it is evident that for everyone who is promoted purely on a caste basis, there may be ten or more who feel that their merit has been unjustly ignored. If a number of such cases of preferential treatment takes place, it is conceivable that the consequence will be the creation of a very considerable army of disgruntled and demoralized officials who can be a serious liability to the Administration.'¹⁸

Recognition is given to caste even in the matter of admission to medical and engineering colleges where seats are reserved for certain communities. In Mysore, (where Brahmins may apply for only one in five Government posts) barely 30 per cent of the seats in medical and engineering colleges are allotted on the basis of merit. It may be recalled in this connection that Article 29(2) of the Constitution of India guaranteeing that 'no citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any one of them' was amended in 1951 to provide for reservation of seats in schools and colleges on the ground of caste. The Constitution (First Amendment) Act was passed in 1951 and added the following in Art. 15 of the Constitutions.

'Nothing in this Article or Clause (2) of Article 29 shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the

advancement of any socially or educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.' The Amendment Act arose out of the case of Champakan Dorairajan Vs. the State of Madras. Miss Dorairajan, a Brahmin girl, was refused admission to a college in Madras and she filed a writ petition in the Madras High Court. The Court held that Communal Government Order, under which the action was taken, was ultra vires of the constitution. The Madras Government appealed to the Supreme Court which upheld the decision of the Madras High Court. The Amendment of the Constitution was thus prompted by the decision of the Supreme Court.

The ten-year period of reservation of legislative seats and Government posts came to a close in the year 1960. Yet it was given a further 10-year lease of life. The Railway Ministry, on its part, has stretched the principle of reservation even to promotions. The effect of all this is to encourage the different sections of the population to think in terms of their being separate entities.

In this context a distinction must be drawn between the Scheduled Castes and Tribes on the one hand and the 'Backward Classes' on the other. The decision to accord preferential treatment to the former was perhaps justified in the circumstances in which it was taken. These communities constituted minorities which had suffered social oppression for generations and were really at the bottom of the social and

economic ladder. The motives behind their uplift were largely humanitarian. But the concessions progressively granted to a wide variety of castes by labelling them 'backward' cannot always be explained in purely humanitarian terms. There can be little doubt that in at least a number of cases, political pressures have been equally important.

Reservation on the basis of caste is bound to result in lowering of standards. When a person is more or less assured of a position because he belongs to a particular caste, he is naturally inclined to put in less than his best. Moreover, a candidate who is abler and more efficient is often by-passed because he does not belong to the right caste. This not only leads to decline in standards but is also against the principles of social justice.

These are thus some of the new spheres of activity in social and political life into which caste has entered. We may conclude this paper with the remarks of Dr. Radhakrishnan at the National Integration Conference held in September, 1961. Speaking of the danger of exploiting caste loyalties for winning elections or getting jobs, Dr. Radhakrishnan said: 'Though caste is today ceasing to be a social evil, it has become a political evil; it has become an administrative evil. We are utilizing these caste loyalties for the purpose of winning our elections or getting people into jobs, exercising some kind of favouritism or nepotism.'

¹ Healey, John: Caste and Economic Development in India - Religion & Society, Vol. V, No. 3, Sept. 1958.

² Srinivas, M. N.: Caste in Modern India - Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. XVI, No. 4, 1957.

³ Quoted by Murphy, G.: In the Minds of Man, pp. 108-9

⁴ Aiyappan and Balaratnam: Society in India, 1956, p. 73

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 76

⁶ Barnabas, A. P.: Sanskritization, Econ. Weekly, April 15, 1961.

⁷ Srinivas, M. N.: "There is vested interest in backwardness" - Statesman, Oct. 9, 1961.

⁸ Srinivas, M. N.: Origins of Backward Classes Movement in India, Statesman, Oct. 10, 1961.

⁹ Ranade, Gandhi and Jinnah, pp. 24-25.

¹⁰ Barnes, H. E.: Social Institutions, p. 17

¹¹ Menon, V. P.: "Dangerous Decades" - Hindustan Times, Independence Day Supplement, 1961

¹² Hindu Society at Cross Roads, 1955, p. 12.

¹³ The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, Nov. 16, 1961, p.7.

Democracy in South-East Asia: Problems and Prospects

By SUDHANSU BIMAL MOOKHERJI

SOUTH-EAST ASIA is one; and yet not one. Geographically speaking, all the countries of south-East Asia—Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaya (and Singapore), the Phillippines, Thailand and Vietnam (North and South)—are in the same region. There are affinities of blood, language and religion among their peoples. But each and every one of them has at the same time characteristics of its own, which mark it off from its neighbours. Some similarities notwithstanding, they differ from one another in linguistic, religious, and cultural patterns and in socio-political orientation. But the problems faced by them to-day are in many respects similar, if not the same.

South-East Asia was catapulted into the whirlpool of world politics by Japan's entry into World War II (1941). The whole of it excepting Thailand was tied to the apron-strings of one or another Western colonial power till the outbreak of World War II in 1939. Subsequently they passed under Japanese tutelage for a time. They all became independent within a few years of the end of the war in 1945.

The post-war era during which the various South-East Asian countries excepting Thailand have attained statehood is itself revolutionary in character. Much of their recent history and the problems faced by them stem from this all-important fact. The atom bombs that reduced Hiroshima and Nagasaki to charnel houses (August 6 and 9, 1945, respectively) ushered in a new era in the history of the world in more senses than one. They no doubt ended the shooting global war that had raged for nearly six years. But they gave

the signal as it were of a far more sinister and no less dangerous war. The hot war was at an end; the cold war was about to begin.

The atom bombs which devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki knocked the last vestige of resistance out of Dai Nippon and brought her to her knees, but they also marked the beginning of the end of Western colonialism. Asia and Africa held in fee for centuries by the West were to awake into independence before long. The West, which had expanded all over the world, was about to shrink to its natural frontiers in the years that followed. The process, it should be noted, is not yet complete.

South-East Asia awoke to independence to discover that it was hopelessly behind Europe, America and Japan—and even India—in the march of progress. It had gone into mental hibernation during the centuries-old colonial period of its history when the West had forged fast and furious in all fields of human activity, especially those of science and technology. The new South-East Asia realized before long that it must make up for the lost time by doing in years and decades what the West had done in generations and centuries. This was—it is even to-day—the feeling of the new nations all over the world. To quote Nehru, 'We have suddenly arrived at a stage when we have to run. Walking is not enough—and in running we tumble and fall and try to get up again. It is no good anybody telling us that we walk slowly....it involves risks and dangers but there is no help and no choice for it, for there is a torment in our minds....'¹

Ours is an age of speed and progress. History marches so fast that decades are packed into years. As if this were not enough, the new South-East Asia is confronted with a multitude of stupendous problems, which clamour for a speedy solution.

The problem of political structure is one of the most serious problems faced by all the new nations of South-East Asia. On the attainment of independence, North Vietnam opted for 'People's Democracy', Laos and Cambodia for monarchy and Burma, Malaya (without Singapore), Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam South) for some sort of parliamentary democracy. But by the time of the coup d'état of Marshal Ne Win of Burma on March 2, 1962, parliamentary democracy had been given the go-by all over the South-East Asian world except in Malaya and the Philippines. In the context of this debacle of democracy in South-East Asia it would be interesting and useful to analyze some of the more important conditions necessary for the successful working of democracy, conditions almost wholly absent in the greater part of the South-East Asian world.

Popular sovereignty is the very essence of democracy and any democracy worth the name must guarantee the sovereignty of the people. A democracy is the way of political life that a people chooses for itself and the genius and traditions of the people concerned are bound to be reflected in its way of life. To be worth anything and beneficial, it must grow from below, not be imposed from above, evolve from within, not be imported from abroad. Under the circumstances, democracy differs in appearance from country to country and there is no uniform and universally acceptable pattern of democratic forms and mechanism. This fact should be borne in mind all the more carefully as 'there is sometimes a tendency to interpret the democratic system in rigid terms and equate it with certain forms of government and administration which have developed in many Western countries.'²

Democracy must be written off as a failure in South-East Asia for the time being. The present failure, however, does not warrant the pessimistic conclusion that it will never succeed in that part of the world. History, an endless flow of events in the last analysis, is essentially dynamic in nature. It knows no finality.

The present failure of democracy in South-East Asia is to be attributed in part to inexperienced leadership and to the international situation. The cold war has affected seriously the internal political situation all over the world in general and in the new states in particular. The Communists in some of the new South-East Asian states—the Hukbalahaps in the Philippines, the P.K.I. (Partai Komunis Indonesia) in Indonesia, The Red Flag and the White Flag Communists in Burma—made strong bids for power on the morrow of independence. The Communist revolt in Burma, which broke out in the spring of 1948—Burma became independent on January 4, 1948—and was followed by the Mon and Karen separatist insurrections spear-headed by the M.N.D.O. (Mon National Defence Organization) and the K.N.D.O. (Karen National Defence Organization), respectively, before the year was out, assumed formidable proportions. In the spring of 1949, when the writer was in Burma, more than 90% of Burma had slipped out of the hands of the Nu Government at Rangoon. The backbone of the Malayan Communist rebellion, which preceded that country's independence in 1957, could be broken only after years of incessant fighting and ruthless repression and at a tremendous cost of men and money. The Vietnam Communists under Ho Chi Min succeeded in having the country partitioned before Vietnamese independence was recognised by France. As these lines are written, the Communist Viet Cong are trying to overthrow the 'democratic' government of President Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam. What the outcome will be is anybody's guess. The insurrections in Burma, Malaya, Indonesia and in the Philippines

rebounded on the Communists themselves. They received good beatings at the hands of the governments concerned and are lying low for the time being licking their wounds and biding their time.

The widespread suspicion—perhaps not altogether unfounded—that most of the national Communist parties have affiliation with extra-territorial movements, that they have extra-territorial loyalties and that they take orders from abroad has weakened their position considerably in the South-East Asian countries, 'which have just emerged from a dependent status and value their hard-won freedom'. But for the great prestige and popularity of many of the nationalist leaders, the unsavoury reputation of the indigenous Communist parties and the 'beligerently assertive nationalism' of the South-East Asian masses, the Communists might have fared much better in South-East Asia. The economic situation and popular grievances due to poverty, unemployment, low purchasing power, absentee landlordism, fragmentation of holdings, vagaries of monsoons, dependence of economies on a few raw materials—rice in Burma and rubber in Indonesia, for example—might have played into the hands of the Communists. But they have missed the bus in South-East Asia, whether for ever or not cannot be said at the present moment. Much depends on the integrity and capacity of the South-East Asian leadership and the speed and degree of its success in appeasing the hunger of the masses, their 'hunger for freedom, justice and human dignity' and in making life worth living for them. They 'will judge a political system by the manner and the speed with which it removes economic disabilities and ensures equality of opportunity'.³ One might admit without being a Marxist that economic conditions and social relations are of fundamental importance in any political system.

Burma, Indonesia, Malaya, the Philippines and South Vietnam, it has been noted above, chose the path of parliamentary democracy on the attainment of independence. Their choice was in part

due to the influence of the countries whose colonies they had been. The institutions of the metropolitan countries appeared to their erstwhile colonies as models to be followed. Burma and Malaya adopted the form of British parliamentary democracy, while the conditions of the Dutch system were reproduced in Indonesia and those of the American system in the Philippines. But neither the leaders nor the rank and file in these countries seem to have understood in all cases the full implications of democracy and long before the recent coup in Burma at least one of the South-East Asian democracies parted company with parliamentary democracy.

One of the principal causes of the debacle of democracy in South-East Asia is the absence of the psychological background necessary for the success of democracy. The basic problem in a democracy is what may be called the 'doctrine of obedience.' 'Many men, many minds' is not an empty phrase and democracy is government by many. Unanimity is seldom attainable in democratic gatherings. Democracy is, therefore, rule by majority in practice and majority decisions are arrived at in national parliaments.⁴ The minority must accept the decisions of the majority, however unpalatable they may be (to the minority). It is, however, open to the minority to convert the majority by constitutional methods. Till the conversion of the majority to its own point of view the minority must accept the decision of the majority as expressed in the national legislature, which is the representative of the sovereign people. Unquestioned obedience to its decisions is one of the essential pre-conditions of the success of parliamentary democracy. But in Burma and Indonesia majority decisions have been defied by minority groups 'based either on military power or claim to local independence'. There have been attempts on the lives of the Presidents of Indonesia and South Vietnam. Democracy is a make-believe and empty show unless all groups of people and politicians are prepared to accept majority decisions arrived at

constitutionally in the sovereign assembly of the people, i.e., the parliament.

An elected parliament and an executive responsible to it alone do not make a democracy. To make democracy a living reality, the people must be entrusted with power and saddled with responsibilities at all levels of administration. They must be associated through their representatives with the work of administration in village councils or 'panchayets', municipal corporations, District Boards or County Councils and the like. They are in fact the training ground for leadership and disinterested public work. Active participation of the people at all levels of administration builds up the democratic tradition so essential to the success of democracy. In default, democracy becomes a head without a body like the Dragon's Head (the Rahu of Indian astrology) and what is worse, a body without a soul. South-East Asian countries accustomed to authoritarian rule through the entire course of their history, have had no tradition of popular participation in the work of administration at any level. When some of them set up democratic governments at the centre on the attainment of independence, their peoples were taken by surprise. Democracy was a dark horse to them, as mysterious as the erstwhile colonial administration whose wires were pulled by invisible hands thousands of miles away. They remained as apathetic and as lethargic as before. Popular lethargy and apathy played into the hands of dishonest, designing and career-seeking politicians. Corruption, graft and nepotism polluted the atmosphere and undermined the efficiency of the government.⁵ The new rulers lost the confidence of the masses, which is the principal stabilising factor in any political system. Democracy stood discredited with the people.

'Democracy must be provided with ideas'. Ideas, developed outside political circles, are very often taken up by politicians who give legislative shape to them. These ideas are the products of independent thinking 'connected with political

problems', and independent thinking—political and otherwise—implies a certain degree of intellectual dynamism on the part of the people. The parliament, the cabinet and other political institutions provide the machinery of political action. But a political machinery must have ideas to work with. A mill requires grist. Political ideas are the grist of the political machinery. Political leaders tackle the day-to-day problems of administration. They formulate the policies to be pursued by the government. A mill does not—it cannot—produce its grist. Similarly, political institutions cannot generate ideas. Political leaders have neither the time nor, in most cases, the capacity to provide ideas. All over the democratic world political ideas originate and grow outside the parliament and political institutions. It is only at a later stage that they are reflected in the national legislature. They are finally adopted as the basis of official policies only after they have gained some strength and popularity in the country, after they have struck roots among the masses, in other words. Prof. A. V. Dicey has shown in his great work *Legislation and Public Opinion in England in the 19th Century* that the basic principle of each and every major legislation in 19th century England had been thoroughly discussed and debated on, argued about and fought out in the country before the Parliament proceeded to give legislative recognition to them.⁶ The importance of ideas to democracy is thus obvious.

Universities and other institutions of higher education are the nurseries of free and independent thinking. The importance of the School of Economics (London), the Ecole des Sciences Politiques (Paris), the School of Economics (Delhi University), the Gokhale School of Politics (Poona) and similar institutions, discussion groups and clubs clustering around outstanding academic leaders and institutions like the English Fabian Society have been doing valuable work in the matter of providing the ideas and doctrines of democratic practices in their respective countries. Nor

can we ignore or minimize the importance of various research groups with special interests. They study national problems from all angles of vision and finally pass on the results of their respective studies to public men, who are thus provided with ideas concerning every aspect of the national life. The stream of thought, thus fed from many sources, is kept running. Stagnation and self-complacency are ruled out.

Nowhere in the whole of South-East Asia is to be found any reliable and well-established agency of free political thinking. The oldest South-East Asian university is barely forty years old. The first South-East Asian university was founded towards the end of the Great War (1914-18). The University of Rangoon, the only university in British Burma, was founded in 1920. Earliest colleges of university standing in Indonesia date from between 1920 and 1926. The first Thai University—the Chulalongkorn University at Bangkok named after King Chulalongkorn (Rama V), 1868-1910—was ushered into existence in 1917 during the reign of King Maha Vajrayudha, 1910-1925. The University of Hanoi (Vietnam), founded in 1907, had to be closed down within a year due to the strong nationalistic assertiveness among the students. It was re-opened ten years later during the Great War. The Medical College at Singapore, founded in 1905, had to wait for more than a decade for the recognition of its degrees by the British General Medical Council in 1916. The Raffles College at Singapore, Malaya's first Arts and Science college, came into existence in 1928. It was followed by an Agricultural college in 1931. Full fledged Malayan universities are fledgelings even in 1962. It should be borne in mind that the growth of traditions is a slow process. They take generations to grow. The young South-East Asian universities have not had the time necessary for developing traditions of any kind, far less traditions of free political thinking. What is still more important is that they were not allowed freedom of political thought, which 'was the

last thing which colonial authorities could afford to encourage'.⁷ Colonial educational policy all over the world had uniform pattern and objectives in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The primary concern of the makers of colonial educational policy was to have an abundant supply of lower grade white-collar workers for government and commercial establishments. Educational institutions were busily engaged in bringing out 'branded' bales of standardized commodity whose highest ambition in life was to find a job in one or another office. And what was the content of education imparted? Vivekananda (1863-1902), the patriot-prophet of India and one of the greatest thinkers of 19th century India pointed out that those educated under the colonial system in India were taught that their fathers were fools, their grandfathers lunatics, their teachers hypocrites and their saints and sages liars. The indictment, a little exaggerated as it is, is not wholly unfounded. Nothing could be less conducive to the growth of the habit of independent thinking, let alone independent political thinking. To the colonial rulers, independent thinking was 'dangerous' and smacked of sedition. Such thinking was frowned upon, if not actually penalised. In fairness to the colonial governments it must be admitted that human nature being what it is, they could not be expected to dig their own graves by encouraging freedom of thought in the colonies. 'Self-preservation', they say, 'is the first law of nature.'

Shortage of qualified and experienced personnel for the various departments of the government is another major problem of democracy in South-East Asia. How dangerous this shortage is will be realized when we remember that even the best constitutional machinery becomes an engine of oppression and a model of inefficiency in the hands of an unqualified, inexperienced and unscrupulous bureaucracy, which places personal interests above public interests. The recent history of not a few new states is a pointer. The

shortage of personnel with requisite qualifications and experience may be met for the time being by the employment of foreign personnel on a contractual basis. This is being done by all or almost all the South-East Asian governments. The policy, however, has its drawbacks. International organisations like the agencies of the United Nations and the Colombo Plan and national organisations, such as the British Council, the I.D.A., among others, have been rendering valuable services to South-East Asia by lending experts to various governments of the region. Besides, these governments themselves employ foreign experts on short-term contracts. But the import and loan of foreign experts are no real solution of the problem. The responsibility of running the state machinery in all its departments and providing solutions for problems in terms of local conditions must be undertaken by South-East Asians themselves. The sooner they take up the work, the better for them and their nations. Prospects, however, do not seem to be bright. Democracy, therefore, remains by and large a borrowed ideology, surrounded by an air of unreality. The implications of democracy are little understood by South-East Asia's teeming millions. Democratic institutions have little significance for them.

As noted earlier, the pattern of democracy varies from country to country. The English, the French and the American democracies differ from one another in details. But there are certain essential features by which the democratic system can be distinguished from other systems. What these features are have been described at the beginning of this paper. The new countries of South-East Asia copied largely the institutions prevailing in the countries of their erstwhile rulers without much apparent attempt at distinguishing the essential from the incidental characteristics of democracy. The result has been summed up by Panikkar in the following words—'They (Asian and African democracies) have in fact become text book

democracies, with but little relation, in most cases, to the social and economic conditions of the countries concerned. The consequence is that in many of them there is an air of unreality—an attitude of make-believe.'⁸

In a democracy, the majority is all-powerful for the time being. But an all-powerful majority may—it very often does—grow tyrannical unless effective checks are provided against an arbitrary exercise of power. Besides, a strong opposition is essential for keeping democracy on an even keel and an effective opposition both within the legislature and without can be offered only by disciplined and well-organized political parties, which must not be confused with groups—factions as Burke calls them—united for the time being by considerations of selfish interest. Genuine political parties, on the contrary, are national organizations which mobilise 'political opinion for action along certain defined lines.'

To err is human and men who form governments are no exceptions to the rule. A strong, honest and watchful opposition by exposing the sins of omission and commission and errors of judgment of the government and by subjecting its proposals, plans and policies to honest and intelligent criticism minimises the possibilities of governmental errors and idiosyncracies. A strong opposition is moreover, a constant reminder to the party in power that it is not indispensable to the state. It is not for nothing that the Opposition is accorded a place of honour in all really democratic countries. The leader of the Opposition is the second most important man in the British House of Commons, the most important being the Prime Minister.

Parties must be based on well-defined principles. The Opposition must not oppose for the sake of opposition. Unfortunately, 'One of the most discouraging aspects of the politics of South-East Asia relates to deficiencies in political organisation and education. Party organisations must become something more than coteries of office-seeking politicians. They must be

capable in some measure of defining the issues and policies with which they are identified. Equally difficult is the task of communicating the alternative policies to politically inexperienced peoples in simplified terms which they can understand. Difficulty arises also from the fact that basic popular loyalties usually relate to religious and group associations or at best to commitments to striking personalities. Such communal issues tend to overshadow the reasoned definitions of basic political issues unrelated to popular fears and suspicions.⁹ This is a situation which confronts not only South-East Asia, but all the new states of Asia and Africa. Even in India, which can perhaps claim a greater degree of political maturity than almost all, if not all, the new Afro-Asian states, reactionary communal parties like the Muslim League, the Jana Sangh, the Akali Dal and the D.M.K., among others, were strong enough to contest successfully for seats in the central and state legislatures in the general elections of February, 1962.

Educational backwardness stands in the way of the successful working of democratic government in South-East Asia. The problem of education is in fact three problems in one. For one thing, universal primary education must be provided in as short a time as possible. For another—and this is far more important than mass literacy—provision must be made for a system of higher education 'to stimulate independence of thought, creative achievement in terms of social progress and withal the development of a body of informed opinion which governmental authority cannot safely or wisely ignore.'¹⁰ Higher education is also necessary to prepare the South-East Asians for handling their own administrative economic, social and political problems. And finally, technical skill and scientific education, which are indispensable in this nuclear age with its tremendous speed and limitless possibilities, must be imparted to the people. A sound education alone can equip the people for the struggle for existence. Unsound edu-

cation, like broken or outdated weapons, is worse than useless. South-East Asia 'will fall back in the race for modernisation' unless the three-fold problem of education under reference is solved as soon as possible. South-East Asia's future depends on whether, how and when the problem is solved by the nations concerned.

A large, politically conscious and educated middle-class independent of governmental favours and patronage is a very effective safeguard against the abuse of powers by the rulers. Europe in the Middle Ages had no middle-class in the sense in which it is understood nowadays. It first came into existence in most cases as a counterpoise against the turbulent feudal nobility and owed not a little to royal favours. Needless to say, such a class could not check royal absolutism. But the Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries finally led to the emergence of a middle-class which owed everything to its own intellect and enterprise and which spearheaded liberal movements almost in every country where there was such a movement. A middle-class has just begun to grow in most of the countries of South-East Asia. But it has yet to grow into a force. From the political point of view South-East Asia has practically two classes—the small educated ruling elite and the vast uneducated masses. A wide gulf separates the two. It is not difficult for the former to silence all criticism by a clever distribution of the loaves and fishes of office among the comparatively few with a higher education. The common citizen does not bother about anything but two square meals a day, a shirt on his back, and a roof over his head. The rulers thus get a free hand to manage or mismanage the affairs of the nation as they like.

The absence of a large educated class has produced another evil. There are in at least some South-East Asian countries more jobs than qualified candidates for them. In consequence, posi-

tions are very often held by persons who do not deserve them. 'Political' appointments make the confusion worse confounded. The inevitable has happened. Corruption, nepotism and graft flourish. Public money is wasted. Prices soar. The people suffer. Democracy becomes a hoax and forfeits popular confidence.¹¹ The situation is dangerous. As Panikkar observes, 'If democratic institutions are only formal, or become discredited with the people, then the army becomes a rival centre of power. This is a danger which faces every democracy . . . all over the world. In the new states (of Asia and Africa) the danger is all the greater as the practice of demo-

cratic obedience is unfamiliar and the acceptance of authority based on effective power is traditional.'¹²

Democracy faces very serious problems in South-East Asia. But an honest and efficient leadership dedicated to the country's cause may yet save the situation. Above all, the peoples in the various South-East Asian countries must be determined not to yield to the forces of reaction. Free South-East Asia must accept the challenge of history. Their own future, that of their countries and perhaps of the world depends not a little on whether they accept the challenge and how they respond to it.

¹ Speech in the Pacific Relations Institute Conference, Lucknow (India), 1950.

² Phillip W. Thayer (edited by) — *Nationalism and Progress in Free Asia*, p. 107.

³ *Ibid*

⁴ There are, and have been, exceptions to this. The *liberum veto* in the 18th century Polish constitution and the veto power of the permanent members of the Security Council of the United Nations are prominent examples. Constitutions of some democratic countries cannot be amended without a two-thirds majority or without reference to the sovereign people in some cases. The "Entrenched Clauses" of the South African constitution cannot be altered without a special majority. Second Chambers of national parliaments also act as brakes on majority decisions of their lower houses.

⁵ Corruption, graft and nepotism, not unknown during the colonial period, were kept under control and never allowed to undermine governmental efficiency. But the successor-governments were in every case weaker than those they had succeeded and were very often helpless against these evils.

⁶ Some of the more important examples are — The Catholic Emancipation Act, 1820, The Reform Acts, 1832, 1867 and 1884, The Emancipation of Slaves Act, 1833, The Repeal of the Corn Laws, 1846, Forster's Education Act, 1870 (followed by Acts of 1880 and 1891 which made elementary education compulsory and free, respectively), abolition of religious tests in the universities, the Ballot Act and the Trade Unions Act — all passed in 1871.

⁷ K. M. Panikkar — *The Afro-Asian States and their problems*, p. 23.

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 25.

⁹ Phillip W. Thayer, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-25.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 126.

¹¹ Cf. "In a situation where dependable and experienced administrative talent was in very short supply, the new regimes undertook to staff their armed forces, to initiate financial controls, to conduct domestic and international trade, to rehabilitate and operate transportation and other services often under difficult circumstances, to send purchasing missions abroad and to execute construction contracts of large dimensions. Youthful leadership attained on the basis of emotional opposition to imperialism and answerable to no considered public opinion was usually not calculated to provide needed business experience, however honest its intentions. In actuality inexperience as well as politics have been the causes of widespread corruption and maladministration in most countries (of South-East Asia)". *Ibid*, pp. 119-20.

¹² K. M. Panikkar — *op. cit.*, p.30.

A Note on Planning and Welfare

By A. K. SARAN

AS is well known planning and welfare have been associated with each other nearly from the time the idea of planning began to dominate practical affairs. If the concept of welfare has not been as prominent in totalitarian societies as it has been in liberal societies, the reason is that a totalitarian society is based on the assumption that the rule of the proletariat, i.e., the communist party, is in itself a guarantee of the welfare of the entire society. In liberal societies the concept of social welfare has been prominently and almost invariably associated with the idea of a planned social order because of the historical circumstances in which planning emerged in these societies. The liberal societies had been based on the idea of least interference of the state in social matters. As occasions for state intervention became increasingly frequent and the necessity for it more and more regular and unavoidable, people began to think in terms of a non-competitive planned order. And since the only justification for this unavoidable and frequent state intervention could be the interests of the people, welfare became the basic objective of a planned order.

Logically, however, social planning and social welfare do not imply each other. Welfare can be, and has been, achieved by means other than planning; and planning could be oriented to goals other than social welfare. Nevertheless, it is clear that social welfare will always remain the goal of all social endeavour and hence we have to analyse the concept of social welfare in connection with the desirability of planning. Three questions are involved here:

- i) the proper concept of social welfare;
- ii) whether this concept is compatible with the ideals of democratic society;
- iii) whether planning is the best way to the maximisation of social welfare.

(i) *The Concept of Welfare:* It has been the general opinion that a set of 'objective' criteria for determining the state of social welfare cannot be evolved. Nevertheless, it can be seen without much difficulty that social welfare has to be conceived in terms of equality, freedom, and justice. In other words, the current conception of welfare is a projection, in the field of economy and society, of the political ideals of liberal democracy. It will also be clear from this that the concept of social welfare comprises not only material well-being and prosperity but also what have been called non-material goods and 'imponderables'. In other words, it might be said that the degree of social welfare depends upon the effective opportunity people have for the realisation of common as well as individual goals provided the latter are in consonance with the former. It is at this point that a serious difficulty arises. Is social welfare the summation of individual welfares? Or, is it a state of the society independent of the individuals? In consonance with the usual assumptions of a liberal society, it has been the general practice to think of social welfare in the former manner. But this has given rise to the problem of eliminating divergences between individual welfares. Also it is not easy to define social welfare merely as the sum of welfare of all individuals since any given social policy will usually have unequal effects on different classes of people. The common way of solving this difficulty has been to say that a general increase in social welfare is determined by the balance between the increase and the decrease caused by any given social measure. We shall not discuss this concept any further except to emphasise once again that social welfare is not merely economic well-being but includes everything that is considered necessary for a dignified human existence according to

the contemporary conception of human dignity.

(ii) *Welfare and Democracy*: Our next question is about the compatibility of the contemporary concept of welfare and the principles of a democratic way of life. It is in this connection that the question of individualistic and holistic conceptions of welfare to which reference was made above becomes of crucial importance. In consonance with the democratic ideology, it is held that each individual should have full liberty and opportunity of ordering his social and moral life in the preferred manner. Whether the democratic organisation of society can guarantee this as well as the common welfare of the people has been the subject of differing views but this is not our present concern. We are more concerned with the concept of social welfare implied in the concept of planning and wish to find out how far that is consistent with the democratic concept of welfare. An examination of the principles of planning will show that a planned order presupposes a set of goals which the individual has to accept as given and in accordance with which alone he can order his life. In other words, social planning requires a holistic concept of welfare. Indeed, that is what is implied in the rejection of a natural harmony between individual and common interests. From this it is clear that the democratic concept of welfare and the concept required by the theory of planning do not harmonize with each other.

(iii) *Social Planning and the Maximisation of Welfare*: As is common knowledge the ideal of maximisation of welfare is one that is shared by both the liberal-competitive (capitalist) society on the one hand, and the democratic planned and the Marxist planned societies on the other. In fact, it has been the common opinion about the liberal way of socio-economic organization that it tends to maximise the welfare of certain classes only and that a planned socio-economic order will be effective in eliminating such inequalities and promoting general welfare. We have to see how far this belief is justified.

A highly developed technology is common to all forms of social organisation — planned and non-planned. It is believed that a planned social order unlike the competitive capitalist society will enable man to utilise this technological development to the fullest possible extent and that social planning will also make it possible for man to maximise common welfare. This claim can be said to be justified if technological development as such were merely a means and hence neutral to the use to which it may be put. Also if technological development could be fully controlled by man. In fact, these are the basic assumptions of the contemporary view according to which technological development, if properly planned, is the best way to increase general human welfare. The capitalist society has been regarded as one which permits human exploitation by means of technology. In Marx's famous phrase, a planned social order will end the exploitation of man by man. We shall, therefore, briefly examine the relation between exploitation and planned technological development.

What is the basic connection between the development of technology and the exploitation of man by man?

Among those who hold that increasing technological power can mean universal human welfare, two schools of thought may be distinguished. Firstly, there are the Marxists. They have been greatly preoccupied with exploitation in various historical forms. Their fundamental thought is that man's increasing technological power can cease to be an instrument of exploitation and become the means to unprecedented human happiness if, but only if, there is at the same time a communist social order. They are quite clear that it is by no means technological power that leads to exploitation but a socio-economic system based on free enterprise, private ownership of the means of production and private profit.

The other school which may be called non-Marxist, does not believe that a communist socio-economic system is the indispensable condition of human welfare.

They put their faith in: (i) a further development of technological power such that it will enable man to eliminate or control the evils of technology; (ii) corresponding development of the psycho-social sciences; (iii) education for love and altruism; and (iv) a growing fear of the consequences of nuclear warfare.

These points except perhaps the second one are accepted by the Marxist school also. The real point of divergence arises from the Marxist insistence on a communist social order as the only guarantee of the welfare of the people. The non-Marxist modern thinkers deny this and hold that the above four factors are sufficient for controlling the abuse of man's increasing technological power as also for ensuring the welfare of the people.

A definition of exploitation is necessary for discussing this issue but very difficult to give in precise terms. In the Marxian tradition, exploitation is the concrete social historical expression of alienation, the economic basis of which in the present age is the appropriation of surplus value by a set of persons other than those who create it.

In the context of a programme to end exploitation in all its forms and for ever, it is clearly connected with the end of the reign of necessity and the coming of the reign of human freedom. Thus exploitation is loss of self-determination on the part of man. This remains true, however pre-eminent the role of any given economic system may be in bringing it about.

In less abstract language, exploitation of man by man means the rule over one group (A) of men by another (B) such that it benefits neither the former (A) nor the whole of which both are parts but only the latter group (B) either wholly or largely.

We are now ready to examine the relation between increasing technological advance and the degree of exploitation in the planned society. The first point to note is this: technological advance cannot be its own end for it is essentially a system of means. The accepted purpose of techno-

logical advance in modern thought is to provide increasing leisure, that is surplus time and energy for an increasing number of people in a society. Now it is also clear that leisure is not an end in itself; for it is not leisure when one has surplus time and energy at one's disposal but does not know what to do with it. This state is called 'boredom', and can be a serious threat to human well-being. Therefore leisure must be devoted to the pursuit of ends other than those to which the leisure-producing technology has been a means. These ends will obviously be of a higher level. Hence in the context of a society which admits no supra-human purpose of human life, leisure will be either synonymous with mortal boredom, or it will be used for war or persecution. It will be a cause of war among different nations so long as there are reasons or motives for national ambition and aggression. It will promote persecution of the ruled by the rulers or even among the ruling party itself, when a society has become powerful and self-sufficient to the extent that it has no tendency towards domination over others. This means that a social order, however planned it may be, will become highly exploitative in these circumstances. The reason is that leisure without a suprahuman purpose is simply the other side of technological power and technological power has a double face. It is a power over natural forces. At the same time and by the same token it is a power over men. And because technology whether it be material or social (in the form of techniques of controlling social action), always implies in the last analysis a replacement of human action. Similarly, technological power implies a mastery of impersonal processes and forces. It is because of this fundamental characteristic of technology and of planning centred on it that the moment of its highest success is also the moment of the loss of man's human status. In other words, the more man masters nature the more compelled he is to lead his life in terms of the natural forces he has subjugated. Also because man cannot alter physical laws his

mastery over nature implies that he is subordinating himself more and more to the physical order in proportion as technology becomes part of his life.

The usual answer to these well-known objections against a technology-centred social planning has been to say that man's technological power can be used for promoting welfare and that it may be possible to design safeguards against destructive and exploitative uses of increasing technological power. In other words the main problem for a technology-centred planned society would be a discovery of such safeguards against the use of increasing leisure for international war or wide-spread persecution within the society.

The above analysis of the connection between technological advance and the degree of exploitation shows that the only guarantee against the exploitative use of technological power or leisure is the acceptance of a supra-human purpose guiding the overall pattern of social action. This is all the more necessary because the fundamental direction of technological advance clearly indicates its tendency to concentrate power in the hands of a few people. It is surprising to find a large number of thinkers putting their faith in the (future) development of social sciences which they think will enable man to plan in such a way that concentration of economic and political power does not occur. This is surprising because the ambition of social scientists is to be able to control man's conduct and his historical destiny as fully as the natural scientists control those of natural phenomena. If this ambition were to be realised, there could be only two alternative consequences: either each man acquires a degree of self-control which eliminates the very necessity for social planning or some people get power over others of a quality and to a degree unprecedented and even unimaginable for us.

It is usually objected that such an analysis assumes a fixed human nature. It is even said that such an argument against planned maximisation of human welfare

assumes that human nature is fundamentally evil, an assumption which is said to be a hangover from capitalist society. The Marxians point out that the future fully planned society will not merely be a new society, it will also be a society of new men. In such a society human nature will be radically different from what it has hitherto been. And, therefore, if our thinking were not in terms of human nature that had deep-seated tendencies of aggression and ambition, we would not be anxious about the danger of war and persecution.

On close examination of the argument presented above it will be seen that no assumptions have been made about the goodness or badness of human nature nor about its fixity or plasticity. Only two assumptions have been made in our argument: one, that the new man of the future communist society will still be man, that is to say, he will not be omniscient and omnipotent. Secondly that the infinitely expanding technological power and the consequent leisure will have to be used by man. Given these two assumptions, it will logically follow that in a society which lacks a supra-human spiritual dimension the increased leisure will lead to exploitation and its higher transformation, persecution; and eventually to the explosion of man by man.

It can, of course, be urged that the distinction between an exploitative and non-exploitative system and the correlation between a high degree of exploitation with a low level of general human welfare is based ultimately on the concept of a common good desirable for all. However, in the higher stages of a technologically planned society, our ideas about what is commonly desired and desirable may themselves be rendered out of date; and with the elimination of these ideas about welfare, exploitation may become a meaningless idea. In other words as Alfred Weber brilliantly puts it there may be only pure power relationship in the future society.

We have no answer to this objection. But we wonder if such a future society could still be called a society of man.

CURRENT POLITICS

Reflections on the Chinese Invasion

1 Anguished Awakening

By SIBNARAYAN RAY

CHINA'S undeclared war on India is fraught with many dark possibilities, but its most immediate consequence should be the welcome disintegration of two powerful ideological myths which have exercised enormous influence on Asian intellectuals over the last few decades. The first of these myths was ably formulated as early as 1903 by Okakura in the very opening sentence of his *Ideals of the East*: 'Asia is one.' Like all myths this one too was centred round a hard grain of factual truth, namely, the ubiquitous exploitation of the stagnant communities of Asia by the more dynamic nations of Europe. This fact was used to sustain a whole framework of passionately held beliefs in a common 'oriental' culture and destiny in contradistinction to a no less legendary 'occidental' civilization. The new ideology of pan-Asianism obstinately refused to recognize that the cultural differences among India, China and the Islamic countries of the Middle East were at least as pronounced as between any one of them and Western Europe, that in the West too there were a number of conflicting traditions, and that Asian destiny in the twentieth century was to be determined by a choice which was in no sense peculiarly Asian but universal and modern. This refusal powerfully obstructed the growth of moral and intellectual maturity in Asia.

Japan's treacherous attack on China in the 'thirties was the first major shock to pan-Asianism. The shock was, however,

absorbed without a great crisis of conscience because of Asian obsession with western imperialism. During the second world war, to the overwhelming majority of Asian nationalists the real villains were the Allied Powers, so much so that Subhash Chandra Bose was made into the archetypal Asian hero and few bothered to remember the fearful record of his friends—in China, Abyssinia or Czechoslovakia. Even after the spectacular disintegration of European empires in Asia and Africa during the 'forties and 'fifties, most of the newly emerging nations of the East refused to outgrow their pre-independence habits of thought in spite of the pressures of post-independence problems and responsibilities. The concept of an Afro-Asian bloc was an extension of the earlier pan-Asian illusion.

The second myth owes its origin and effective propagation to the ingenious leaders and publicists of the Soviet Union. Lenin, even more than Marx, is responsible for the widespread belief or make-belief among Asian intellectuals that all wars in the present age are due to Capitalism and that Communism by its very nature means world peace. During the first two decades after the Revolution, the rulers of the Soviet Union were far too pre-occupied with internal struggles for power and problems of stabilisation to consider seriously any programme of expansion through war and conquest. The Leninist thesis thereby acquired a spurious plausibility, especially

among the naive political leaders of the poor and exploited nations of Asia, many of whom had already been deeply impressed by the Communist promise of equality, social justice and material advancement. Close and critical acquaintance with Communist theory and practice would, of course, have made it evident that Communism is the very opposite of pacificism, that its aggressive ideology not only requires but would theoretically justify 'revolutionary' wars, and that through the network of communist parties in various countries of the world, the Soviet Union was actually waging a subterranean war on an international scale. But such acquaintance was and still is rather rare in Asia. In any case, the highly streamlined propaganda machine of world communism was employed to imbue the leadership of the newly awakening nations with faith in the pacifist professions of the Soviet Union. The ruthless suppression of the Hungarian revolution by the Red Army did raise some misgivings, but they were greatly weakened by the Anglo-French fiasco over Suez. Khrushchev's 'co-existence' theory also helped considerably to reinforce the illusion.

For nearly four decades the Indian political intelligentsia, by and large, has been a victim of these two insidious myths. Even Mr. Nehru, essentially an internationalist and democrat, did not altogether escape their spell. Since independence, Indian neutralism under his leadership has hardly been quite neutral; most of the time it has been ever so slightly tilted in favour of the Communist powers and the so-called Afro-Asian bloc. When China went communist, it profited greatly from this twofold illusion on the part of India. Against every evidence, the Indian government clung tenaciously to the thesis that Mao's China could never have aggressive intentions since it was not only Asian but also communist. Its armed intervention in Korea was glossed over by Indian public opinion. Even the rape of Tibet did not succeed in awakening Indian political

leadership to the imperial aspirations of Communist China.

With cynical deliberation China took full advantage of this myth-fed naivete of the Indian people and the Indian government. On the one hand, China professed Panchsheel, peace and Asian solidarity; on the other, it made large territorial claims, built up its military might and manoeuvred to isolate India from her friends and neighbours. It advocated settlement of frontier disputes by peaceful negotiation, and at the same time went on nibbling at Indian territory. Even then India's reaction was nothing more positive than one of pained bewilderment. She sent long letters of friendly protest, but took hardly any measures to defend herself against Chinese aggression. Consequently, when the Chinese finally launched in October massive attacks on both the North-Western and the North-Eastern fronts, India found herself utterly unprepared for the showdown.

It will not stand scrutiny to argue that India's unpreparedness is due primarily to her moral scruples against the use of military means to settle disputes. India certainly did not hesitate to use her army in Kashmir when the Maharajah appealed for help, nor did she rely on Gandhian methods in liberating Goa from the Portuguese. It should also not be overlooked that India has been spending a not very negligible share of her revenue on defence. The inescapable conclusion seems to be that India's unpreparedness in the face of Chinese aggression is due far less to her general advocacy of non-violence than to her systematic refusal to confront the Chinese reality. That refusal in its turn was primarily inspired by the double illusion of Asian solidarity and communist pacificism. The extent of India's unpreparedness has been agonisingly revealed in the course of the last few weeks. On both the fronts, one post after another has fallen to the Chinese invaders. At this writing, the Chinese seem to have secured full strategic advantage; and India's main chance of halting their advance lies for the

time being atleast more with an early winter in the mountains than with the defensive strength of her valiant army. For this dismal situation the main share of blame should, of course, go to India's erstwhile defence minister, Mr. Menon's resignation from the Cabinet, although highly belated, is a welcome step in the right direction. However, the Indian political intelligentsia would only be deceiving itself if it did not acknowledge its own share of responsibility for this state of unpreparedness. After all, Mr. Menon could not have won in the last general elections with a convincing majority without the explicit support of his own party colleagues and of many liberal intellectuals in the country.

II

China's invasion of India is presumably encouraged in no small measure by the latter's obdurate unwillingness to wake up to the reality. However, it is unlikely that an overt conflict could have been postponed indefinitely. Purely geo-political considerations would indicate that in Asia today China's most formidable potential rival is India. A stable and prosperous India would be a constant threat to the Chinese bid for supremacy in South Asia. Moreover, as good communists, the leaders of Red China are firmly convinced that history is on their side, that it is both necessary and obligatory on their part to promote revolutions elsewhere, and that red Napoleonism is a perfectly legitimate method for spreading communism, especially in countries where the local communist parties are not strong or determined enough to bring off the revolution on their own. Almost from the very beginning, Red China has been opposed to the 'revisionist' theory of co-existence and peaceful revolution. Its self-imposed role as the 'liberator of Asia' has been made all the more urgent by Russia's reluctance to risk a nuclear war for the sake of world communism. China would have attacked India sooner or later because this was

indispensable to its programme of Asian liberation.

But possibly the most decisive factor in China's hostility to India is the latter's commitment to democracy. I have mentioned earlier that Asian destiny in our times will be moulded by a choice which is not specifically Asian but universal. That choice is between totalitarian dictatorship and libertarian democracy. The choice presented itself sharply to Europe after the first World War; today it confronts the newly emerging nations of Asia. Red China has unambiguously plumped for totalitarianism. India, on the contrary, has chosen the alternative of democracy. Not that this commitment can be called altogether unambiguous; otherwise India would not have had to wait so long to recognize the reality of Red China. However, in spite of her pan-Asian illusion and myopic trust in communist professions, India since independence has been pursuing democratic principles and practices far more closely than possibly any other country in Asia and Africa. This does not mean that anti-democratic forces and tendencies are not strong in this country. We have, for example, to reckon with the two powerful organisations of the C.P.I. and the R.S.S.; our caste system is extremely well-entrenched; and political and cultural tribalism in its various manifestations continues to obstruct all efforts in the direction of democratic development. Nevertheless, it is admitted even by India's critics that during the last decade and a half India's main endeavour has been to establish and promote conditions essential to her development as a full-fledged democracy. Not only has India forged a genuinely democratic constitution for herself; she has also made considerable headway towards social justice and material progress without violating the fundamental rights and liberties guaranteed by her constitution. The rule of law has already struck deep roots in this country; the independence and integrity of the Indian judiciary is above reproach; the three general elections on the basis of

universal adult suffrage have been on the whole free and fair; and in spite of the stress of tensions and conflicts there have been no serious attempts to interfere with the rights of free association and expression. At the same time many significant measures have been taken to improve the national economy, to raise the general standard of living, and to reduce inequalities and social injustice. Much, of course, remains to be done, but on a balanced view the achievements are admittedly quite creditable, and in consequence, India has acquired a degree of healthy political stability which is in sharp contrast to the record of most of the other countries of Asia.

India thus presents to Asia an alternative possibility of development from the one held out by Red China. Although India does not seem to have fully grasped the profound implications of her choice for the future of Asia, it amounts in reality to a clear repudiation of the myth of a common Asian destiny. Now a democratic system, so long as it is not directly threatened with aggression or subversion, can and does tolerate the existence of other systems which are non-democratic or even anti-democratic. Such toleration, however, goes against the grain of any regime committed to totalitarian ideas and methods. From practical considerations it may temporarily adopt peaceful co-existence as a strategy; but its very logic would impel it to seek by every means the destruction of all alternative systems. All modern totalitarianisms, but especially the communist variety, are messianic in outlook; at the same time, however, they suffer from an aggressive type of inverted inferiority complex. In the existence of other alternative systems they see a threat to their own existence.

When India began to emerge as the principal exponent of democracy in Asia, it became obligatory on Red China to bring about by fair means or foul the subversion of her government. On the one hand, under cover of friendship, it began to extend its frontiers and to pre-

pare to attack at the most opportune moment. On the other, it tried to gain control of the Indian Communist Party so that it could be used as its effective fifth column. In this latter effort, its success has been limited, thanks to the rivalry between Moscow and Peking over the leadership of the world communist movement. In any case, the present invasion of India has been prepared for nearly a decade. But for her political shortsight, this should have been obvious to India at least after the Chinese conquest of Tibet.

This ideological aspect of the Chinese invasion gives to it a dimension of significance which would not have been otherwise present in a war between two rival nations. China, presumably, hopes in the long run to subjugate the whole of India, but its objectives at the moment seem to be more limited and less unrealistic. In the first place, by inflicting a series of defeats on both the fronts and forcing India to a humiliating peace, China wants to impress on the rest of Asia the superior might of Communist totalitarianism to democracy. Secondly, by extending its frontiers into Indian territory both in the North-West and the North-East, China would keep India perpetually vulnerable to attack. Thirdly, by forcing India to divert suddenly most of her resources to defence preparations, it expects to subvert the Third Five Year Plan and immobilise all efforts towards peaceful democratic development. And finally, it may even have calculated that the stress of war and the demoralisation brought about by military defeat would cause great disaffection and unrest which would then create the proper climate for its communist fifth column in this country to stage a successful *coup d'état*.

China's unprovoked aggression, in itself, should be reason enough for all non-communist countries to extend their sympathy and support to India in repelling the attack. But more is involved in this conflict than the question of territorial aggression. If China's military adventure proves to be even partially successful, then that

may be the beginning of the end of the democratic experiment in Asia. For this will not only greatly reinforce the misgivings of the smaller Asian nations about the competence of the democratic system to defend itself against totalitarian attack. It is also bound to shake India's own confidence in the feasibility of her choice. That will be disastrous not only for Asia, but for the whole world. Consequently, it should be realised by every nation or government which cares for democracy that it has an urgent obligation to rush to India's assistance in this hour of destiny. Asia's choice between the two alternative systems of our age will be largely determined by the issue of this contest.

III

Developments inside India during the last few weeks leave no doubt that although caught unawares the country is now determined to defend itself at all costs against aggression. But determination is not enough. It is necessary at least for the leadership of this young democracy to anticipate and prepare for the many hazards and compulsions of the new situation.

In the present emergency, military requirements are bound to get top priority. But in the present stage of its economy, can India afford to prepare seriously for what threatens to become a long-drawn tussle and at the same time continue her pursuit of general economic development? In other words, will the Third Five Year Plan be the first casualty of this conflict? This is what the Chinese must have calculated. Realism dictates that India has to rely heavily on international support if she is to fight the aggressor effectively and at the same time carry on her struggle against poverty, disease and ignorance. She must appeal urgently to the United Nations, and should a decision be prevented there by the Russian veto, approach directly every member nation that can be persuaded to offer military and/or financial assistance. Very little effective help, how-

ever, can be expected from Russia or the Afro-Asian countries because the former is unlikely to back India openly against China and the latter have hardly any surplus to offer. But the United States, several West European countries and some members of the Commonwealth, being definitely committed to democratic ideals, would presumably be anxious and are certainly in a position to come to India's succour. Time is pressing and efforts in this direction cannot brook delay.

India must also make a big effort to win Pakistan's friendship and persuade it to joint defence arrangements for the entire subcontinent. This will not only permit India to concentrate more fully on her defence efforts against China but also make it easier for other nations which have friendly relations with Pakistan to assist India. For this India may have to go more than half way to remove Pakistan's grievances and suspicions. If necessary, she should have the courage and wisdom to agree to a plebiscite in Kashmir under international supervision, provided Pakistan consents to its being held after the Chinese have been forced to evacuate all Indian territory.

Internal democracy is usually the first victim of a prolonged war. During the last few weeks Mr. Nehru's government has shown remarkable responsiveness to public opinion. However, the logic of war points to increasing regimentation and centralisation of authority. This cannot be altogether avoided, but a wise leadership can try to ensure that the pressures of this temporary national emergency do not permanently injure the not-yet very securely laid foundations of this young democracy. To the extent it is possible in times of war, the government should respect and even welcome free and informed public discussion of its activities and constructive criticism from non-official sources. It is also highly desirable in the interest of both democracy and effective defence that public men of proved democratic faith and record who may not belong to the party in office should be

closely associated with the government at all levels, if necessary by reconstituting the latter. Most important of all, steps must be immediately taken to ensure intelligent, organised and effective participation of the civilian population in defence efforts through homeguards and a chain-work of non-official organisations. In other words, the defence of democracy must make full use of the resources of the democratic system.

Another hazard of war is the resurgence of conservative and reactionary forces with the help of militant patriotism. War invariably breeds chauvinism, and there is a genuine danger that in the new climate militant nationalists will try to replace liberals and democratic socialists in the leadership of the country. This danger can be met if the more enlightened leadership of today tries energetically to explain to the people the basic issues involved in the conflict and to imbue them with sentiments of unshakable loyalty to the values of democracy. This is a war not merely for the defence of one's own country but also for the defence of democracy against aggressive totalitarianism. The common people must be educated in the far-reaching implications of their commitment to freedom, and this should include clear and unambiguous repudiation of all varieties of serfdom, whether of the Right or of the Left.

The threat from the communist fifth column in India is another urgent problem which must be faced squarely and without delay. The recent resolution of the C.P.I. to support the government against China should not deceive Indian democrats into giving it the benefit of doubt. It will be suicidal not to recognise and alert the general public against the essentially anti-democratic nature of communism. This summer patriotism of Indian Communists cannot and should not obscure their ultimate commitment to the most potent and insidious ideology of slavery in modern times. In particular, people must be educated to see behind

their clever doubletalk and to frustrate their highly developed methods of internal subversion. This should be the occasion for developing sufficient intellectual and moral maturity so as to rid ourselves of our mythical thinking about communism and to distinguish between this pseudo-democratic ideology and the various schools of genuinely radical, libertarian and cosmopolitan thinking.

Finally, in spite of all the patriotic gestures and protestations of our businessmen, it should not be forgotten that war is an invitation to hoarders, blackmarketeers and fortune-hunters. The strain of the war is bound to be felt soon in the supply of essential civilian necessities. It is not enough to enforce austerity in consumer spending; it is also essential to raise production and to ensure equitable distribution of available supplies. For this purpose, steps have to be taken to promote more effective and enlightened participation of workers in planning production, pricing and distribution. Since sooner or later rationing may have to be introduced, especially in the cities and big towns, consumers' cooperatives should be formed to discharge this major responsibility in the most effective and democratic manner. Citizens' vigilance committees are also called for to check blackmarketeering and fifth column activities.

The present conflict, which is certainly not of India's seeking, has put Indian democracy to its first crucial test. We have not only to defend this country against the aggressors; we have also to protect our young democracy from internal corrosion and subversion. In fact, the strategy of defence, wisely conceived and ably pursued, should, as in England during the Second World War, considerably strengthen the democratic bases of Indian polity, economy and social institutions. It is a tremendous task and our very best is demanded.

November 9, 1962

Reflections on the Chinese Invasion

II The Silver Lining

By ABU SAYEED AYYUB

THE Indian Communist Party's National Council came out on the 1st of November, 1962, with a forthright condemnation of Chinese aggression against India and gave its full support to the Prime Minister's appeal for national unity in defence of the country. The Council 'never expected a socialist country like China to settle its border dispute with India by force of arms and make astounding territorial claims against a country which is engaged in peaceful consolidation of its newly won independence'. A leading member of the party is reported to have said that 'this was the first time the CPI had taken a decision on an extremely grave issue entirely on the basis of its own reading of the situation within the country and outside. He claimed that this was clear proof of the fact that the CPI had come of age'. (*The Statesman*, 2-11-62).

Coming of age is a happy event and deserves congratulations. Candour and modesty are also commendable qualities and these were shown in the confession implied by the above claim, viz., that all these years the Communist Party was so immature as to find it necessary to let other people living thousands of miles away (in Moscow, Peking or London) guide its decisions on grave national issues on the basis of *their* reading of the Indian situation. How one wishes that the coming of age of the leading opposition party in this country had not been so exasperatingly delayed!

Unfortunately, I do not feel so sure that this is precisely and exclusively what the resolution does prove. In my opinion it points more directly to several other

things. It might even be taken as a 'proof' that the Indian Communists have grown out of communism. But that is only an outside possibility which we may ignore for the moment. The resolution, however, does prove that the CPI after mature deliberation has come to believe in one or other of the two alternatives presented by the following disjunctive proposition: Either the Chinese Party has ceased to be communist, or communism is just as compatible with expansionism and military aggression as capitalism and fascism. It would be interesting to enquire which of these two horns of the dilemma the CPI—its majority group, that is to say—is more anxious to embrace, or avoid.

The resolution expresses surprise that a 'socialist country like China' should be guilty of conduct which the sponsors of the resolution have been accustomed to regard as inseparable from capitalism. Critics of communism are often tempted to point out that communism can no more help being expansionist than capitalism, in its initial phases—witness the military expansion of Soviet Communism in Finland before and in eastern Europe after World War II, and of Chinese Communism in North Korea and Tibet, and now over the Himalayas into India. Jawaharlal Nehru went further and said on the floor of the Lok Sabha on November 8, 1962, that 'the major issue between India and China was not one of communism or anti-communism but one of an expansionist and imperialist minded country like China deliberately invading another country... Today we are facing naked aggression, just of the type which the world saw in

the 18th and 19th centuries when there was no communism in the world' (*The Statesman*, 9-11-62). I do not subscribe to this reading of the situation. I think it wrong and harmful to believe that Mao's government wants to conquer India or large parts of it, send a Chinese governor-general to rule over the conquered territory, and use that territory as a source of raw material and cheap labour and as a field for the investment of excess home capital. It is very much the issue, if not between communism as such and democracy as such, then between Chinese communism and Indian democracy. The stakes are high for both sides. For China, it is less vital but more grandiose: acceptance by the countries of south and south-east Asia of Chinese communism and Chinese tutelage. For India, it is a question of survival as a free and democratic nation.

The immediate motives behind the Chinese invasion of India were succinctly stated by the *New Statesman* editorial of November 2: 'China may be attempting to undermine India's emergent system of economic planning, and so remove her as an alternative, democratic magnet to the peoples of Asia. Or her object may be to drive India into the Western camp—which would in the long run have the same effect. Mr. Nehru is fully aware of these dangers. Non-alignment remains the keystone of his policy—and rightly so'. Adherence to the five year plans, with only minor modifications, also remains the keystone of Mr. Nehru's policy, and one is again tempted to say—rightly so. Simultaneous and strict adherence to both these right courses may, however, stand in the way of that quick massive build-up of our defences without which the large scale and long prepared Chinese attack cannot be thwarted. Knowing how allergic the Nehru government has always been to receiving any big military aid from western powers and how passionately devoted it is to its economic plans, the Chinese government must have reckoned that it is quite within their military capacity to make good their 'astound-

ing' claims in the NEFA and Ladakh regions. These mountainous tracts are not obviously being coveted for their own sake. They are only a first step, a foothold. Once the Chinese have got a firm foothold on this side of the Himalayas, it will be only a question of time, and not a long time, before the pincer movement constituted by Communist China's military forces on the border and the indigenous Communists' party-forces inside the country succeed in turning it over to communism of the Chinese brand and owing allegiance to Peking. After that, China will not need to resort to military force in order to pull the smaller countries along the Himalayas and further east into the Sino-Communist orbit.

One is, therefore, surprised to see that the National Council of the Communist Party of India has thought fit to condemn the crossing of the McMahon line by the Communist army of China—so obviously but so nicely calculated to further the interests of world communism in general and of Asian communism in particular. Our anti-Communist press and platform loudly explain this self-denying Communist pronouncement as a purely hypocritical and skin-saving device, also as a move which will enable the Communists to infiltrate for their own purposes into civil defence committees, home guards and other war-time organisations. It may be true of some Communists, but many whom I know personally are not made of such stuff. They are honest and earnest men. Perhaps they sincerely believe that even without the strains of a war our economic plans were bound to collapse anyway, and in the chaos that could well be expected to follow Nehru's retirement from politics in the not too distant future (he is 73 now), the CPI would be able to chalk out an easy path to power. The brother Communist Party of China, therefore, need not have unleashed a wholly superfluous war, one of whose inevitable consequences would be the temporary fade-out of the Indian Communists from our political scene. Was this the point of

difference between the majority and minority groups in the National Council meeting—the majority contending that they could go it alone and do the job within a reasonable time, the minority being of the opinion that it was necessary for the Chinese to give them a leg up?

That is not of course what the minority Communist group says. What it, or some of its spokesmen, have said is that it is axiomatically true that no socialist State (for some mysterious reason communists insist on calling themselves and their regimes 'socialist' in spite of their unbounded hatred for all socialist parties, Asian or European) can ever commit aggression, ergo the Chinese army has not committed aggression against India; the McMahon line is only an imperialist imposition, the proper boundary between India and China has yet to be fixed by negotiation, et al. The majority group led by Mr. Dange has, as we began by saying, accepted the fact of Chinese aggression and condemned it. It follows, or else logic has no meaning, that Mr. Dange's group has (we assume that it has not ceased to be communist) either renounced the communist axiom that 'no socialist state can commit aggression', or denounced the Chinese regime as having ceased to be communist. Vinoba Bhave with his Gandhian innocence of communist politics, accepts the above axiom, but with his sound petit bourgeois fidelity to logic rejects the Chinese government's claim to be communist. What is the position of the Dange group?

This group has not so far been reported to have denounced the Chinese government or party as non-Communist. The front page article in the *New Age* (the CPI weekly) of November 11, 1962 (claiming to be based on notes taken from Chairman Dange's utterances) says, 'The genuine questioners think that perhaps we as Communists, knowing Communist policies and the Communist mind, must be able to fathom the depths of a Communist mind everywhere. It is not so... We admit our failure to understand China'. No hint here of any doubts being enter-

tained as to the communism of the Chinese government. To the insistent question: 'Could you tell us why China is behaving like this, the likeliest answer is that her political understanding of India has gone wrong'—not, according to Mr. Dange, her understanding of communism. If the Chinese are accepted as sound communists (in spite of their comradely but unresolved differences with Khrushchev and now with Mr. Dange himself) then the Dange group has publicly announced its rejection of the thesis that no communist state can ever commit aggression. This is significant. It is not a very startling revelation for those of us who had received their first shock a quarter of a century ago by the Soviet government's unprovoked assault on a weak and helpless neighbour. But it is significant that the Indian Communist Party (the 2nd biggest party of Asia after the Chinese party) has officially admitted that communism is quite compatible with military aggression by officially branding *Communist China* as an aggressor. The Italian Communist Party (the 2nd biggest party in Europe after the Soviet party) too sees no incompatibility between communism and unprovoked military aggression.

On the other hand, an article in a Delhi weekly, reportedly written by a well-known Communist intellectual now in the Dange group, did, in effect, maintain that the revolution in China has gone sour. Just as Napoleon, 'carrying the very tricolor of the French revolution turned the crusade into an empire, there are indications that the establishment of a powerful centralised State in China possibly could bring about Han chauvinism under a Communist leadership'. The fellow-travelling weekly *Link* in its issue dated November 11 speaks of 'the unbridgeable chasm that divides the war-mongering expansionists of Peking and the genuine Communists of the world'. If this is the position of the Dange group, then how do they explain the recent *Pravda* editorial proclaiming the Chinese as their 'brothers' (in contrast with the Indians who are only their 'friends') and its sup-

port of the territorial claims of the Chinese government which the National Council of the CPI itself described as 'astounding'?

The silence of the pro-Peking faction is understandable, but that of the Dange group (fortunately in a majority of two to one in the National Council of the CPI) is mystifying. Or is it a deliberate attempt at mystification? It is hard to believe that the leaders of this group are not fully aware of the logical impossibility of holding at one and the same time that: (1) the Chinese government is Communist; (2) its military forces have invaded India; (3) no Communist government can commit aggression. But that is precisely what the Dange group is doing—as severing all the three propositions in the same breath.

Prof. Hiren Mukherjee, the deputy leader of the Communist group in the Lok Sabha, said in the course of his speech on the floor of the Parliament on November 8 that he had been trying hard to find out 'what possibly could be the motive behind the madness that had seized the Chinese government' in their armed invasion of India (*The New Age*, 11.11.62). Looking for motives in the actions of a man or group 'seized by madness' is a futile task. We are reminded, however, of the famous speech delivered by Khrushchev before the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU(B) in 1956 in which he also attributed, in effect, the absolutely unaccountable and bizarre conduct of Stalin from 1936 to the time of his death in 1953 to a more serious kind of mental derangement. One wonders if there is anything in the theory and practice of communism which leads to the development of these terrible forms of madness in the top leadership of the Party after it has been in possession of absolute dictatorial power for a decade or more. We used to be told by good old liberals that absolute power corrupts absolutely. Good communists now inform us that absolute power has far worse effects: it produces serious forms of mental derangement. Stalin's diseased mind caused immeasur-

able suffering to millions of Soviet citizens. Mao's and Chou En-lai's 'madness' is bound to spell disaster for untold millions of Indians who were not even remotely responsible for these leaders' assumption of dictatorial power. When a physically strong man becomes suddenly and violently insane, not the members of his household alone but his neighbours too have to suffer much until the man is safely put in a strait jacket. Stalin was too powerful to be straight-jacketed by any human agency. Who is going to cure or curb the mad men of Peking? Some people are hoping that the mighty man of peace and sanity at the Kremlin will do the job. There is no harm in hoping or praying, but we must in the meanwhile keep our powder dry, and make or procure more powder.

One of the many things which the Chinese government want to achieve by their military adventure is to bring to dust the prestige that Nehru's India enjoys in Asia and in the world. That is yet to be seen. But what they have immediately and unquestionably achieved is to blow to bits whatever prestige the Indian Communists enjoyed in their country. However, there is another angle to it. The Chinese calculation is that their supporters in the CPI have only to lie low for the time being; as their armies advance, the time will soon come when these Indian comrades will be able to rise and overthrow the Nehru government after first having overthrown 'self-styled Marxists-Leninists' like Dange from the leadership of the Party. Only then will the Chinese government make peace with the new Communist government of India. How do I know the Chinese mind? I did not, until I read this on p. 5 of the Party organ, the *New Age* of 11.11.62—'They (the Chinese leaders) virtually call upon the Indian people to overthrow the Nehru government if a peaceful solution of the India-China border is to be achieved and peace on our Northern frontiers to be secured. At the same time they call upon the ranks of the Indian Communist Party to get rid of

their present leadership' (*italics added*). I don't like to use the pejorative expression 'puppet government', but that is just what the dictators of Communist China seem determined to establish, first in the border areas and ultimately at New Delhi. With such a government alone are they prepared to live in peace. We guessed that this is what they were saying with their guns in Ladakh and NEFA. We are obliged to the *New Age* for confirming the guess with authentic quotations. The guns were equally authentic but not equally explicit.

'Non-alignment remains the key-stone of Mr. Nehru's policy and rightly so'—observed the *New Statesman*. We are all very fond of the sound of this word non-alignment, but not equally clear about its meaning. If it means that India is not going to join either of the two power blocs, that she is not going to enter into any military pacts, that she will not let military bases be constructed on her soil—then that should indeed rightly remain the key-stone of our policy. But military non-alignment is often coupled and not seldom confused with political and ethical neutrality. Now neutrality is not a good thing to swear by under all circumstances. It will be immoral to proclaim our neutrality in a situation in which a weak State has been invaded by a militarily more powerful State, and we have no reason to doubt that it is a clear case of aggression. We must boldly extend our sympathy and moral support to the aggressee and such material help as we can. We may not declare war on the aggressor, for, apart from our own military weakness, there may well be other sound reasons against that step. But stopping short of it does not mean that we are neutral. When Egypt was the victim of aggression, we were not

neutral and our voice did not falter in declaring our sympathy and our condemnation. Rightly so. If Cuba were to become the victim of aggression, I dare say we would not hesitate to let the world know which way our sympathies and antipathies lie. But when Hungary was the victim of aggression by a bigger and more ruthless military power than France, Britain or the U.S.A., we faltered and equivocated. That was not morally right; I doubt if it was even politically prudent. When Tibet fell and its ruler sought asylum with us, we gave him asylum but condoned the aggression. That again was wrong and, as it transpires now, highly imprudent. Jayaprakash Narayan has drawn the attention of 'the persons concerned' to their myopic vision produced by 'mental and emotional alignment that went about in the garb of non-alignment.' A war cannot be fought with uncorrected eyesight, still less a war with an enemy whom our short-sightedness had led us to regard all these years as a friend. No nation can hope to survive whose political vision is not good enough to distinguish friend from foe. We needed the ophthalmic surgery of a treacherous war to reveal to us the face of our enemy; it will also show us who our real friends are.

Now that we ourselves are the victim of a foul attack by the Chinese, the voices of Indonesia, Burma, Ghana and Ceylon and several other countries are silent on the pretext of neutrality. Such neutrality looks mean to our eyes. We should remember that look next time when some other country falls victim to an aggression like this. There will be another thing to remember. The United Kingdom and the United States of America have answered our desperate cry for help generously and without the least possible delay. The Soviet Union consoled us by calling us their friends but did not omit to inform us that those who have committed this dastardly aggression against us are their brothers; they went out of their way to support* the Chinese claims on our territories this side of the Himalayan ridge, fraught with more sinister possibilities but even less justifiable

* This is nothing new. The Geographical Atlas published by the Soviet Ministry of Geology and Protection of Minerals (proscribed and forfeited by the Indian Government on Nov. 14, 1962) and some other Soviet atlases had all along been lending their support to these expansionist ambitions of Communist China.

than Nazi Germany's claim on the Sudetenland. They are gentlemen enough to assure us that they would fulfil their commitments made prior to the date of large scale Chinese aggression. Their political and military alignment, however, prevents them from promising *now* any kind of aid which we badly need to defend ourselves against the Chinese. We know of course that our aggressors owe much the greater part of their military strength to the Soviet Union. I hope I am not being politically naive if I predict that our neutrality will tremble in the balance ever so slightly when in future we compare these two attitudes displayed towards us in the hour of our misfortune.

Nehru had told Taya Zinkin in 1954: 'They (the Chinese) have a sense of urgency and dedication which our people and the Congress totally lack. We got our independence far too easily. How I envy Mao the Long March! What a test for man it was. We did not have the Long March, we had it easy. I cannot blame the British for this, but I must recognise that what we gained in continuity, we have lost in spring cleaning, if you know what I mean. Progress is slowed down because we have not had a revolution, only evolution' (Taya Zinkin—*Reporting India* p. 209). The Chinese have given us what the British were too genteel to give, a long march and a revolution rolled into one—a long and hard war. Every one of us will have to be in this war one way or another. Only some may have to die, but all must pass through years of toil and suffering. It is possible that a cease-fire may be arranged and a truce offered—only to be broken by the Chinese as soon as their own military consolidation or the international situation suits them. Peace will come only when we succeed in making the Chinese government respect our defensive strength, when we make our Himalayan frontiers fool and knave proof.

We are too soft in brain and brawn. We will have to be steeled in the furnace of this war brought on us as a result of our poetically unreal politics having to confront

the diabolical *Realpolitik* of Communist China. The Chinese treachery, instead of taking the ground away from under our feet has put our feet firmly on solid ground. We have got rid of Mr. Krishna Menon, and this signifies a turning point in our political thinking. But one or two remnants of unreality still cling to our thoughts. Are we mentally and practically geared to the fact that we are up against the worst kind of twentieth century totalitarianism? Nineteenth century imperialism fought with small professional armies for limited economic gains and maybe a little military glory thrown into the bargain; twentieth century totalitarianism fights with its entire population regimented, and for the total subjugation of the entire populations of other countries to its own way of life and thought. A totalitarian power not only mobilizes its army, it regiments its art and literature, its science and philosophy. We are amazed by the way the Chinese leaders and spokesmen lie, but they are not lying; they are speaking the truth. Only, truth for them is what serves the cause of the proletariat—which in Asia is identical with the cause of the Communist government for China. This is their honest conception of truth. The Chinese leaders are not dishonest; they are communist. They have sacrificed much for communism, including of course bourgeois notions of truth and honesty. Nehru thought in 1954 that communism in China would become Sinified. He was right. He thought it would become Confucianised, de-Stalinised. He was wrong there. It has become over-Stalinised.

Such a totally regimented country, fully and ceaselessly prepared for war, blind in its mighty arrogance, determined to spread Sinified communism in Asia and probably Africa through war and insurrection (Mao has scornfully rejected Khrushchev's thesis of peaceful coexistence and competition between capitalism and communism), has hurled its armies across our Himalayan frontiers. Several times in the past we failed to protect these frontiers, not because the invading armies were strong,

but because we were neither united nor properly organised for defence. This time the invaders are terribly strong, but we are united as never before (except for the dissident Communist group). The emotional integration of India's many religious communities, linguistic groups and innumerable sects and castes—which our leadership and government have been trying hard to achieve for over a decade—has been achieved at one stroke. It is a precious gift from the Chinese invaders which we must not squander away. Although we were taken not unawares but unprepared—thanks to Mr. Krishna Menon—our military build-up is going on satisfactorily. And the morale of our people is as high as any government could wish. But it is going to be a terribly hard war. What makes it harder is that we are not only at

war with China, we are also in economic competition against them. This war on two fronts, military and economic, is going to need every ounce of our energy, every kind of privation and sacrifice. We must not fail on either front. Defeat in war will of course mean the total destruction of all that we stand for and hold dear. But even if we succeeded in driving out the invaders only at the cost of our economic disruption, or at the cost of surrendering our democratic way of life (so painstakingly nurtured by Nehru*) to indigenous militarist or communal-fascist dictatorship, that would be a disaster of almost equal magnitude—not only for India, but for the greater part of Asia. The whole world is watching with deep anxiety the outcome of a frontier war which is bound to change the course of world history.

November 15, 1962

*If we all love (admire is too pale a word) Jawaharlal Nehru in spite of his many human frailties, it is because he symbolises for us the democratic spirit and secular temper of life. Gandhi was the symbol of much that is best in our traditional culture; Nehru of much that we mean by the new, the resurgent India.

A R T S

Konarak

By MARIE SETON

SOME years ago I saw a few reproductions of sculptures at the Sun Temple at Konarak. The humanism of the imagery deeply impressed me. I wanted to go to Konarak more than to any other temple in India. These few pictures did not convey the actuality that Konarak is a Song of Songs in stone depicting every conceivable posture in which men and women can make love to one another, and revealing the range of feeling which can be evoked through the act of physical intercourse.

It was not until I was shown a large collection of unpublished photographs that I gained a comparatively accurate impression of the Sun Temple. These photographs seemed to me to be perhaps the most beautiful I had ever seen. But still it was several years before I finally visited Konarak and found the Black Pagoda still more of a marvel than the photographs suggested.

My desire to go to Konarak and form my own impression interested me for one particular reason — my ingrained aversion to the pornographic. It was evident to me that to a lot of people the pictures I saw of Konarak would seem to be pornography. But to me these pictures of the erotic appeared to be the furthest point away from anything I understand as pornography. For me lewdness and suggestiveness are an essential part of the pornographic. Pornography makes me feel uncomfortable not because it shocks me but because of what it reveals about the deep-seated puritanism

of the people to whom it appeals; I mean, of course, the puritan in matters of sex, for it is such puritans who have scourged humanity under many different guises and only too often have slaughtered the innocent.

I don't really think that the person who gains some vicarious thrill from the sight of semi-nude chorus girls with made-up breasts is likely to be responsive to the beauty and spirit of sincerity that inspires the sculptures on the walls of Konarak. I've never been to the temple at Khajuraho but the pictures I have seen make me feel that there is too much seductive artifice in the concept and that there is a teeter-tottering at Khajuraho between the vital and passionate and decadence. It is decadence that produces pornography as a general rule.

The consciously seductive in life can be a prologue to the realisation of a great passion in love. But great passion itself consumes the impulse to be artificially seductive. Many of the ladies at Khajuraho are in love with *Love*. But at Konarak, the women are in love with men, or divinity, and they have abandoned artifice.

I have vivid recollections of the salacious attitude of many people when D. H. Lawrence's novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, first appeared. People tried to get hold of copies. Although the book was banned; a married woman gave it to me to read as a 'naughty' book. I don't know if she thought I was a virgin and this would

educate me, but I remember her attitude impressed me and I thought this woman has been sexually frustrated. I was eighteen or at the most nineteen.

Lady Chatterley's Lover instantly struck me as the most remarkable novel I had ever read. I liked it because it lacked all suggestiveness. I could not understand how anyone, unless they were puritanical, could think the book indecent. When I read it again many years later I found it a far greater book, the only novel which has depicted for me sexual attraction and the results of sexual intercourse in a manner which I know to be true to the actual experience of a certain number of people. Lawrence realised a dynamic reality about men and women who are highly suited to each other sexually: that no matter how promiscuous either may have been before, the highest ecstasy in sexual union produces the psychological state of monogamy and may very well ignite a sense of spirituality. No other modern writer has expressed this in terms of such realistic insight. This is also expressed in certain figures high up on the walls of Konarak.

About a year ago I decided I would read *Lolita* because, while *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is banned in India, or at any rate in Bombay, *Lolita* is to be bought everywhere. I waded through it from the first to the last page but it took me weeks to do so. Perhaps it has great literary merit. But I found it the most unpleasant book because it is cluttered up with paragraphs which deliberately go 'sailing near the wind'. It stops just short of any description of sexual intercourse. The perversion in *Lolita* has nothing to do with *Lolita* being twelve years old, or Humbert being old enough to be her father. It lies in the basic self-loathing of both characters and their abhorrence of their own sexuality. *Lolita* is the condensation of all frigid women. Sexuality in *Lolita* is nothing but a torturous misery to both and the most joyless of all human experience. For me, at any rate, it is the most morbid book I've ever read.

Despite my aversion for pornography

because I had not been brought up to regard sex as sin, I could hardly escape having seen occasional examples of pictorial pornography. What strikes me about Western erotic art — pornographic or otherwise — is the strange absence of delight, of any real sensual pleasure, or even profoundly of passion. This 'frank' expression is not really true at all to life for in actuality there is as much pleasurable sex experience as frustrated and miserable experience. If this were not so there would be a veritable rush to espouse the celibate life. But for the most part celibacy is only enforced upon the unmarried by moral conventions, or else it is achieved through religious dedication. In the whole of my life I have only met one woman who really at bottom appeared to have no interest whatever in men and yet did not seem to be a Lesbian by inclination. However deeply it may be suppressed, there is a natural sexuality in people and a desire for love — to love and be loved. There are people in all cultures who are more passionate by nature and less passionate. Having been rather far around the world, I definitely have the impression that the most highly sexed people are in the area where they are not generally supposed to be — in Northern Europe and in North America. Wherever there is puritanism there is a corresponding concentration on sexuality. Among the people who have been deeply influenced by the puritan approach there is also a tremendous drive in men towards a rapist approach and an impulse to seduce in women.

Most people the world over may not experience the heights of satisfaction in their sexual lives, but neither is sex for the majority of people an orgy of seduction, rape, or the involvement in a grossly unpleasant joke. Yet this is the portrayal of the erotic in almost all of Western art, even the Greek and Roman. With Christian art, so-called sacred and profane love are juxtaposed and, oh my god, the number of rakes' progresses and the amount of sexual sadism that has been recorded

over twenty-five hundred years! It's simply amazing.

I don't know why this miasma of violence in sex should have appeared in the West *before* the rise of Christianity which, alas, has been excessively hard on its followers in that it tabbed sex as 'carnal' and of the 'lower nature' of man. But it did, and the consequences in their extremist form have been the perversity of the Black Mass, black magic, and a markedly pornographic streak in art, the peculiarity of which is the dominance of the theme of rape, on the one hand, and sex as a dirty joke on the other.

The underlying differences between the erotic art of the West, including the pre-Christian Greek and Roman, and that of Konarak are truly astonishing.

Greek and Roman myths in which deities have intercourse with human beings are very common. But the element of seduction and rape are already much in evidence. If these myths are compared for instance with the Krishna Lila or the Ram Lila there are glaring differences. The sharpest contrast lies in the aspect of conquest in sex which appears in the Old Testament of the Bible as well as in the classical mythology. The question of mutuality between men and women hardly ever enters in, whereas the element of mutual passion and consent plays a very central role in Hindu myth. It is most evident in the Krishna Lila while the character of Ravana is extremely provocative of thought to anyone who is at all familiar with the corresponding Western figures. It can almost categorically be stated that Sita, in any Western myth, would have been taken against her will.

The most astounding thing about almost all Western erotic art is the excess of idealism, on the one hand (or what can be called 'sacred love'), and the amazing lack of mutuality in what is thought of as pornographic art. Hardly anyone enjoys themselves.

By contrast it is the mutuality of enjoyment which makes so great an impact at Konarak.

II

Allowing that Konarak is a microcosm of life, certain details emerge with very great individual force. At the apex of the purely artistic aspect of the Sun Temple stand the figures of Surya, the Sun God, on the various horses symbolizing his riding of the sky from dawn to sunset. (It is interesting here to mention that the sun is also conceived of as a horseman riding the sky in the pictorial art of the Pueblo American Indians. I possess a most fascinating painting done by a seventeen year old Pueblo Indian which depicts the Sun riding a white horse along a rainbow). I have seen no images that excell those of Konarak's Surya in nobility of spirit and beauty of form.

It makes me feel content that such indescribably beautiful figures should be given the background of no less exquisitely beautiful men and women entwined as lovers. That man born of woman can evolve so far as to conceive the images of Surya is very adequate proof, if proof is required, that to attempt to confine the idea of sex to man's 'lower nature' is to show a two-dimensional understanding. It is simply impossible if man is born out of 'sin', or only out of humanity's 'animal' nature, that he should be so well equipped to conceive and fashion images of divinity.

The thing which is the most appealing to me at Konarak is the depiction of the profound truth which is that of all human acts that of sexual intercourse is the most intimate. It is precisely because it is the most intimate that it is the most fitting symbol for portraying the idea of man's relationship to God, or the Creative Power in life.

When I see Konarak I know, and I refuse to pretend I don't know, that what is depicted on the walls reflects in the most truthful manner the range of physical and psychological experience of which men and women are capable through the act of intercourse. This is what I see and, at least for me, there is no need to seek any explanation as to why these scenes should

appear on the walls of a temple. I can see no reason whatever why a temple dedicated to the Sun — the giver of life — should not be decorated with a Song of Life, or the Song of Songs, in stone.

If high on the walls, as if reaching upwards, the lovers are symbols of the seeking of the human soul to adore divinity (as the expression on the faces suggest), I am prepared to look at and accept the sexual experience furthest away from the intercourse of man and god. There has never been a period, or a country, when some men did not in actuality derive a release from tension through copulating with animals. A vast number of people have known this eons of time before the famous, and much read, Kinsey Report denied it was a fact. This is perhaps the least human expression of the sexual aspect of man. Because it is, at Konarak the small plaque which depicts this act is not at all conspicuous and it is on the base of the walls. Many people may never even notice it at all. But it is there. What one could object to is if this was the image that was stressed. To stress it would certainly be to put forward a pornographic idea.

There is no doubt a certain ambivalence in the feelings of many people in regard to Konarak. Some go in search of the pornographic; others from a genuine interest in art; still others from a mixed desire. But there are also those who go with no complex feelings at all because being simple people they have never thought much about Konarak as something unique. I saw such people there, people who had obviously come to see what was for them a local, or not-so-distant temple built in the form of the temple chariot which they had seen many times in wood perhaps at Puri, or somewhere else.

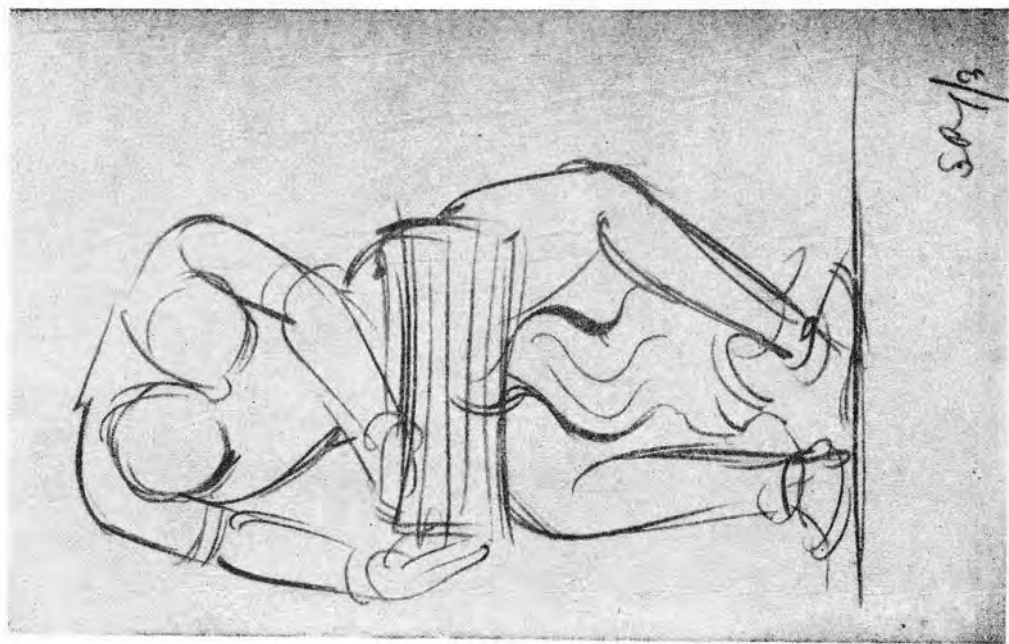
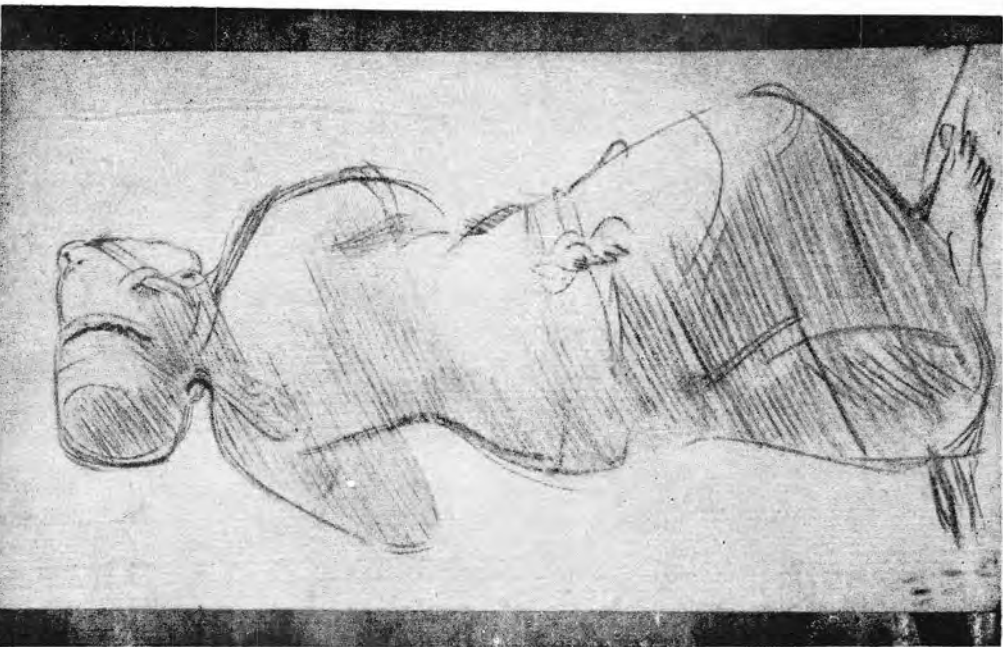
I doubt if these people were concerned about the history of Konarak, or the flowery explanations and speculations that surround it. It mattered not to them that this surviving building serves as the apex of Orissa's tradition of temple building. They may not have known that it was built in the 13th century as the culmination of a

long process. They probably knew from tradition that its builder was Narasimha Deva (1238-1264) and that he had been the ruling monarch who had ordered the construction of the Temple of the Sun after he had defeated would-be Muslim invaders. But beyond that, Konarak is just Konarak for them, a place that had once been a flourishing port on the Bay of Bengal.

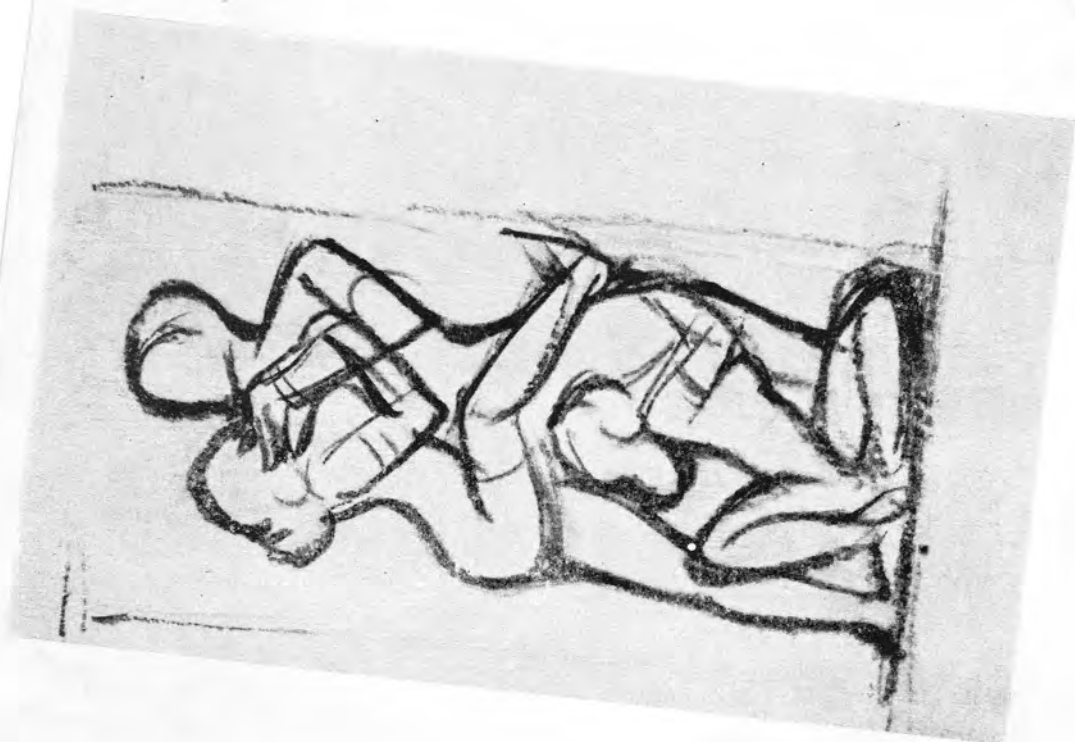
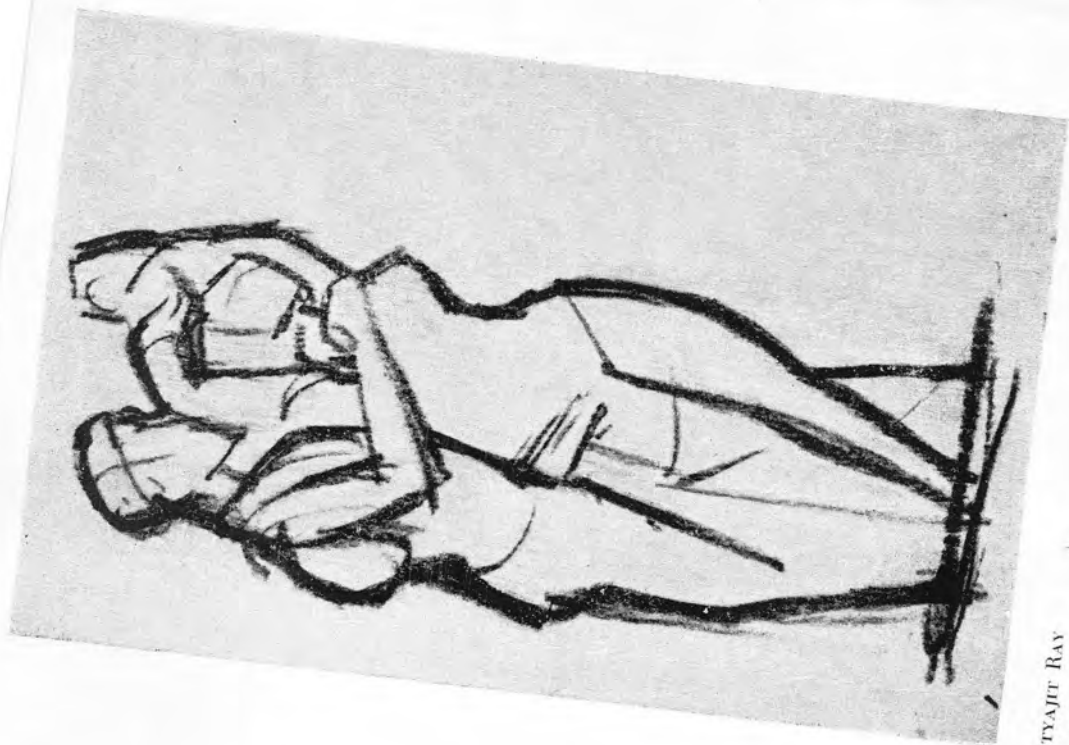
Despite the appalling ravages of time, and the great violence vented on Surya's temple by iconoclastic hands, enough of the main temple, plus the exquisite Natmandir, or Dancing Hall, survives to suggest what the original was like. The Natmandir is a pillared delight carved with the most adorable galaxy of dancers and musicians — heavenly females — all of whom look so extremely happy that their accumulated happiness tends to obliterate the fact that each individual figure is a work of superb sculptural art.

It is the gigantic Jagamohan which, though badly battered records the evolution of human love from its most bestial aspect to its most sublime; but the Mandapa tower which once rose higher than the Jagamohan is a tragic wreck despite its setting for three surviving images of Surya. Many of the twenty-four wheels at the base of the chariot-shaped form have been horribly mutilated by infuriated hands. The seven small horses which are so beautifully fashioned at the giant feet of Surya's statues, are repeated again in huge dimensions as drawers of the temple itself. Many people have claimed to have felt that the wheels give the illusion of turning and that the whole immense structure is about to be lifted into the sky. This may be rather poetic fancy. I did not have this impression, perhaps because I want Konarak to stand forever and ever as the greatest of all testaments that it is the most excellent thing to have been born a man or a woman and for each to come together with the other.

Looking at the handiwork of the artists and craftsmen who recorded their vision of the pleasure of being man and woman, I would assume that the creators can only



Sketches of Konarak Sculpture by SATYAJIT RAY



Sketches of Konarak Sculpture by SATYAJIT RAY

have created from their own experience. Perhaps they were a fraternity of artists who had first learned the art of love and then, being devotees of the search for the spirit through the flesh, carved their personal sexual biographies in stone images. Many different levels of artists came together to create the whole. Some were far in advance of others both in concept and execution. This may be fancy. But it is certain that the carvers had an adoration of life and none had ever heard that there was sin in man's love for woman, or woman's adoration of man.

If every mother taught her daughter that the inner nature of woman is realised through the *quality* of the physical union with the man that is here, and every father taught his son that manhood is realised in its most civilised form in terms of the effect of intercourse upon him, the world would be a vastly more contented place. The marvel of Konarak is that the symbol of the highest humanism I have ever seen expressed is that of man making the offering to the woman, and woman accepting it with such ineffable and passionate dignity. Is it not extraordinary that this is perhaps the only place in the world where this act has been depicted with absolute simplicity and total frankness? It is the qualitative aspect of Konarak — the spirit — which is unique.

III

None of the monographs, nor either of the two films made of Konarak, give the least impression of the diversity in size of the sculpture. It is the most difficult building to describe and this is not because of the extent of the damage done by time, or by the hands of men who felt compelled to mutilate many of the figures. It is because life itself is so rich, exuberant and contradictory that no single sentence, paragraph or book can sum it up.

The basic form of the surviving Jagamohan is a pyramid and this form has signified to many mystics the union of God, Man and the Universe. It would seem to

me that this idea is embodied in the structure and that the sculpture as a whole illustrates it. In life there is at one end destruction by war, and it is shown, and at the other love and procreation, which at Konarak is far more in evidence. But everything is under the jurisdiction of the Sun God.

The chariot wheels unite in each spoke the beauty of nature. And the actions of human beings, the human actions, frequently but not exclusively those of amorous couples joined in physical union, are contained within a circle. Behind the wheels on the wall are larger figures who may or may not be engaged in some action of love. From the base to the top of Jagamohan, and what survives of the Mandapa, the motif of man and woman in union is repeated. But as the motif reaches upwards as the unifying force in life — one that cuts across such activities as war shown in friezes — the size of the figures increases and the expression of emotion becomes ever more refined. There is the suggestion that the spirit ascends towards the divine as the sexual intercourse of loving couples becomes ever more human and tender.

There is something very extraordinary about the erotic art of Konarak and that is that though there never could be greater realism, there is not a single scene where a man touches a woman against her will. Not one scene remotely suggests the idea of rape. Even the scenes which can be called orgiastic are by mutual consent. In consequence there is an expression of intense joy, unbroken by violence between men and women. This joy, so intensely human in its depiction at the base and on the lower levels of the main buildings, becomes the serene ecstasy of union of the flesh and the spirit as it reaches towards the parapet where the very large figures of the heavenly musicians stand. There are no more spiritualized faces in all of art than those of the lovers high up on the walls of the Jagamohan. Konarak makes all the other erotic art of the world appear grotesquely lewd and pornographic.

Konarak is a book of life in stone where

the human and the divine are united in a state of joy. And Konarak presents an unbelievable freedom from rigidity for there is absolutely no rule maintained. Figures larger than life-size are set like jewels amidst small plaques no more than 12 or 18 inches high. Among the individual marvels are the delicately carved doorways which in execution are curiously suggestive of the most beautiful carving of Europe's Gothic period. There is even a very sedate man and wife on the base of the Mandapa who look most singularly like a medieval European couple.

There are innumerable stories handed down, or invented in succeeding centuries, to explain the Sun God's temple at Konarak. But it seems to me that so loving an appreciation of life needs no explanation except, perhaps, the acceptance that the sculptors must have been men who had themselves been lovers, and were lovers of all life. Konarak cannot be judged by academic standards, even though sculpturally there has never been created more marvellous plasticity of form. I am a lover of sculpture, but I have never seen anywhere a sculpture that is as appealing to the senses, the heart and the mind as that of Konarak.

The content—life itself and every aspect of love, human and divine—cannot be forced to conform to any philosophic or religious doctrine, orthodox or unorthodox though here is a building and a style which did evolve over a period of five centuries in Orissa and which is an evolution of the very earliest temple in Bhubaneswar, the Parasurameswara. But I think Konarak has an individuality—a psychological and spiritual individuality—that makes it a thing unto itself. It seems to me that Konarak must always have spoken to each individual who came to it according to that person's own attitude to life and in the light of their own experience.

To those who see the physical union of man and woman as only 'carnal', the main thread of experience depicted on the walls can only be a disturbing seductive love song in stone images and, perhaps, 'sinful'

or 'obscene'. To the true ascetic, the whole world is Maya—illusion—and an unreality to be transcended and escaped through the discipline of the spirit. But for those who are neither puritans nor ascetics and seek, consciously or unconsciously, the union of their own flesh and spirit for reasons of living in this world harmoniously with themselves and others, the Sun Temple can only speak of the happiness and dignity of being human and of being possessed in various degrees of the capacity to reach spiritual heights through the personal act of love.

There are many mysteries as to the meaning of Konarak. In folk lore the Sun's chariot is the symbol for triumph over one's sins. But sin brings suffering and marks both the body and the face. I could find but one face at Konarak which some have designed as lustful. The only sign of cruelty is conveyed by the giant figures of horses trampling down enemies and, perhaps, the huge elephants hoisting human victims with their trunks. There are small-scale battle scenes of great force among the friezes.

Though there is not a shred of evidence for my speculation, it seems to me possible that the king, Narasimha Deva, who was inspired to order the creation of Surya's temple, might have done so not in a spirit of triumph because he had defeated the Muslim invaders, but in honour of life in contrast to the horrors of war. It was in this land of Kalinga that the great Emperor Asoka, a thousand years before Narasimha Deva, turned away in horror of his victory and became a convert to the Path of Goutama, the Buddha, and thereafter pursued 'conquest by piety'. In the time of Narasimha Deva, Buddhism had become sterile and Brahminical Hinduism petrified. Surely it is possible that Narasimha Deva, the last great ruler of Orissa, was a man whose triumph in war may have been transcended by a prolonged moment of passionate love for a woman, even the wife so sweetly depicted among a bevy of women? Or, the sight of death in battle may have caused him to turn to life under

the glowing sun with a sense of adoration?

The legends of the son of Lord Krishna being cured of leprosy, or of Narasimha Deva becoming a leper, all seem too torturous to have inspired the building of a temple dedicated to the joy of living. No faces on the walls are those of sinners. The sensitivity of the creators is vividly illustrated by one small group. There is a very realistic fat man, rather gross, but he is *not* shown in amatory play with the two women in the group. Realism stops at the depiction of the gross or the comic as an aspect of the art of love. Those who built Konarak had an attitude of mind which had transcended the ribald.

If the Taj Mahal is a poem in stone designed to commemorate the love of the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan for his wife, then may not Konarak be another earlier and more realistic song of love by a royal master of the ancient *Kama-Sutra*? It is psychologically true that the greatest personal experience of love, and physical love at that, can expand the consciousness towards an attitude of embracing the world with impersonal love. From this "love thy neighbour as thyself" there can spring an adoration for the Creator.

In all our universe there is no force for life giving, its preservation, or regeneration, comparable to the power of the sun. Without the sun there is no life. At Konarak this force is personified in the three figures of horsemen (the fourth and deity figure once standing inside the Mandapa is now in Delhi) gazing outward from the Mandapa walls. There is the rising sun, the midday sun and the setting sun. The rising sun is mounted on a horse that seems to rise from the darkness of a niche. The midday sun stands and below his feet are seven small horses, the central horse standing on its hindlegs. The setting sun god, Surya, also stands, but now the seven horses are symmetrically arranged.

Never was there a face, except perhaps that of the Sphinx, embodying so completely the spirit of serene beneficence as Surya's three faces. Here is the dispassionate lover of all living things, the Creator

of the primeval life force. In Hindu thought primal energy is feminine — Shakti. This is conveyed philosophically by all the women on the temple waiting to give their energy, or giving their energy, to their masculine counterparts; or waiting to give in adoration of the sun itself.

The full sculptural miracle of Konarak is revealed twice a day — at dawn and at sunset for it is at these times that all the figures become most intensely alive as a result of the shadows cast upon them. The wall facing the setting sun begins to glow a tone between pink and gold for the main structure is of a subtle toned sandstone. High up on the second and third parapet of the Jagamohan there are set (and they are placed at intervals along all four sides of the parapets) massive, but gloriously graceful, and free standing figures of women dancers and musicians — perhaps the most famed figures of Konarak. Behind them on the temple wall are smaller figures, also of divine women. But as the sun sinks, these figures seem to fade into the wall, allowing the dominant motif of the free standing women, divine yet in the likeness of their earthly sisters, to appear to step forward when looked at from the ground below. This extraordinary effect is because these figures are in a darker, greyish-toned stone.

The vast and intricate picture of life sinks into the walls with the descent of the sun leaving the grey figure of Surya in all his peaceful nobility, and the figures of the heavenly women on the two parapets above. Each figure stands out in isolated splendour. This marvellous effect was not the original intention for centuries back the tall tower, long demolished, that rose above the Mandapa obscured the women. But ruin has created a new synthesis which seems to image the music of the spheres played by the celestial women who now attend, as it were, on the figure of the sun god against the disappearing scene of life, human and divine.

This is not the only transformation that takes place at sundown. Centrally placed, and almost at the very top of the Jaga-

mohan, there is the curious visage of a huge liongryps, the fabulous embodiment of the power of nature which appears on the Rajrani temple at Bhubaneswar and as guardian of the stages of Jagannath's temple at Puri. The setting sun changes the demeanour of this ferocious face so that it appears to become contemplative and spiritualized, tender in place of terrifying. Perhaps it is all my imagination, but I seemed to detect at dusk a kinship in inner feeling between the beautiful face of Surya and the liongryph. Since dualism is part of Hindu thought and feeling, this is not so fantastic an impression to suddenly receive.

It would be absurd for me to pretend I have grasped more than a general impression of Konarak and delighted in certain scenes here and there. Konarak is an edifice that needs to be lived alongside for a considerable time. The whole effect can only too easily escape the consciousness because of the allure of the intimate and domesticated detail. It is not the grandeur of Konarak that has captured me but the intense humanism I see in its details. For me it is the most loving building, or most lovingly constructed building I have ever seen.

There are two friezes on a huge piece of unidentified masonry resting under a tree which I will remember for the rest of my life. The upper frieze depicts some mythological figure in human form as if swimming through the ocean with a smaller

human figure on its back. The sense of limbs moving in water is breathtaking. The frieze immediately below is a line of women, some playing instruments, others just sitting cross-legged with their heads turned this way and that. I have never seen a photograph of this absolutely undamaged piece of carving and, unfortunately, I had forgotten my camera. But this fragment is at least for me the distillation of all the intimate beauty and the goodness of heart that is embedded in the walls of the happiest building that I think the creative genius of man ever achieved.

The creation or appreciation of art, like the art of love at its most harmonious, is a sensual experience uniting the flesh and the spirit, or the mind and the body according to what words you want to use. Art is the transubstantiation of life. The art of Orissa, which has very ancient roots and which finally flowered so humanistically at Bhubaneswar and Puri, reaching its apex at Konarak, is above all else the revelation of man's human potential through love of that which is within the world of reality. It reverences woman and it honours man and it is an exuberantly healthy expression of observation and imagination. The greatest lesson that Konarak might teach to the confused and frequently brutalized and tormented people of the modern world is that passion and tenderness are not antithetical but can exist at the same moment.

POETRY

ALLEN GINSBERG, author of *HOWL* and *KADDISH*, is now in India, experimenting on the hallucination-inducing properties of certain indigenous drugs. But the poem which appears in this number was written under the influence of a quite different kind of stimulant and in circumstances far different from his Indian journey, though it has been somewhat condensed and reset for QUEST.

Ginsberg says he has spent longer in Calcutta than in any other city except his native New York and San Francisco ("and of course Paris") because he finds he has much in common with a group of young Bengali poets who call themselves members of a "Hangry Generation."

This is only apparently surprising. Although the Bengali poets seem to be reacting angrily against India's abysmal poverty and the Beat poets against America's stifling wealth, both share an obsessive craving for an experience which art can hardly give. This experience is supposed to be supersensory, revelatory, mystical. The Beat emphasis on drugs is due to the belief that if poetry fails to give it, maybe narcotics will unlock the gates of vision.

AETHER

11.15 p.m. May 27

4 Sniffs & I'm High,
Underwear in bed,
 white cotton in left hand,
archtype degenerate,
 bloody taste in my mouth
 of Dentist Chair
music, Loud Farts of Eternity—
an owl with eyeglasses scribbling in the
 cold darkness—
all the time the sound in my eardrums
 of trolleycars below
taxi fender cough —creak of streets —
Laughter & pistol shots echoing
 at all walls —
tic leaks of neon— the voice of Myriad
 rushers of the Brainpan

all the chirps the crickets have created
 ringing against my ears in the
 instant before unconsciousness
 before,—
 the teardrop in the eye to come,—
 the Fear of the Unknown—

One does not yet know whether Christ was
 God or the Devil—
 Buddha is more reassuring.

Yet the experiments must continue!

Every possible combination of Being— all
 the old ones! all the old Hindu
 Sabahadabadie-pluralic universes
 ringing in Grandiloquent
 Bearded Juxtaposition,
 with all their minarets and moonlit
 towers enlaced with iron
 or porcelain embroidery,
 all have existed—
 and the Sages with
 white hair who sat crosslegged on
 a female couch—
 hearkening to whatever music came
 from out the Wood or Street,
 whatever bird that whistled in the
 Marketplace,
 whatever note the clock struck to say
 Time—
 whatever drug, or aire, they breathed
 to make them think so deep
 or simply hear what passed,
 like a car passing in the 1960 street
 beside the Governmental Palace
 in Peru, this Lima
 year I write.

Kerouac! I salute yr
 wordy beard. Sad Prophet!
 Salutations and low bows from
 baggy pants and turbaned mind and hornèd foot
 arched eyebrows & Jewish Smile—
 One single specimen of Eternity—each
 of us poets.

Breake the Rhythm! (too much pentameter)

...My god what solitude are you in Kerouac
now?

—heard the whoosh of carwheels in the 1950 rain—

And every bell went off on time,
And everything that was created
Rang especially in view of the Creation
For

This is the end of the creation
This is the redemption Spoken of
This is the view of the Created
by all the Drs, nurses, etc of
creation;

i.e.,—



I just nodded because of the secondary
negation

The unspeakable passed over my head for
the second time.
and still can't say it!

i.e. we are the sweepings of the moon
we're what's *left* over from perfection—
The universe is an OLD mistake
I've understood a million times before
and always come back to the same
scissor brainwave—

The
Sooner or later all Consciousness will
be eliminated
because Consciousness is
a by-product of—
(Cotton & N₂O)

Drawing saliva back from the tongue—

Christ! you struggle to understand
One consciousness
& be confronted with Myriads—
after a billion years

with the same ringing in the ears
 and pterodactyl-smile of Oops
 Creation,
 known it all before.
 A Buddha as of old, with sirens of
 whatever machinery making cranging noises in
 the street
 and pavement light reflected in the facade
 RR Station window in a
 dinky port in Backwash
 of the murky old forgotten
 fabulous whatever
 Civilization of
 Eternity,—
 with the RR Sta Clock ring midnight,
 as of now,
 & waiting for the 6th
 you write your
 Word,
 and end on the last chime—and remember
 This *one* twelve was struck
 before
 and never again; both.

.....I stood in the balcony
 waiting for an explosion
 of Total Consciousness of the All—
 being Ginsberg sniffing ether in Lima.
 The same struggle of Mind, to reach the
 Thing
 that ends its process with an X
 comprehending its befores and afters,
 unexplainable to each, except in a prophetic
 secret recollective hidden
 half-hand unrecorded
 way.
 As the old sages of Asia, or the white beards of Persia
 scribbled on the margins of their scrolls
 in delicate ink
 remembering with tears the ancient clockbells of their
 cities
 and the cities that had been—
 Nasca, Paracas, Chancay & Secrecy of the Priests
 buried, Cat Gods
 of all colors, a funeral shroud
 for a museum—

None remember but all return to the same thought
 before they die—what sad old
 knowledge, we repeat again.
 Only to be lost
 in the sands of Paracas, or wrapped in a mystic shroud
 of Poesy
 and found by some kid in a thousand years
 inspire what dreadful thoughts of his own?

It's a horrible, lonely experience. And
 Gregory's letter, and Peter's...

May 28 — 7:30 pm

...In the foul Dregs of Circumstance
 Male and Female He created them"
 with mustaches.
 There ARE certain REPEATED
 (pistol shot) reliable points
 of reference which the insane
 (pistol shot repeated outside
 the window)—madman suddenly
 writes—THE PISTOL SHOT
 outside—the REPEATED situations
 the experience of return to the
 same place in Universal Creation
 Time—and every time we return
 we recognise again that we
 HAVE been here & that is the
 Key to Creation—the same pistol shot
 —DOWN, bending over his book of Un
 intelligible marvels with his mustache.

(my) Madness is intelligible reactions to
 Unintelligible phenomena.
 Boy—what a marvellous bottle,
 a clear glass sphere of transparent
 liquid ether—
 (Chloraethyl Merz)

9 PM

I know I am a poet—in this universe—but what good does that do—when in
 another, without these mechanical aids, I might be doomed to be a poor Disneyan
 Shoe Store Clerk—This consciousness an *accident* of one of the Ether-possible
 worlds, not the Final World

Wherein we all look Crosseyed
 & triumph in our Virginity
 without wearing Rabbit's-foot
 ears or eyes looking sideways
 strangely but in Gold

Humbled & more knowledgeable, acknowledge
 the Vast mystery of our creation—
 without giving any sign that
 we have heard from the

GREAT CREATOR

WHOSE NAME I NOW

PRONOUNCE:

GREAT CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE, IF
 THY WISDOM ACCORD IT
 AND IF THIS NOT BE TOO
 MUCH TO ASK
 MAY I PUBLISH YOUR NAME?
 I ASK IN THE LIMA
 NIGHT
 FEARFULLY WAITING
 ANSWER,

hearing the buses out on
 the street hissing,
 Knowing the Terror
 of the World Afar—

I have been playing with Jokes
 and His is too mighty to hold
 in the hand like a Pen

and His is the Pistol Shot Answer
 that brings blood to the brain
 And—

What *can* be possible
 in a minor universe
 in which you can see
 God by sniffing the
 gas in a cotton?
 The answer to be taken in
 reverse & Doubled Math
 ematically *both* ways.

Am I a sinner?
 There are hard & easy universes. This
 is neither.

(If I close my eyes will I regain consciousness?)
 That's the Final Question—with
 all the old churchbells ringing and
 bus pickup snuffles & crack of iron
 whips inside cylinders & squeal of brakes
 and old crescendos of responsive
 demiurgic ecstasy whispering in streets of ear
 —and when was it Not
 ever answered in the Affir-
 mative? Saith the Lord?

A MAGIC UNIVERSE

Flies & crickets & the sound of buses & my
 stupid beard.
 But what's Magic?
 Is there Sorrow in Magic?
 Is Magic one of my boyscout creations?
 Am I responsible? I with my flop?
 Could Threat happen to Magic?
 Yes! this the one universe in which
 there *is* threat to magic by
 writing while high.

A Universe in which I am condemned to write statements.

"Ignorant Judgements Create Mistaken Worlds—"
 and this one is joined in
 Indic upion to

Affirm with laughing
 eyes—
 The world is as we see it,
 Male & Female, passing thru the years,
 as has before & will, perhaps
 with all its countless pearls & Bloody noses
 and I poor stupid All in G
 am stuck with that old Choice—

Ya, Crap, what Hymn to seek, & in
 what tongue, if this's the most
 I can requite from Consciousness?—
 That I can skim? & put in words?
 Could skim it faster with more juice—
 could skim a crop with Death, perchance
 —yet never know in this old world.
 Will know in Death?
 And before?

Will in
 Another know.
 And in another know.
 And
 in another know.
 And

Stop conceiving worlds!
 says Philip Whalen
 (My Savior!) (oh what snobbery!)
 (as if he cd save Anyone)—
 At *least*, he won't understand.
 I lift my finger in the air to create
 a universe he won't understand, full
 of sadness.

—finally staring straight ahead in surprise
 & recollection into the mirror of
 the Hotel Commercio room.
 Time repeats itself. Including
 this consciousness, which has seen
 itself before—thus the locust-whistle
 of antiquity's nightwatch in my eardrum...
 I propounded a final question, and
 heard a series of final answers.
 What God? for instance, asks the answer?
 And whatever else can the replier reply but reply?
 Whatever the nature of mind, that
 the nature of *both* question and answer,

& yet one wants to live
in a *single* universe.

Does one?

Must it be one?

Why, as with the Jews
must the God be One?

O what does
the concept ONE mean?

IT'S MAD!

GOD IS ONE!

IS X

IS MEANINGLESS—

ADONOI—

IS A JOKE—

THE HEBREWS ARE
WRONG—(CRIST & BUDDA
ATTEST, also wrongly!)

What is One but Formation
of mind?

arbitrary madness! 4000 years

Spreading out in all directions simultaneously—

I forgive both good & ill
& I seek nothing, like a painted savage with
spear crossed by orange black & white bands!
“I found the Jivaros & was
entrapped in their universe”

I'm scribbling nothings.
Page upon page of profoundest nothing,
as scribed the Ancient Hebe, when
he wrote Adonoi Echad or One—
all to amuse, make money, or deceive—

Let Wickedness be Me
and this the worst of all
the universes!

Not the worst! Not Flame!
I can't stand that— (Yes that's
for Somebody Else!

Yet I accept
O Catfaced God, whatever comes! It's me!
I am the Flame, etc.

O Gawd!

Pistol shot! Crack!

Circusmaster's whip—

IMPERFECT!

and a soul is damned to

HELL!

And the churchbell rings!

and there is melancholy, once again, throughout the realm.

and I'm that soul, small as it is.

HAVE FELT SAME BEFORE

The death of consciousness is terrible

and yet! when all is ended

what regret?

'S none left to remember or forget

And's gone into the odd.

The only thing I fear is the Last

Chance. I'll see that last chance too

before I'm done, Old Mind. All them

old Last Chances that you knew before.

—someday thru the dream wall

to nextdoor consciousness

like thru this blue hotel wall

—millions of hotel rooms fogging

the focus of my eyes—

with whatever attitude I hold the cotton

to my nose, it's still a secret joke

with pinky akimbo, or with effete queer

eye in mirror at myself,

or serious-brow mein

& darkened beard,

I'm still the kid of obscene chance await-

ing—

breathing in a chinese Universe

thru the nose like some old Brahamic God.

O BELL TIME RING THY

MIDNIGHT FOR THE BILLIONTH

SOUNDY TIME, I HEAR AGAIN!

I' ll go to walk the street,

who'll find

me in the night, in Lima, in my

33'd year,

On Street (Cont.)

The souls of Peter &
I answer each other.
But—and what's a soul?
To be a poet's a
serious occupation,
condemned to that
in universe—
to walk the city
ascribbling in
a book—just accosted
by a drunk—
in Plaza de Armas
sidestreet under
a foggy sky, and
sometimes with no
moon.

The heavy balcony
hangs over the white
marble of the Bishop's
Palace next the Cathedral—
The fountain plays
in light as e'er—
The buses & the
motorcyclists pass
thru midnight, the
carlights shine
the begger turns
a corner with his
cigarette stub &
cane, the Noisers
leave the tavern
and delay, conversing
in high voice,
Awake,

Hasta Manana
they all say—
and somewhere
at the other end of
the line, a telephone
is ringing, once again
with unknown news—

The night
looms over Lima,
sky black fog—
and I sit helpless

smoking with a
pencil hand—

The long crack
in the pavement
or yesterday's
volcano in Chile,
or the day before
the Earthquake
that begat the
world.

The Plaza pavement
shines in the electric
light. I wait.

The lonely beard
workman staggers
home to bed from
Death.

Yes but I'm
a little tired of
being alone...

Keats' Nightingale—the
instant of realization
a single consciousness
that hears the chimes
of Time, repeated
endlessly—

All night, w/Ether, wave
after wave of magic
understanding. A dis-
turbance of the field
of consciousness.
Magic night, magic stars,
magic men, magic music
magic tomorrow, magic death,
magic Magic.

What crude Magic
we live in (seeing trolley
like a rude monster
in downtown street
w/electric dimond
wire antennae to sky

pass night café under
white arc-light by
Gran Hotel Bolivar.)

The mad potter of
Mochica made a

pot w/6 Eyes & 2
Mouths & half a Nose
& 5 Cheeks & no Chin
for us to figure out,
serious side-track,
blind alley Kosmos.

(Back in Room)

How strange to remember anything, even a button
much less a universe.

"What creature gives birth to itself?"

The universe is mad, slightly mad.

—and the two sides wriggle away
in opposite directions to die

—lopped off

the blind metallic length curled up
feeby & wiggling its feet

in the grass

the millepede's black head moving inches away

on the staircase at Macchu Picchu

the Creature feels itself

destroyed,

head & tail of the universe

cut in two

Men with slick mustaches of mystery have
pimp horrible climaxes & Karmas—

—the mad magician that created Chaos
in the peaceful void & suave.

with my fucking suave manners & knowitall
eyes, and mind full of fantasy—

the Me! that horror that keeps me conscious
in this Hell of Birth & Death.

34 coming up—I suddenly felt old—
sitting with Walter & Raquel in Chinese
Restaurant—they kissed—I alone—age of
Burroughs when we first met.

Hotel, Comercio
Lima, Peru
May 28, 1960

SHORT STORY

Laurie Lewis

By KEWLIAN SIO

I MET Laurie Lewis in the lane behind my cousin's place. It was during the summer holidays. My cousin and I had hired a cycle and were trying to teach ourselves to ride it, when, all of a sudden, there was this boy standing at the gate of the opposite block, smirking. Whenever we collided into a lamp-post or took a spill, he laughed. We tried not to notice and went on practising, but our spills and collisions perceptibly increased. It was my turn and my cousin got off and held the bike while I climbed on, steadying myself against a wall; then I launched myself with a kick and went freewheeling down the lane. Halfway, adjusting my grip on the handlebar, I accidentally squeezed the brakes. The bike stopped dead and crashed over. I tried to get up, but my left shoe was stuck somewhere and I kept falling down. Finally, I had to take off the shoe.

Someone was laughing loudly.

'Shut up, Laurie,' said my cousin.

'Who's that hyena?' I asked as I limped over to some steps to sit down.

'That's Laurie Lewis,' said my cousin. 'He's an Anglo-Burmese bloke who moved in last Christmas. His brother Edgar's in my class, a real gawk. They ran away from Burma when the Japs came.'

I remembered the pair now; they had been around at school for not more than two months and they always wore khaki shirts and kneepants, as if they were in the army or something. It was wartime and Calcutta was having its share of refugees. Relatives and friends arrived in the city, some with barely more than the clothes on their backs, and stayed in the homes of other relatives and friends.

Laurie began to walk towards us. 'I'm sorry,' he said amiably. 'Want me to teach you?'

'Why can't some people mind their own business,' I muttered, turning away, my ego as bruised as my knee.

But Laurie had not heard; he had gone over to the bike, picked it up and shaken it, and was now coolly mounting it. We watched as he sailed up the lane, turned neatly at the far end and sailed down to us again; he dismounted with a light, swift movement and said, 'It's not very hard. I'll show you.' Impressed by this exhibition of his ability, we meekly submitted. He was a born teacher, patient and intuitive; he was also patronising in an insidious, elusive way that made him difficult to snub, but his being taller and a little older made the situation bearable.

We had been at it for an hour when my aunt leaned out of a first storey window and asked if we wanted lemonade. 'Yes, mum!' my cousin called back. My aunt held up three fingers and looked questioningly at my cousin. He turned to Laurie and asked, 'Want some lemonade, Laurie?'

'Yes,' said Laurie.

'Yes!' my cousin called up, and my aunt disappeared.

We trooped up the wrought-iron spiral staircase at the back that had missing steps you had to look out for. 'Watch it here!' said my cousin, and 'Watch it here!' On the dining table stood three huge glasses of lemonade, ice cubes bobbing on top, dewy outside. While we were gulping mouthfuls, my aunt came in with a plate of cakes. Then she sat down.

'You're with Mrs Robinson, aren't you?' she asked Laurie.

'Yes, ma'am,' said Laurie quietly, almost shyly.

'She's your aunt, I believe.'

'Yes, ma'am, she's my father's sister.'

'When did you arrive?'

'In the middle of November.'

There was a pause, during which we were all silent; noticing this, my aunt got up and went back to the kitchen. Then we began talking.

'Yes, ma'am,' said my cousin with a giggle.

'Oh, *come* on now!' I said, frowning at him; he was the host, after all.

'I picked it up from an American missionary doctor,' Laurie said. 'When we were coming out we had to hike for six villages before we got a truck and some people were sick. I used to carry the doctor's kit when he went round at night. Whenever it was a woman, he'd say, "Good evening, ma'am." "Well, ma'am, how are we today?" "Your foot looks good, ma'am." Laurie used an exaggeratedly nasal accent when he recited the American missionary's pleasantries.

'Did you get very tired?' I asked.

'Ooooff!' said Laurie, turning up his eyes. 'We had to be in the last village when the truck came and we were going as fast as our legs could carry us. If we sat down for two minutes we'd have to run for two minutes; but if we sat down for even half a minute we wanted to sit on for one hour, so we tried not to sit down till night-time when we could all lie down and sleep for a while. It took us three days and three nights. And sometimes we didn't have any water. This,' he clicked a finger-nail on his glass, 'would have been a *bloody* mirage.' I looked around to see if my aunt was out of earshot.

'Hurry up,' said my cousin. 'If we're going to pay for another hour, let's not waste it.' So we drank up, grabbed a cake each and went down to the hired bike.

We rode the bike by turns till it was nearly time to give it up to the shop. Then we decided to let Laurie have it for the

last ten minutes. He had barely started when a woman appeared at a window in the opposite block and called, 'Laurie!' He didn't answer and she called again. 'Coming, ma!' he called back this time. As we watched him go into the house the woman glanced at us and flashed us a funny obsequious smile we weren't used to getting from a grown-up. 'Hefty, isn't she?' said my cousin.

A couple of days later, I sat by while my mother was doing some sewing and told her all about Laurie Lewis. 'There you are,' my mother said. 'Shows you how much we have to be thankful for. We've always had a roof over our heads, lots of good food—which some people don't know how to appreciate,' she added pointedly, 'and we've never known what it is to be really thirsty.'

'That time,' I said, 'on the hike from the Peak in Shillong, I got very hungry and thirsty.'

'It can be much worse than that,' said my mother, shaking her head, as if she knew. 'And all that walking, for miles and miles,' she went on, 'and having to sleep out in the open...' Actually, curled up on that springy chintz-covered sofa, with a good dinner inside me, it all sounded rather inviting, like a picnic; and we had not gone on many picnics since we left Shillong. 'Why don't you ask Laurie over on Wednesday?' suggested my mother. Wednesday was my birthday; I would be thirteen; my cousin and a boy named Leong were coming for lunch, and after that we would go to a picture. I thought it a good idea and phoned my cousin to run over and ask Laurie.

Wednesday was day-after-tomorrow. That night I lay in bed unable to sleep, wondering what my parents planned to give me for my birthday. They knew I wanted three things equally badly: a collie like Lassie, a bike, and a magic lantern. My mother had her hands full and put on a tired look whenever I mentioned the word 'dog'; there had of late been a bumper crop of items in the newspapers des-

cribing misfortunes that had overtaken several cyclists—some were knocked down in the ever increasing traffic, one was held up in a lonely place at night. I felt I would get the magic lantern; and at the same moment I felt I had never wanted a collie or a bike more. I began to build cases for the collie and the bike: I would care for the collie myself and she wouldn't be a bother to anyone; and I would ride the bike only in our street, which was in a quiet residential area. . . . But I knew it would be the magic lantern.

And so it was. I was almost disappointed to see the box on the drawing room table. After breakfast, my father, even though he was getting late for office, insisted on showing me how it worked, so that, he said, 'you won't twiddle it into a repair shop.' He seemed more excited than I was, and though he kept looking at his watch he had the curtains drawn and sat through half of 'Felix the Cat'. It was the same as reading a comic strip, only you had to ask 'Finished?' before you could click to the next panel. 'All so simple,' the accompanying pamphlet said, 'a child can operate it.' In a minute I had taken charge, and my father, feeling superfluous, reluctantly left.

Leong arrived first. He brought me a model airplane. I brought out the magic lantern, and while I was showing him how it worked my cousin arrived with Laurie. My cousin brought me a dozen American comics; he knew what we both liked—sooner or later he would borrow them. Laurie dug into a pocket of his khaki shorts and pulled out a ring with a red stone in it. 'That's a Burmese ruby,' he said. 'Try it on.' It was too big for me. I tried it on all my fingers; it fitted my thumb best. Finally, Laurie said I could wind some string round it and wear it on my middle finger; afterwards I would 'grow into it'.

During lunch, when my mother came in to see how we were doing, I held up the ring. 'Look what Laurie gave me,' I said. 'That's a Burmese ruby!' She looked

it over and said, 'A ruby? How lovely. Now don't forget there's lots more. And no feeling shy.' Then she left us. As I put the ring back into my pocket, Laurie said, 'It's a magic ring. A Burmese monk, a friend of my father's, gave it to me. He was a scary looking chap with shining eyes and long nails. . . .'

'I've heard about these chaps,' said Leong. 'They know black magic. Sometimes, when a woman loves a man and he doesn't love her, she goes to one of these chaps and he asks for a hair from that man's head, and then he does something to the hair and the man goes to her.' We sniggered. 'Well, that's what my uncle told us!' said Leong, turning red.

'One night,' said Laurie, 'I was sleeping under a tree and suddenly my finger started to burn. I woke up and looked at the ring, and it was glowing. Something made me glance into the branches of the tree, and there I saw a Jap. He was counting us. After he went away to call his men, I quickly woke up the doctor and he woke everybody up and we ran away. In the morning he told everybody how I had saved them and they all thanked me and shook my hand. . . .' Laurie's voice was pitched a little too high, his eyes were wide and compelling. '... and ...' he said, '... and that just shows you that it works!' In the silence after the last shrill words, there was a faintly awkward tension in the air; but it quickly evaporated when I asked, 'Anyone want another chop?' We finished up with plenty of strawberry ice-cream and fruit cocktail.

In the drawing room, after lunch, I plugged in the magic lantern and asked, 'Which first, "Felix the Cat", "The Canyons of Colorado" or "Joe Louis - Champ"?' Leong wanted Joe Louis. My cousin asked, 'Who's Felix the Cat?' And Laurie said, 'Reminds me of the movie projector we had at home in Rangoon. . . .'

'You had a movie projector!' I cried excitedly, my head whirling. 'What mm was it?'

'Oh, 35mm, I think,' said Laurie.

'Did you get the Superman cartoons?'

'Yes, we got all sorts of films.'

'How much did it cost?'

'About twenty rupees.'

'Twenty rupees! But the ones in the shops here are at least four hundred chips!'

'This was Burmese,' Laurie said. 'It was made of bamboo. Do you want one? I could write to my father and ask him to send you one.'

I thought I would go mad. 'And what films could you get?' I asked.

'Anything you want: Superman, Captain Marvel, Wonder Woman...'

'...and Batman and Green Lantern?'

'Yes. Anything you want.'

'And in colour?'

'All in colour, just like the comics,' said Laurie.

I was speechless.

'Ong, do you want one too?' Laurie asked. 'It's only twenty rupees, and two rupees for each cartoon.'

'My name's Leong. I'll ask my mother first,' Leong said, noncommittally.

'I say,' said my cousin, 'I'm waiting for Felix the Cat.'

'I'll play the piano while you show the slides,' said Laurie going over to the little-used upright.

We looked at him in surprise; none of us could play. 'What will you play?' I asked.

'I'll play a Burmese tune,' said Laurie. 'Ready?'

I stuck in the first slide and he began. It was very sad music; not at all consistent with the mood of the story. Felix was a very happy cat and very smart; he was having a one-cat picnic and he outwitted a devilishly organised gang of larcenous ants in a very satisfying way; then he tied a napkin round his neck with 'The End' written on it. I pressed the ejection button and the last slide came off; but the music went on. Turning round to inform the pianist, I saw, through the dimness of the semi-darkened room, that Laurie was playing only on the black keys, the way we did when we fooled around at the piano, because it was hard to miss getting a strange, doleful and oriental tune on

them. He was entirely absorbed, using first his left hand, then his right, his head weaving about a little. 'It's over, Laurie!' I called. He turned round slowly, his eyes blinking. 'Now we'll have Joe Louis—Champ,' I said. 'I don't think we'll need any music for this.'

Before we left for the picture, I went to tell my mother and she gave me a wallet with ten crisp one rupee notes in it. We arrived early and hung about in the air-conditioned lounge, looking at the posters and stills of coming attractions. There was a war film next change and there was a particularly interesting still of a dog-fight in the air. We began arguing about the respective merits of the allied and enemy planes in such a situation. While we were talking, Laurie wandered off. Then I looked at the clock and said, 'Let's go in.' 'Look at Laurie!' said Leong.

We saw Laurie near the entrance, talking to two GI's; his arms were folded and he was imitating their slouch. One of the GI's threw his head back and laughed. We didn't dare call out or approach them. GI's, we had been told, though friendly, good-natured and brave, were also noisy, uncouth and unreliable. We ourselves had seen them walking down Chowringhee with squeaking and giggling girls on their arms; once, my cousin and I had watched two of them slugging it out in the New Market, though in the end they shook hands and went away. After a while, one of the GI's passed something to Laurie, then Laurie pointed at us and the other GI took something out of his pocket and passed that to Laurie. Then Laurie saluted them and they saluted him back.

'Want a stick of gum?' asked Laurie when he returned. We were undecided whether to be censorious or admiring. But, in those days, a stick of gum, as distinct from the sugar-coated pellet which we regarded with some disdain, was not to be had any other way, and it was a thing glamorous with associations of heroism. We each accepted a stick reverently. The other piece of loot was a slab of Hershey's

chocolate, but this Laurie stowed away for his mother with a devout air.

During intermission we came out and I stood them orange squashes. I remember the pride with which I pulled out the wallet and laid down those two crisp notes.

The film was a musical comedy in a technicoloured south-sea island setting with Betty Grable in a grass skirt; the sort of film at which people shout with laughter and put their fingers in their mouths and whistle piercingly; that is to say, the sort of film we appreciated. On the way home we recalled the funny scenes, enjoying them again. 'I like Betty Grable,' said my cousin unabashedly. 'She's my favourite actress.'

'I like Joan Leslie,' said Laurie. 'I like the way she smiles—such a warm friendly smile. Who do you like Leong?'

Leong said, 'I don't have any favourite actress.'

'Oh what a liar,' I said. 'He told me he liked...' Leong gave me a warning look, so I put my cousin between and said, 'He likes Phyllis Thaxter. He also likes the way she smiles.'

Leong blushed and said, 'You're a helluva chap.'

'And what about you?' said my cousin, turning on me. 'He likes June Allyson.'

'That's my boy,' said Leong, clapping my cousin on the back. 'What else?'

'Nothing else,' replied my cousin.

Laurie had fallen back, walking several paces behind. 'What's the matter, Laurie?' I asked.

'I think I've lost something,' he said.

'Remember how she hid behind the tree and shook coconuts down on their heads...' I said my cousin.

It had been a good day. A flute seller strolled down Chowringhee playing 'Deep In the Heart of Texas', and round the corner a man played a harmonium and a boy sang, 'I-yi-yi-yi-yi-yi, I like you very much...'; all star pupils of the US Armed Forces. Tomorrow was not black Monday. When I reached home, instead of homework, I would take a bath, have

dinner and get into bed with a dozen comics. It was a fine breezy evening. I was completely happy, and so, I thought, were we all.

At any rate, Leong was. He began whistling our school song, which was one of two or three tunes he was successful in carrying after a fashion. 'Come over to my place,' he said impulsively. 'I'll ask my mother to give us a cup of tea!' Leong had lost his father, and his mother, a simple unlettered woman, idolised him; he responded by being conscientious and coping with certain situations in a mature way. He was the same age as me, but whereas I was given to great enthusiasms and corresponding disappointments, he was always equable and amenable to reason. Occasionally, he got angry; a single fiery spurt, and then it was all over. His mother discussed the household budget with him.

My cousin said, 'I can't. We have to go to a wedding and I was told I must be back by six.' He waved to us forlornly as he turned into his street. He enjoyed weddings, but I knew he was sorry not to be able to come with us.

Leong's mother opened the door, her face wreathed in smiles. Leong whispered something to her and she inclined her head and looked grave, as if he were communicating to her a matter of great importance. Leong's father had opened a restaurant; when he died, two years ago, a younger brother began to manage it, but Leong would take over when he came of age. Meanwhile, it was wartime, and the restaurant, like all the other restaurants, was doing a roaring trade. The mother and son, together with an assortment of cousins and aunts, were able to move to a better flat and were all fairly comfortably off now.

Leong led us through the drawing room, which was in great disarray, with tattered magazines on the floor, chairs and couches scattered arbitrarily, and two little girls under a table stirring pieces of paper in little pots. 'Sorry about the mess,' said Leong; he picked up a couple of magazines and looked disapprovingly at the little

girls, but they were too busy to notice. 'See that?' he said, pointing to a lumpy divan with a spring sticking out of a ragged hole in it. 'The little boy did it: he kept jumping up and down till he went through it. They're cracked—all of them.' He took us out into a small backyard and slid a panel off the top of a hutch; reaching into it, he pulled out a yellow chick. 'We have ten of them in there,' he said. 'You can have one. You too, Laurie.' Laurie looked the chick over, genuinely interested, and asked, 'How did you hatch them?' Leong began to explain at the same time that I started laughing. 'Don't be funny,' he said, but he started laughing also. Laurie looked up from the chick and asked, 'What's the matter?' 'Let's go in,' said Leong, embarrassed and sobering up.

We sat at the dining table on which three white porcelain bowls had been arranged. 'Are we going to drink tea in these?' I asked.

'Oh, I see,' said Laurie, suddenly laughing. 'That was a good one.' We let him laugh by himself for a while.

'No,' said Leong. 'They are for something else—we'll get tea afterwards.' In a few minutes our bowls were brimming with chicken noodle soup; and no one wanted tea afterwards.

Laurie and I said, 'Thank you. So long. See you again,' and began to walk down the street.

For a while we walked in silence. Then I said, 'That chicken noodle soup was good. He must have ordered it from his restaurant.'

'Has he got a restaurant?' asked Laurie, but not as if he cared for an answer; he obviously had something on his mind.

'The Red Dragon Restaurant—that's his,' I said.

'Do you know what I lost on Chow-ringhee?' asked Laurie.

'What?'

'I dropped some money. My aunt asked me to get a couple of loaves of bread.'

'Oh,' I said, 'hard luck. Anyway, then it couldn't be very much.'

'No, it wasn't very much, only two

rupees. I say, win an angel in heaven and let me have two rupees. It could be an advance on your projector. I'll be writing to my father tonight and I'll tell him that you're a good friend of mine and to send it on as soon as he can.'

I had forgotten about the projector, but now all the excitement came back. I took out my wallet, and as I opened it a picture of myself doing the same thing at the bar flashed through my mind together with a sudden vague suspicion; but this was swamped by a stream of vivid images of Green Lantern, The Flash, Dr Midnight, Atom.... We parted at the end of the street. All the way home, pictures of the Indestructibles filled my head; they fought hordes of toughs, using fists, feet, elbows, knees, swinging from rafters and hurling furniture, and yet having breath enough to say witty and mordant things. 'Pardon my fists!' 'Heel meets heel!' 'Interested in stars?' 'Sweet dreams!'

It was only after dinner when I was telling my parents about the outing that I remembered the little yellow chick I had forgotten to bring home. I also talked about the bamboo projector and the two-rupee reels. 'That's a good bargain,' said my father amiably. 'I wouldn't mind paying twenty rupees for a movie projector.' I quivered all over; in my happiness I blurted, 'And you'll only have to pay eighteen. I gave him two rupees as an advance.' They both looked up at me.

'You'll have to promise not to give him anything more,' my father said. 'Understand?'

'All right,' I said, feeling the vague suspicion start up in me again.

That night I slept late. I lay in bed with my eyes shut, visualising the projector; I fixed the reel on the top spool, threaded the film, switched it on; the credit titles flashed on the screen; there was Green Lantern re-charging his ring in the green rays of the lantern that was the source of his power, and he chanted the mystic verse that ended, '... Let all who do evil, fear Green Lantern's might!' Then, disturbing sensations welled up, making me toss,

blotting out the coloured images. 'He couldn't have been lying,' I told myself, articulating my doubts for the first time and trying to shut them out; but they tumbled in; there was Laurie telling us about the ring, his voice shrill, his eyes compelling; and Laurie at the piano, playing on the black keys; Laurie getting gum and chocolate off the two GI's; Laurie walking on the pavement, laughing, talking; Laurie in his khaki uniform. . . . I was filled with a sudden anger. 'He's a stupid liar!' I cried half-aloud. 'And a cheat!' I writhed with hate, my rage taking on phantasmagorical proportions in the night.

In the morning I felt better. Still, I remembered while dressing that the movie projector which yesterday had seemed already mine did not even exist. It made me quiet at breakfast and my mother said, 'Somebody got up from the wrong side of his bed this morning.' I cheered myself up with the magic lantern for an hour or two and then the phone rang. It was Leong; he asked if I could come for the chick at three that afternoon.

Leong put the chick into a glass jar lined with cotton and screwed on the perforated lid. I thought only insects were put into glass jars with perforated lids but Leong said it was all right for the time being.

'Laurie came and took his,' he said.

'Oh,' I said. 'When?'

'At about twelve.'

'You know,' I said, 'he was lying about those movie projectors.'

'Of course he was,' I felt very foolish, and I would have liked to kick Leong for saying that. 'And today,' Leong went on, 'he kept asking me for an advance. I told him I didn't want a projector, but he was sort of insisting and my mother asked me what the matter was and I had to tell her. She wasn't pleased but she gave me five rupees for him, just to end it all.'

'Five rupees!' I began to feel angry and embarrassed. 'I'm sorry,' I mumbled. 'It's all my fault.'

When I left Leong's, I started down the

street to go home. Then, abruptly, I crossed over and turned into the road that led to the Robinsons' place, where the Lewises were staying.

I wasn't even sure what I would say.

When the door opened, I glimpsed a clean blue wall with an ornamental cabinet against it. The small fragile woman standing in the doorway was Mrs Robinson; my cousin had once pointed her out to me. 'Excuse me,' I said, 'I've come to see Laurie.' She sighed, flapping a hand in the approximate direction. 'They're behind there. I don't know if he's in. They're not with us now.' She didn't seem interested any more and closed the door with me still standing on the doorstep.

I explored a little and came to a small wing. There was a separate entrance with rickety green-shuttered doors which stood open; through it, I saw the heavy figure of a woman moving about inside. I went nearer. It was Laurie's mother. 'Oh my, isn't this a pleasant surprise. Good afternoon,' she said, smiling and nodding. 'You're Laurie's friend. It was very kind of you to invite him for your birthday. Sit down, please, I'll ask Edgar where he is.'

She went into the next room. I looked about me, taking in the patchy walls and the few sticks of furniture in a single distasteful glance. They were conferring within: 'Edgar... Edgar... wake up, son... where's Laurie?... his friend is here...' 'Don't know, ma. I don't know. For goodness sakes, ma, let me sleep!' She came out sighing, 'One is always sleeping, the other is always out...'

I felt relieved and wanted to get away. I got up and said, 'I have to go.'

'Is that a little chickie in the jar? Laurie kept his in a basket. Let me see it.' She held it up to her face and said, 'Cheep-cheep! Cheep-cheep!'

'I'd better go,' I said. 'I have to be home by four...'

'Is it already four?' she asked. 'How time flies. Of course, I never know what the time is around here. I had a good alarm I managed to bring along with me,

but that scoundrel servant-boy stole it. Whenever I need to know what time it is, I send Edgar to look at the panwalla's clock. But sometimes it gets quite exasperating, as you can imagine.' She laughed, and then sighed, 'I wish I had a clock. Just a small one.'

I said quickly, 'Well, goodbye.'

'Goodbye,' she said. 'Give my regards to your mother.' I skipped down the four doorsteps and walked away as fast as I could. 'I'll tell Laurie you came to see him,' she called after me. With a last nod at her I turned round the corner of the building and stepped through the gates into the street.

I met Laurie again, for the last time, a fortnight later. It was two days before school opened and like everybody else I was rushing madly through my holiday homework. I had begun at nine that morning, stopped for lunch, and returned to work immediately after. 'This will teach you not to leave everything till the last moment,' said my mother. I grit my teeth and ploughed on. By two o'clock, my eyes wouldn't stay open; the fan whirled and clicked above me, blowing warm opiate currents of air against my lids; my long multiplication went wrong for the fourth time. The doorbell rang.

Laurie stood two steps down, an arm resting on the banister; his khaki shirt had dark patches of perspiration; he had been running and had not quite got his breath back. I stood at the door looking down at him, not saying anything.

'I've just come from school,' he said. 'My mother is with the principal and he asked for our fees before school opens day after tomorrow. Could you lend us a hundred rupees till Monday? The banks are all closed today and my mother's cheque book is finished.'

'Are you mad?' I said, startled out of my pose. 'Where would I get a hundred rupees?'

'I say, be a good guy and ask your mother.'

'She's gone out,' I said promptly.

He looked down at his shoes for a while,

still breathing heavily. Then he looked up with a smile and said, 'It's hot here. Can I have a glass of water?'

I went in, poured out a glass of water and brought it out to him. 'Thanks,' he said. As he drank, he gurgled a little. I watched his grimy fingers round the glass, his hair dank and uncombed, his forehead streaked with dirt and sweat. I longed for him to leave.

He paused when his glass was half empty and said, 'That was a grand day.'

'What day?'

'Your birthday. When I came here for lunch and we all went out to the pictures and all...'

'Oh,' I said.

'When will your mother come back?'

'I don't know.'

He emptied the glass and held it out; his hand began to tremble and I quickly took it from him. He seemed to be looking beyond me. 'My mother's waiting in the principal's office,' he said. 'I ran here as fast as I could. Could you get me a hundred rupees?'

I didn't say anything.

He turned round, and as he went down the stairs he kept talking. 'The bank closed at twelve today. It will open on Monday...' He didn't look back once. He kept muttering to himself, and when he reached the bottom of the stairs he stooped to tie a shoelace, and then he was gone.

After that, I poured myself a glass of water, drank half, bathed my face with the rest, and went back to work. The long multiplication finally came out.

Neither of the Lewis brothers were seen again at school; from my cousin I learnt that the Lewises had gone to stay with other relations in Delhi. Then I forgot them completely. But last night, when the children were in bed and my wife had fallen asleep at last, and I lay awake with the troubles of an adult world, I closed my eyes and in that instant I saw that fourteen year old boy go down the stairs, muttering to himself in despair, the weight of the world already upon his shoulders.

DISCUSSION

Integration, Separation, and Overlapping of Groups in Indian Society

By SATISH C. SABERWAL

SEVERAL contributors to recent issues of this journal have discussed some of the phenomena frequently aggregated under the rubric 'national integration.' My concern in this paper is modest; I shall discuss some of the properties of group integration, and in doing this I shall introduce the following concepts: overintegration, underintegration, group separation, and group overlap.

At the level of discourse attempted here, a precise definition of the term 'integration' appears to be unwarranted. I shall give it two complementary meanings: the term may refer to certain properties of a group *qua* group, or to certain properties of the relationship between a person and his group.

1: The nature of overintegration

The members of an overintegrated social unit give strong, emotionally laden allegiance to the interests and goals of that unit. The situation is most probable when the social unit assumes responsibility for its members' multiple needs; usually

the right to demand the members' unquestioning loyalty goes with this responsibility, and a more or less rigorous discipline characterizes the overintegrated social unit.

Overintegration is like overlearning. To ensure good recall a year later, one has to learn one's material more thoroughly than is necessary for immediate needs: it becomes necessary to overintegrate the elements of cognition. To ensure good performance by a social unit—a family, an orchestra, an army platoon—the members of the group have to be overintegrated. Other examples of overintegration would be: the Communist Party in pre-revolutionary Russia, the Nazi party in the Germany of the twenties, the R.S.S. in North India of the mid-forties. Whether you like the overintegration of a particular group or not depends partially on whether you are inside or outside the group.

Although we do not know, at least this writer at the moment does not know, how to determine the optimal integrational level for a particular group, we can assume here that such optima are ascertainable. Then we can suggest a proposition: if the integrational level of a social unit deviates too far from the optimal level, this deviation will upset the state of social equilibrium.¹

¹ The equilibrium may be stationary, as when a tradition is being maintained; or it may be moving, as when the tradition is being changed; the latter is the case during industrialization. A moving equilibrium may be considered to have been upset when it moves in a direction other than the planned or predicted one.

Probably one of the major determinants of the optimum level is the goal in relation to which the level is being ascertained. It would not be the same for a group of pickpockets and an army unit: probably the overintegrated army unit will give a poor performance at the task of picking pockets. In any case we may suggest a proposition: a major change in group goals will also change the levels of integration optimal for the attainment of the goals.

It is widely held that in contemporary India the caste units, linguistic units, and religious units are overintegrated; implicitly, their level of integration is judged in relation to the requirements of an industrial society. The general experience of industrial societies suggests that these function best when the rewards are determined by the nature of the person's achievements and not the nature of his birth. This is contrary both to the assumptions underlying the caste system and to the criteria for membership in linguistic and religious groups.

II: Caste overintegration

The caste units are most highly integrated in rural India. This statement may be illustrated with reference to this writer's observations during residence in a village less than twenty miles from Delhi from April, 1958, to August 1959. About 750 persons, in a dozen castes, lived in this village. The sweepers, the leather-workers, and the potters, the three lowest castes, lived in parts of the village clearly set off from the area where the the higher castes lived.

This partial residential integration of caste units (segregation from the village viewpoint) was strengthened in other ways. If you walked down the village streets, you found groups of men taking turns round their hookah; and the membership of these hookah-smoking groups

was drawn from either a single caste or several castes ranking close together in the hierarchy of the village caste system. Comparable restrictions prevailed with regard to eating, drinking, and other daily routines.

The habit of doing things with other members of your own caste is very strong in the village. For example, I was invited to join a Brahmin boy's *barāt* (wedding procession) as it took a chartered bus to a village thirty odd miles away. Six or seven Jats, members of a middle caste, were also in the party. In the bus these Jats sat next to each other in a cluster. Their sitting together in the bus was the result not of chance nor of deliberate choice but of a deeply ingrained unconscious tendency. The caste group is a very highly integrated social unit.

Needless to say this is a highly simplified view of a caste group in a village. For example, Oscar Lewis, Baljit Singh, and other students of village India have drawn our attention to the existence of factions which cut across the caste lines. Without surveying the literature here, I shall merely make the summary statement that the factions are usually led by members of rival kingroups within the dominant caste in a village. In factional fights they may, for tactical reasons, seem to support the members of a lower caste against the opposite faction. However, if a dispute really involves the whole caste's interests, the members of the dominant caste are likely to close their ranks and meet the other castes as one unit. (See sec. IV also).

In concluding this analysis of caste overintegration, I would like to make a tangential remark. The caste system has of course been around for a long time; why have our statesmen become seriously concerned with overintegration at this level (and underintegration at the national level) only in the last two or three years? I suggest that the increasing salience of

caste solidarity in Indian politics indicates that our rural citizens are beginning to realize the considerable political weight of their votes; at a time of increasing urbanization, paradoxically, the locus of political strength seems to be moving from urban to rural areas, where indeed most of our voters live. If additional evidence can be found for this ruralization of Indian politics, some important questions for the future of Indian polity arise; however I cannot discuss them here without going far beyond this paper's territory.

III: Urban underintegration

Sociologists have long recognized that urban societies are considerably less integrated than rural societies. I have earlier suggested that the caste is a highly integrated social unit in village India. In the city it is observably less so: the caste mates do assemble on ceremonial occasions, but one's daily routine relationships—in the office or the factory, in the slum or the teashop—do not have the persistence through generations so characteristic of the village. One is much more apt to "feel lost" in the big city² than in the village; this feeling of being lost indicates a weakness of integration in one's social milieu.

For the purposes of this paper we may presume that the family unit continues to be relatively well-integrated in urban India. Part of this persistence of the family unit, I suggest, results from the continuing effectiveness of one feature of the caste system: marriages continue to take place

within the caste. This is of course universally known; in this connection I have two comments.

First, since an overwhelming majority of marriages occur within the caste, this unit thereby acquires some effectiveness in other aspects of social behaviour also. (The partial circularity of this statement reflects the social process: the caste units facilitate marriages, and marriages strengthen the caste units.) Quite logically, many of us have argued that a reduction in intra-caste marriages will weaken the caste units in urban India. While this is logically correct, the development may exact a heavy price; hence my second point.

I suggested earlier that the family unit in urban India presumably continues to function fairly effectively. We may confidently assert that any reduction in formation of the family unit will further decrease the level of integration for the urban men and women; further, if the currently established procedures for arranging marriages become unavailable, the formation of the family unit will be rendered much more difficult. True, in many countries of the world men and women do themselves decide whom to marry; however, these are not snap decisions; anyone who has closely observed the courtship process is aware of the complex understandings, signals, and opportunities that are standardized and widely accepted. To throw over the available apparatus in India³ when the alternative mechanisms are still embryonic would be an act of folly.

Here again we need sociological research. There are probably several thousand couples in India today who have married outside their caste. We need from them information on the following questions: What were the factors in their social and educational background and in their psychological make-up that led them to their marital decision? After the

² The writer is generalizing from his experience and observations while he went to college and later to work in Calcutta between 1947 and 1958. This procedure is unsatisfactory on a variety of counts, and the reader is invited *not* to accept my assertions uncritically. In any case we should all profit from increased systematic research into the urban sociology of India.

³ Or, to make people feel guilty about using this apparatus, as this writer appeared to be doing in *Quest*, 33, p. 80.

marriage, what was the social reaction to their deviant decision? If this reaction was unfavourable, what psychological effects did it have on the newly-weds?

Of the two alternative procedures, I suspect that self-choice is slowly becoming more frequent. Probably it fits a changing, industrializing society somewhat better; but, if the deleterious effects of losing the previous procedure are to be minimized, we urgently need research into the cases of intercaste marriages. Developmental psychologists would want to extend the research problem so as to include the personality formation of the children born in such marriages: what are the conflicts facing a boy or a girl, heir to two traditions, perhaps accepted completely by neither? The results of this research should be disseminated widely so that the younger generation may take its decisions confidently.

IV: Separation and overlapping of groups

The preceding sections have suggested that the level of integration of a social unit may be high or low. I invite you now to contrast the notion of "separation of groups" with that of "overlapping of groups." As we noted in an earlier section (II), the residential arrangements and other customary procedures for eating, hookah-smoking etc. produce a separation of groups in the Indian village. Indeed there is some overlapping: the low caste agricultural labourers and the high caste landowner may work in one group—and, at noon, receive food from a common source. Membership in a faction or a village council, to name only two of the

possibilities, also provides some group overlapping; nevertheless, there will probably be wide agreement to the effect that the separation of the castes is a prominent feature of the village social structure.

In contrast group overlapping is much more important in city life. The caste group, the residential group, the group in the factory or the office, the 6 o'clock coffee house group—all these and others are likely to overlap. Most individuals have at least the possibility of multiple group membership.

We have now set the stage for making two comments. First, I suggested earlier (note 4) that all individuals have levels for optimal integration into groups; that is, a person needs a certain amount of this integration (which may also be called belongingness): this may be attained by high integration into one group which takes care of many of one's needs, or it may be reached by moderate integration into several groups concerned with rather specific needs or interests. In the village most individuals find their needs for integration fulfilled by the caste group; but its effectiveness is curtailed in the city, and therefore membership in this group does not meet the individual needs for belongingness.

For those urbanites who do indeed crave for greater integration—and their number is legion—the need could be met if they had the opportunity to participate in several overlapping groups built around specific concerns and interests—be these adult education, civic responsibilities, music, religion, or any others.⁴ The fact that individuals are attracted to membership in small groups has long been known; and the R.S.S., the Communist Party and similar other organizations have demonstrated its use. For optimal integration in urban India, it appears that larger numbers of overlapping small groups can be helpful.

⁴ I realize that unemployment, physically and mentally unhealthy living conditions, and other factors are probably more important for individual unhappiness than the absence of small groups; the last factor nevertheless demands consideration in the total context.

The existence of such groups can have a second important consequence. Broadly I am suggesting that a person who belongs to several overlapping groups can act as a go-between (or broker) if conflicts of interest arise between these groups. Imagine a situation with two political parties A and B and two religious groups X and Y. Suppose both the parties have extensive membership in both the religious groups. Then, if there is a conflict involving the religious groups X and Y, we may expect that, in the interests of party solidarity, the leaders of both the parties would strive to have the conflict resolved.

However, our difficulties increase when the boundaries of many different types of groups coincide. This is precisely the problem in India. A political party may appeal to the members of only one religious or linguistic group. We can generalize and say that the less the overlapping the scarcer the go-betweens, and therefore the greater the difficulty of conflict resolution. Conversely, the greater the overlapping of groups, the more abundant the brokers, and the easier the resolution of conflicts between groups.

If the preceding analysis is valid, we can redefine the problem of national integration as that of increasing overlapping of groups. How can we promote this? Let us look at the issue from the individual and the institutional levels.

At the individual level a person helps to

increase the overlapping of groups, although maybe only by a little bit, everytime he or she makes friends with someone who does not belong to the caste, linguistic, or religious group that he or she does. The ultimate expression of this attitude is to marry someone from outside one's group.

I find it difficult to say anything on institutional behaviour without repeating what more competent people have previously said in connexion with national integration. From the perspective of this analysis we can see that, when a political party spans several religious or linguistic groups, it thereby adds one more link which may be utilized for resolving conflicts between these groups; when an educational institution admits into its halls students from various groups, it thereby increases the potential number of go-betweens for conflict situations involving the original groups of these students.

Unfortunately inter-group relations have received surprisingly little systematic attention in India. Gardner Murphy, a distinguished social psychologist, initiated a series of studies in this area in 1950. However, his principal report was published in New York and has had only limited distribution in India. To take inventory of and to redefine problems for research in the field of inter-group relations is a major task for contemporary social science in India.

The Three Language Formula

By KUSUM CHANDRA

IN 1950, in that flush of enthusiasm and nationalism which marked the years immediately following Independence, our Constituent Assembly decreed that by 1965 the change-over from English to Hindi as the official language would be complete. Unfortunately, an ugly process of disintegration started as Independence began to lose the charm of novelty. Centrifugal forces began, almost imperceptibly, to get the better of the centripetal tendencies. As a result, Hindi, which had for decades been a symbol of national unity, has now been relegated to being merely one of the fourteen contending forces.

It has recently been announced that English will continue to be an 'associate' official language for an indefinite period after 1965. A Bill to this effect is to be brought before Parliament. The proposal appears quite innocuous. Its implications, however, are otherwise.

It means that since there is no more a time limit, things can proceed at a leisurely pace. Added to this is the fact that even though declarations are every now and then made in Parliament and suggestions offered by the National Integration Council, there is so far no indication of the formulation and adoption of a definite plan of action for complete switch over to Hindi in the near future.

My contention is that the problem has already been examined from all possible angles and relevant suggestions have been offered. Now is the time for us to wind up the debate and plunge headlong into constructive activities. What follows is a presentation of some of the most realistic and practical of the solutions hitherto suggested in the form of a plan of education.

In the three-language formula we have an excellent solution to our language problem. According to this, every Indian of the coming generations will know at least three languages. For non-Hindi-speaking people, the three languages will be their own mother-tongue Hindi and English. For those whose mother-tongue is Hindi, these languages will be Hindi, a modern Indian language and English. To avoid any misinterpretation of the formula, one may add that it is to be applied not on the basis of the region in which a person is living, but according to his or her mother-tongue. For instance, a Bengali living in U.P. will be required to read not Hindi, English, Bengali and one more regional language — and this is how the U.P. Government seems to be interpreting the formula — but only Hindi, English and Bengali. In order to make the plan a real success, it is essential that the spirit underlying it be widely broadcast and understood.

We feel that language belongs to the domain of culture, and as such it should have nothing to do with parochialism and imperialism. If Hindi has been accepted as national language, it has not been done for the purpose of imposing the tyranny of the Hindi-speaking populace over the rest of Indian citizenry. Hindi is just a thread to bind the various language groups into a whole, thereby providing them with a sense of unity. As for the clause requiring Hindi-speaking groups to learn at least one modern Indian language other than Hindi, we are not doing it because we want to create a balance of difficulties for the various language groups in the country. Instead, we feel that if we really wish to foster a feeling of national unity through the instrument of Hindi, it is imperative

that Hindi-speaking people should themselves offer the hand of friendship to others. This will be possible only when they know at least one non-Hindi language.

We will do well to guard this scheme against any attempt by Hindi-speaking persons to circumvent its requirements by offering Urdu as their third language. From a strictly constitutional standpoint, it would be difficult to dispute such a choice. Yet it cannot be allowed as it goes against the very spirit of the scheme. Our aim is to facilitate first-hand contacts among the different language groups. So far as persons speaking Urdu and Hindi are concerned, no linguistic barrier stands between them. Hence the necessity, and also the desirability, of such a check on the choice of Hindi-speaking people. It is just possible that Urdu may suffer slightly on this account. There is, however, a ray of hope in that Urdu has never been treated as an alien language by the Hindi-speaking populace. As in the past, many Hindi-speakers will study Urdu for love. Possibly more and more of them will study Urdu, for now they will have the added facility of learning it in Devanagiri script. As for those who speak Urdu, they will, like members of other language groups, study only Hindi and English besides their own mother-tongue.

Recently, the four Hindi-speaking States of Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh have agreed to introduce the teaching of a modern Indian language, preferably a South Indian language, at the secondary stage. The Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University has introduced a scheme of scholarships for learning South Indian languages. Heartening as these reports are, and a departure as they do present from the earlier position of apathy and indifference, we cannot depend on them for the solution of our language tangle. What we actually require is the simultaneous introduction of a well thought-out three-language plan throughout the length and breadth of the country. We contend that instead of starting the teaching of a second Indian language at

the secondary level, we must proceed with it right from the primary stage. To give but one example, hundreds of Bengali families can be found in U.P. where children imbibe both Hindi and Bengali with their mothers' milk. In the same State, examples are not wanting where children having Hindi as their mother tongue start speaking Bengali in their cradle as it were. The very concept of English medium education in our country is based on the very correct presumption that a child can learn two languages simultaneously.

Thus we shall start the teaching of two Indian languages at the primary and not the secondary stage. The difficulties that the U.P. Government is alleged to be facing should press home the lesson that the existing conditions in India do not admit of any alternative other than this policy of beginning systematically from the bottom. As a first step in this direction, our State Governments should finalize, by the first quarter of 1964, the number of teachers, along with their language combinations, that will be required for the purpose of teaching a second Indian language in the primary schools. In this connection it may be added by way of clarification that every primary school in the country will not be providing courses in all regional languages. The State Governments will, while selecting the language combinations of teachers required in their schools, distribute a couple of regional languages to every primary school. This will, on the one hand, solve the otherwise insoluble problem of recruitment by requiring only a reasonable number of teachers, and, on the other hand, ensure that all the primary schools in a locality or State do not start offering the same combination of languages. The number of unemployed graduates being appalling in our country, there should be no difficulty in enlisting the required number of prospective teachers. Besides, one would not be placing too much of a burden on the exchequer by proposing the provision of an extra allowance to these teachers. These men, after all, will be pioneers of a

new India and no extra rupee given to them would be wasted.

Once these prospective teachers have been selected, we must start a few national schools for teaching these persons the language of the region where they are to work. This training should not take more than three years, especially as these teachers will be teaching, in the first instance, children in primary schools only. Presuming our Governments truly realise the urgency of the problem, there should scarcely be any difficulty in starting such national training institutes for teachers by the middle of 1964.

These teachers will be ready to take up their work by 1967. (It may be necessary to extend this date by a year or two). To enter the third stage of our scheme, all the primary schools in the country will be providing compulsory lessons in two Indian languages when their new academic session starts in June-July, 1967. In that year the new scheme would extend only to the first class of these schools. As this batch goes on passing from one class to another, the scheme would also be automatically extended accordingly. By 1972, this batch will have completed its primary education. At this stage, the boys and girls of this batch will start learning English. Meanwhile the national institutes for the training of bilingual teachers will be giving advanced training to its trainees so that they may cope with the greater demands of the children who will have entered high school stage. In order to ensure that teachers of the first batch are not condemned to primary schools for the whole of their career, provision will have to be made for them to get their promotion to high school if they succeed at a test to be instituted for the purpose.

By about 1984 the generation which began its education in 1967 will start entering various walks of national life and public administration. This will be the time for us to effect complete switch-over from English to Hindi. It is a long-term process no doubt. But it is the quickest that we can hope for in the circumstances prevailing at

the moment. So far we have flirted with the idea of a change-over in stages. The sooner we get rid of it the easier it will become for us to bring about the desired change. No change-over is possible in instalments. Because, if a part of the official business can be conducted in a certain language at a given period of time, that language can be equally easily used for carrying out the whole of it also at the same point of time. Official work is not conducted by one or two persons. It is carried out by a large bureaucracy. Unless all or most of these know a language, administration cannot be conducted in that language. Hence the fallacious nature of the plans intended to bring about the necessary change in instalments. Let us declare once and for all (but only when we have provided adequate educational facilities) that in 1984 or 1985, when a whole generation has received the benefits of the three-language plan, Hindi will fully and irrevocably replace English as the State language.

The proposed scheme will leave State Governments free to adopt the regional languages as the medium of education and also of official business at the State level. Since all members of the I.A.S. etc., will then be knowing at least three languages, it will be possible, in accordance with the recommendations of the S.R.C., to post men and women from one State to another. It will be only then that this recommendation of the S.R.C. will bear its best fruits. For, then, there will be a common language to provide a rapport between the people of one State and their officials from another State.

Though, for the present, no regional script is even to be touched, the gains to be derived from a common script are so overwhelming that the idea cannot be ignored while chalking out a nationwide scheme for the solution of our language problem. It is sometimes suggested that the Roman Script, being so simple, is ideal for adoption by all Indian languages. But mere simplicity is hardly a criterion for the acceptance of a script. The fact is that without diacritical marks Roman script

cannot be adopted by Indian languages. But the inclusion of these marks makes Roman script cumbersome, thereby robbing it of its only quality for adoption.

Acharya Vinoba Bhave has suggested that Kannada, since it is so akin to Devanagari, may be utilised as a common script for the languages of our country. The very fact that it is akin to Devanagari constitutes a valid ground for its rejection as an all-India script. After all, Kannada is used by about twelve million persons, while Devanagari embraces about 180 million men and women in its orbit. Moreover, the alphabet of almost all Indian languages is basically the same and with a few modifications in its present character Devanagari can reasonably be adopted by all Indian languages. It must be understood clearly that a common script is desired not because their diversity is a source of distintegration, but because mastering the script is the most tedious part of learning a new language.

If we can adopt a common script the task of enforcing the three-language plan is half accomplished. But here we shall have to advance cautiously and gradually. As a first step, all language groups will be free to continue with their own script. But Hindi-speaking people will be taught all Indian languages in Devanagari. The Central Government will follow the example it has itself set by publishing 'Bharatiya Kavita'. As time proceeds and more and more Indians, belonging to different language

groups, come into contact with each other, there is bound to occur a psychological transformation of non-Hindi speaking people — a transformation that will enable them to realize the utter futility of equating a language or script with any sort of imperialism. Then will they realize that Hindi or Devanagari is the monopoly of no single group. And having realized this, they will voluntarily accept Devanagari as their common script.

We have a lot of time at our disposal. It will be by about 1979 that the first generation studying under the new schemes reaches the University stage. Since today the real problem is one of imparting education through the medium of Indian languages at the Universities, especially at the post-graduate level, efforts should be made to produce translations and original works dealing with all aspects of knowledge by the year 1979. As English will also be taught, international terminology in the spheres of science and technology can be retained for use at higher levels, at least provisionally. Whether we shall carry on with it or change over to Hindi can be decided in due course.

This then is the plan of action which we can enforce in order to solve our language tangle. There is nothing rigid about it. It can be modified if necessary. But whatever be the final shape of our plan of action, let us all realize that now is the time to act.



Buy and Sell in Rationalised Metric Units

Use of metric weights is now compulsory throughout Maharashtra. For smooth interchangeability of old units of weights to new metric values, adopt the *rational conversions* as shown below:—



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CORRECT
METRIC
HABIT

IF YOU HAVE BEEN BUYING BEFORE

ASK NOW FOR

1	oz. (equivalent to 28 g.)	30 Grams
1	lb. (equivalent to 454 g.)	500 Grams
2	lbs. (equivalent to 907 g.)	1 Kilogram (1000 g)
7	lbs. (equivalent to 3.17 kg.)	3 Kilograms
14	lbs. or stone (equivalent to 6.35 kg.)	5 Kilograms
28	lbs. or quarter (equivalent to 12.70 kg.)	10 Kilograms
56	lbs. (equivalent to 25.40 kg.)	20 Kilograms
112	lbs. or cwt. (equivalent to 51 kg.)	50 Kilograms
1	Ton (equivalent to 1016 kg.)	1000 Kilograms (Metric tonne)

1	Tola (equivalent to 11.66 g)	10 Grams
1/16	Seer or Chatak (equivalent to 58 g)	50 Grams
1/4	Seer or Pao (equivalent to 233 g)	200 Grams
1/2	Seer (equivalent to 467 g)	500 Grams
1	Seer (equivalent to 933 g)	1 Kilogram (1000 g)
2 1/2	Seers (equivalent to 2.33 kg)	2 Kilograms
5	Seers (equivalent to 4.66 kg)	5 Kilograms
10	Seers (equivalent to 9.33 kg)	10 Kilograms
20	Seers (equivalent to 18.66 kg)	20 Kilograms
1	Maund (equivalent to 37 kg)	40 Kilograms
2 1/2	Maunds (equivalent to 93 kg)	1 Quintal (100 kg)

Director of Publicity Government of Maharashtra, Bombay

BOOKS

BEYOND EXISTENTIALISM by J. von Rintelen
(George Allen and Unwin, 264 pp. 30s.)

OUR acquaintance with German philosophy as it shaped itself during the last three or four decades is extremely inadequate. Husserl is almost unknown except to a few teachers of philosophy who have had their training in Germany; Nicolai Hartmann is known only through his *Ethics*; Max Scheler, Heidegger and Jaspers are either unknown or known superficially. The majority of Husserl's writings are still not available in English, the language through which most of us gain access to the philosophical systems of Europe. Hartmann's ontological writings which have run through several editions in Germany—they have not yet been translated into English—are not widely read even in Britain and the United States. Heidegger's *Being and Time* appeared in English only this year; and the major philosophical writings of Jaspers still remain unknown to those who do not know German.

Existentialism came to India largely through the literary writings of French authors. Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* has been available to the English-knowing readers for nearly six years and yet our acquaintance with this important work is not as profound as it should have been. His equally voluminous *Critique de la Raison Dialectique*, Tome I, is yet to be translated into English. Marcel's plays, again, are not as popular as one would imagine. The only existential thinker whose works have been made available fairly widely is Kierkegaard.

Critical as well as expository works of Wahl, de Tonquédec, Biemel, Karl Löwith, Marcie, de Waelhens, Vietta, Bollnow and many others are still not available in English translations. So Fritz-Joachim von Rintelen's *Philosophie der Endlichkeit* (1951) translated by Hilda Graef is doubly welcome. For one thing, von Rintelen is a clear thinker of considerable eminence and for another thing, this book contains a balanced assessment of existentialism as it has been expounded, particularly by Heidegger, Rilke and Jaspers. The existentialist movement, as von Rintelen puts it, can be understood only as the aftermath of the two world wars, as an analysis of the basic mood engendered by these catastrophic events. If material possessions are lost in an instant, if friends and relatives are killed every day, the only thing left is oneself, one's own existence. And what sort of existence is this? Today man has become a problem to himself, not only because of his suffering, but because he is capable of frightful atrocities.

What had once been accepted seems now questionable. The demonic abyss of life that has been uncovered in our time simply does not admit of a mere formal-intellectual analysis of the immediate world of sense. Existentialism holds that our rational constructions are concerned with a superficial 'thought world' (*gedachte welt*), dealing with the substitutes of *Dasein*. For Heidegger this kind of representing, rationally constructing thought, is a crime against Being itself; hence, he believes, we ought to go back to

primeval basic moods, to fundamental dispositions and attitudes of feeling, in order to elucidate Being itself and the essential ground of human existence, including the religious point of view.

Rintelen thinks that this concern is carried too far. He asks, 'Do not those who reject the "rule of the intellect" sacrifice both truths and falsehoods, so that the meaning and riches of life can no longer be grasped?' Elsewhere Rintelen observes, '...owing to the sad experiences of the last decades, our contemporaries concentrate almost exclusively on what is depraved, bad and full of discord... *The world is evil* remains the fundamental principle' (p.123) Nietzsche summed up the whole attitude when he said, 'Optimism is cowardice'. In a disarmingly self-conscious manner Rintelen repeats, 'This whole attitude corresponds to the German liking for whatever is burdensome and tragic, deliverance from which comes only by *the melancholy deed*.' (p. 123; also see pp. 128 and 241)

In reply to contemporary pessimistic existentialism Rintelen echoes Leibniz who said, 'We increase the evil if we pay attention to it.' Fear and anxiety make the sick man more sick. 'Why do we,' asks Rintelen, 'deliberately overlook everything that is joyful, uplifting and of value?' Life could be much more beautiful and satisfying if we could look at something else, and not always call up the forces of darkness. He says, '...we have affirmed the view that despair cannot be conquered by itself but only by the indestructible trust in meaning and value....'

Joy, as Rintelen thinks, is not a mere mood; like *Angst*, it has its essential metaphysical ground which may be unconsciously present. Joy is always a *new project*, a deliverance from burden. Every joy makes me realize that there is some value appealing to me. It owes its authentic origin always to what makes life appear worth living; it is not arbitrary and is invariably a sign of the affirmation of life.

A. M. GHOSE

History as Before

BRITISH STATESMEN IN INDIA by V. B. Kulkarni (Orient Longmans, 550 pp. Rs. 20.)

THE author claims that his object in writing this book is, 'to present a comprehensive and dispassionate picture of the rise and termination of British rule in India through a study of the regimes of fifteen out of the thirty-three British Governors-General and Viceroys that administered this country.' And further that, 'A study of their administrations will help us to gain a vivid understanding of the ideas and ideals that animated the British rulers of this country.' Clearly, the author does not intend to make any significant departure in his treatment of the subject from that of the innumerable general histories of British India where precisely this scheme is followed, i.e., the period is divided into the term of office of the Governor-General or Viceroy and each one's administrative quality is examined. Even within this well-worn and conventional framework Mr. Kulkarni's book can be described as barely competent.

It is unfortunate that there should be yet another book which approaches the subject in this manner. Indian historical studies suffer from an undue emphasis on the biographies of rulers. What is worse, little attempt is made at presenting a sharply etched biography analysing the factors which went into the making of the man. An impersonal record of events is about all that emerges. On reading this book it is difficult to point to the characteristics which determine one statesman from the other. In fact Mr. Kulkarni astonishes one with his ready use of adjectives and phrases which, although never actually repeated from one statesman to the next, in effect mean the same thing.

This study could have been made more effective if the author had attempted to link administrative ideas more definitely with certain aspects of the lives of the statesmen and the policies that resulted. Most of them were representative of the

intellectual trends occurring in Britain during the two hundred years under survey. An explanation of certain administrative measures in these terms, together with a careful balancing of other factors, would make the administrative system more comprehensible.

In delineating the background of India at the time of the first entry of the British in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, political conditions are described at length, almost to the exclusion of all else. Yet the author at the same time accepts the view that the British came primarily as traders, the political involvement taking place later. One would expect in these circumstances a description of economic conditions in India at the time, and some attempt at explaining how British trading interests fitted into the scheme: also, the means by which the British acquired economic ascendancy, which led later to political control. This aspect is practically neglected. It is difficult to believe that Clive was given a free hand to fight battles, if there was no underlying motive leading to an improvement in the Company's position.

Warren Hastings' blunders over Nanda Kumar and the Begums of Oudh were not merely because of personal idiosyncrasies. Mr. Kulkarni avoids an interesting discussion by stating (in the case of Nanda Kumar), 'The reason for his aversion (i.e. Warren Hastings') will never be known.' and suggests that Nanda Kumar knew some fact of Hastings' life which the latter wished to suppress. If Mr. Kulkarni had followed this scent and tried to give a reason for the aversion, he would have produced a far more valuable chapter on Warren Hastings. A brief paragraph mentions Hastings' administrative measures in encouraging studies of the past culture of India. Considering that Hastings was responsible for the first modern study of the ancient past of this country, he deserves more than a mere paragraph. Here again his interest in Sanskrit and Arabic forms a strange part of his personality and could

profitably be investigated at greater length.

The omission of Lord Cornwallis and the preference for Lord Hastings (distinct from Warren Hastings), is a strange choice. Cornwallis' permanent settlement of agrarian revenue in Bengal, certainly had far-reaching effects on the life of that part of India. Not only did this system have repercussions in the agrarian economy of Bengal, but it also made an impact on Bengali social and cultural life, with the emergence of the landlord (zamindar) of Bengal who gave expression to Indian feudalism and British Victoriana, almost in the same breath.

The mention of Bentinck's name immediately brings to mind the abolition of Sati. Not enough work has been done on this from the historical and social point of view. The erroneous view that the ceremonial burning of widows was practised by all ranks of Hindu society—having once been put forward—is repeated ad infinitum. A more careful study reveals that the cult was originally reserved for certain occasions, and was not indulged in by all and sundry. It was not a normal procedure that the death of a man necessitated the immolation of his wife. Furthermore, the cult appears to have been more prevalent amongst the feudal aristocracy and the zamindar class, which makes one wonder whether the hesitation in banning this practice was really due to the fear of Hindu orthodoxy or due to the fear of antagonising the established upper-class—the antagonising of which would have created serious political and economic problems.

The last few chapters, bringing the account up to 1947, continue in the same vein with a chronological survey of events leading to Independence and the partition. A strong prejudice on the part of the author emerges, that of suspecting Muslim intentions in the matter of Indian independence. There are frequent quotations from descriptions of riots in which Muslims are said to have been the instigators. A criticism of the role of the Muslim

League in the national movement, should not be confused with the role of Muslims en masse. To suggest that all Muslims should be regarded as suspect, because of the policy of the Muslim League in the '40's, shows considerable intellectual immaturity. A statement such as the following, 'A good number of them (i.e. the Muslims) are, however, excellent performers, and many of them have already found for themselves a secure place in the Congress ranks', reduces the book to the level of political ranting. The book closes with a rather pedestrian chapter on India since independence.

ROMILA THAPAR

The Human Element

THE ANATOMY OF SOVIET MAN by Klaus Mehnert (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 30s.)

GEORGE PALOCZI-HORVATH in his study of 'Khrushchev: The Road to Power' has sought to explain what makes the successful politician in a totalitarian regime. Where he has not been able to do this, he has attributed success to luck—always an incalculable factor. But he has established convincingly that eternal vigilance is even more necessary for the politician in an authoritarian state; for it is necessary for survival. Khrushchev had the quality of effacing himself when necessary. But the basic fact was that he seems to have been somehow more the creation of Stalin and the machinery perfected by Stalin than the other leaders of the post-Stalin period. The significant contribution of that book was to demonstrate how the party established its ascendancy over all political thinking and to explain the processes by which even those leaders who desired an end to the system of purges, feared to rouse forces they could not control and were content to replace one-man rule with 'collective leadership.' Drawing mainly on the testimony of writers, Mr. Paloczi-Horvath contends that the desire to live free lives is widespread among the

Russian people, but is unable to assert itself because of the iron hand of the party and the party-controlled government.

This is where Klaus Mehnert's 'The Anatomy of Soviet Man' continues the record. The main thesis, briefly, is that every contact with the outside world serves to make Soviet Man more acutely conscious of the shortcomings of the regime he lives under—though not proportionately more attracted to the Western democratic system. Mr. Mehnert, who has the advantage of knowing Russian and of frequent visits to the U.S.S.R., draws on innumerable conversations with ordinary people there to conclude that Soviet Man is more man than Soviet. He too draws a sharp distinction between the Russian people and the Bolsheviks but is careful to point out that, while an increase in the influence of the people over the party and the government would reduce ideological pressures, it would not automatically remove the danger of power politics. He regards it as imperative that 'by our behaviour we make Soviet man understand that we have no unfriendly feelings towards him or to the Soviet people as a whole, that, on the contrary, we feel the highest admiration for their cultural and economic achievements and regard them as one of the great peoples of our times... If others treat me as an outcast, then they are responsible if I behave like one... We must help the Russian to get rid of the idea that the rest of the world regards him as a mad dog and fears him accordingly.' All this suggests that Mr. Mehnert might know his Russia very well but it betrays a complete misreading of the world situation. His attempt to win Russian confidence by a joint expedition to the moon by Americans and Russians is obviously the result of over-anxiety to provide an 'imaginative' conclusion to his book—which actually stands in no need of it. Of more practical importance is his warning that the Russian people are not likely to change their Government, not rendered the weaker by vague allusions to possible liberalisation of the regime.

The best part of the book, however, is the reactions of Russians to events within and outside. Mr. Mehnert gives a very vivid account of his discussions over a long period with individuals. It is interesting to see, for instance, the changing attitude to the foreigner ranging from the natural curiosity of the Russian to the cautious timidity of the Soviet subject; the distinction made between 'real foreigners' and visitors from the satellite countries to the disadvantage of the latter. Here Mr. Mehnert's references to India and to Mr. Nehru's visit to Russia and welcome by Russians are instructive. The general feeling in Russia, he observes, is one of appreciation that India is a friendly nation, of interest in the exotic and of enthusiasm at the widening horizon envisaged.

To some extent, too, the foreign visitor helps to bolster up the regime even while he dispels some sedulously fostered suspicions. A visitor like Tito—or better still Mao—would cause a sensation, if he was able to appear publicly in Russia. Mr. Mehnert too makes the interesting but debatable point that Soviet policy, at any rate as reflected in Mr. Khrushchev's speeches, is greatly influenced by public opinion. Unlike Mr. Palocz-Horvath, he does not allow for the intervening play of internal party intrigues which exploits public opinion.

Mr. Mehnert, however, has one great quality: he is strong on facts. He breaks down the 'classes' in Soviet Russia, giving detailed numbers in each class. He depicts the struggle for living, the housing problems and the puritanism of the Government-Party which oppresses heavily the natural uninhibited nature of the people. From casual contacts at the theatre, the restaurant or the shopping counter, he derives a great deal of information. Interesting is his account of the Russian techniques to secure the achievement of targets. The 'incentive' method is greatly relied on—leaving the inference that the punishments are reserved mainly for persons who are politically inconvenient—and it is assumed that to accomplish 80 per

cent of the target is commendable. The effect is to double the salary of a manager who achieves 100% and treble that of one who touches 120%. What follows might serve as a warning to others who may be tempted to tread the same path. The manager skimps on material, provision for spares, etc., in order to gain his bonus, and quality tends to suffer. The 'Anatomy' is a very readable book and a most rewarding one.

S. NATARAJAN

Reform and Revolution

TILAK AND GOKHALE by Stanley A. Wolpert
(California University Press, 370 pp., 60s.)

THIS book is perhaps the best comparison of the contributions of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Gopal Krishna Gokhale to the making of modern India. Gokhale comes out as the nobler of the two heroes and justifies Mahatma Gandhi acclaiming him as 'Mahatma' and adopting him as his Raja Guru.

Both Tilak and Gokhale were Chitpavan Brahmins, were graduates of the Bombay University, joined the Deccan Education Society at great self-sacrifice, worked as teachers before they changed over to public life and they both made Poona their headquarters. They both attained national stature and served the cause of India's emancipation from political subjection to British rule, with singular devotion. Both passed away before realising the fruition of their labours, and in the expressive, if pathetic, words of Gokhale, it was given to them to serve India by their 'failures', leaving it to their successors to serve her by their 'successes'.

In their public life Tilak and Gokhale followed different policies and methods. Gokhale's response to modern University education was characterised by the progressive humanitarianism and liberalism of British statesmen like Edmund Burke and John Stuart Mill, and Indian statesmen and reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy

and Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade. He attributed India's political subjection to the inequities and inadequacies of caste-ridden and priest-ridden Hindu society, and welcomed British rule for a temporary period as the instrument to rouse India to modernism and help her to reform her social institutions and bring them in conformity with those of the more advanced nations of the world and provide a sound base for political democracy.

The response of Tilak was different. He looked back and championed Hindu orthodoxy, resented social reform and attributed all of India's misfortunes to British Rule, which he characterised as a predatory incubus, which could not be eliminated by persuasion but only by terrorism. When World War I broke out in 1914, he professed that his objective was to reform the administration and not to overthrow it, that the acts of violence, which had been committed, were repugnant to him as they had only retarded political progress, and that co-operation with Government was an article of faith with him and that British Rule was of inestimable benefit to India. (p. 265). But when, encouraged by these professions, Gokhale proposed a re-union of Liberals and Extremists on the basis of co-operation with the Government, Tilak reverted to his former policies. Mrs. Annie Besant said that Tilak's views could be carried out only by a revolution, if he was not merely playing with politics. (p. 267).

On social reform, Tilak and Gokhale differed fundamentally. Gokhale was all in favour of the education of women. In his opinion, it was of the highest value to the true well-being of any nation and, more particularly, of India where enforced ignorance and overdone religion tied women down to out-moded customs and crippled all efforts at even the most elementary reforms. Education was the only means of emancipating them from the degrading thralldom to unhealthy traditions. On the other hand, Tilak opposed the education of women on the ground that it was contrary to Hindu religion. If

they were educated, they would be discontented with their traditional lot in life and would become immoral and irresponsible. He believed that even the knowledge of the three r's was unhealthy for women (p. 36).

Tilak defended child-marriage and opposed the Age of Consent Bill. An educated girl was promised in marriage to a much older man. When she refused to join him, he filed a civil suit for recovering her. While Ranade and other Hindu reformers defended her, Tilak asked that she should be tried, not according to Common Law but according to the Hindu *Dharma Shastra*, that her action should be treated as a criminal offence and that she should be compelled to go to her husband or to jail! (p. 37). When the eleven-year old Phulmani Bai of Calcutta died of the lacerations she received during her intercourse with her husband, enlightened public opinion was shocked and demanded legislation to prevent such cruel outrages. Tilak opposed the move as a violation of Hindu customs, sanctified by the Hindu *Shastras*. He said: 'the common rule is for intercourse to take place on that very night when she has her first menstruation, after performing the *homa* sacrifice. The custom has been practised for at least 2,500 years since the ancient era of the *sutras*' (pp. 55-56) and reforms had no business to interfere with it!

In defence of Tilak's opposition to social reform, it was said that he did not personally object to it but that, as a journalist he was merely reflecting the popular opinion of the day and he acted as the disinterested spokesman of that opinion. It is difficult to accept this plea. Even if he was only a journalist, Tilak's stature required him to lead public opinion rather than slavishly to reflect it. It was also said that Tilak favoured reform from within the Hindu society by voluntary action and his objection was to coercive legislation by the foreign, Christian, British Government, notwithstanding that the reform was advocated by Hindu reformers themselves, as voluntary action

was not forthcoming and effective. It is clear, therefore, that Tilak's opposition was not to reform by legislation by an alien Government but to reform itself; he defended cruel customs on religious grounds. He himself admitted that the opponents of social reform often prefaced their opposition by professing that they favoured them! (p. 52)

While Gokhale sought political progress through constitutional agitation in the open, Tilak sought it through revolution, including political assassination.

'Tilak was far too practical a man voluntarily to court martyrdom or self-destruction. He rallied his forces by devious means, and directed them in techniques other than frontal assault. ... He was neither squeamish nor doctrinaire about the methods he employed, so long as they helped further his ends. He saw no inherent contradiction in providing ethical and philosophical justification for political assassination, racial and religious antipathy, or the use of duplicity on the one hand, while avowing his loyalty to British rule and promising to co-operate with the government on the other.' (p. 301)

In 1902 Tilak dwelt on guerilla warfare and its effective use in other parts of the world. Regarding the assassination of Capt. Rand in 1897, Wolpert comes to the conclusion that Tilak was not innocent. He says:

'From the historical viewpoint, then, it may be concluded that Tilak approved of Rand's assassination as a beneficent act, that he tried to aid and protect the Chapekars after he knew of their crime, that he may have helped inspire their action and, at any rate, provided ethical justification for it based on the scripture they most revered.' (p. 97)

It is difficult to dissent from this conclusion.

Gokhale gave publicity in Britain to some charges against the behaviour of British soldiers during the plague operations in Poona in 1897 and, on his return

to India, was challenged to prove his allegations. But his informants hung back because of fear of victimisation by the Government. In the circumstances, Gokhale followed the only course open to an honourable gentleman; he apologised to the Government. Tilak criticised him as a *kutchra* reed and as one who lamentably lacked courage at a crucial time. His followers asserted that Tilak was ready to help Gokhale with the necessary evidence, but was arrested by Government before he could do so. It is surprising that they themselves did not help Gokhale with the evidence that Tilak had collected. On the other hand, Tilak's paper, the *Maharatta* said that Gokhale's charges were not well founded and were based on mere rumours (p. 117).

Wolpert is mistaken and unfair to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri when he succeeded Gokhale as President of the Servants of India Society. He says that Gokhale had chosen Gandhi as his heir and successor, but Gandhi was denied admission to the Society because Sastri was not willing to serve under him. (pp. 273-274). The reason was very different. There was a wide and vital difference between the policies and programmes of Gandhi and the then members of the Society, and Gandhi had frankly given notice that, after joining the Society, he would strive to bring its policies into accord with his. Gandhi himself admitted it when he said that, while it was possible for him, working independently, to co-operate with the Society, he would be a disturbing factor as a member of it. (p. 274). Wolpert also says that, before his death, Gokhale had provided Gandhi with funds to start his own *Ashram*. If before his death Gokhale had anticipated that Gandhi would succeed him, there was no occasion for him to think that Gandhi would have to start his own separate *Ashram* and to provide him with funds for it. According to Sastri, Gokhale did not indicate his successor, much less nominate Gandhi.

P. KODANDA RAO

Can Conservatives Revolt?

REVOLT ON THE CAMPUS by M. Stanton Evans (Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 241 pp., \$ 4.50)

IT is all rather bewildering and finally depressing. The author (who 'already, at the age of twenty-seven, has established himself as one of conservatism's leading thinkers and writers') has documented here the course of the revolution, over the last ten years, among the students and intellectuals of America. The liberal revolution is dead: long live the conservative revolution! And the manifesto (one hopes the word is not too 'red' for them) of this new upsurge is as follows:

This is a God-created universe: man is part of that creation: man has a free will and reason. It follows that individual men should be their own agents in all things respecting their own lives. Liberty is indivisible.

The constitution of the United States is the best arrangement yet devised for empowering government to fulfil its proper role. Socialism and Welfareism are unwelcome intrusions in market economy.

The United States should stress victory over, rather than coexistence with, the menace of international communism.

Mr. Evans has taken care to explain: (a) that the rebellion does not belong to the 'rich young fogey', but to the young student who comes from a family with an annual income of around \$ 5000, who holds a job while in college, and is often likely to have scholarship aid in getting through school; (b) that the new conservative has had enough of the relativism, passivism and conformism of the liberals; and (c) the movement is not just a reaction, the 'swing of the pendulum'; it is conscious conservatism, which will select and adjudge.

'When categories no longer hold, the universe loses its certainty. Uncertainty breeds fear, and fear breeds incoherence', writes the author, and yet, here, the labels have been categorically exchanged. Chapter after chapter is loaded with information about the intelligent and critical groups closing their ranks against the

anaemic liberalism and Keynesian socialism of the campus and at the capital. ('From out of the land of La Follette', commented one undergraduate magazine, 'believe it or not, comes this reactionary magazine, honest to God. It has always seemed to us that the college campus was just not the place for reactionaries.' The episode indeed established that conservatism was the bandwagon to join'). There is a string of names of writers, of the new organisations—ISI, YR, YAF, YRNF, SCANR—all evangelists of conservatism, 'seminal', 'characterological'.

These 'inner-directed' men and women have campaigned for retaining the 'loyalty oath', for the House Committee on un-American Activities, for Barry Goldwater ('we want Barry'). And one began to wonder if words had any meaning. For one should have thought that for a 'rugged individualist' the choice between wearing 'Goldwater buttons' and the aversion to flag-waving and jingoism was clear. Is the liberty-loving conservative getting away from groupism, or is he plunging straight for the safety of the herd?

One would also like to ask, what is un-American? The subversion of the constitution is un-American, would be one answer. Abraham Lincoln, with a heavy heart, engaged in a civil war to test the spirit of a nation 'conceived in liberty'. Edmund Wilson, in 'Patriotic Gore', reviewing the literature of that Civil War, talks angrily of the 'rainbow slogans' of American foreign policy. The memory of Little Rock is not very remote either. Would these youthful revolutionaries applaud the sentiment expressed by William Faulkner: 'But if it came to fighting, I'd fight for Mississippi against the United States, even if it meant going out into the street and shooting Negroes'?

Their distrust of government encroachment in the citizen's life is understandable. But today, involvement and interrelatedness are so much part of our heritage that our home is no longer our castle. Hence the welfare state, the subsidies, the national health service, and even the aid

to communist countries. Their opposition to the New Deal has witnessed the passing of three regimes, Democrat, Republican, and now the nation has gone and elected as President a young man, rockbottomed in faith and with the courage to champion friendship and humanism.

The writing is a little too committed and humourless (there is no chuckle even for a statement like *'Insight and Outlook* itself is a lively, twenty page monthly magazine, carrying a heavy quota of advertising from local merchants'.) There is an admission that the young grail-seekers have to go a long way before becoming an influence at Washington. In the meantime there are two items of the credo which one found depressing. Somewhere, there is an observation that YAF is marked by its 'appetite for power' and for action. Then, there is the declaration that the United States cannot coexist with communism, but must destroy it. If that were not impracticable, it would be cataclysmic. Fortunately, campus exuberance need not presage the end of the world.

One final reflection is inevitable. The revolt on the campus is a ferment, it is the breath of life, and, thank heavens, it is a fight for ideas, for a way of living, and not a rebellion against the increase of fees, or difficult question papers or the referee's decision. One would rather wear a Goldwater button, carry a Goldwater balloon and let off steam than set fire to a bus or stone the Vice-chancellor's car.

N. L. KHANOLKAR

Music from the Hills

SHADOW AND SUNLIGHT, an anthology of Dogra and Pahari Songs. Translated by Karan Singh (Asia Publishing House, 124 pp. Rs. 14)

LOVE is a sort of universal norm. You can say 'I love you' in any language and it will mean the same thing. But try to say how or why you love and the method of expression will differ from language to language. It is true that the story of Romeo and Juliet has its counterparts in, for

instance, the stories of Shirin and Farhad, Laila and Majnun or Heer and Ranjha but, of course, the actual details of the stories differ in accordance with the usage and idiom of the various countries in which they occur. When it comes to the question of poetry, whether it be romantic or devotional or purely patriotic, the differences in convention, modes of expression and simile are even more striking.

Accurate translation, even of simple prose, is a difficult enough task. The translation of poetry, attempting to convey the full meaning and beauty of the original, is an undertaking at which the boldest might well quail. Mr. Karan Singh, in the introduction to his *Shadow and Sunlight*, an Anthology of Dogra-Pahari songs, has made it clear that he is well aware of the great difficulties faced by a translator of poetry. He has not undertaken the task lightly and has, consequently, not made the common mistake of trying to give a literal, word-for-word, translation. He has also, when the occasion arose, taken limited liberties with the text in order to bring out more clearly to the English reader the spirit behind the words. He himself says, 'If I have succeeded even partially in conveying the lilt and vigour of the original songs I will feel more than satisfied.'

I think I can say, without danger of contradiction, that Mr. Karan Singh has succeeded very well indeed in bringing out the richness of simile and breadth of imagination of the hardy mountaineers who write and sing the songs. If beauty of language and aptness of expression constitute literary artistry then the Dogra-Pahari composers are artists indeed. Take, for instance, the description of the Goddess Durga, worshipped as the Sacred Flame at the Jawalamukhi shrine:

'A bright red garment adorns Your body
and on Your forehead is the yellow
saffron mark,
the five-hued shawl covers Your head,
its edges shimmering with golden
embroidery.'

Surely a flame, as the embodiment of Deity, has seldom been so delicately and

effectively described. Stop and ponder for a moment on the red body of the flame, the yellow of its leaping crest and the spectrum-like shimmer where it fades into nothing and you will see what I mean.

It is true that the majority of the songs are concerned with expressing the sorrow and loneliness engendered by the absence of the loved one. At the same time, one is given glimpses of the humour, sometimes crude and sometimes subtle, of the singers. In the song, 'O Soldier, Come Home to Me' the hardships of the military life (one can imagine the long face he made when narrating them in the hope of winning sympathy,) are thrown back at him as an inducement to take his discharge and come back home. (To work a darn sight harder in his fields than he ever did in the army?). Whilst I was reading 'The Bogus Contractor' I could clearly picture the hill woman, in a somewhat strident voice, holding forth in the midst of the interested neighbours:

'He does not give me enough to eat
nor does he bring me anything to wear,
why, then, does he go about telling
people
that I am his dear wife?'

If true, humour lies in being able to laugh at one's own foibles then the Dogra-Paharis are certainly not the least humorous of India's teeming millions.

Finally, of course, the songs show, more than anything else, the fundamental cheerfulness of the people in the face of difficulty and disappointment. Mountain dwellers seldom have easy lives and the Dogra-Paharis are no exception to the rule. Nevertheless, in common with others of their ilk, they seem to draw from the majesty of their surroundings the fortitude and deep religious consciousness which enables them to face all things with a smile.

All these things Karan Singh has brought out. Nevertheless, once one has read the originals, one is left with a sense of frustration. Frustration, not so much at any shortcoming on the translator's part, as at the sheer impossibility of putting into another language, English or Hindi, the

piquancy, the neatness, the 'so much said in so few words' of the original. Liberties must be taken for the sake of clarity; explanations must be given, particularly for readers from a foreign country; yet these liberties and explanations cannot help but detract from the elegance of the verses as written in Dogra-Pahari. One cannot avoid thinking that a version of the original songs, in the Roman script, would have helped the English reader to gain some idea of the rhythm and lilt although he might not have understood the actual words. After all, the translation is there to say what the words mean!

It is not for me to comment critically upon the Hindi translation. Nevertheless, I was at rather a loss to understand how the 'Chakra' or 'Chakor' of the original, a form of partridge, became the 'Chakwa' or Brahmini Duck in the Hindi version. Perhaps it was one of the liberties taken in view of the fact that the Chakwa-Chakwi, male and female Brahmini Ducks, are accepted in Hindi as the prototype of faithful lovers.

For the musically inclined Hindi reader the provision of the Hindi equivalent of the tonic sol-fa notation is a brilliant idea. I only wish I could follow it!

A. H. MORTIMER

India as it Was

COMBAT OF SHADOWS by Manohar Malgonkar
(Hamish Hamilton, 290 pp. 18s.)

MR. MALGONKAR'S book has all the attributes expected of a good novel in the old fashioned days when the writer addressed—primarily, at least—the ordinary healthy reader, and good story telling had not yet become an item permitted only on the menu of crime and science fiction writers. One is pleasantly surprised, therefore, to find oneself reading through *Combat of Shadows* with the same sustained excitement with which an Agatha Christie fan would lap up the latest series of Poirot exploits. At no time while

actually reading the book is one aware of anything except the progress of the story itself. It is only—as with all true art—when one looks back after having finished it, that one realizes how little ‘story’ there was: the details of the narrative recede and fade away and one is left with only a lasting imprint of the time, the place and the people which the author intended to portray.

The far-flung tea-garden, or for that matter the headquarters of the tea district in Assam where the Resident Directors of the big companies live in a world of tea-and-tennis afternoons, a world of rigid protocol and dressing for dinner and minding one’s p’s and q’s of intensified values where black is always charcoal-black and white chalk-white, where in 1939 the British Empire is still a mighty thing—these are rather far away from the average person, but Mr. Malgonkar handles his *dramatis personae* with a subtlety that enables the reader to find a seat for himself in the auditorium from which he would have, in actual life, viewed the scene. The shikar scenes are exciting and accurate; but it is in the superb handling of the tragedy of the English Public School boy who becomes a planter—who weighs every action in terms of ‘not letting the Empire down’—that Mr. Malgonkar proves himself a consummate artist.

He has presented a completely convincing picture in his characterization of the upright dedicated young man whose colour complex blinds him into committing the most hell-worthy actions in the sincere belief that it is the right performance of duty. What is terrifying is that Mr. Malgonkar does it so well that instead of being shocked, the reader often finds himself sympathising with the hero. I, for one, have rarely come across so skilful a portrayal of the problem of race prejudice and the disillusionment and tragedy that follow in its wake. The novel is about the combat of the two opposite shadows—desire and aversion—which victimize its characters who are too small to overcome the colour wall that separates them. While

the motivating power of sex is acknowledged as the force that elevates as well as destroys, there is never any attempt to use the subject to create exaggerated or shock effects. In a sense, its very matter-of-factness makes it a thing of beauty.

Mr. Malgonkar is a very rare commodity: one of those authors who writes English with absolutely no Indianisms at all. It would be impossible to say that the book was not written by an Englishman. As such, the similarity of style and material make a comparison between Mr. Malgonkar and John Masters inevitable and the point that is proved in the process is that—provided he has the requisite language at his command—it takes an Indian to capture the subtler nuances of India with authenticity. Mr. Malgonkar’s Eurasians, labour union leaders, the Britishers who do, as well as those who do not, ‘conform’ are all completely true to life, as is indeed everything about the book—the love and hate, the revenge and stupidity, are all drawn from living experience. And Mr. Malgonkar does have the necessary vocabulary to ensure that each character speaks his own language. Thus, when Captain Cockburn—who does not conform—remarks of the girl with the glowing olive skin: ‘Strordinarily fetching bit of skirt, that,’ or when he tells the hero, ‘Wonder how long you’ll last. I’ve noticed that none of these virtuous, psalm-singing bastards really last...’ and that the hero—who does conform—replies, ‘I wish you wouldn’t refer to me as a psalm-singing bastard, sir’, the words remain always those of the character and do not become those of the author.

Finally, today, when India finds itself in a position where many of her young men may have to be drafted, how familiar do the words of the Resident Director sound when he says: ‘Dashed awkward, twenty-five men to run twenty-seven gardens now, and I’m afraid more will have to be going away soon. The Government won’t agree to classify planters as essen-

tial. Shocking ignorance, of course—sheer muddleheadedness!

It is sauce for the gander.

IQBAL LUKMANT

Progress and Poverty

THE BACKWARD SOCIETY by Raymond Frost
(Longmans Green, 234 pp., 18s.)

THE predicament felt by the backward society regarding economic progress is a recent one. (Let us not call a spade an agricultural implement, and a backward society an underdeveloped country). Our forefathers were presumably content in the revelation of the sages that their lot was ordained and that the rapacious landlord or the king and the invading hordes of locusts or enemies were acts of God. The liberal concept of history taught the opposite view and Macaulay, Bentham and H. G. Wells (before he wrote his despairing introduction to the last edition) assured us that history was impelling states towards a liberal, prosperous society.

That assurance now lies shattered. Today for about two-thirds of the world's population the problem is not of the second telephone but of the next meal. We are politically independent and we are determined to eliminate poverty. But we also know that time may be running against us. Not only is the monthly income of the average American Rs. 1,000/- and that of the average Indian Rs. 30/-, but the income of the American is increasing at the rate of Rs. 15/- per month, whereas that of the Indian is increasing at the rate of 50 np. per month. Economists warn us of the vicious circle of low incomes, low savings and low investments. In other words, we have the will to progress but we despair of the means.

Raymond Frost (Oxford, the *Guardian* and the *City*) who is now with the World Bank, is well aware of our predicament. He suggests that the existence of a large number of poor backward un-

stable nations sets a danger to the peace of the world and therefore the lot of the backward society is an international problem. (Mr. Raymond Frost is astute enough to have concluded much before its neighbours did, that Red China is an exception to the general proposition that backward countries are not a military menace to the rest of the world. He observes that even if Red China's ambitions do not have any economic motivation, her aggression can be profitable and that alone among the backward nations, she may have a valid economic interest in aggression.)

Mr. Frost advances the main argument of the book with lucidity that should not deter a lay reader to whom the book is addressed. After concluding that the movement of Capital is the last international equilibriser, because War and Migration can no longer be matters of policy, he examines the implications of foreign trade. While recognising that the advanced countries should share some burden of developing the backward countries with economic aid, the author rightly concentrates on what the backward countries can do for themselves and examines the nature and implications of foreign trade in a backward society.

Mr. Frost makes a point which is frequently lost sight of, that the problem of the backward society is in essence, different from the problem of depression in an advanced and industrial society—what is lacking in the backward society is not the demand but the means of production. Mr. Frost examines two systems of economic organization, namely, bureaucracy and the market, to suggest that while bureaucracy should be used to supply the objectives of economic policy and provide a correcting factor, it is the market which must exploit the opportunity for economic progress by using favourable terms of trade which for a country producing primary products is more in the nature of a fortuitous boom. The author emphasizes that the nature of investment even by the Government must be such as would yield quick returns and

should be oriented towards increasing exports and not for public works to satisfy political demands.

Dr. Frost has written a sympathetic account of the problems faced by the backward society and the value of the book lies in the fact that he has raised the right issues. The problem of economic growth in the backward society bursting with political pressures is of a very complicated nature and no model can suggest more than tentative solutions. The compulsions felt by the planners in a backward society are not merely the desirability of high savings and productive investments. There are also the political compulsions of ideology and leadership, the economic necessity to invest in public works which private enterprise cannot or would not undertake, and the military desirability of self-sufficiency in strategic fields. It is these imponderables that are the despair of planners. No wonder some of them seem to have gone back to the sages and have become leading lights of the Sadhu Samaj.

ASHOK DESAI

SHORTER REVIEWS

Lack of space prevents us giving full-length reviews of all the books we receive. Those we think are likely to have some interest for our readers are briefly noticed in these columns.

BY NISSIM EZEKIEL

THE JOURNAL OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

Vol. 1 No. 1. Sept. 1962. Editor: Dr. Amrik Singh. Published three times a year in September, December and March. (Faculty of Arts, University of Delhi, Delhi 6. Per copy: Rs. 2.50 Annual subscription: Rs. 7.00)

ONE ARDENTLY HOPES THAT this new periodical will be actively supported by all those involved in University affairs. At the very least, every college library should subscribe to it. The first number is very promising and full of meat. Romila Thapar's article on 'The Study of Indology' deservedly gets pride of place. It provides a thoughtful survey of the historical background of this study before proposing the means by which it can come to terms 'with the requirements of twentieth-century India'. Girja Kumar, in charge

of the library of the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi, discusses 'University Libraries in India' with special reference to specific questions such as documentation, acquisition of out-of-print books, and specialisation. Dr. B. G. Rao deals with the expansion of medical education in India and Prof. Bhabatosh Datta with problems of economic research. D. D. Karve's plea for Junior Colleges in India is informatively and cogently argued. There are also book reviews and newsletters from a number of Universities. Production is dignified and appropriate to a periodical of this nature.

LAND'S END: Poems by Adil Jussawalla (Writers' Workshop, 162/92 Lake Gardens, Calcutta 31. 46 pp., Rs. 6)

THIS IS PROBABLY the best collection of poems in English by an Indian since Dom Moraes published *A Beginning*. The author is 22. He left for England in 1957 to study architecture, which he abandoned to write a play. Having written it, followed by another, he went up to Oxford to read English, began to paint and produced several short stories. He spent the greater part of 1962 in India but is now back in Oxford. His poems were written in England, or some part of Europe, and express a distinctly Westernised sensibility. This gives a certain strength to his handling of the language without making him ape Western attitudes now in fashion. A sensitive, personal voice asserts itself, virtually independent of any national matrix of feeling.

'Violence is a culture found on playgrounds.

Cities fall to let their children breathe.'

This is from a poem on 'A Bomb-site' in which an unsentimental compassion is characteristically expressed. The youthful idealism sounds often a surprisingly mature note, restrained, formal and finished:

'So may I

Cleaned of all my deaths

Once more stand firm against

A lifeless sky.'

Some of the poems in *Land's End* are mere notes, short and casual-looking, but one does not feel that they are truncated or short of breath. Every one of them presents an image that is wholly convincing and a phrase or two of lucid power:

'The stars will burst

Tonight; how bright

The frosts burn

The hollies, the pines.

I have no thirst

Tonight for private worlds.'

Both the thirst for private worlds and the urge to connect with the public world are seriously explored in *Land's End*. Adil Jussawalla's next collection of poems, if it carries forward the achievement of his first, will establish him securely as a poet in a growing tradition of international poetry in English.

BERGSON AND THE STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS NOVEL by Shiv K. Kumar (*Blackie and Son, Ltd., London and Glasgow, 174 pp., 18s. 6d.*)

PROF. KUMAR is Head of the English Department at Osmania University, Hyderabad, holds a doctorate of Cambridge, and has published critical papers in several English, American and European periodicals including *The Modern Language Review*, *English Studies*, *Modern Fiction Studies* and *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*. In 1961 he visited England for a second time on an invitation from the British Council to collect material for his next book, on contemporary criticism. He must be counted among the very few Indian writers on English literary themes whose voice is authentic and authoritative. In the first place—and it is really necessary to say this—his mastery of the English language is never in question. Secondly, his ideas are not derivative. The subject of his choice is obviously original and he demonstrates in dealing with it the adequacy of his intellectual equipment. These are already formidable advantages, even if Prof. Kumar's book had not been, which it is, a real contribution to the understanding of the modern novel, particularly of Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf and James Joyce. Prof. Kumar claims, I think correctly, that his is the first attempt to present 'a comprehensive interpretation' of the stream of consciousness novel in Bergsonian terms.

It is not a mere influence that he establishes but what he calls a 'parallelism' between the techniques of the novelists concerned and the 'Bergsonian concept of flux.' His study is heavily documented, but the main line of the argument remains remarkably clear and illuminating. A chapter on 'Bergson's Theory of the Novel' prepares the reader for the analysis to follow, but already, even here, one gets an insight into the significance of the 'radical dislocation of normal prose syntax' which characterises Joyce and others. Though psychological concepts are freely used by Dr. Kumar, as required by his subject, he manages to keep the focus on literary issues. Thus the criticism of Dorothy Richardson's novels while acknowledg-

ing their historical importance in the development of the English novel, rightly emphasizes their weaknesses as literature. Technique is only a means to an end.

The chapter on Virginia Woolf is perhaps the most helpful to readers unsympathetic to her novels, as I am. Dr. Kumar's analysis of Mrs. Woolf's intentions in relation to individual plots and characters is particularly constructive. On Joyce, he is repetitious, partly because he keeps within the narrow limits of his critical thesis. 'All that is intended here is to show that there are some interesting and illuminating parallels between Bergsonism and some significant aspects of Joyce's technique and attitude.' A less modest ambition in this case would have been in order, and may have yielded a wider range of observations on Joyce's view of reality. On the other hand, of course, Prof. Kumar's self-imposed limitation in commenting on Joyce gives his book its impressive unity.

HISTORY AND HOPE—*Tradition, Scepticism, Fanaticism in Modern Society. The Berlin Conference of 1960*—Edited by K. A. Jelenki—with a postscript by Michael Polanyi (*Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 208 pp., 25s.*)

IN 1960, the Congress for Cultural Freedom celebrated its tenth anniversary with a Conference attended by more than two hundred scholars, writers and intellectuals. Among the various seminars held at that time was one on the 'Progress of Ideas' under the direction of Prof. Michael Polanyi. The papers contributed to that Seminar, along with extracts from the discussions on them, are assembled in *History and Hope*. It is divided into two parts. Part I under the general title 'Beyond the Ideological Passions?' (cautiously with a mark of interrogation) has papers by Michael Polanyi, Richard Lowenthal and Sidney Hook. Part 2, entitled 'Prospects for a New Civility' consists of papers by Herbert Luthy, Albert Hourani, Kathleen Bliss, Joseph Pieper and Jeanne Hirsch, all distinguished scholars and thinkers of international repute. It is not surprising that among them, and between them and the other participants in the Seminar, there are considerable differences of opinion and view-point. Prof. Polanyi's thesis that beyond the nihilism of the existing forms of totalitarianism there are glimpses of ideological sanity, and that these are indicated in the 'revisionism' of Eastern Europe, dominates the first part of *History and Hope*. Both Richard Lowenthal and Sidney Hook disagree in different ways, the latter actually defending 'the principle

of radicalism'. His plea is for a return to the ideals of the Enlightenment. Against Polanyi's caution, he says, 'Over-cautious drivers can be just as much of a road hazard as speed demons. Some historical situations have degenerated into chaos because those in a position to act have played it too safe.' Paul Ignatus, Hans Kohn, Salvador da Madariaga and Pieter Geyl make notable points in their comments on the main papers.

In Part 2, Herbert Luthy's paper on nationalism examines that concept as being 'at once impractical and indispensable.' His glances at the English variety of it are somewhat wistful and he maintains throughout his sense of nationalism's variety and ambiguity. Albert Hourani starts his paper with this spectacular summary of nationalism in the modern world: 'If most communities in the modern world have followed the path of the French Revolution rather than English reform, that is not because they preferred the doctrines of Rousseau to those of Locke on intellectual or aesthetic grounds, but because the experience of France has been more relevant to their problems than that of England; and it was the gravity of these problems rather than the influence of Dostoevsky which pushed some to the logical extreme of nihilism, while others managed to achieve the "suspended logic" of England and America'.

In that one sentence, one sees the quality of thought which was expressed at the Berlin Conference. Prof. Polanyi's *Postscript* poses the question as to whether the West can build a bridge, despite all the apparent difficulties, to communist ideas and authority. His view is (1) that Communist ideas are powerful and seductive (2) that they possess these qualities because they are 'deeply rooted in ideas which we share'; (3) that by recognising this common ancestry we shall 'make contact with the internal difficulties of the Soviet mind' which are leading it to revisionism; (4) that we see this revision 'as a struggle of minds like our own against a predicament similar to our own.'

It is a pity that the two Indian participants, Mr. Jayaprakash-Narayan and Mr. Raja Rao, are not more strongly represented; the latter, in fact, only with the question: 'Can one really be free when one still has a body?' Jeanne Hirsch answers: 'I personally as a good Westerner would like to ask how one can be free when one hasn't got a body?' And that is virtually the only dialogue between the Orient and the West in this highly stimulating and profound debate.

THIS DIFFICULT INDIVIDUAL, Ezra Pound.
by Eustace Mullins (Fleet Publishing Corporation, 230 Park Avenue, New York 388 pp., \$5.)

EZRA POUND's death early this year went almost unnoticed even in the literary circles of the world's cosmopolitan capitals. Perhaps this was fortunate. His enemies were too many and too powerful. His friends had forsaken him. Only the less amiable sides of his character had impressed themselves on the public mind; only the controversial episodes in his long and meritorious service to literature are remembered, for their sensation value. He was tried for treason and spent a decade in a mental home—but was finally acquitted of all the charges against him, and of course he was always sane.

Mr. Mullins recounts Pound's highly constructive literary career from its very beginnings, in the course of which he manages to give an entertaining survey of the *avant-garde* milieu in Europe before and after the first world war. After that, he surveys the tumultuous debate started by the award of the Bollingen Prize, and includes in his intimate portrait of Pound, extracts from the 'treasonable' broadcasts as well as innumerable and generous quotations from his letters and conversations. The case for Ezra Pound could hardly be better argued than by Mr. Mullins, though he identifies himself a little too closely with Pound's point of view on a host of subjects. One is aware that the case *against* can also be cogently made but it remains true to say that Pound was more sinned against than sinning. He paid the price for being 'difficult' but eventually the price proved far in excess of the difficulty. Some posthumous reparation is due to Pound in the form of clearing from memory of him at least the more pernicious charges. Those who wish to help in this process will find Mr. Mullins' case-book an invaluable source of reference.

M. N. ROY AND RADICAL HUMANISM by G. P. Bhattacharya (A. J. B. H. Wadia Publication, Casa da Vinci, 89 Worli Sea Face, Bombay 18. 76 pp., Rs. 3)

THERE ARE NOT many books on M. N. Roy and this is the only one available at present, if we except a brochure of statements on him compiled and edited by Prof. Sibnarayan Ray. Mr. Bhattacharya devotes an introductory chapter to the biographical background of M. N. Roy but is concerned thereafter almost exclusively with the philosophy Roy developed in the last years of his life. At the end there is a partial list of Roy's

writings which cover sixty-five books and thirty-nine pamphlets. Mr. Bhattacharya gives a straightforward account of the principal ideas in M. N. Roy's philosophy, quoting liberally and in a spirit of acceptance rather than critical analysis. Nevertheless, the account is lucid and it is impossible to take exception to any part of it. In relating Roy's ideas to 'contemporary social philosophies', Mr. Bhattacharya emphasises the current ideologies, including Gandhism. In a book as short as this one, perhaps no wider references could be expected. The chapter on 'Radical Humanist Methodology' attempts to break new ground since Roy not only visualised a new social order 'but also suggests means and methods to realise it.' The author develops Roy's conception of education as the only ultimate way to a superior way of democratic life. 'The real battle for democracy,' Mr. Bhattacharya says, 'must be fought not mainly against any dictator or any Government, but primarily against the ignorance, narrow selfishness, intolerance, arrogance, lack of self-reliance and self-respect among the people and their inability to administer their own affairs.' One hopes Mr. Bhattacharya's book will stimulate greater interest in India in the life and work of M. N. Roy.

BY LAEEQ FUTEHALLY

RABINDRANATH TAGORE, a biography, by Krishna Kripalani (Oxford University Press, 397 pp., 35s.)

SINCE this full-length life of Tagore was not quite ready in time for the Tagore centenary, a limited edition of an abridged version was hastily printed off in 1961. The real biography now appears. The fuller text as well as its handsome appearance makes this a very much more rewarding book, in every way worthy to be looked upon as a standard life of the poet.

Mr. Kripalani has managed to keep a fine balance between the details of Tagore's domestic background and his public achievements. The author's own position as Tagore's assistant who worked in Santiniketan and became a member of his family, must have been useful in helping him to give us a well-rounded picture of the life of his guru. 'He gave to his people in one life-time what normally takes centuries to evolve—a language capable of expressing the finest modulations of thought and feeling, a literature worthy to be taught by any university in the world.' And yet, if, as Robert Frost says, 'poetry is what gets lost in translation,' then Tagore is condemned to be

known either at second hand even to his own countrymen, or through works which he himself did not consider were really central to his being.

INTEGRATION, a programme of education, by Kewal Motwani (Ganesh and Co., Madras 114 pp., Rs. 2)

THE title of this book is so compelling that any Indian who turned away without reading it would expect to be plagued by his conscience for the rest of his life. In this spirit of fulfilling a serious duty we turn page after page, expecting any moment to come upon some striking fact or comment which will reveal to us what we must do in order to become a close-knit, well-integrated nation.

The introductory chapter is obviously not what we are looking for. It is a University Extension Lecture delivered by the author in 1960 and is entirely concerned with the virtues of the Manu Dharma Shastra. The second chapter is the author's Presidential Address to the Indian Sociological Conference, again in 1960, and a great part of it is taken up in expressing his sense of gratitude for the honour done to him by every one. The sub-title of the third and last chapter seems to indicate that we are getting nearer the subject, but this turns out to be deceptive. Still, our spirits are lifted when we read the truly unexceptionable sentiments which form the hard core of this chapter. Here is a sample: 'India of today is failing in her sacred mission of guarding the ramparts of her spiritual being, left to her charge by innumerable generations of teachers, poets prophets scientists statesmen mystics monarchs and millions of masses since the time of her aeonian history.' The book ends with a carefully worked out reading list for a course in Sociology which has nothing to do with any integration. Prominent in the list, naturally, are the different works of the author himself.

So that there is nothing, after all, about what the title seemed to promise. And who can blame the author for getting caught up in a far more absorbing subject—the subject of himself? And of course, to a lesser extent in Manu, a whole-hearted return to whose laws, the author earnestly believes, would take care of nearly all the troubles with which India is faced today.

KRISHNAKANTA'S WILL by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. Translated by J. C. Ghosh. (New Directions, 172 pp., \$1.65)

It is not really necessary to formulate a literary opinion of either this novel or the present trans-

lation. The main interest of the book naturally rests on the fact that it is one of the earliest novels written in India. It is also, one may add, a very typical representative of the early Indian novel. The wooden characters and their seemingly motiveless actions, the rigid line between good and bad, with the heroine dying triumphantly of T.B. after having accepted the remorse of her erring husband, is something we have not yet succeeded in shaking off.

The present translation has been jointly sponsored by UNESCO and the Government of India and is a part of the series of the UNESCO Collection of Representative Works. J. C. Ghosh has translated the book into an English which is plain and simple, but free from any awkwardness. Compared to some of the locally published translations of similar works which have appeared recently, this itself is an achievement. The production of the book is neat and pleasant, greatly enhancing its value.

WHAT INTERESTS YOU MOST IN THE WORLD TODAY. Edited by Julie Medlock (Wilco Publishing House, 186 pp., Rs. 2)

THIS BOOK is based on a project to get 'the best thinking of the best minds of our time focused on world affairs'. About two years ago, Julie Medlock organized a series of articles for *The Hindu*. She chose what she considered the best minds of our time and asked them to write a short article on 'Whatever Interested them Most in the World' — imposing no kind of limitation on their choice.

It is not easy for a 'best mind' to put his most profound thoughts and deepest beliefs into a short newspaper article, but Julie Medlock has collected an impressive number of articles which combine profundity of thought with an ease and lightness of expression. Bertrand Russell, for instance, manages to put into a few paragraphs his long-term view of Communism, seen in a historical perspective. Horace Alexander's article on *Citizens and Villagers* probes a problem of modern life

which is seldom even acknowledged to exist. Each article is preceded by a short editorial piece in which Julie Medlock gives 'personal glimpses' of the writer. This introduction is particularly useful in the case of writers with whose lives most Indians are not familiar. It is a pity that the cover design of the book is so poor that it gives a totally false impression of its contents.

MINERVA A Review of Science, Learning and Policy. Edited by Edward Shils. Vol. I., No. 1., Autumn 1962. 5s. Published by C.S.F. Publications Ltd., 135 Oxford Street, London W.1. Agency in India: Four Oceans Publishers, 412 Mirabelle Hotel, 33a Marine Lines, Bombay-1. (Annual Subscription: £1)

PROFESSOR EDWARD SHILS is already well-known to most of our readers. In his carefully considered introduction to this new journal he announces that *MINERVA* will concern itself primarily with that area of intellectual life where research and politics meet — and sometimes clash. *MINERVA* hopes, too, 'to testify to its belief in the reality of the international intellectual community by drawing into its circle of contributors, scholars, scientists and administrators from the Communist countries.'

The first issue of *MINERVA* opens with Sir Eric Ashby's lecture at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, that University which has put up a bronze plaque to announce that all 'men and women without regard to race and colour are welcome to join in the acquisition and advancement of knowledge.' Of special interest to Indian readers will be Amar Kumar Singh's paper on Indian students, *The Impact of Foreign Study*. An imaginative departure is the editor's decision to summarize and publish the reports of the Special Commissions of various countries, where these deal with matters which have relevance to intellectual life. Among such reports in this issue are the Report of the Scientific Commission in Pakistan and the Report to the President of the United States on Government Contracting for Research and Development.

Our Reviewers

A. M. GHOSE teaches philosophy in Jaipur.

ROMILA THAPAR'S book 'Asoka and the Mauryas' was reviewed in the previous issue of *Quest*.

S. NATARAJAN works for the Council for Economic Education, Bombay.

P. KODANDA RAO was a member of the Servants of India Society for forty years.

N. I. KHANOLKAR is Principal of the Shivaji Military Preparatory School, Poona.

A. H. MORTIMER works in the British High Commission and is a student of North Indian Languages.

IQBAL LUKMANI is interested in literary criticism.

ASHOK DESAI is a Bombay lawyer who is a student of Economics.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sir,

In regard to the suggestion of Dr. Devaraj in the July issue of *Quest* that no Sanskrit-trained pandit should be allowed to teach or examine, I wish to point out that the problem is a larger one. It is essentially one constituted by the tendency of different traditions in Indian society to isolate from one another. Actually, a worse problem than of the pandit is that of the regional language specialists, who may be described as the spiritual descendants of the kathak. We have a three-headed intellectual elite, some genuinely literate only in Sanskrit, some genuinely literate only in a regional language, and some genuinely literate only in English, there are of course overlaps, but not as much as needed. The desire of the regional language specialists to teach and examine is probably much more troublesome than the similar desire of the Sanskrit specialists, since it not only fails to hook on to the ever-increasing drive of modern science and civilization but also disrupts national unity.

The situation is potentially of high tragic significance. For it is by no means true that all, even most Sanskrit trained scholars, or most regional language scholars, are incompetent. Many of them are indeed of the highest competence. Only their best competence is, alas, of a kind impossible to link up with the invincible, indecelerable flow of objective knowledge. I foresee a great deal of anguish before the two old orders learn to accept the inevitable with grace. Too much of the best of India is in them for us to disrespect them, even if we see that they are doomed, not to oblivion, but to supersession. A danger is that obduracy in the old will provoke blasphemy in the new. Sanskrit or the regional languages cannot win India any more, but they can still ruin her.

The technical weakness in Indian education is a related problem. At one end of education is the baby, utterly helpless without personal care. At the other end is the genuine adult, one who is prepared to submit to the most stringent test

of merit. Over all the years of civilization, the tests of merit in physical and social competition have become easier, and correspondingly, the tests of merit in the competition of knowledge and enjoyment have become harder. It is no longer necessary for me to learn swordsmanship, but it is also no longer possible not to learn algebra. This dialectic is neglected in India and so too the consequent need to be exposed to the most merciless standards of modern science at some point.

The amazing thing about Indian education is its tenacity in avoiding any real contact with the up-to-date and the increasingly harshening standards vested in the consensus and the accumulation of discoveries. Authority is placed in the Vedas, in the medieval mystics, in 19th century Europe, in the undergraduate lores of Oxbridge, in such quarters that are as distant, as static and as undemanding as possible. Contact between the ever-changing, ever-demanding science of the world and the mass of our teachers and students is studiously avoided. I sometimes wonder whether our universities are not designed more for stemming the flow of science into Indian minds. Yet, the assumption upon which higher education has been based ever since Wilhelm von Humboldt established the first university recognizable as modern, is that 'one who does not investigate, cannot teach'. Even the British system provides for this, mainly by the custom of appointing fellows at Oxbridge, the one feature we have not taken over.

The Indian system has to be 'revolutionized' only in this sense that the authority of modernity has to be accommodated in the paramount position within a new order. We must in proposing and carrying out such a change see to three things. 1) The authority of modernity, of progress, of science and civilization, must not be kept away from our masses through the bottlenecks of our so-called universities. 2) This authority must not be usurped by the dogmas that justify the unchecked dominance of any limited social class,

even of the class of the so-called 'intellectuals'. 3) This authority must protect the legitimate, if restricted, rights of the other two sources of standards. This third point needs stressing, for even if paramount the authority of modernity will never be able to replace the other two. Much of our deepest spiritual resources will still come from Sanskrit, and communication with the vast majority of our people will continue to be obtained through the regional languages. Modernity neither is self-sufficient nor should be expected to become self-sufficient. We must learn to distinguish between dominance and sufficiency, no less than between independence and segregation.

I conclude by saluting the courage of a professor of Indology and Indian Philosophy to have written as he has.
October 8, 1962.

PUNYA SLOKA RAY

My dear Punya,

Your Letter to the Editor will of course be published in the next issue of *Quest* with, I am hoping, a rejoinder from Prof. Devaraja. I myself feel tempted to join issue with you, for you have completely ignored the role of the regional languages as the natural media of expression for our creative writers. Surely you are not expecting or desiring that within the next few decades our poets and novelists and literary critics will be writing in English? If so, how can you say that "regional languages cannot win India any more, but they can still ruin her"?

And if you admit that humanities are distinct from the sciences, then the proper choice of the medium of expression becomes of great importance in the field of humanities, as it is not in the field of science. Our best scientific work can be easily done in English, but I fear that monumental works of philosophy or history will not be written by Indians in English. I feel that there is a type of philosophy (metaphysics and ethics) which is as much creative as discursive: Plato, Schopenhauer, Bradley, Bergson, Whitehead and Sartre represent a type of philosophy which is not dead and is not likely to die. For this kind of philosophising one needs a complete mastery of every shade and nuance of the language in which one is writing. And shall we ever produce our Gibbons, Mommsen and Toynbees in English? We must always know enough English to keep abreast of the latest research, but in some fields of knowledge we shall need to express ourselves in our own languages.

The more important point will not always be to reach the largest number of readers immediately, but to reach the highest level of thought and expression, and wait.

There is another point. Though our creative literature has reached a fairly high level of excellence (I can speak with some confidence of Bengali only), it yet lacks, by and large, a certain quality which can perhaps be described as toughness or solidity. I am not suggesting that our poetry or fiction is vacuous; but it is rather thin. When it is not sentimental in the bad sense, its sentiments are weak and nebulous. It is difficult to say whether we feel strongly or not: the Bengalis at least are usually described and sometimes derided as a highly emotional people. At any rate our poets and novelists do not express their emotions powerfully, perhaps because they cannot express them precisely. And that is because our languages lack power. They have been developed almost exclusively along imaginative and creative channels. We have hardly any literature of ideas,—anything, that is to say, which is worth reading or talking about. And no language can develop its sinews so long as it is developed only as a medium of artistic expression. Our creative writers have been handicapped by the fact that our thinkers, such as they are, have so far expressed themselves almost exclusively in English. Literature of ideas in the field of humanities must grow apace in the Indian languages if our creative literatures are not to starve. Our humanistic thinkers have not found their level (not solely but largely) because they have had to struggle against the difficulties of a foreign language. As a result, or as a part of this failure, they have failed to give the necessary linguistic support to our creative writers to reach a higher level of excellence. This is doubly deplorable.

Therefore, that would be a sad day indeed when our regional languages will be 'doomed not to oblivion but to supersession.' I believe that day will never come; we must not let it come.

Yours affectionately,
ABU SAYEED AYYUB

Dear Ayyubda

If you feel like it you may add the following as a postscript:

I hope that I shall not be mistaken for a lover of English as such. I have not written the above words with the thought of esthetic literature or speculative metaphysics, but with that of scientific and historical discussion. The operative word is

'knowledge'. I have merely wished to point out that there is happening in this world an absolutely unprecedented expansion, and acceleration of expansion, in every field of human knowledge, not merely in engineering technology but also in the social and the human sciences, even in Indology. The leadership in this movement is in the English-speaking countries, not presumably because they speak English, but because they have been most willing of all peoples to read, translate, give others a hearing. But French or German would be almost as good, and for certain limited fields, Russian. I am convinced that no future Indian thought, even literary or metaphysical, will flower without the closest contact with this movement. The language in which the new Indian thought seeks expression is another matter and is not the topic of my discussion. I am not asking people to start writing in English instead of in an Indian language, but to do more of their reading in English, in the most modern developments of all kinds of knowledge. What has appalled me is the complacency presupposed in the refusal to read at all, or to read more than a minimum number of books, or any books in English, or books published later than 1930, etc. Such attitudes seem to me like blinking at the sun. Like our soldiers who went to fight with the Chinese with brave hearts, summer uniforms and Enfield rifles, our MA's and Ph.D's can only find reality unexpectedly overpowering.

With regards,
PUNYA

Dear Sir,

I welcome the significant and suggestive comments of Dr. Punya Sloka Ray as providing me with the opportunity to elucidate some points raised in an all too brief article on a vast subject. I share Dr. Ray's sense of regret in respect of the traditional pundit. What led me to recommend some extreme measures in regard to him was my perception of the essentially anti-democratic and anti-progressive character of the part being played by him in Indian society to-day. Apart from this, the fact remains that the pundit (educated on purely traditional lines) is almost completely lacking in the sense of philosophic wonder, is insensitive to the complexity and weight of problems, and is almost wholly wanting in the capacity to stimulate his students to any kind of new thinking. If he still seems to be useful to us it is because of the tremendous vitality of the thought and sensibility enshrined in Sanskrit whose literal knowledge he is in a position to transmit. It is an irony that that vitality is almost

wholly missed or else not properly appreciated by the pundit himself. In view of these facts, I reiterate the suggestion that the traditional pundit, instead of being permitted to have young pupils of his own, should be attached to modern institutions of learning and research, and special inducements may be offered to graduate and post-graduate students in the universities to take diplomas and degrees in ancient texts and so gradually to replace the traditional pundits as teachers of those texts.

I am unable to agree with Dr. Ray's estimate of the role of the 'regional language specialist'; I also fail to appreciate his allegation regarding 'the tendency of different traditions in Indian society to isolate from one another.' The regional or state languages, in my view, are precisely the media where interaction and amalgamation of the different traditions is taking place. The process is as follows.

A fairly large number of students in Uttar Pradesh, for instance, pass B. A. with Hindi as one of their optional subjects. Some of them later on take M.A. in the same subject. (Others, too, are fairly well acquainted with the Hindi language, though not necessarily with Hindi literature). It is these graduates and M.A.'s who are employed to teach Hindi in most of the schools and colleges. If they at all keep in touch with current Hindi literature through magazines, etc., they are bound to be affected by the currents of modern thought.

The literateurs in a modern Indian language may, and probably do, possess adequate knowledge of the Sanskrit tradition, but they are certainly not tradition-bound like the pundit. And the more intelligent among them are only too eager to display their acquaintance with the latest in Western thought and literature. This tendency is not considered undignified in the best circles in India; it is no less prevalent among those who use English as the medium of expression.

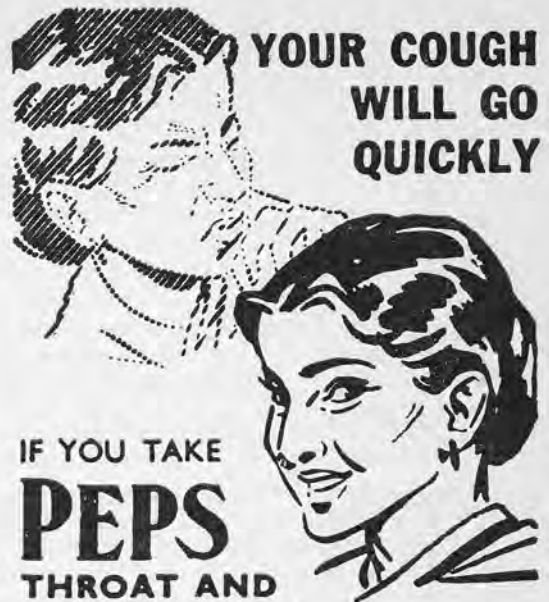
In fact, there is no sharp line dividing the regional language teachers from other teachers in schools, colleges and universities. They all live and breathe more or less in the same cultural milieu. Apart from the university education they have had, they are all influenced by the culture of the towns and cities in which they happen to be placed; they are also responsive to the propaganda of the various political parties. They read dailies, weeklies, etc. published in the regional language or in English or in both according to their tastes and capabilities and the opportunities offered by nearby libraries. With its introduction as medium of instruction at the B.A. stage, the regional language has now been officially installed

in some state universities. The majority of students in a university like the Lucknow, Allahabad or Banaras Hindu University, have greater facility in expressing themselves in the regional language than in English, though they read books in both languages. In view of this pervasive role of the regional language in the intellectual life of the people, it would be wrong to place it, from the viewpoint of utility and influence, on the same level as Sanskrit, and grossly unrealistic to allege that 'it cannot win India any more'. On the contrary, I am persuaded that any far-reaching reform or change in the Indian mind can be effected only through the media of the regional languages.

Among the top-ranking scholars and writers in India two types may be distinguished, those who write exclusively in English and those who use both English and the regional or state language as the vehicle of their thoughts. The top-ranking writers of literature generally use their respective regional languages as the media of expression. It is my impression that scholars and thinkers writing exclusively in English have been less influential in shaping the minds of our countrymen than those who have written in the regional languages as well. Thus Dayanand, Tilak, Gandhi, and Tagore have influenced the Indian people more than Vivekananda, Aurobindo and Radhakrishnan. The Indian people feel closer in spirit to those who write in the regional languages. Professors and critics who have written exclusively in English and exclusively on British writers have been failures in a double sense: they have failed to win recognition like German or French critics in England, and they have failed to contribute to the vitality and growth of literatures in their respective state languages.

It should also be remembered that there is a large number of writers and critics in the regional languages who though keen students of European letters choose, for various reasons, to write in the regional languages only. As creative writers, they are naturally acquainted with the Indian tradition, ancient and medieval. They constitute powerful agencies making for the fusion of different cultural traditions mentioned by Dr. Ray.

N. K. DEVARAJA



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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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A. K. SARAN is Reader in the Department of Sociology at Lucknow University.

SIBNARAYAN RAY is Head of the Department of English Literature, S.I.E.S. College, Bombay, and edits the Calcutta weekly *Radical Humanist*. He is the author of *Radicalism, In Man's Own Image* (jointly with Mrs. Ellen Roy), *Explorations* (literary and political essays), besides several collections of literary essays in Bengali.

MARIE SETON is the distinguished English film critic and biographer of Eisenstein. She has just completed a book on Satyajit Ray.

KEWLIAN SIO has had a collection of his short stories and vignettes, *A Small World*, recently published by Writers Workshop, Calcutta.

ALLEN GINSBERG, author of *Howl* and *Kaddish*, is a leading representative of the school of modern poetry known as Beat poetry. He has now spent almost a year in India.

SATISH C. SABERWAL is a Research Fellow at Cornell University, U.S.A.

KUSUM CHANDRA describes herself as "an ordinary housewife."

Appeal to the Intellectuals of the World

INDIA TODAY is faced with the gravest situation since independence. She is engaged in a bitter struggle with a cynical invader who has taken advantage of India's friendship and trust only to prepare to turn its expansionist designs against her.

We appeal to the intellectuals of the world to grasp the historic significance of this struggle. It is a fight not merely for a strategic strip of land. Nor is it a struggle for establishing some imaginary historical rights.

It is a calculated move ultimately to destroy the freedom of Asia. In attacking India, Red China is aiming a blow at democracy in Asia. In seeking to defeat India by methods customary to communist imperialism China is seeking to dominate the people of Asia. And in seeking to humiliate India, Red China seeks to destroy the prospect of peace and prosperity in Asia.

You doubtless know all this. We appeal to you today to exercise the authority of your knowledge and understanding to broadcast the significance of India's historic fight and declare your solidarity with her struggle for freedom, democracy and the values the free intellect must cherish everywhere.

Signatories:

Rajendra Prasad	Former President of the Republic of India
Jayaprakash Narayan	Founder of the Praja Socialist Party and a leader of the Bhoodan movement for voluntary land reform, Honorary President of the Congress for Cultural Freedom.
Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao	Director, Institute of Economic Growth
Professor Kali Prasad	Former Vice-Chancellor, Lucknow University Research Consultant, Indian International Centre
Dr. B. Kuppuswamy	Psychologist and Joint Director of the India International Centre
Dr. Raghuvira	Director of the International Academy of Indian Culture
Mr. Asoka Mehta	Leader of Indian Praja Socialist Party
Mr. Eric Da Costa and others.	Economist and former editor of "The Eastern Economist"

Response from France

The Chinese aggression against India has provoked profound anxiety among Western intellectuals because of the great respect which they have for the pacific and democratic character of India. English intellectuals such as the distinguished novelist E. M. Forster, and Italians such as the novelist Carlo Cassola, the poet Libero de Libero, the editor of *Il Mondo*, Mario Pannunzio, Roberto Rossellini, Ignazio Silone and Professor Levi della Vida have publicly expressed their sympathy for India in the hardships which she is undergoing.

The following French intellectuals hope that the Chinese will fail in their bid at territorial expansion, and that their aggression will cease so that India may again take up her task of peaceful construction.

Signatories:

MM. Jean Cocteau, member of the <i>Académie Française</i>		
François Mauriac, member of the <i>Académie Française</i> , Nobel Prize winner		
André Maurois, member of the <i>Académie Française</i>		
Raymond Aron & L. Renou, Professors at the Sorbonne		
Armand Salacrou, member of the <i>Académie Goncourt</i>		
Marcel Arland	Roger Giron	Jacques Nantet
Claude Aveline	Alfred Kern	Jean Paulhan
Janine Bouissounouse	Bernard Lecache	Armand Pierhal
Camille Bourniquel	Prof. Jean Lecerf	David Rousset
Adrian Dansette	Simone Martin-Chauffier	Rene Tavernier
Pierre Emmanuel	Louis Martin Chauffier	Louis de Villefosse

Response from the United Kingdom

China's attack on India, a peaceful democracy and a member of the Commonwealth, a country engaged in a determined struggle to make a better life for its millions of citizens through freedom and independence, is a challenge to all of us.

The Indian frontier, which the rest of the world has long recognised, has been crossed without warning or even the breaking off of diplomatic relations. Thousands of lives have already been lost. The Chinese attack was mounted from Tibet, whose conquest by the Chinese was an unconscionable act of imperialism.

The Indians are fighting their own battle. They have not asked their fellow democracies or their fellow members of the Commonwealth for soldiers or for free arms. Nevertheless, India's fight is the fight of every one of us who wants to see freedom, democracy, the rule of law, prevail in Asia. What can we do to help? We have heard appeals from distinguished Indians for "understanding and solidarity" against a "cynical invader who has taken advantage of India's friendship and trust only to prepare to turn its expansionist designs against her ..."

As individuals we can doubtless help by contributing to the United India Defence Fund, or some other fund. We can urge on our Government and the Governments of the West to supply arms on lend lease, and to increase the aid they give for India's Plans, now that India's own resources have so largely to be devoted to war. Above all, we must try to give additional heart and courage to our Indian friends whose spirit in the crisis is sound and steadfast. On the survival and success of India depends the hope for a better life of one fifth of the human race. We cannot let the Chinese aggressors destroy this hope.

Signatories:

Lord Altrincham
Professor Max Beloff
Sir Olaf Caroe
Runer Godden

E. M. Forster
Laurie Lee
Professor J. E. Meade
A. L. P. Norrington

D. Doddas Parker
Barbara Ward
Guy Windt

Response from Japan

The appeal presented to us by eminent Indian scholars on the current Sino-Indian frontier dispute has aroused our keen attention and sympathy.

We regret that Communist China's present unwarranted invasion of the Indian boundaries ignores the principle of peaceful settlement of international conflicts. It constitutes a serious menace to the freedom and democracy of not only India but also of all Asian people.

We take this opportunity to express our deep sympathy to the Indian people who are fighting against this great menace and hope for a peaceful settlement of the present dispute. The intellectuals of Japan who base their actions on a democratic constitution in the same way as the intellectuals of India look forward to strengthening the solidarity with you at the present time and in the future.

Signatories:

Dr. Kenzo Takayanagi
Dr. Takeyasu Kimura
Prof. Kentaro Hayashi
Mr. Hataji Iijima
Prof. Daishiro Hidaka
Prof. Kensho Honda
Prof. Masahisa Matsushita
Mr. Toshio Takahashi

Chairman of the Constitution Investigation Commission
Professor at Tokyo University
Tokyo University
President of the Asahi Broadcasting Corporation
Vice-President, International Christian University
Head of the Literature Dept., Hosei University
President, Rikkyo University
Director, Shinbashi Art Theatre
and twenty-eight other signatories

Similar responses have been received from Germany, Italy, Brazil, Argentina and many other countries.



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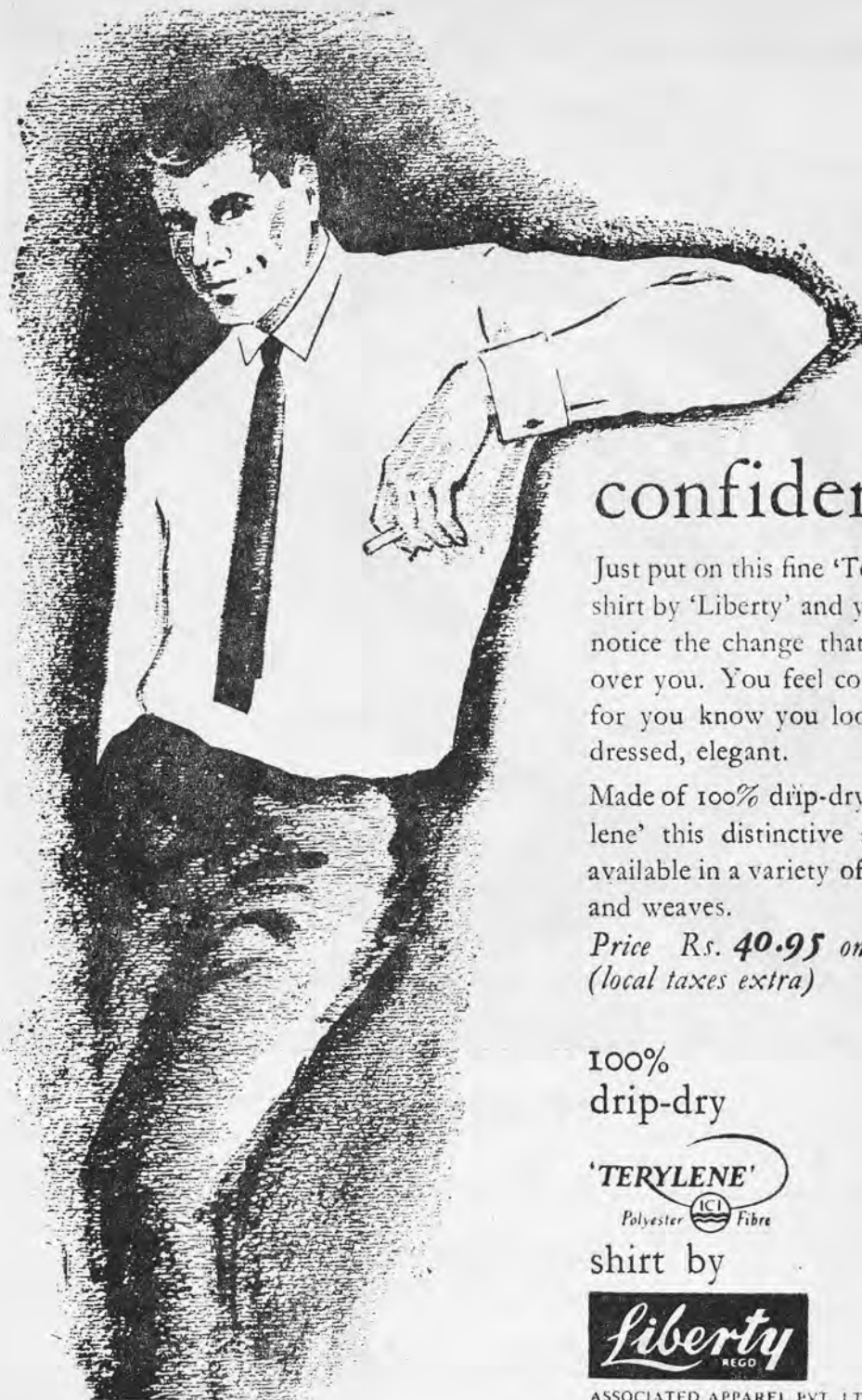
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Babulal was once an ordinary truck driver, but it wasn't long before he followed his employer's example and saved enough to buy his first TATA MERCEDES-BENZ truck.

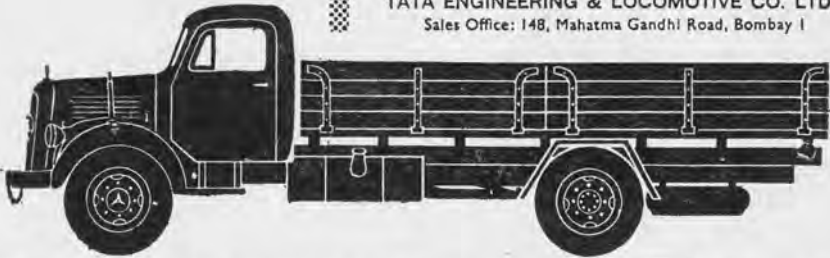
There were signs of prosperity soon after Babulal hitched his future to the three-pointed Star: a house in a new colony—full of shining happiness; a good education for his children; medical care...

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