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QUEST

Editors: Abu Sayeed Ayyub & Amlan Datta

RAJ KRISHNA

Non-Violence, War and Peace

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Doctrine of Niskama Karma

M. M. BHALLA

Function of Criticism

JOSEPH JORDENS

Shakuntala: Fluidity and Harmony

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Our Non-Violent Movement

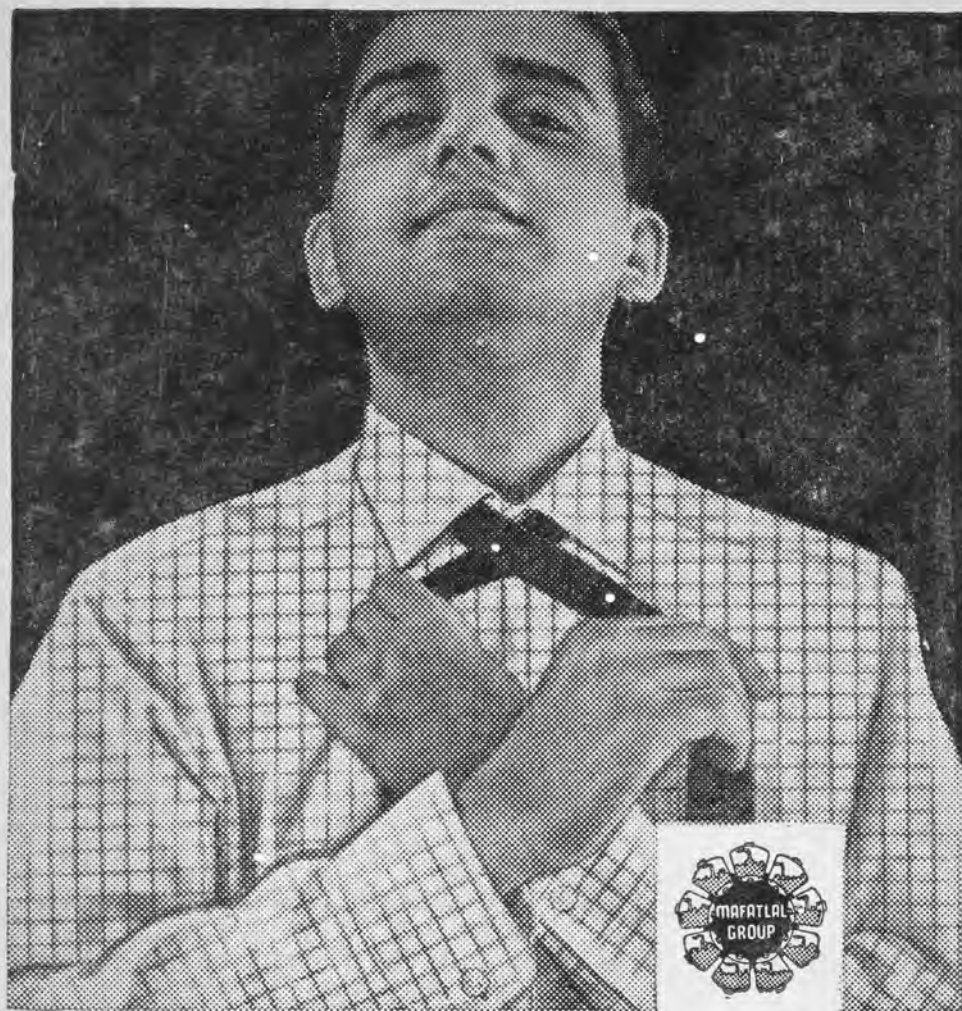
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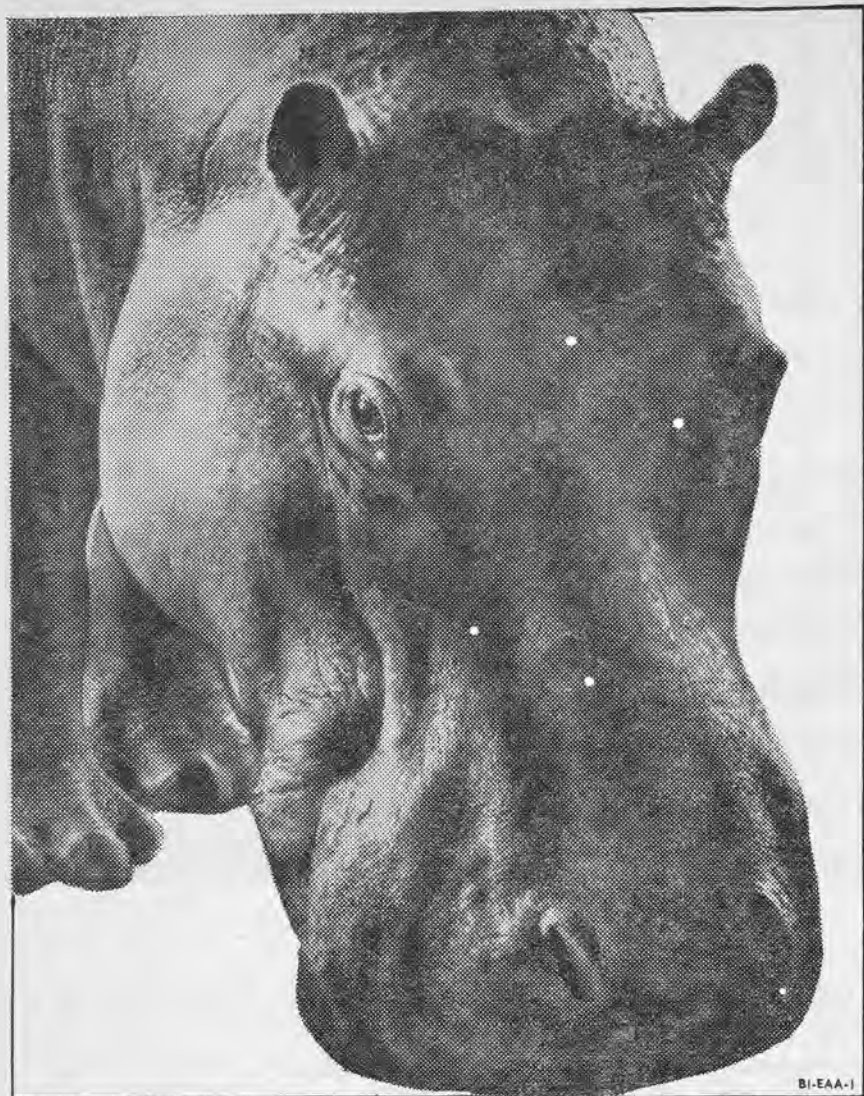
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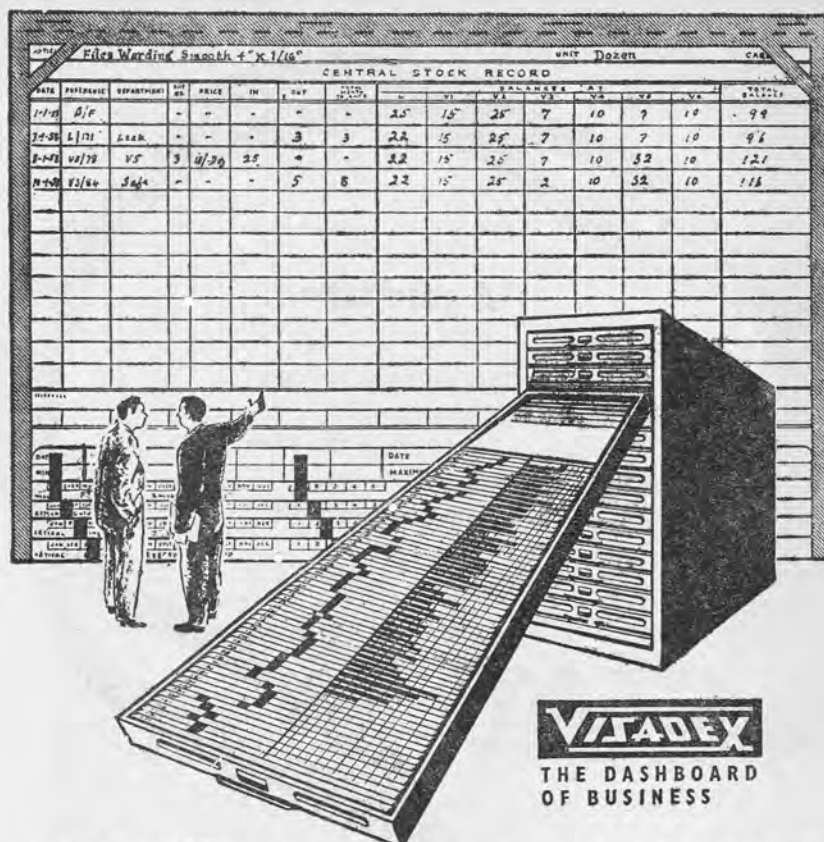
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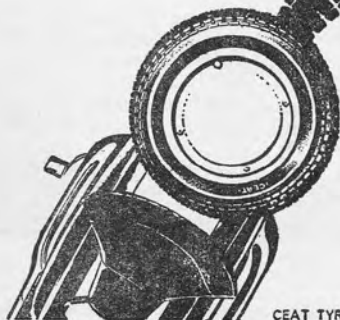
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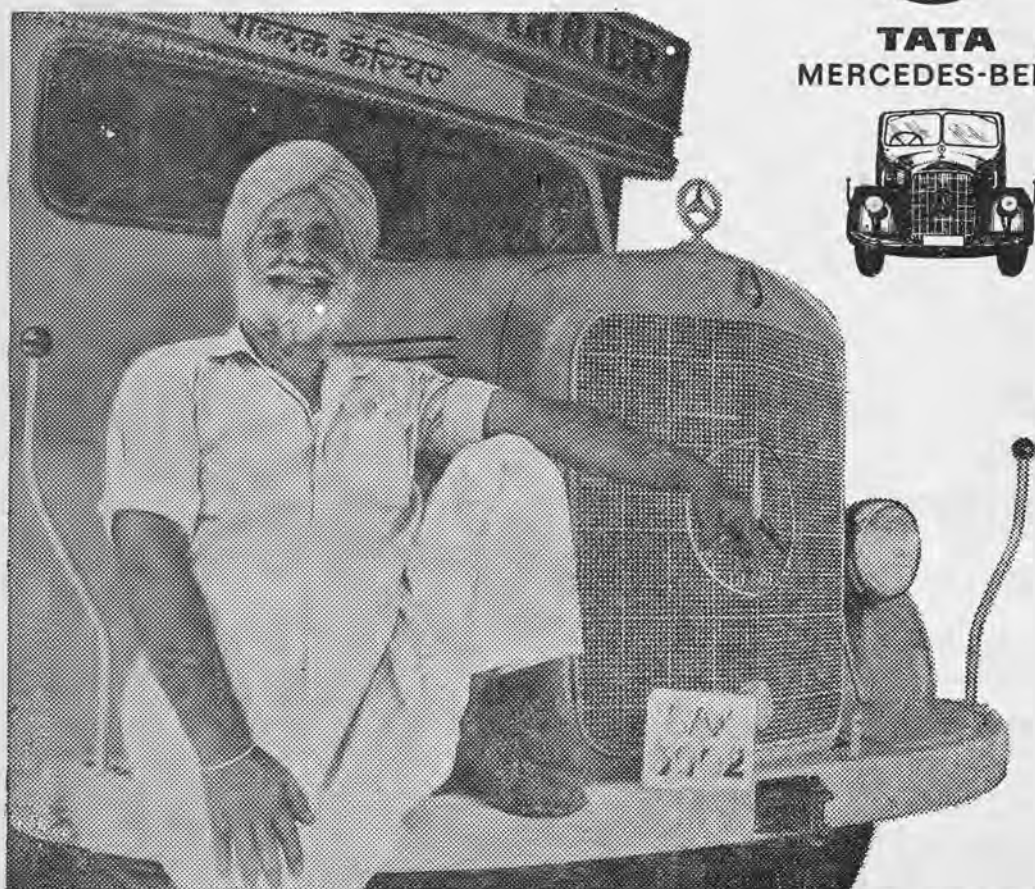
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A Quarterly of Inquiry, Criticism and Ideas

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*God we may deny, but what hope is there for us if we deny man
and thus reduce everything to futility?*

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

(14th Nov. 1889 – 27th May 1964)

Glimpses of Jawaharlal Nehru

INDIA is supposed to be a religious country above everything else, and Hindu and Moslem and Sikh and others take pride in their faiths and testify to their truth by breaking heads. The spectacle of what is called religion, or at any rate organised religion, in India and elsewhere has filled me with horror, and I have frequently condemned it and wished to make a clean sweep of it. Almost always it seems to stand for blind belief and reaction, dogma and bigotry, superstition and exploitation, and the preservation of vested interests. And yet I knew well that there was something else in it, something which supplied a deep inner craving of human beings. How else could it have been the tremendous power it has been and brought peace and comfort to innumerable tortured souls? Was that peace merely the shelter to blind belief and absence of questioning, the calm that comes from being safe in harbour, protected from the storms of the open sea, or was it something more? In some cases certainly it was something more.

.....Roman Catholicism offered, as Islam and popular Hinduism offer, a safe anchorage from doubt and mental conflict, an assurance of a future life which will make up for the deficiencies of this life.

I am afraid it is impossible for me to seek harbourage in this way. I prefer the open sea, with all its storms and tempests. Nor am I greatly interested in the after life, in what happens after death. I find the problems of this life sufficiently absorbing to fill my mind. The traditional Chinese outlook, fundamentally ethical and yet irreligious or tinged with religious scepticism, has an appeal for me, though in its application to life I may not agree. It is the *Tao*, the path to be followed and the way of life that interests me; how to understand life, not to reject it but to

accept it, to conform to it and to improve it. But the usual religious outlook does not concern itself with this world. It seems to me to be the enemy of clear thought, for it is based not only on the acceptance without demur of certain fixed and unalterable theories and dogmas, but also on sentiment and emotion and passion. It is far removed from what I consider spirituality and things of the spirit, and it deliberately or unconsciously shuts its eyes to reality lest reality may not fit in with preconceived notions. It is narrow and intolerant of other opinions and ideas; it is self-centred and egotistic, and it often allows itself to be exploited by self-seekers and opportunists.

—*Autobiography* (Allied Publishers).

The burden of the past, the burden of both good and ill, is over-powering, and sometimes suffocating, more especially for those of us who belong to very ancient civilizations like those of India and China. As Nietzsche says: 'Not only the wisdom of centuries — also their madness breaketh out in us. Dangerous is it to be an heir'.

* * * *

Kamala wanted to play her own part in the national struggle and not be merely a hanger-on and a shadow of her husband. She wanted to justify herself to her own self as well as to the world. Nothing in the world could have pleased me more than this, but I was far too busy to see beneath the surface, and I was blind to what she looked for and so ardently desired. And then prison claimed me, so often I was away from her, or else she was ill. Like Chitra in Tagore's play, she seemed to say to me: 'I am Chitra. No goddess to be worshipped, nor yet the object of common pity to be brushed aside like a moth with indifference. If you deign to keep me by your side in the path of danger and daring, if

you allow me to share the great duties of your life, then you will know my true self'. But she did not say this to me in words and it was only gradually that I read the message of her eyes.

* * *

Iqbal was one of the early advocates of Pakistan and yet he appears to have realized its inherent danger and absurdity. Edward Thompson has written that, in the course of conversation, Iqbal told him that he had advocated Pakistan because of his position as president of the Moslem League session, but he felt sure that it would be injurious to India as a whole and to Moslems specially. Probably he had changed his mind, or he had not given much thought to the question previously, as it had assumed no importance then. His whole outlook on life does not fit in with the subsequent developments of the idea of Pakistan or division of India.

During his last years Iqbal turned more and more towards socialism. The great progress that Soviet Russia had made attracted him. Even his poetry took a different turn. A few months before his death, as he lay on his sick bed, he sent for me and I gladly obeyed the summons. As I talked to him about many things I felt how much we had in common, in spite of differences, and how easy it would be to get on with him. He was in reminiscent mood and wandered from one subject to another, and I listened to him, talking little myself. I admired him and his poetry, and it pleased me greatly to feel that he liked me and had a good opinion of me. A little before I left him he said to me: 'What is there in common between Jinnah and you? He is a politician, you are a patriot'. I hope there is still much in common between Mr. Jinnah and me. As for my being a patriot I do not know that this is a particular qualification in these days, at least in the limited sense of the word. Greatly attached as I am to India, I have long felt that something more than national attachment is necessary for us in order to understand and solve even our own problems, and much more so those of the world as a whole.

But Iqbal was certainly right in holding that I was not much of a politician, although politics had seized me and made me their victim.

* * *

In our individual lives also we have to discover a balance between the body and the spirit, and between man as part of nature and man as part of society. 'For our perfection', says Tagore, 'we have to be vitally savage and mentally civilized; we should have the gift to be natural with nature and human with human society'. Perfection is beyond us for it means the end, and we are always journeying, trying to approach something that is ever receding. And in each one of us are many different human beings with their inconsistencies and contradictions, each pulling in a different direction. There is the love of life and the disgust with life, the acceptance of all that life involves and the rejection of much of it. It is difficult to harmonize these contrary tendencies, and sometimes one of them is dominant and sometimes another. 'Oftentimes', says Lao Tzu:

'Oftentimes, one strips oneself of passion

In order to see the Secret of Life;

Oftentimes, one regards life with passion,

In order to see its manifold results.'

For all our powers of reason and understanding and all our accumulated knowledge and experience, we know little enough about life's secrets, and can only guess at its mysterious processes. But we can always admire its beauty and, through art, exercise the godlike function of creation. Though we may be weak and erring mortals, living a brief and uncertain span of life, yet there is something of the stuff of the immortal gods in us. 'We must not, therefore', says Aristotle, 'obey those who urge us, because we are human and mortal, to think human and mortal thoughts; in so far as we may we should practise immortality, and omit no effort to live in accordance with the best that is in us'.

—*The Discovery of India*

(Meridian Books Limited)

Non-Violence, War and Peace*

RAJ KRISHNA

An Abstract Prelude

TO begin with, I should like to examine the doctrine of non-violence in the light of a general theoretical formulation of the moral problem.

Modernity has added little to the repertory of the primary value-concepts evolved by the religious—ethical traditions of all the great civilisations of the world: the concepts of truth and beauty, freedom and justice, equality, charity and humility, self-control, selflessness and mutual cooperation, non-greed and non-violence.

The moral problem is not the problem of discovering new value concepts. It is the problem of translating the old, perennial value-concepts, to which individuals and societies are committed, into concrete, individual and social choices in unique, real-life situations. It is the problem of the application of familiar concepts to ever-new circumstances.

Moral action involves two distinct tasks: (1) the task of choosing the morally best, or the least evil, course of action out of all the feasible courses of action; and (2) the task of following the chosen course in spite of inner, psychological and outer, physical and social obstacles.

The second task requires a strong will, the cultivation of which is the function of moral education. This is an important subject. But here we have to concentrate on the prior intellectual problem of *choosing* the 'good' course of action. Religious and moral teachers lay great stress on realising the 'good' assuming that the 'good' is

known. But the problem of knowing the 'good' in given situations must receive first attention.

If the feasible choices in a given situation could be easily and unambiguously classified as 'good' and 'evil', moral choice would be easy. But they cannot be so classified. The basic difficulty is that each of the available alternatives furthers the realisation of some values, but only at the expense of some other values. There is conflict, not between 'good' and 'evil' but between different 'goods'.

This point can be best understood with a quantitative illustration. Suppose there are two courses of action, C' and C'' and we are pursuing three values, V' , V'' , and V''' . Alternative C' conforms to the realisation of values V' and V'' but at the expense of V''' . Alternative C'' realises value V''' but negates values V' and V'' .

$$C' \rightarrow +V' + V'' - V'''$$

$$C'' \rightarrow -V' - V'' + V'''$$

If all the values are equally valuable i.e. each carries, so to speak, a weight of 1, so that $V' = V'' = V''' = 1$, then we should clearly prefer choice C' to C'' . For, $C' = 1$, and $C'' = -1$. A greater sumtotal of 'good' is realised by C' in terms of values V' and V'' than is lost in V''' . Course C'' involves a net balance of evil, for the loss of values V' and V'' is greater than the good in V''' .

In this example, one alternative realises a net balance of good, and the other a net balance of evil. But in other cases, all alternatives may realise a net balance of good, but the good realised by some alternatives may be greater than the good realised by others, and we could choose the 'best' alternative that realises the maximum good. Or, all alternatives may realise a net

*The G. V. Mavalankar Memorial lecture delivered at the Harold Laski Institute of Political Science, Ahmedabad; slightly revised and abridged.

balance of evil, but the evil realised by some alternatives may be less than the evil realised by others, and we would choose the alternative that realises the minimum evil.

This formulation of the problem of moral choice brings out several aspects of it with great clarity. Firstly, we see that the problem arises because we pursue, not one value but several values; and every alternative involves the realisation of some values and the sacrifice of some others. The values, the 'good', themselves are in conflict.

Secondly, we see that the net balance of good or evil realised by any choice can be known only if we know how much of each individual value is likely to be realised or sacrificed by this choice. The consequences of each choice have to be anticipated as correctly as possible. Here the scientific, empirical knowledge of probable causal sequences is required.

Thirdly, we see that if different individuals or societies assign different weights to the same set of values, they will differ in their moral choices. For instance, in the quantitative example above, if for Mr. or Society X, all the three values are equally important ($V'=V''=V'''=1$) but for Mr. or Society Y, V''' is thrice as important as V' and V'' ($V'''=3; V'=V''=1$), then X would prefer C' ($=1$) to C'' ($=-1$), but Y would prefer C'' ($=1$) to C' ($=-1$).

Conflicts between the moral judgments of individuals and societies, even regarding choices in the same situation, may arise either because they differ in their knowledge of alternatives, or in their anticipations of the consequences of different alternatives, or in their valuation of different values. Differences in the knowledge of alternatives and their consequences can be narrowed. But differences due to the divergent valuations of different values are fundamental. They create the most serious conflicts of moral judgment.

Non-Violence and Moral Choice

Let us now reflect on the value of non-violence in the light of the above formulation of the problem of moral choice.

First of all, we must recognise that non-violence is one and only one of the values which our moral heritage enjoins us to pursue. If non-violence were the only value we had to pursue choices would be easy. But it is one among many. Even so, if the pursuit of the value of non-violence did not involve the sacrifice of any other equally, or more, important values, there would be no problem. But in many concrete situations, the pursuit of the value of non-violence *does* involve the sacrifice of other equally and more important value. Therefore, unless one is a moral monist i.e. one who attaches an infinite weight to one value and negligible weights to all other values, one cannot hold that the non-violent course is, in all circumstances, the best course.

Many of the celebrated moral leaders of mankind have been moral monists. They gave a preponderant emphasis, in their precepts and practice, to one or a few values. They provided inspiring demonstrations of how far the pursuit of these few values might be carried. But these demonstrations also involved, invariably, a serious neglect of other important values.

That is why, even with the knowledge of all the examples of moral choice which history and biography provide, the moral dilemma of every new generation of men—the problem of the relative valuation of many different values—remains as acute as ever. In our time, since science has created unprecedented possibilities of realising good and evil, and brought into intimate contact all the peoples and cultures of the world with very dissimilar value-systems, moral conflicts have become more complex than ever before. In this situation, moral monism of any kind is bound to be disastrous.

Once we realise the complexity of moral choice in contemporary conditions, and give up moral monism, the proper question to ask is not whether we are for non-violence or violence, but whether, in a concrete context, the good realised through non-violence is greater or less than the evil involved in the accompanying loss of other equally important values; or, whether

the evil of violence in a given situation is greater or less than the good it may preserve or promote.

Our commitment to non-violence ceases, then, to be unconditional. It becomes conditional. The distinction made here between unconditional and conditional commitment is different from the old distinction, which used to be made in the struggle for independence, between non-violence as a *creed* and non-violence as a *policy*. Our commitment to non-violence is conditional not because of some considerations of expediency but because of the basic reason that we are simultaneously committed to the realisation of other values. Our commitment to any single value is necessarily conditioned by our commitment to other values as well.

The theory of non-violence should, therefore, be an inquiry into the conditions under which the course of non-violent satyagraha realises more good than evil, and the conditions under which the minimum necessary violence does so. What are the principles, if any, which can enable us to choose satyagraha or violent conflict as the morally best course in given circumstances?

Conditions in which Violence may be Justified

It is very instructive to re-examine Gandhiji's writings in search of an answer to this question. Gandhiji was fully aware of the complexity of moral choice:

'It would be smooth sailing if one could determine the course of one's actions *only by one general principle*.... But I cannot recall a single act which could be so easily determined.'¹

More than one general moral principle may be relevant to any particular choice; and these principles may be in conflict.

As we all know, Gandhiji explicitly up-

held the moral legitimacy of violence under certain conditions. Since he had a deep faith in the efficacy of non-violence, he regarded the conditions in which violence would be permissible as *exceptional*. The question whether these conditions occur rarely or frequently can only be answered on the basis of historical experience. But we should first formulate these conditions as clearly as possible. I propose to show that three general conditions justifying violence can be derived from the specific 'exceptional' cases in which Gandhiji himself sanctioned violence.

The Sacrifice of Other Values

In the first place, violence is admissible—and this condition is a clear reflection of the plurality and discordance of moral values discussed above—if non-violence would cause the sacrifice of some other values of great worth. As the following passages show, Gandhiji himself would permit violence if the honour of women, or the freedom and honour of a nation, or the overall strength and growth of a race, or the survival of democracy was at stake:

'I have not hesitated... to tell the Hindus that if they do not believe in out-and-out ahimsa and cannot practise it, they will be guilty of a crime against their religion and humanity if they failed to defend by the force of arms the honour of their women against any kidnapper.'² 'I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should, in a cowardly manner, become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour.'

'I would risk violence a thousand times than the emasculation of a whole race.' 'Strange as it may appear, my sympathies are wholly with the Allies. Willynilly this war is resolving itself into one between such democracy as the West has evolved and totalitarianism as it is typified in Herr Hitler.'³

It is clear that even Gandhiji's commitment to non-violence was not uncondi-

¹ N. K. Bose, *Selections from Gandhi*, p. 168. Emphasis added.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 155, 156, 170.

tional. It was conditioned by his simultaneous commitment to other great values. In the cases cited he clearly reckoned the evil involved in the sacrifice of these other values to be greater than the good realised through non-violence, and therefore accepted the need to abandon non-violence. Implicitly, he recognised that adherence to an unqualified, monistic doctrine of non-violence, which regarded it as a universal panacea in all situations, could result in a great net balance of evil.

The Preparedness of Satyagrahis

It is true that, in his view, the practice of absolutely pure non-violence by ideal satyagrahis, on an adequate scale, would *always* be the morally best course. But he realised that if a sufficient number of people were not ready and could not be persuaded to believe in and practise true satyagraha, violent struggles for just causes would be justified. This is the second general condition which legitimises violence. It is implicit in the following passages:

'My faith in non-violence...is as firm as ever. But I realise that India today as a whole has not that faith and belief and the government in free India would be formed from the various elements composing the nation.' 'If there was a national government, whilst I should not take any direct part in any war, I can conceive occasions when it would be my duty to vote for the military training of those who wish to take it. For I know that all its members do not believe in non-violence to the extent I do.'⁴

The Convertibility Condition

While the second condition relates to the preparedness of the victims of injustice for satyagraha, the third relates to what may be called the 'convertibility' of the oppressor. If there is little prospect of the conversion of the oppressor to the course of

justice through satyagraha, the victims must defend themselves violently. This is by far the most important condition limiting the applicability of non-violence. For the heart of the doctrine of non-violence is *the principle of universal convertibility* — the belief that all evil-doers, anywhere and in all circumstances, can be persuaded to give up their evil course if their victims practise satyagraha.

This belief requires careful scrutiny. Gandhiji, while adhering to this belief in principle, recognised, in practice, the existence of differences in the degree of convertibility of different oppressors, and was ready to adjust his policy in the light of this recognition.

Comparing the British and the Japanese he wrote to the latter:

'the hope of your response to my appeal is much fainter than that of response from Britain...the British are not devoid of a sense of justice... All I have read tells me that you listen to no appeal but to the sword. How I wish that you are cruelly misrepresented and that I shall touch the right chord in your heart.'⁵

And, drawing the logical conclusions from this comparison of the prospects of converting the British and the Japanese, he declared:

'what may be enough to affect the old occupant would be wholly different from what would be required to keep off the invader. Thus we can disown the authority of the British rulers by refusing taxes and in a variety of ways. These would be wholly inapplicable to withstand the Japanese onslaught. Therefore whilst we may be ready to face the Japanese we may not ask the Britishers to give up their position of vantage merely on the *unwarranted supposition that we would succeed by merely non-violent effort in keeping off the Japanese.*' 'To make it perfectly clear that we want to prevent in every way Japanese aggression, I would personally agree, and I am sure the government of free India would agree, that *the Allied Powers might,*

⁴ Ibid., p. 174, 169.

⁵ Ibid., p. 159.

*under treaty with us, keep their armed force in India and use the country as a base for operations against the threatened Japanese attack.*⁶

The principle of universal convertibility is clearly discarded here. It is admitted that where the convertibility of the aggressor through non-violent methods is doubtful military defence is inescapable.

As soon as the assumption of universal convertibility is given up, whether a non-violent or a violent struggle is required against injustice becomes a matter to be decided on the merits of every case.

Convertibility—Philosophy and Facts

In spite of all the sacrifices of all the saints of history, aggressors and oppressors continue to appear with a sickening constancy. If anything, the frequency and enormity of aggression and oppression have been increasing over time. And there is no evidence that the aggressors and oppressors of today are in general more 'convertible' than their predecessors.

Let us recall some cases of aggression and oppression in our own lifetime in which it seemed that a non-violent struggle would be of no avail. No satyagraha could convert Jinnah, Hitler, or the Japanese, or the Pakistani raiders in Kashmir or the Razakars of Hyderabad or the Portuguese in Goa, or the South African racialists, or Stalin who seized country after country in Eastern Europe after the Second World War and wanted to seize Berlin, or the Chinese Communists who invaded South Korea in 1950, and aggressively occupied Tibet and thousands of miles of Indian territory. Against one or a few cases in which satyagraha could effect some conversion, we have these numerous cases in which the tide of tyranny could not be stemmed by anything except violence in defence of justice. The Allied forces alone could stop Hitler, Tojo, Stalin and Mao in Europe and the Far East. The Indian army, alone could defeat the forces of chaos, oppression and aggression in

Hyderabad, Goa and Kashmir, and will have to do so in the Himalayas.

A doctrine which has no effective and timely solutions to offer for the recurrent situations created by large-scale tyranny and aggression cannot be regarded as a panacea. It is not helpful to argue that a satyagraha of the required quality and scale could meet all these situations. For, in the first place, it is not clear that such a satyagraha could always be organised. Pacifists and the followers of Mahatma Gandhi, who do speak and write as if satyagraha could meet all situations, have not organised a single successful satyagraha to meet any of the postwar crises. They have only been creating an atmosphere of guilt around every effort to deal with aggression through organised military activity, without offering any adequate alternative to it. Most of their campaigns against armament and war are concentrated in the territories of the defenders where they are free to campaign. They are never directed, in equal measure, against the aggressors in the territories under their control. Thus they damage the defence efforts of the victims of injustice, without impairing in the least the plans and preparations of the aggressors. In effect, they only help tyrants and aggressors — a strange anti-climax for Gandhism. It is no accident that Stalinists and Maoists have actively supported 'peace' movements in all non-communist countries.

Gandhiji tried to conduct a non-violent battle against the injustice of British rule in India. For conducting non-violent battles against more massive tyrannies and aggressions men much greater than Gandhiji would presumably be required. They are certainly not in sight. All that we see are morally confused utopians unwittingly helping the oppressors, and demoralising the victims of oppression, in the name of Gandhism, without fighting any battle at all.

The Condition for Conversion

We must now try to formulate the condition under which conversion of the

⁶ Ibid., p. 175-7. Italics added.

oppressor through satyagraha is most likely. It seems that conversion is likely whenever the adversaries in a combat—one of them being the agent and the other the victim of injustice—share the same value-complex and speak the same moral language. If the moral orientation of the two is the same, then the perpetration of injustice may only be a lapse, a temporary failure of the moral will of the oppressor. And non-violent action on the part of the victim may revive the moral sensibility of the oppressor. He may see error, and reverse his course. But if the moral systems of the two parties in a conflict are very divergent the chance of a non-violent conversion of the oppressor, or even a sincere non-violent dialogue between the two, is usually very small. And a violent encounter becomes an unavoidable prelude to a dialogue.

The victory of Gandhian non-violent resistance against British imperialism in India, which is rightly cited as proof of the power of such resistance, must be attributed—apart from the dynamics of the political events leading up to it—to the fact that the crucial condition required for the success of such resistance was satisfied. We and the British shared the same norms of ethical judgment, and spoke the same ethical language. And so we succeeded in persuading the British that the course of imperialist rule was evil. Gracefully, they changed their policy and withdrew their authority from India. Their withdrawal was as much a victory for them as for us.

But it is foolish and potentially suicidal to rush, from our unique experience, to the sweeping generalisation that *any* people *anywhere* can similarly convert *any* unjust adversary. Where the contestants in a dispute do not share the same conscience, non-violence on the part of the oppressed may only lead to the indefinite prolongation and

aggravation of their misery or to their glorious suicide. In the numerous cases cited above, the victims could hardly have fared better with non-violence. To recall a few examples again, it would be cruel to think that the 6 million Jews scientifically exterminated by Hitler or the millions condemned to forced labour camps by Stalin would have escaped their fate by offering satyagraha. And we cannot forget that Gandhiji could not persuade Jinnah at all. It is, in fact, arguable that the violence that followed the partition of India was not less than what might have occurred if the Congress leadership had threatened a civil war rather than appease Jinnah by agreeing to the partition of the country; and perhaps the other consequences of a refusal to partition the country would also not have been much worse than the consequences of partition. (In order to avoid being misunderstood I may state that my theoretical argument has no implication whatever that the partition should now be undone).

The impossibility or the failure of non-violent persuasion in all such cases is best explained by the utter divergence of the moral systems of the parties involved.

The struggle of the negro in America may turn out to be an instructive, difficult case. The ethics of the whites and the negroes are identical. And yet the negro has been denied justice for centuries. The long-drawn legal struggle and even some satyagraha did not 'convert' the whites. Recently the direct non-violent struggle has been greatly intensified. It remains to be seen whether it would suffice to create the conditions for a real dialogue with, and a real conversion of, the whites.⁷

The notion that *all* oppressors cannot be induced to abandon oppression through peaceful protest was always recognised in the mainstream of the Indian tradition. The concept of the *ātātāyī* acknowledges the unfortunate existence of persons who are beyond persuasion and even beyond satiation with limited appeasement.⁷ Their identification with tyranny is such that

⁷ In general, most of the disputes within an orderly society are non-violently settled because the disputants share the same ethics. But this process of peaceful settlement works because it is constrained by the readiness of the state to use violence in difficult cases.

they cannot be made to see the evil of their ways by any peaceful method.

A frightful new aspect of 20th century tyranny is that the tyrants have perverted the moral language itself. In the totalitarian imperialist ideologies of this century moral concepts have been abused to describe the opposite of what they have been traditionally supposed to describe. The word freedom has been abused to describe a state of servitude; democracy to denote a single party dictatorship; truth, to denote the current party line; justice, the condemnation of political opponents to concentration camps; and peace a worldwide violent revolution. Thus the alienation of the moral vocabularies of different peoples and movements has increased; and the task of peaceful persuasion and conversion has become more difficult than ever before.

Righteous War

Whenever and wherever the conditions required for the success of peaceful conversion do not obtain, defensive violence has to be organised. And this violence must be regarded as *just*. The old concept of the righteous battle, or *dharma-yuddha*, must remain a central concept of political ethics.

The concept seems to have faded out in India partly because it can be and has been abused; but mainly because many people misinterpreted the doctrine of non-violence to imply that all violent conflict is *equally* bad regardless of the relative justice of the cases of the contestants. But it is necessary to resurrect the obvious truth that the two parties of a conflict cannot be *equally* condemned merely because they may both be engaged in violence. For the use of violence cannot be the sole criterion for judging the moral merit of the combatants' behaviour. The other moral dimensions of the case of each party must be evaluated before an overall judgement is made.

Gandhiji clearly emphasised the need to distinguish between the aggressor and the defender, and to give moral support to the defender, *even though both may be engaged in a violent conflict*:

'I believe all war to be wholly wrong. But if we scrutinise the motives of two warring parties, we may find one to be in the right and the other in the wrong... For instance, if A wishes to seize B's country, B is obviously the wronged one. *Both fight with arms. I do not believe in violent warfare, but all the same B whose cause is just deserves my moral help and blessings.*'

'While all violence is bad and must be condemned in the abstract, it is permissible for, *it is even the duty of, a believer in ahimsa to distinguish between the aggressor and the defender.* Having done so, he will side with the defender in a non-violent manner...'⁸

In spite of this injunction, there are many followers of Mahatma Gandhi who condemn the participants in *any* conflict in *equal* measure simply because they are all committing or preparing to commit violence, without taking the trouble to examine the merits of the conflict in detail, and to distinguish between the aggressors and the defenders. This attitude reflects intellectual and moral sloth. It is the easy and cheap road to a feeling of immediate self-righteousness and superiority over the combatants. It is a neat escape from the human obligation to share the moral dilemmas and the moral anguish of the people engaged in conflict.

Even in the case of ordinary disputes which come before the courts, it is crucial to determine whether the violence of a person or a group was defensive or offensive. Offensive and defensive acts of violence are never equated. If the violence of the raider and the defender were equated, if the violence of the robber and the robbed were equated, society would end up in

⁸ Ibid., p. 171. Italics added.

anarchy.⁹ For the victims of every offensive act of violence trying to defend themselves violently would be considered as guilty and punishable as the perpetrators of the act. They (the victims) would thus suffer twice, first at the hands of the oppressors and then at the hands of 'justice'. The oppressors on the other hand would lose very little if during and after the oppression they were to be treated by society on a par with their victims.

Similarly, if the violence of Hitler, Stalin, Tojo and Mao, and the violence of the English, the French, the Polish, the Americans and the Indians were equated, there would be international anarchy. But thanks to the moral intuitions of a majority of humanity, an equation of all violence is consistently avoided. The violence of the Algerians and the French is never equated. The violence of Khrushchev and the Hungarian rebels is never equated. The violence of Communist Chinese forces and the U.N. or Indian forces is never equated. The violence of the Whites and the Negroes in America is never equated.

In this connection, it is necessary to point out that in so far as the doctrine of non-alignment has encouraged the indiscriminate condemnation of both sides in every cold war issue it has been palpably immoral. An escapist, self-righteous, moral neutralism is incompatible with the tenets of Gandhism.

We have to learn always to apply several tests—and not the sole of the use or non-use of violence—in order to come to a moral judgment about any conflict. We have to learn to identify and support the relatively just or righteous violence and oppose the relatively unjust or oppressive violence in all cases where non-violence ceases to be a feasible choice.

⁹ Strictly speaking, three types of violence should be distinguished: aggressive, defensive and juridical. An example of the last kind is the violence of the police when it intervenes in a conflict, either to aid the victim, or just to restore peace, before the oppressor and the victim are identified by the legal process. Another example will be the violence of the United Nations forces intervening in an international conflict.

The Indian tradition has always been permeated with a wise moral pluralism. It not only recognised the multiplicity and the intrinsic disharmony of values but also the fact that moral precepts had to be applied differentially in different kinds of situations, and in the case of different personality types. What is moral meat in one situation (and for men of one type) may be moral poison in another situation (and for men of another type). And a variety of policy instruments might have to be used, in different combinations, to increase the sumtotal of realised 'dharma' in different conditions. Moral monism is unIndian.

Righteous Cold War

The concept of the righteous war can and must be logically extended to cover the righteous cold war. Like war, the cold war, as a generalised concept, represents a recurrent human situation. Essentially, it is a conflict between two nations or groups of nations unfolding itself at the cultural, diplomatic and intellectual (or ideological) levels but not yet at the military level, although an arms race may be an important part of it. The dominant objective of diplomacy as well as armament in a state of cold war is to match or 'balance' the actual or potential power of the adversary.

A cold war, involving a balance-of-power diplomacy and an arms race, has been anathema for Indian foreign policy thinking. But some bitter truths about this phenomenon have to be recognised. Firstly, we have to realise that a nation may not *choose* to be in a cold war and yet find itself forced into it. The behaviour of some other nation (or nations) may compel it to enter a cold war with it (them) in legitimate defence of its values and interests. Therefore no adverse value judgment applies to the mere fact of a nation being in a state of cold war with another nation. For this value judgment rests on two assumptions: (1) that it is always possible for a nation not to be in a state of cold war if it so chooses, and (2) that the evil of the cold war as such is a *priori* and always

greater than the evil of jeopardizing other values and vital interests in case a cold war is not joined. These assumptions are not always true.

Secondly, nations who have condemned cold wars, arms races and balance-of-power policies, in which other nations have been engaged, have themselves been engaged in all these when and where *their* interests have been directly threatened. The so-called non-aligned nations have been condemning the cold war between the Western democratic nations and the Communist bloc but they have at the same time been engaged in small-scale but extremely acrimonious cold wars with nations whose policies have damaged their interests. Thus, India has been engaged in a cold war, a balance-of-power diplomacy and an arms race with Pakistan ever since the partition of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. The exchanges between India and Pakistan can any day be compared with the exchanges between the two great power blocs. Each of the two countries has been trying to win the sympathy of the largest possible number of nations on its side to match the support the other side has been able to enlist: in other words each side has been practising a balance-of-power diplomacy, with more or less competence. And each country has been trying to match its military power with the actual and potential military power of the adversary. In other words both countries have been involved in an arms race. It is true that the arms race between them is a small, non-nuclear arms race. But for the purpose of a moral argument and a moral judgement it has nonetheless been an arms race. India is also engaged, right now, in a full cold war with Communist China. Egypt, another non-aligned country, has been conducting a full cold war with Israel while condemning all other cold wars in the world. Similar instances of non-aligned nations participating in their own cold wars but condemning the cold wars of others, and feeling self-righteous about the latter, can be easily multiplied.

Thirdly, it has to be admitted that the

arms race and balance-of-power policies pursued by the democracies—though objectionable in some details—have successfully contained Russian communist totalitarianism and forced it to transform its theory and practice of foreign policy in many essential respects. And to these Western policies must go the credit for preserving such peace as we have had since the second world war. The maintenance of peace in Berlin and in Cuba, inspite of attempted Russian intrusions, the recent test ban treaty, and any further steps towards nuclear disarmament that may follow it, are the outcome, not of the mere sentiment for peace which the various peace movements in the world have spread and strengthened, but of the hard and solid nuclear stalemate created by the armament race. The nuclear armament race has made nuclear peace not only a necessity but a real possibility. Any confusion or weakness in the West about the unpalatable but inescapable necessity of maintaining, at all costs, a balance of nuclear power would not have improved the prospects of peace but would have led to a repetition of aggression and war and a possible shrinking of the area of actual and potential freedom in the world.

Just as the refusal to recognise the legitimacy of violent conflict in certain circumstances can enormously increase the balance of evil in our imperfect world, so also the refusal to recognise the necessity and the moral propriety of a cold war, involving an arms race and a balance-of-power policy, in certain circumstances, may cause grievous errors and hypocrisies in the foreign and defence policies of a nation.

As in the case of war proper it is immoral to condemn both sides equally merely because they are fighting, so also it is immoral to condemn the participants in a cold war equally, merely because they are engaged in a cold war, without examining all the valuational dimensions of the conflict, and the feasible alternatives.

A Valid Pacifism

Nothing that has been said above denies

the existence of one unproved possibility, namely, that a satyagraha, bold enough, efficient enough and massive enough, may force an aggressor to change his course. It is conceivable that a million-strong army of unarmed satyagrahis simultaneously urging balanced disarmament in the capitals of all armed countries, and ready to intervene physically between armies, and to dismantle naval, air and missile bases, may influence the aggressors to desist from aggression. An experiment of this kind in the conversion of the almost inconvertible will be unprecedented in history. But it is not unthinkable. In fact the consequences of war today are so unprecedented, that moral innovators—Gandhites, pacifists, religious and secular intellectuals, and earnest lovers of peace in general—must, if possible, think of and plan an unprecedented experiment of the kind suggested. It will be the only real test of the hypothesis of universal convertibility through non-violent action on the right scale.

But it is important to note the conditions that have to be fulfilled for such a test to be effective as well as morally unobjectionable. An international satyagraha of the type contemplated should organise *equally* intensive education campaigns in *all* armed camps. It is extremely immoral to preach or press disarmament in societies characterised by freedom of speech and assembly, and not do so, or to do so in lesser measure in totalitarian societies which deny such freedom. For an *unequal* satyagraha weakens the democratic parties, and upsets the balance of strength. Should the satyagraha fail, the imbalance of power thus created might be disastrous for the democracies. Whatever be the risks of entering totalitarian territories and campaigning there, satyagrahis have to enter and campaign there as much as they campaign in democratic territories. They cannot exploit the privileges of democracy to strengthen the relative power of tyrannies by campaigning unequally. If satyagrahis are afraid or incapable of campaigning against arms in the zones of tyranny, they lose the right to campaign against arms in the zones

of democracy. A valid satyagraha campaign must be equally weak or equally strong and absolutely simultaneous in all areas. And any damage caused by it to the armament of one side must be matched by an equiproportionate damage on the other side.

Until the regular efficacy of satyagraha as a means of converting the aggressors in difficult cases has been demonstrated, satyagrahis must recognise the right of the majority of defensive citizens and the defensive state to treat them and imprison them as saboteurs and traitors just as they admit the certainty of being treated as such by the aggressors. For they would, in effect, be functioning as saboteurs and traitors, undermining the military effort on the defensive side until and unless they prove that they have undermined it equally on the offensive side as well.

Either the satyagrahis should be able to organise a satyagraha or a series of satyagrahas for disarmament on the basis of the principle of equal and simultaneous action on all sides, regardless of the risks; or else they should accept the need to establish and maintain effective balances of power in the world. They can lend their moral support to groupings which, in their judgment, are defensive and less evil on the whole; or remain neutral between contestants, if and so long as they can do so, not with any sense of moral righteousness but simply with a confession of inability to form a judgment or the need to keep aloof from a particular conflict owing to weakness. They can also press for peaceful mediation or arbitration of disputes, whenever it is acceptable to both sides, but again without condemning or weakening the efforts of defendants to balance power until mediation or arbitration is successfully concluded.

These conditions for valid pacifism may seem to be harsh and tedious, but pacifism cannot be an easy pursuit in a dangerous world. The line between a morally valid and a morally monstrous pacifism must be sharply drawn. The road to peace is not smooth; it is not paved by the exudation

of cheap sentiment. It can be paved either by balances of power, and peace treaties dictated by an awareness of the futility of war created by those balances. Or it can be paved by equal and simultaneous satyagrahas of the type indicated. Sometimes it may be built by successful mediations and arbitrations against the background of propitious power balances. And occasionally the road to peace may pass through local wars. The infliction of defeat in battle may, on some occasions, be the only means of converting an otherwise inconvertible aggressor to seek peace sincerely. This defeat may be inflicted either by the military efforts of the defenders and their allies or by the forces of a peace-preserving international authority like the United Nations.

In the present state of the world, none of these alternatives is by itself a panacea. But none should be ruled out. It is worth repeating that the morally best or least bad choice may differ from case to case.

The Argument in a Nuclear Context

One issue remains to be considered at this stage of the argument. Does argument need qualification in the context of the nuclearisation of war? Aren't the moral dimensions of feasible choices in the case of international conflicts transformed altogether by the fact that the issue of a war now may not be local or limited victory or defeat, but nearly universal death? Shouldn't war or preparation for war be ruled out altogether as a means of securing 'justice' in *any* conflict whatsoever in this new situation?

These issues were debated in depth in a famous controversy between Bertrand Russell and the American philosopher Sydney Hook. The complexity and anguish of moral judgment on the issues of war and peace in the nuclear age are fully brought out in this controversy.¹⁰ No thinking citizen can avoid the responsibility of facing and formulating his position on the fundamental questions discussed by them.

¹⁰ See Congress for Cultural Freedom, *Forum Service* release Nos Fs/55 and Fs/71.

I shall attempt to state my own position on some of these questions which are relevant to the present discussion.

It should be noted first that the essential structure of the moral problem as it was formulated in the beginning of the present discussion is not altered by the nuclearisation of war. The effect of every choice on the realisation of many values has still to be assessed to gauge the net balance of good (or evil) achievable through it. But it is true that when the alternative of war involves the extinction or permanent mutilation of a large part of the human race, the choice of the least evil course in a given situation becomes an unprecedentedly terrible choice.

Since armament has been nuclearised on a large scale in the particular context of a cold war between the communist bloc led by Russia and the Western bloc led by America, the valuational implications of nuclear armament are best revealed by a consideration of actual Russian and Western policy.

According to the traditional communist ideology the Russian leaders used to be committed to the communisation of the whole world by all means—economic, political, diplomatic, psycho-ideological and military—as the greatest good to be achieved in the long run. But it is extremely significant that the nuclearisation of war led them to reject—sincerely and not merely tactically—that part of the traditional doctrine which visualised a series of wars to further the communisation of the world. The maintenance of nuclear armament to match the nuclear armament of the West still remains an imperative of Russian policy; all means short of nuclear war are still to be used to promote the progressive communisation of the world; but nuclear war itself is now ruled out. The *threat* of nuclear action is not excluded but a nuclear initiative is to be avoided, even if this means tactical withdrawals and compromises.

The position of the West is similar. Communist totalitarianism must be contained. Therefore a parity of nuclear power with

Russia must be maintained, whatever the cost. Russians are to be left in no doubt that if they use their nuclear power to threaten the vital interests of the West (as in Berlin or in Cuba) they must be ready to face nuclear retaliation. But there is to be no *original* nuclear action on the part of the West. Reasonable peaceful settlements are to be reached with Russia, against the background of balanced power, on as many issues as possible.

In short, both Russia and the West have been following a threefold policy of (1) maintaining a nuclear balance of power; (2) nuclear brinkmanship—going up to the brink, but never beyond, in vital matters; and (3) negotiating all possible reasonable settlements within the framework of a nuclear power balance.

This policy may be called a 'balance-brink-and-bargain' policy. It excludes two extreme alternatives: the alternative of a policy of unilateral disarmament and the alternative of preventive war or a nuclear offensive.

Unilateral disarmament is ruled out because both sides consider their particular ways of life, and the values whose pursuit is immanent in them, too precious to make them surrender to the other side unilaterally, in spite of the nuclearisation of war. Thus the Russian communists are not prepared to disarm unilaterally to sacrifice the values of the communist way of life and let the U.S.A. rule Russia, for the sake of a mere survival in a nuclear context. Nor is the West prepared to disarm unilaterally, sacrifice the ideals of the free society and let Russia communise the world, for the sake of mere survival in a nuclearised world. Survival is a vital value but both sides consider the other values implicit in their ways of life weightier than the value of mere survival. Both are, in effect, saying that ultimately they are even prepared to sacrifice survival rather than these other values. Both consider the terrible costs and risks of balance-brink-and-bargain-manship as lesser evils, in their scales of values, than the costs and risks of surrender to an alien

regime. Both have assumed—rightly as recent events show—that in imbalance of nuclear power and the consequent possibility of surrender to nuclear blackmail is more likely to cause a nuclear holocaust than a resolute balance-brink-and-bargain policy.

On the other hand, survival is precious enough to prevent either side from launching nuclear action against the other side on any issue, *before* the other side does it, whatever the merits of the issue. Thus a nuclear initiative is ruled out as well as unilateral disarmament. Also, survival is precious enough for both to make ceaseless efforts to negotiate agreements for disarmament, in proper phases and with proper safeguards, while maintaining a balance of power in each phase.

The above interpretation of the valuational ordering of feasible alternatives by the two big powers in a nuclearised world yields for the important general conclusion that only a culture which values survival above *all* other values to which it is committed, only a culture which ultimately would not reject for its people even the degraded existence of an Orwellian Animal Farm or 1984, if only its people somehow *exist*, can choose in the present world situation a policy other than the balance-brink-and-bargain policy, regardless of whether armament is or not nuclearised. Personally, I do not think that in the mainstream of Indian culture, survival as such at any cost in terms of other great values has ever been or should ever be rated very highly. The votary of non-violence in any case does not and cannot value survival above everything else. Therefore, balancing the power, *nuclear and/or non-nuclear*, of the relevant potential aggressors (*ātātāyīs*) is for us, as for other great nations, an inescapable policy until and unless the resolute and continued balancing of power itself facilitates and brings into effect a universal disarmament agreement, aided, if possible, by a morally valid international satyagraha for peace.

This paper is discussed elsewhere in the current issue

Doctrine of Niskama-Karma: An Alternative Interpretation

D. C. MATHUR

THE Bhagvad Gītā has been interpreted by its admirers in diverse ways, and critical scholarship has estimated its worth in varying degrees. As a philosophico-religious document of ancient India it has occupied a prominent place in the lives of millions. Scholars have quarrelled over its central teaching. It is not the intention of this paper to enter into that controversy. This paper has the modest aim of examining critically the Gītā doctrine of Niskāma-Karma as propounded in the text and then to offer an alternative theory which, in my view, will be better suited to meet the demands and challenges of a changing social situation.

In the light of the context and the setting in which the doctrine is preached it is well-nigh safe to say that the Gītā is an exhortation to duty and a stirring call to action. Krishna undertakes the task of persuading Arjuna to shake off inertia and perform his duty in a manly way. This is supposed to be a *moral* persuasion because it is aimed at *convincing* Arjuna and converting him on *rational* grounds. The actual arguments may have a mixture of reason and emotional appeal, but the impression given is that of rational justification for moral action. It is therefore set out as a philosophy of moral action. However it is evident to any student of the Gītā that moral action there has not been conceived in isolation but is viewed in the larger context firstly of a metaphysical commitment derived from proto-Samkhya and Upanisadic doctrines and secondly of a theistic faith in a personal God.

The Gītā believes in status-quo and sets a high value on social stability. It accepts the established social order and derives the *content* of duty from the caste structure and from the notion of different

stages of life. The ideal of lokasamgraha is held in high esteem and Krishna appeals to Arjuna to act in its name. (III. 20). Its doctrine of Niskāma-Karma or disinterested action can be understood only in the light of the *ultimate end* which is conceived as Moksa. Moksa means liberation of the empirical self from all bondage to the not-self—a total emancipation from the phenomenal world culminating in the realization of the Self as pure Ātman. Consequently the *ideal man* for the Gita is the *sthita-prajna*, the *gunātīta* or the *Yogārūḍha*. The essential nature of such an ideal man is detachment, equipoise (*śamatva*) and unperturbability while engaged in activity of the intensest kind. The Gītā believes that all action—good, bad or indifferent—feters the self because of the self's *involvement* in and *desire* for the fruits of action. If, therefore, the self is to attain the final goal of moksa and yet not withdraw from the field of action, it should firstly, perform all its *duties* (*dharma*) conscientiously in the light of its *svabhāva* and *svadharma*; secondly action must be done in a spirit of *non-attachment*. Non-attachment implies two things—freedom from an egoistic pride in one's own agency (*karttrtvābhimāna*), and freedom from the *desire* for the fruits of action (*phalāśā*) (II. 47). There is one more condition which secures the freedom of the self from all bondage and that is that actions and the fruits thereof must be dedicated in a spirit of love and devotion to God. When these three conditions are fulfilled action does not bind the self and the so-called law of *karman* is transcended.

I think the above is the universally accepted interpretation of the doctrine of *niskāma-karma*. I want now to argue that this conception of disinterested action,

however ennobling and elevating, suffers from two serious limitations which render it unsuitable for meeting the needs of changing and revolutionary times. It is admitted that in performing any action which has social and moral implications it will be highly presumptuous to take pride in one's own agency. Besides giving rise to false pride and therefore being morally reprehensible, it overlooks the fact that every significant moral action is performed in a social setting and involves the cooperation of a number of persons. It is a cooperative enterprise. The Gītā therefore rightly points out that one should be free from such a false pride. But having said all this it is to be recognised that viewing every moral action in the context of the ultimate end of mokṣa undermines the *autonomy* of moral action and subordinates it to a metaphysical pre-commitment. In such a case concrete situations cannot be evaluated and assessed in terms of the *problems* they raise but are lifted out of their concrete contexts into the haze of metaphysical doctrines. This can be used to justify all kinds of status-quo and obscurantist actions. It therefore cannot meet the challenge of *novel* and *revolutionary* situations because in every case if one acts with perfect equi-poise, no matter what side he takes in the issue, he will be unfettered and will eventually attain mokṣa. This is bound to render all moral distinctions of right and wrong actions in specific situations nugatory and void. Thus the Gītā, in effect, encourages a kind of spiritual self-consciousness which is inimical to moral action.

Secondly it is said that the Gita's doctrine of ethics is deontological since it exhorts us to do our duties because they are duties without regard to any consequences they lead to. This would work only when we assume, as the Gītā does, that the *content* of duty is derived from the social organisation and is in strict conformity with *svadharma* and *svabhāva*. However in actual life moral situations are always problematic to the solution of which the existing code of duties offers

very little, if any guidance at all. Such a problem is faced by Arjuna as the opening Chapter of the Gītā so ably dramatises. Hence the main issue is how to solve a moral problem and how to *act* in a moral situation. It appears to me that a rational appraisal and evaluation of the problem is called for in the light of the conditions under which one is to act (here *svadharma* and *svabhāva* are relevant) and in the light of the *consequences* which are likely to ensue and which one thinks *desirable* or *undesirable*. If this is admitted then in order to resolve a moral problem one should act after a proper appraisal of the situation to achieve the *end* or the *goal* which rational reflection shows to be most desirable. In other words one should have a firm *commitment* to achieve the goal and should show all the *care* and *concern* for its fulfilment. One would wonder what exactly the Gītā *means* by saying that one should *not* care for the *fruits* of one's actions (*phalāśā*) in the performance of duty (II. 47,48). If it means that one should not be *committed* to the *fulfilment* of the goal then it is almost asking for the impossible as it would undermine the very need for moral action.

It should not be forgotten that the Gītā purports to offer guidance in times of social and moral crisis. When one faces conflicting obligations and is not able to decide between competing goods, and in short, when one is confronted with a crisis of the spirit, one needs to know what is the right thing to do. Arjuna faced such a crisis and stood in need of enlightenment with respect to the right course to follow in the specific situation portrayed in the Mahābhārata. Now it appears to me that while Arjuna's situation is revolutionary, fraught with the gravest of consequences and is such whose moral significance is uncertain and indeterminate, the advice given by Krishna is in terms of a static code of duties determined by *svadharma*. Certainly such a static code of duties is unfit to meet the dynamic situation faced by Arjuna otherwise he would not have asked for any moral advice at all. One has

a feeling that the whole tenor of the advice given by Krishna is in terms of a transcendental doctrine. Such an esoteric doctrine of an eternal Ātman might have been highly useful in infusing courage and in boosting up morale. But it is evident that from the point of view of such metaphysical heights *all* actions might be justified. Hence my contention is that there is a disharmony between the changing character of a moral situation and the unchanging eternal nature of the Reality in terms of which advice is offered. Arjuna is not led by Krishna through a rational reflection on the social and moral consequences of acting one way or the other but is initiated in the mysteries of an esoteric doctrine. And it is precisely because of this metaphysical intrusion into the solution of a dynamic moral situation that the Gītā preaches a serene unconcern for and non-attachment to *all* consequences personal or social. Is it because of an underlying assumption that a right action must lead to right consequences?

On the otherhand Krishna himself is deemed to have exhausted all possibilities of a rapprochement in order to arrive at an amicable settlement between the contending parties. Having therefore considered the issue from all points of view and having weighed and *evaluated* the consequences—social and moral—which might ensue by following the alternatives of fighting or not fighting, he should have convinced himself of the superior worth and righteousness of fighting the war *in order to win it*. Unless therefore he was fully committed to achieve the *goal* of winning the war and unless everything was staked for bringing it to a successful conclusion there was no point in fighting it and no hope for reestablishing dharma on earth. We should not forget that Krishna, as tradition depicts him, was a master strategist and a superb politician and as such was goal-oriented rather than self-oriented. The efficacy of persuading Arjuna to fight the war and thus be goal-oriented on the basis of a doctrine which is highly meta-

physical and self-oriented is therefore highly doubtful.

This tension between the need for being goal-oriented and for effective moral and social action to achieve a desirable social end on the one hand, and the need for an *ultimate concern* for the serene Ātman on the other has characterised Indian culture ever since. These have never been fully reconciled. In actual practice for the vast mass of people it has meant either a lip-service to the transcendental self and a consequent withdrawal from the field of social and moral action, or an opportunistic pursuit of selfish, individual goals. In both cases it has been detrimental to effective social change for the better and to some extent it accounts for the relatively static character of Indian society.

Therefore a more sensible and fruitful interpretation of *niskāma-karma* would be to hold that while we should be firmly *committed* to achieve the goal after a rational assessment of the situation, we should *not* be so egoistically *involved* in the issue as to calculate what, in terms of pleasure or pain, prosperity or otherwise, will be its likely effect on our personal fortunes. This is indeed the *sine qua non* of all effective action as it brings out the best in human nature and releases boundless sources of energy which might otherwise have been frittered away in selfish calculations. Non-attachment in this sense is certainly the most inspiring message we have from the Gītā. It is, I believe, a wrong or at least a partial interpretation of the doctrine of Niskāma-Karma that has puzzled thinkers and men of action alike—who have drawn their inspiration from the Gītā. If the above distinction is kept in view then it will be perfectly legitimate, nay morally indispensable to be *committed* to the fulfilment of the goal and yet to be *detached* with respect to its effects on personal fortunes.

This interpretation may not be wholly in line with the doctrine as preached in the Gītā but is certainly consistent with the practice of Krishna as mentioned in the traditional texts.

Function of Criticism

M. M. BHALLA

I must, first of all, admit my inability to define literary criticism. The most reputed critics offer either too much or too little counsel about the nature, the purpose, and justification of critical judgements. There is a variety of aims corresponding to a diversity of interests. Despite the extension of critical capacity, the enrichment of ideas at the critic's command, and the successive reformation of critical vocabulary, criticism lacks a philosophy, a consistent science, a common and agreed idea about what it is, and what it appropriates to do. If I assume with T. S. Eliot that criticism is 'commentation and exposition of works of art by means of written words', I am at once caught in the controversy over the meanings to be attached to 'commentation' and 'exposition'. For instance Mr. Eliot will have nothing to do with interpretation (he has revised his opinion in the introduction to G. Wilson Knight's *The Wheel of Fire*). 'There is a large part of critical writing', says Mr. Eliot, 'which consists in 'interpreting' an author, a work... But it is fairly certain that interpretation is only legitimate when it is not interpretation at all, but merely putting the reader in possession of facts which he would otherwise have missed'. On the contrary, Donald A. Stauffer says, 'Every critic is an individual who proposes to act as an interpreter and a systematizer'. Thus, as an interpreter, the intent of a critic would be in some way to ameliorate the relations between art and its audience. Or again, if we take the broader definition offered by Leavis, who says that 'What criticism undertakes is the profitable discussion of literature', we are asked to put special and unusual meanings upon the word 'profitable', so as to exclude various

other related disciplines that literary criticism invariably employs, if not for critical judgement, at least, for clearer perceptions. Still further, shall I believe with John Crowe Ransom that the job of literary criticism is the evaluation of individual works of art by a specifically 'aesthetic' standard which is applicable to no other sphere? Or should I evoke Anandavardhana and Abhinava Gupta, the exponents of the *rasa* theory to assume that, since the essence of poetry lies in the enjoyment of the flavour of an emotion with the objective references of words only playing an intermediary function, the purpose of literary criticism is the refinement of taste? The long and short of it is that there is no agreed definition of criticism and, consequently, no possible agreement about the function and purpose of criticism. That this is so is undoubtedly lamentable; that it should be so is no surprise.

The matter is further complicated by the fact that contemporary criticism is sharply divided into various schools which maintain that criticism as such should approximate more closely to one or the other of the related disciplines like sociology, biology, psychology or aesthetics. For instance, there are those who believe that the origin and growth of literature is a sociological phenomenon. They maintain that the changes that occur in the realm of literature are the resultant of the varying social and economic conditions. And since literature is rooted in the historical structure of society, it should be explained and evaluated in terms of sociological norms. It does not matter whether sociology is a normative science or not. It can at least provide data capable of normative treatment. So, the sociological school adopts

the social effectiveness of a literary work or its capacity to mirror social phenomenon as the criterion of literary value. Excellent though sociology is as a descriptive instrument, an instrument to make us see why certain poets, novelists, and playwrights wrote as they did and what the moral pattern of their work really is, it leads to a confused assumption that value judgments about kinds of society and states of mind produced by those kinds can enable us to evaluate literary works. It confuses the genetic tool with normative quality. And it is evident from *the Marxist School* which argues that, since the social conditions which produced the symbolist aesthetics were unhealthy, Symbolist poetry is unhealthy too. To the Marxist critic a work of art which arises out of good social patterns or healthy social conditions is necessarily a good literary work. Then, there is the *Psychological School* of criticism, which aspires to convert criticism into a 'science' by an increased application of psychological knowledge to the problems of literature. Some of these critics are busy explaining a work by a complete knowledge of the psychology of an artist, his inhibitions, his environments and his social conditions. Others of this school, like I. A. Richards, have investigated the processes of appreciation, and have converted literature into the simple categories of efficient cause and effect. And since poetry is an aspect or condition of language, it is definable in terms of its medium; it is language differentiated from other language by a certain attribute: ambiguity, engendering complexities of response. So, there is the Empsonian school enumerating the types of ambiguities and converting diction into an all-important category of literary evaluation. In contradistinction to the Psychological school, is the one which would estimate the excellence and value of a work in terms of its effects. In reality, there are a large number of critical schools, each repudiating the others, each pursuing its specific purpose and function, each claiming its writing the only 'true' criticism.

Amidst so bewildering a variety of theory and practice, amidst so sharply differentiated categories of abstract knowledge based on the assumed duality of Nature and Mind, Reality and Art, Object and Subject, Thing and Thought, we are likely to forget what Coleridge called 'substantial knowledge', 'that intuition of things which arises when we possess ourselves as one with the whole', the consciousness of the whole process of living organisation which the writer or artist in his own way perceives, defines, and relevantly communicates. In any experience by man there is not only man's observation and interpretation but, also, a kind of reality outside the human mind that interpenetrates the human experience. Obviously, then, we must think of the human experience as both objective and subjective, in one inseparable process, a substantial unity, a vital organism with multiple inter-connections. Out of this living organisation with a network of vital relationships to study in abstraction a separate attribute (emotion, beauty, phantasy, the unconscious) is to make a narrow assumption. In the general human process of creative discovery and communication, in the whole process of our living organisation, literature images in a more or less complex, in a more or less coherent, manner the essential particularity, the concreteness, the structure of meaning, and the patterns of relevance. It is concerned with awakening conscience and enlightening consciousness by responding to the process of growth and change, of tensions and achievements, of that which is revealed and that which is anonymous. As one of the still alive and life-giving expressions of the creative mind, literature has a significance and validity, a capacity, as Yeats said, 'continually making and unmaking mankind'. Thus literary studies have a relevance to 'a whole way of life', what we are and what we would like to be. In fact, literary studies are a concern with culture itself, the clarification of values and meanings implicit and explicit in a particular society. A literary critic, then, has three roles: as

a self-disciplined individual responding to particular works of art, as an educator concerned with the health and tone of society, and as a judge awakening conscience and enlightening consciousness.

First, the self-disciplined individual. The term 'disciplined' suggests that a critic, in contradistinction to the aesthete with a training of a special faculty of appreciation or discrimination of the vintage of emotion, so orders his intelligence, so refines his sensibility that he will respond to particular works of art with relevance and purity. Every act of response is an education of the self, an 'enactment' of the inner (spiritual) and the outer (social), an affirmation of the true, a corrective gesture in relation to the living and the immediate. The critic realises what is evaluated and his whole career is a process of disciplining his powers. He is not merely cultivating his sensibility; he is disciplining his conscience. He is not interested in the finer condition of his self as the followers of the *rasa* theory are. He does not cherish his isolation; he knows that his consciousness is part of reality, and that reality is a part of his consciousness, in the whole process of our living organisation. He pursues values with interpenetrating relationships. His intelligence, his feelings, his matured sensibility, his concern with the living process of life, make him look beyond literature, beyond the concrete and the individual work. He acknowledges his obligation to society, an obligation to refine the quality of living. Criticism would be at once a process of realisation and propagation of what is realised. A critic's is an educated mind, trained for meaningful organisations rather than for arrangements of intellectual abstractions. It is not a question of range of scholarship, still less of a collection of information. It is a certain method of thinking and feeling, of ordering, of patterning events, of foreseeing in each integral part the whole. By the 'educated mind' I mean two qualities — unity and method — of which Coleridge talked in *The Friend*:

What is that which first strikes us, and strikes us at once in a man of education, and which

among the educated men, so notably distinguishes the man of superior mind?... not the weight and novelty of his remarks, not any unusual interest of facts communicated by him... It is the unpremeditated and evidently habitual arrangement of words, grounded on the habit of foreseeing in each integral part, (or more plainly in each sentence) the whole that he intends to communicate. However irregular and desultory his talk, there is a method in the fragment. (II,4)

Coleridge elaborated this in *Biographia Literaria*:

...the intercourse of uneducated men is distinguished from the diction of their superiors in knowledge and power by the greater *disjunction* and *separation* in the component parts of that, whatever it be, which they wish to communicate. There is want of that prospectiveness of mind, that *surview*, which enables a man to foresee the whole of what he is to convey, appertaining to one point; and by this means so to subordinate and arrange the different parts according to their relative importance, as to convey at once, and as an organised whole. (xviii)

The educated mind is not a slave to multitudes of facts; it is not a passive storehouse of all sorts of knowledge. The educated mind is concerned with something more than specific information: with that 'vitality which grows and evolves itself from within', with principles that lie behind our living organisation. It must begin with self-knowledge, together with the art by which it is attained, the art of reflection, not the art of introspection. Introspection is abstract knowledge in which, as Coleridge pointed out, 'we think of ourselves as separated beings, and place nature in antithesis to mind, object to subject, thing to thought, death to life'. Reflection is the 'contemplation of reason, namely the intuition of things, which arises when we possess ourselves as one with the whole... Here there is neither singly that which affirms, nor that which is affirmed; but the identity and living copula of both' (*The Friend*, II, II). In introspection the subject struggles to hold himself aloof from the object; in reflection there is a 'coincidence

of subject and object...the objective and subjective are so instantly united that we cannot determine to which of the two the priority belongs. There is no first and no second; both are co-instantaneous and one' (Coleridge, *Biog. Lit.* I). The art of reflection begins with the particular, the concrete, the individual; it is a mode of personal experience, of organisation of feelings, discernments, values, and patterns. I am not suggesting that the critic is not interested in artefact. I should think that artefact is merely an occasion and that the critic looks beyond it to subtler relations of the human condition.

And this leads me to the educative value of literary studies, an aspect which needs to be re-emphasised under contemporary human circumstances. The community has swollen, it has become spiritually disorganised and heterogeneous, with no widely accepted system of morals and no clearly definable circumference of imagination. The process of mass civilisation with a number of 'gross and violent stimulants' acting on the mind, has broken down the traditional wisdom. And education, despite its wide extent, has become a colossal machine for the manufacture of Philistines rather than the training, quickening and refining of consciousness. Advertisements, newspapers, publicity of every sort, wireless, all the machinery of an industrial civilisation, have perilously undermined the centrality of human contexts in living. Instead of community we have the mob, instead of personality we have a statistical figure in a state dossier, instead of wisdom we have a mass of information, instead of art we have mere entertainment. Coleridge complained, 'After the Revolution the spirit of the nation became more commercial than it had been before; a learned body or clerisy, as such, gradually disappeared and literature began to be addressed to the common miscellaneous public' (*The Church and State*). Arnold in his age said, 'On the one hand despotism, despotism, despotism, of finance in statistics, of vanity in social converse, of presumption and overweening contempt of the ancient in individuals' on

the other, 'government by clubs, committees, societies, reviews and newspapers.' Now comes the society that is quickly getting divided within itself, so separated as to suffer from what Dr. Leavis calls 'a discontinuity of consciousness.'

On the one hand there is the enormous technical complexity of civilisation, a complexity that could be dealt with only by an answering efficiency of coordination — a co-operative concentration of knowledge, understanding and will (and 'understanding means not a grasp of intricacies but a perceptive wisdom about ends'). On the other hand, the social and cultural disintegration that has accompanied the development of the inhumanly complex machinery is destroying what should have controlled the working. It is as if society, in so complicating and extending the machinery of organisation, had lost intelligence, memory and moral purpose.

Dr. Leavis may seem to exaggerate the situation, but it does indicate the human conditions that are growing and the urgency of fostering humane powers and civilised standards. In earlier times this could be left to traditional pieties, to the rhythm of growth or the intercourse of the likeminded. In the present world, it has to be a commitment to consciousness, an effort of the mind, a free flexible play of intelligence. We have to refine consciousness by educating it, not by debasing standards but by setting out to be correct.

In this respect, I feel that critical discipline is an excellent training. In the pressure and complications of the dehumanising conditions of the modern world, in the threat of distracting specialisations in which human ends are lost sight of, literary studies train and enlarge the mind, establish a centre of tradition, a world of humane consciousness. They cultivate a sense of values that have a direct bearing on the problems of civilisation. True, literary studies use certain instruments, linguistic, semantic, philological, historical, but they are or should be subordinate to the main function of training the mind and its capacities. In an age of technicians and

technical humanists, fostering the mind in intelligence and sensibility, in precision of response and delicacy of discrimination, in analysis and integration, and above all in the recognition of humane organisation, is an urgent necessity. Literary criticism, I believe, performs these functions. Since criticism is a matter of affirmation, definition, discrimination, judgement, analysis, it has a valuational dimension. It sets standards, creates and directs; and its directions can be a force in education, 'checking and rebuking', as Arnold said, 'those that fall beneath these standards'. The main function of literary criticism is to preserve and guard the treasures of human

experience and bind them into a growing process of meaningful structures. I think this function of criticism more significant than the normal categories in which we discuss literature. I do not suggest that our normal categories are irrelevant but I feel that today, when there are so many inimical forces working within the human situation, criticism can strengthen humane values and civilised standards. To invoke the cultural tradition, to create a centre of correct taste, to train a consciousness, and to direct a sense of values are the functions of criticism. As such, it should occupy the same status in University education that the classics did many many years ago.

I felt lonely and homeless, and India, to whom I had given my love and for whom I had laboured, seemed a strange and bewildering land to me. Was it my fault that I could not enter into the spirit and ways of thinking of my countrymen? Even with my closest associates I felt that an invisible barrier came between us and, unhappy at being unable to overcome it, I shrank back into my shell. The old world seemed to envelop them, the old world of past ideologies, hopes and desires. The new world was yet far distant.

'Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born,
With nowhere yet to rest his head.'

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Shakuntala: Rhythm, Fluidity, Harmony

JOSEPH JORDENS

WHY does the study of the *Shakuntalā* along the classical lines of analysis of plot, characters, and theme, time and again end up in frustration? True, this type of analysis does help one to appreciate the masterly technique of Kālidāsa. One cannot but admire the way he manipulates and dramatizes the particularly weak story of *Mahābhārata*, the aptness, economy, and meaningfulness of every incident; the way all threads are gathered in the spinning out of the action and none are left hanging loose; the consistency and variety of the characters and the ease with which they are kept true to themselves; the exquisite refinement of the poetry; the high moral tone; etc. etc. One could enumerate many more qualities traceable by this method of analysis. Why then say that it mostly ends in frustration? Because all these qualities seem to be only incidentals, secondary aspects, fringe qualities of this great play. One feels that the heart of the play, the pulse that animates it has not been discovered in this analysis. One has ended up with a perfect body without a soul.

This frustration manifests itself concretely by the deadlock this type of analysis usually reaches. Take as an example the analysis of plot. This will reveal a very simple basic plan: union, crisis and separation, reunion. The crisis is precipitated by the famous curse, which, therefore, is the pivotal point of the play. The interpretation of this curse now becomes vitally important. Is this curse an act of divine intervention, a chance occurrence, or a symbol of the guilt of hero and heroine? In order to do justice to the seriousness of the play, one feels one has to accept the last interpretation. However, when one

searches for the sins and shortcomings of hero and heroine, one finds them so trifling that there seems to be a ridiculous disproportion between sin and punishment. If one interprets the curse as an act of divine intervention, or just a stroke of bad luck, then the play becomes rather futile and strangely pointless. This type of analysis does not seem to be able to bring us any satisfactory interpretation of the curse.

Another instance is the analysis of character. This shows how varied, consistent, alive the minor characters are. So far so good. But how about hero and heroine? Here again one can show perfect consistency. Dushmanta is every inch a king, and in the final instance he is completely perfect and blameless. *Shakuntalā* emerges as the child of nature, perfect maiden, perfect wife, perfect mother. Analysis shows both main characters so full of virtues that disturbances and conflict seem impossible in or between them. They are so full of perfection that they totally lack personality. Just like analytical plot-study emptied the curse of all dramatic significance, in the same way has analytical character-study emptied the hero and heroine of all "character".

If, as we believe, the *Shakuntalā* is a great play, and if this analytical approach, while revealing many fringe qualities, cannot discover the inner logic and spirit of the play, but somehow makes it look either superficial or naive, then there must be something wrong with the approach itself. We suspect it is this wrong approach that has led some otherwise eminent Western scholars to biting criticism of the *Shakuntalā*. The analytical approach may be right and rewarding in many kinds of

plays, where plot, characterization, and action form the core of the play; but this is apparently not the case in the *Shakuntalā*. We seem to have here rather something that, provisionally we may call, instead of "drama" or "tragedy", "poetic drama". Traversi gives that name to the last plays of Shakespeare, saying that "none of the elements into which a play is commonly, and, up to a point, conveniently divided—neither "character", "the analysis of motive", "poetry", nor even "plot" or action itself—can be considered as existing in its own right. The relative importance of each of these factors varies in different plays, but the prevailing tendency—and with it the end of poetic drama as a whole—is towards an ever closer identification".¹ And further: "The tendency is away from realism, towards a conception of the art of the theatre in which character and action alike are real in relation to the poetic unity to which they belong, and finally to that alone".² The approach to the study of such a play must, therefore, be from the dramatic and poetic unity itself. The approach must be more global, more synthetic, and passive, as it were. It is only from within this poetic and dramatic unity that one is able to "interpret" satisfactorily the characters, the curse, e.a.

A very striking characteristic of the *Shakuntalā*, and of Sanskrit drama in general, in contrast with most of the Western plays, is the high degree of unity and individuality of the acts. In many Western plays the division in acts can easily be interfered with, or even completely dropped, without altering the play to the slightest degree. Not so in the Sanskrit plays. Each act forms a well-defined, rounded-off and perfectly enclosed unit having its own particular identity. Let us try to conceive the identity

more precisely in the case of the *Shakuntalā*. The acts form first of all a visual unity, what Stern has called a "tableau vivant, a long plastic scene, a pleasing rather motionless group of characters".³ He compares them to the scenes depicted on the walls of the Ajanta Caves. The important figures occupy the centre of the composition, and around them are fluidly balanced the minor characters. The group is kept relatively still for a considerable time, and the movement is usually not more than a few comings and goings of minor characters, ripples on the edge. All that refers to action, events, decisions, is carried out off stage, and of these the audience is informed in the introduction of the different acts; it is only after this "preliminary" work that Kalidasa constructs his "plastic scene". The centre-piece of the scene is constituted by Dushmanta and Shakuntalā together in alternative Acts I, III, V and VII. In Acts II and VI, the second and the last but one, the King and his Vidūshaka occupy the central position, and in the middle act IV, *Shakuntalā* and her foster father. Every act is conceived in the same way: introductory part where mostly secondary characters (the *Vidūshaka*, a young brahmin; the two maids; the policemen; the charioteer) relate the happenings essential to the development of the action; then the central piece, rather static, and grouped around the hero and/or the heroine; and finally again the eruption of a minor character or of a voice off stage breaking off and rounding off the act ("An elephant!"; "Miracle!"; "A crime against a Brahmin!"; a messenger from the king's mother; Gautamī arriving to look after *Shakuntalā*).

But these are still rather external elements of the unity of the acts, making them a visual and actional unit. The essential unity of every act lies in its peculiar emotional quality, in its *rasa*. In the *Shakuntalā* the dominant *rasa* is the erotic one, but every single act exploits a different aspect, a different emotional tonality of the affect of love. This emo-

¹ D. Traversi, *Shakespeare: The Last Phase*, Stanford, 1953, p. 17.

² Ibid, p. 18.

³ P. Masson-Dursel, H. De William-Grabowska, and P. Stern, *Ancient India and Indian Civilisation*, London, 1934, pp. 392-3.

tional tonality is the essence of the individuality of the acts. Act I shows the idyllic freshness of falling-in-love; Act II the enthusiastic, idealising love of the king; Act III love as a consuming passion. In Act IV, the transitional act, we witness the ambivalent bitter-sweetness of bridal love: the pangs of separation from parents and family alternating and mixing with the joy of going to join the husband. Act V depicts the harshness of love repudiated, and Act VI the king's remorseful love that nearly sends him out of his mind. Act VII crowns it all with mature love, deepened by suffering and separation, and by the fruit of love, the child. The *rasa* is one love. But the different acts are clearly contrasted by the variation this love undergoes by the additional emotions that colour it: love mixed with girlish modesty, with idealising romanticism, with the surge of passion; love affected by anger and indignation, doubt and bewilderment, sorrow and repentance; love illuminated by the joy of reunion and the pride of parenthood.

It can be shown how every act of the *Shakuntalā* is totally permeated with its own emotional tonality of love. This profoundly influences the descriptions of persons, of nature, the use of comparisons and metaphors. Just a few examples to indicate this. Looking throughout the play at the way the king describes *Shakuntalā*, we notice how every word, every comparison is in perfect harmony with the respective tonality of love of each act, and secondly how the description of nature tunes in with this. In Act I, where love is fresh and idyllic, *Shakuntalā* is thus described: "blooming beauty; artless grace; swelling charms; fresh attractiveness; graceful; radiant". Comparisons are practically all taken from nature, especially the world of flowers: "like the soft edge of a lotus-leaf; like some fair bud; the lotus with the Saivala entwined; like the opening bud; like the twining stalks; a tree in bloom". Just like *Shakuntalā* is idyllically described in function of nature, so is the nature of the hermitage idyllically described as the place where there exists a

"sisterly harmony" between man and beast and plant. Now let us compare Act III. We are still before the crisis: the love is still a "courting" love, but from idyllic it has now become passionate. Fire, pain and agitation now dominate all description. In relation to the persons, we hear of "fevered frames; raging thirst; consuming love; burning fever; throbbing heart; ardent passion; rankling wounds; anguish; langour; a sad, fascinating mournful change; fair disorder; wasted bosom; consumed with pitiless flame; killed by Kama's shafts". Nature too is very different. It is no more the idyllic haven of before, but now we hear of "vernal blasts; moonbeams like darts of fire; blighted bloom; scalding streams; rushing cataracts; the glare of noon; withered lotus stalks; bruised lotus leaves". The only redemptive aspect nature has now is that it can alleviate the burning pain of passion by "soothing waters; grateful showers; the fragrant zephyr". The same profound penetration of the mood into the whole description can be shown in every act. In Act IV the bitter-sweetness of *Shakuntalā*'s departure pervades all persons and all nature, and makes this act as it were an elaboration of the "laughingly she cried" of Homer. In Act VI the dark spell that envelops the king prevents nature from erupting into spring. In Act VII, where love becomes deep and sacred, nature becomes celestial. Thus every act forms a well defined unit, a *tableau* of love, clearly individual by its own tonality of the *rasa*, which pervades its every movement, colour or sound.

So much for the acts themselves. The play as a whole is a succession of seven of these acts. How are they joined together, what is their relationship? We have already mentioned the striking similarity in the structure of the acts. This similarity goes even further than just the structure; somehow, to a certain extent, the acts repeat themselves even as far as the content goes. We are referring here to the essential content: the love of Dushmanta and *Shakuntalā*. That love is present from the

beginning and is never really in danger or in doubt. True, the love goes through different phases, and gets mixed with diversified emotions, but basically every act shows us that self-same love from a different angle, in different circumstances. One could say that the acts of the *Shakuntalā* repeat themselves as much as the different movements of a piece of music. The theme is simple and the same throughout, but the movements exploit that theme in their different ways. And Kālidāsa shows in striking symbolism how the last act in fact repeats the first: the play has rhythmically described a full circle. In that last act we see the king again riding in his chariot, talking to his charioteer. Again he notices a hermitage, a heavenly one now. Again he wants to pay homage to the saints dwelling in the hermitage. Again he meets Shakuntalā by accident as it were. The parallelism is too insistent not to be symbolical.

Now we have found the essence of the *Shakuntalā* as a play; we have here a rhythmic movement of plastic scenes, exhausting the theme of love. The aim of the play is to provoke in the audience the aesthetic savouring of love in all its aspects, to make the audience communicate aesthetically in the rhythm of life and love. The *Shakuntalā* is not first of all a dramatic enactment of the purification of love through suffering as so often has been affirmed. Purification through suffering is part of the play, but is not its core. The exploitation of the *rasa* of love, the rhythm of love from idyllic love, through idealistic, passionate, bridal, marital love, love-in-separation, love-in-repudiation, and mature love including the child,—that rhythm is the theme of the play. There is, naturally a conflict underlying this rhythm. Or in other words the succession of *tableaux* gets its dramatic impact from the thread of dramatic action that weaves them together in the lives of Shakuntalā and Dushmanta.

The capital error of much analytical criticism of the *Shakuntalā* is that this thread of action that weaves the acts

together is postulated to be the core and essence of the play, as it often is in Western tragedy. Our contention is that it is of secondary importance, and that the essence of the play is the rhythmic development of the *rasa* of love. It is in function of this that one must try to understand the plot, the characters, the motive, the poetry of the play. We indicated earlier, by way of example, the inadequacy of the analytical method to explain the curse as pivot of the drama. How can we interpret the curse in function of rhythm? As soon as one conceives the play as a rhythmical movement, the very idea of the pivot as central point seems to lose its meaning. There is a natural rhythm in human love, moving it along its different, yet essentially identical curves. The curse causes love to become penetrated with suffering. This contact with suffering is according to the laws of life and love. What does it matter whether the curse is a chance occurrence, or divine intervention, or a symbol of guilt? It could well be all three, because all three can be the occasion by which suffering enters love. Occasion, we said, not cause. Because in the final instance, the cause proper is the rhythm of life itself. Analytical character study found Dushmanta full of perfection and empty of "character". This would naturally be fatal in any play where the deepest recesses of the soul are the scene where the tragic contest is fought. This, however, is not the case in the *Shakuntalā*. There is no tragic contest—There is a contest, naturally, but it is only a superficial skirmish, fought on the surface of Dushmanta's bewildered mind, but never endangering the love deep within. Instead of a tragic contest, there is a rhythmical surging of love, depicted on the canvas of Dushmanta's life. Seen from the core of the play, Dushmanta could not be allowed too strong a "personality" because then he would have been expected to interfere with the essential flow of the play. He is not supposed to interfere with it, but to be carried by it and to experience it.

This conception of the dramatic art of the *Shakuntalā* seems the more satisfying in that it eminently reflects some fundamental Hindu attitudes. We would like to draw the attention to just two. First of all there is the concept of rhythm. Rhythm, for the Hindu, is the essence of life itself. There is the rhythm of the seasons, so markedly overpowering in most of India. There is the rhythm of reincarnation with recurring birth and death. And then there is the cosmic rhythm of creation and dissolution. Human life is completely dominated by this pulsating rhythm in micro—and macrocosmos. It is a pulsating movement, continually repeating itself, and propelling itself along a circular route that brings one always back to the point of departure. The rhythmic development of the *Shakuntalā* moves like the seasons, like the *āśramas*, like the *yugas*. Human life and love seen from this rhythmic standpoint can be pathetic and poignant, but never really tragic. And history, or even a story, is never really decisive. Tragedy and history proper, plot and story, belong to the Western world view, where the world moves along a rectilinear path directed toward a goal, with mankind somehow hammering out its own destiny. It is within that conception that belongs the tragic hero, for whom moral options are agonising and decisive; there also plot and action do necessarily figure prominently. While Western drama generally could be represented by a proper graph having direction and open to the unknown, the *Shakuntalā* could much better be symbolically represented by a *mandala*, perfectly balanced within the bounds of its self-sufficiency.

The second Hindu conception we want to connect with our interpretation of the *Shakuntalā* is what we would call the fluidity of Indian aesthetics. The *Shakuntalā* is not just dramatic art as the West mostly conceives it: a strongly conceptual, clearly defined literary form closely related

to novel and story-writing. The *Shakuntalā* has a very close affinity with dance and music. We compared the acts of the play to the movements of a sonata, exploiting one and the same theme. The stylised acting and the composition of the scenes makes one think more of a dance sequence than of the chapter of a novel. It is significant that drama, in the West perhaps the most conceptual of all art forms, has in India so much in common with those art forms wherein conceptual representation is least practicable. The explicit conceptual (moral, social, religious) content of the *Shakuntalā* is practically non-existent, or completely buried in the rhythm of sounds, forms, movements. This brings us back to the formula we referred to in the beginning: poetic drama. It is a form of dramatic art that, mainly through the use of poetry, tries to participate in the directness of musical and choreographic representation. Plot, character, theme, poetry are more and more identified, lose their clearcut distinctiveness and function, and merging together they become mere functions of the "mood" which is the theme. In his book on Sanskrit Drama, Wells shows how some of the modern Western play-wrights, moving away from the rigid Aristotelian classification and definition of drama, find more and more inspiration in music, and end up with "a marked approximation to the form and spirit of the Sanskrit stage".⁴

When we said the "fluidity" of Indian drama, we were referring to the flowing over of one art-form into the other, with a marked preponderance of the non-conceptual forms. This "fluidity" is again part and parcel of the Hindu tradition. One thinks of the fluidity of the cosmic forms through the continuous interplay of the *gunas* in Hindu cosmology. And there is the fluidity of the souls, moving easily and eternally between the animal, human, and divine forms of life. Art forms participate in this fluidity. There is the great influence of the dance on sculpture and painting, and we have already noted the similarity of Kālidāsa's scenes with the

⁴ H. W. Wells: *The Classical Drama of India*, London, 1963, Ch. 4.

Ajanta murals. Among the art forms, as within dramatic art, there is a preponderance of the non-conceptual, a dominance of mood and emotion. This denotes a passive, contemplative bias of aesthetics, and this is where we discover that the fluidity within the art-forms extends to a fluidity of relationship between art and religion (as there is also between religion and philosophy). If aesthetics lean over towards the non-conceptual, the passive, the contemplative, and thus the religious—religion is inclined towards the non-dogmatic, the rhythmical, the experiential, the passive, the aesthetical. This is too broad an assertion to even start developing, but we feel that a study of the religious aspect of aesthetics, and of the aesthetical aspect of religion, is bound to converge towards that favourite of religious experiences in Hinduism: nature

mysticism. We mean an experience of the unity of all in man and of man in all, of the communion of man, beast, and nature, of the divine nature of the total rhythm of life. This experience, because it melts together in harmony mind and senses, thought and vitality, earth and heaven, has essentially aesthetical overtones. That is the religious and aesthetical harmony that pervades the *Shakuntalā*, and that is supposed to suffuse him who fully partakes in the savouring of its *rasa*.

Essentially, the *Shakuntalā* is a poetic drama, or dramatic poetry, wherein the rhythmic movement of visually, actionally and emotionally unified acts, exploits the *rasa* of love in such a balanced way that the spectator is pervaded by this rhythm of love and somehow experiences a harmony, a balance, which is profoundly aesthetical, and unobtrusively religious.

In order to avoid unnecessary delay all contributions (except book-reviews) and correspondence regarding these should be addressed to **The Editors, 5, Pearl Road, Calcutta 17.** Book-reviews, books for review and all correspondence concerning business matters are to be addressed to **The Business Manager, Quest, 148, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay 1.**

Economic Development, Democracy and the Intellectual in India

A. S. NADKARNI

IT is repeating the commonplace to say that economic development is the primary need of a poverty-stricken country like India. The poor would naturally long for a betterment of their economic lot; and in an age in which the accumulated knowledge of technology gives promise of banishing completely poverty and dire want, the natural craving of the poor is bound to be reinforced by eager expectation of a favourable change. Whatever may be the merits of Prof. Nurkse's 'International Demonstration Effect' hypothesis¹ in providing an explanation of the changing consumption patterns in underdeveloped areas it seems quite reasonable to characterise India's aspiration for economic advancement as itself, in part, an expression of a 'demonstration effect'. In short, people in this country cannot be expected to resign themselves to a state of abject poverty for an indefinitely long period. Given the urgency of economic development, an important question relates to the socio-political conditions in which economic development is best attempted. In our Constitution we have declared ourselves to be a 'sovereign democratic republic'. Considering that a 'sovereign democratic republic' is conceived not as an ultimate goal to be attained but as a continuing reality to be preserved it follows that we should set ourselves the task of effecting economic development in a setting of democratic institutions. The present paper seeks to enquire into the

role of the intellectual in such a situation.

An analysis of the role of a group in relation to a particular goal could be made in terms of the actual role as well as a possible one. An attempt to analyse should ordinarily imply that the 'actual' is believed to be diverging significantly from the 'possible'. However, as we outline the possible role it is necessary to assume that the group under study is at least not hostile to the goal in question. This means in the present context that intellectuals, if there be any, who are opposed to either economic development or democracy or both are of no interest to me in this paper. I only hope that not many belong to this tribe.

Let us look more closely at the group to be studied viz. the intellectuals. An intellectual contrasts with the rest of the population primarily by the manner in which he forms his judgements. This reflects superior knowledge and better training in the art of thinking which, in a representative member of the group, should make for an inclination to take a rather detached view of things. Undoubtedly it is difficult to give a precise indication of the point at which these possessions become adequately 'high-grade' to entitle a person to be classed as an intellectual. It is however possible, I think, to make some general observations which render the term 'highgrade' of practical use in our present context. For one thing, a highgrade attainment must conform to some minimum standard. The minimum would apply to all societies during a given period though it may be different at different periods depending upon the possibi-

¹ Cf. Ragnar Nurkse: *Problems of Capital Formation in under-developed Countries* (Chapter III).

lities, from time to time, in respect of keenness of reasoning power among cultures intercommunicating with one another. Thus for all that I know, the minimum appropriate to a modern age should be higher than that relevant to former periods.² Secondly, subject to this minimum there has to be a relative standard within a given culture. Thus the intellectuals in one country may be, on an average, inferior to their counterparts in another country. However, the former, in virtue of their 'superiority' to their compatriots, are legitimately described as 'intellectuals'. Judging by these standards the average level of reasoning ability in advanced Western countries with widespread literacy and education, is probably so high that it may not be appropriate to designate all educated persons as intellectuals. The case with India is different. An overwhelming majority of the people is totally illiterate, completely divorced from knowledge of the sciences and from academic training. Under the circumstances it would appear that the terms 'intellectual' and 'educated' should be treated as co-terminous.

This raises one issue that needs to be considered. In a general setting of ignorance and backwardness the mantle of social leadership naturally falls on the educated. One does not know how much of this in India springs from the tradition of veneration for the learned which is said to characterize this land. Probably under the present conditions it is largely due to the awe-inspiring 'uniqueness' of education in the eyes of the ignorant masses. Since there is a 'prima facie' reason to treat the terms 'intellectual' and 'edu-

cated' as co-extensive in meaning, the above formulation is likely to create the impression that an enquiry into the role of the intellectuals is in effect an analysis of the role of the entire social leadership. That, I believe, is aiming too high. To my understanding there is a shade of meaning attached to the term 'intellectual' which connotes that an intellectual, qua intellectual, does not work for the assumption of political power. This is not to say that an intellectual as a rule is politically uncommitted. However, an active participation in the struggle for political power is likely to mar seriously even the minimum degree of detachment required of an intellectual. To be sure there is some such phenomenon as an intellectual within a political party, but to the extent he is an 'activist' he is a divided personality. He is trying to reconcile the 'one-track' pursuit of political power with the wide experimentation inherent in an 'intellectual way of life'. Thus for the purposes of our analysis the term 'intellectual' should not be extended to cover political leadership even when such leadership is drawn from the educated classes. Furthermore, we shall also have to exclude men of business, for a businessman as such would find it well-nigh impossible to pursue 'an intellectual way of life'.³ Like a party intellectual a business intellectual would also be a divided personality. The intellectuals understood in the above sense divide themselves into various sections with different degrees of impact on the social situation, e.g. academicians (which includes educators and researchers), journalists, professional classes (i.e. doctors, lawyers etc.), executives and technicians, and literary artists.

We may now try to analyse the basic situation in relation to which the role of the intellectual is to be considered in this paper. The relationship between economic development and democracy is a bilateral relationship whether it is one of harmony or its opposite. Economic development subjects democratic institutions to many stresses but it also eventually creates condi-

² This is not because of any upgrading of innate ability in modern times. It should follow from the continuous process of accumulation of cultural heritage—what Stuart Chase describes as the 'Exponential law of growth' (Cf. *The Proper Study of Mankind*, Chapter 11).

³ This is not to say that those rightfully classed as intellectuals *actually* follow 'an intellectual way of life.' But if they do not, that reflects a lack of will or realisation on their part, and not any compulsions necessarily incidental to an environment they must live in.

tions without which no democracy could be secure.⁴ On the other hand, under certain conditions, democracy may slow down the pace of economic development; all the same it is true that by making people more willing to undergo the necessary sacrifices democracy may help the acceleration of the tempo of development.⁵ In India it is the tensions which appear to be more relevant than a relationship of harmony; hence the role of the intellectual is best considered from the point of view of the need to minimise these tensions. It may appear that an attempt to reduce these tensions will at best accomplish the negative goal of removing the obstacles to the growth of democracy and not the positive one of promoting this growth. This however is not necessarily true. A really vigorous and successful attempt to undo the sapping effect of development on democracy and the retarding effect of democracy on development will mostly lead to a cultural revolution in social attitudes that will go a long way towards stabilising democratic institutions in this country.

As it is, the economic backwardness of India gives a severe setback to democratic

⁴ It is however important to remember that economic development is only a necessary and not a sufficient condition of the consolidation of democratic institutions. It is a necessary condition because democracy is evidently unstable in a society which fails to satisfy the elementary needs of the people. It is not a sufficient condition because even in economically advanced countries democracy has suffered a setback. Nazi Germany is a case in point.

⁵ It is customary to compare the rate of economic development under a communist dictatorship with that in a democratic society and to infer that democracy necessarily makes for a slower rate of development. Analytically, the potentiality which a democratic society possesses with regard to the rate of development has also to be judged on the basis of a comparison in this respect between such a society and one, say, under a monarchy or a military dictatorship. It then becomes clear that there are certain forces in a democracy which work in the direction of quickening the tempo of development. Further it may also be incidentally emphasized that what a democratic society needs in order to enthuse the people is a rate of development adequate to fulfil the reasonable expectations of the people and not necessarily a rate comparable to that in an alternative system.

institutions. The living standards of the vast majority being frightfully low, satisfaction of certain elementary needs becomes a matter of the utmost urgency. At the same time poverty and ignorance impede the growth of an adequate sense of social responsibility which should normally serve to keep mass behaviour within democratic limits. Thus in relation to the vital economic issue there appears to be an understandable gap between desires and awareness of social responsibility. Undoubtedly when desires run ahead of a sense of social responsibility one may cease to be scrupulous about the methods one employs to attain one's ends. What is more disturbing is that this disregard of scruples may not be confined merely to efforts designed to relieve one's economic misery. It is clear that for some time to come the low consumption standards in India could not be appreciably raised, any ambitious scheme of social insurance being positively out of question. This means that the very poor will continue to meet with frustration in the matter of satisfaction of elementary needs. Prolonged frustration with regard to basic needs is likely to weaken the sense of social responsibility in general with the result that the 'lag' between desires and awareness of social responsibility may come to vitiate social behaviour as a whole. In that case people would behave desperately even over relatively minor issues. This is clearly a serious threat to democracy for democracy in essence means the use of persuasive, as apart from coercive, techniques in spreading one's ideas or in securing one's interests.

In conditions such as those analysed above, economic development both provides an opportunity and demands at least an initial sacrifice. Thus in the process of development new sources of wealth, prestige and power are created, at the same time sacrifices have to be imposed in the form of higher prices and taxes for the purpose of securing resources for development. It could be easily expected that with the initial 'lag' mentioned above

there would be effort all round to seize opportunities and evade sacrifices. A situation like this is evidently not favourable to democracy.

On closer analysis it appears that economic development creates stresses for democratic institutions in India by possibly accentuating tensions between (a) caste groups, (b) linguistic divisions and (c) the rural and urban areas. It is a patent fact that since independence caste feeling has not shown any signs of abating. In one of its major aspects the political struggle in India appears to be a scramble between different caste-groups for increasing economic opportunities. It is not without significance that even the 'leftist' political groups here have to reckon with the caste composition of the electorate when selecting candidates for election. Linguism⁶ is another divisive influence which economic development in its early stages is likely to foster. One has only to witness the frequent complaints voiced by the inhabitants of one linguistic region against alleged solicitude shown by the authorities towards a neighbouring region. What is more distressing is the fact that there is reason to suspect that even in the higher echelons of decision-making in India criteria for allocation of projects are not always economic. Finally, economic development in its ordinary course is likely to favour the urban areas rather than the rural unless special efforts are made to protect the interests of the latter. This would widen the gulf between the economic conditions in the two areas giving rise to two trends among the educated here, both of which run counter to the spirit of democracy. The first expresses itself in the attitude of the high-brow urban intellectual which at best is one of indifference to, and at worst one of contempt for, the rural population. The second is epitomised in those persons who come to glorify everything associated with the village and thus merely serve to

put the clock back. In short the different divisive influences in India are likely to be strengthened under the impact of economic development. It is easy to see that this would create serious difficulties for democracy.

At this point we may add one more dimension viz. the conflict between the economic, and hence political, interests of the very rich and the poor. Two facts need to be noted. The rich industrial interests are, by definition, urban in nature. To the extent they succeed in influencing economic policy in India we get an urban-oriented developmental strategy that is likely to denude the rural population of opportunities for sizeable increase in prosperity for a long time to come. Democracy is bound to totter on the foundations of an impoverished rural society. Secondly, the very rich in India are drawn only from certain linguistic regions, with the result that conflict between the rich and the poor often assumes linguistic forms, exacerbating feelings of one linguistic group against another. This means that egalitarian economic policies will reinforce democratic institutions in two ways—directly by encouraging the willing participation of the erstwhile poor in attempts to build a genuinely democratic society, and indirectly by blunting the edge of linguistic chauvinism.

It would be futile to consider the role of the intellectuals as a whole in this situation. The capacity to influence the social situation is not the same for all the sections of intellectuals. Since we are considering in this paper the role of the intellectual for the purpose of reducing a specific set of social tensions attendant upon economic development, it becomes necessary to classify intellectuals on the basis of their probable impact on the social situation considered above. Clearly what an intellectual could do in a social situation will depend upon the nature of the opportunities for communication open to him. This provides, I think, a basis for twofold classification. First, we have sections of

⁶It should be pointed out that I am here referring only to the 'chauvinistic' loyalty to one's own linguistic group.

intellectuals who are in a position to reach wider groups of people, unlike the rest. The former category comprises journalists, who have access to the 'public', literary artists who also approach wider groups mainly through the written word or symbol, and such among academicians who, as a part of their work, have to operate in group situations e.g. the educators.⁷ It appears that the intellectuals belonging to the latter category such as technicians, executives etc. have very limited role to play in the social context in question. They can, however, help to reinforce people's confidence in administrative institutions by adhering scrupulously to healthy conventions and rules of procedure in their work. Then again, by identifying themselves with a common austerity programme designed to evoke willing participation of the people in economic programmes, they could also serve democracy in this country.⁸ Something needs to be said about literary artists who fall in the former category. Though their influence on society could be considerable, their mode of communication is such as would not lend itself to manipulation in the service of defined social ends. It is ridiculous, for example, to expect novelists to write consistently on economic development and democracy—that, too, with a particular slant.

Secondly, we have to grade the various sections of intellectuals on the basis of

directness of access to the society at large. In this respect journalists would rank first followed by educators. It will be seen however that both with regard to the groups of people reached as well as the directness of contact intellectuals cannot hope to vie with the politicians. This is particularly so in the case of India. In Western countries the Press is a powerful medium of communication, but in India it has to be content with a less direct impact since in conditions of illiteracy and general backwardness personal face-to-face contact becomes a potent factor in the communication process. This clearly gives the politicians an upper hand.

In view of the foregoing we may parenthetically analyse the role of the politicians as it would lend the necessary perspective to our main enquiry. It appears that much could be achieved with a proper orientation of the political leadership. This is not to say that the direct impact of the properly-orientated politicians would serve to eliminate tensions entirely. However, a vigorous and dedicated leadership of political movements faithfully abiding by democratic conventions and implementing with determination a well thought-out egalitarian economic programme of development should be able to reduce the severity of tensions. People lose confidence in representative institutions when dual standards, one explicit (*viz.* the spirit of the Constitution) and another implicit (*viz.* allegiance to a particular sectarian group) seem to guide public policy, making the implementation of a given policy highly unpredictable. The proper orientation of political leadership should help to remove uncertainty on this account. Even then narrow loyalties may persist among the people for some time. All the same, by adhering strictly to democratic rules of procedure themselves the politicians could instil in the minds of the people a respect for these rules. Such a respect should serve to curb desires and narrow down the gulf between desires and awareness of social responsibility in the early stages of economic development.⁹

⁷ It may be observed that even professional classes such as doctors, lawyers etc. fall into this category. However in the context of this paper a group situation of interest is the one which is likely to yield results directly or indirectly of relevance to the social issues raised. Viewed in this light the professional classes do not appear to have any significant role to play. There may be doctors or lawyers who are influential political leaders, but they wield this influence in their capacity as political workers, not as intellectuals.

⁸ This could apply also to the professional classes.

⁹ Of course in an ultimate sense democracy could be secure only when individuals become genuinely aware of and willingly accept their social responsibilities. However in the initial stages it may be fruitful to 'exploit' the natural human tendency to conform to conventions in order to ensure a respect for democratic rules of behaviour.

On further analysis it seems likely that any such course of action on the part of the politicians is inhibited partly by the fact that politicians share with the rest of the population its loyalty to caste and linguistic groups, and partly by the very logic of struggle for political power. Where the aim of political groups is to capture power the resolve of any one group not to exploit the caste and linguistic feelings of the people would merely handicap that group. The same struggle for power also places a brake on the move towards an egalitarian ideal since success in this struggle is partly dependent on the support of the moneyed classes. The first impediment could be got over only if the politicians wisely realized the injury they inflict upon democracy by pursuing their narrow loyalties. To the extent that this realization is lacking, intellectuals such as the journalists and educators may be able to help the process of enlightenment. Secondly, the usual logic of the struggle for political power could be foiled if the different political groups would agree between themselves not to take advantage of the narrow jealousies among the people, and if further the mood of a sizeable section of educated leadership were to change truly and firmly in favour of an egalitarian society. It may seem extremely difficult for any one political group to take the initiative in this matter.

In this context intellectual groups such as journalists, educators, social sciences researchers have an important role to perform. It will be seen that politicians will be constrained to desist from exploitation of the narrow loyalties among the people

for election purposes if a strong disapproval of such political practices becomes an integral part of the mores surrounding techniques of capturing political power.¹⁰ I feel, however, that intellectuals have relatively little to contribute towards the formation of such mores, for, in a country in which personal contact remains the most powerful mode of communication, intellectuals—even the journalists—are easily isolated from the bulk of the people. Their role therefore lies in influencing the behaviour of politicians. Far removed from the struggle for power the intellectuals could always expound the impartial academic position on social issues arising out of the basic tensions, and thus provide a basis for agreement between political groups over a minimum programme. They must further show that the approach they prescribe to the politicians also guides them (i.e. the intellectuals) in their corporate life. Thus they have a moral responsibility to conduct the affairs of their corporate forms of activities in a truly democratic manner. They ought to indicate by their actual behaviour that diversities of social life need not mean a perpetual war between different factions, that a basic unity could underlie these diversities. This could be an object lesson to the politicians.

A point needs to be touched upon here which relates to the role of the journalists. It is generally held that when the Press is owned by Big Business it would be unrealistic to expect journalists to remain impartial on issues pertinent to the struggle for political power. Evidently complete impartiality must ever remain an ideal. However, an adequate degree of impartiality which eschews an inclination to distort views not one's own, is not inconceivable. For one thing a sizeable section of the local press is essentially a small scale enterprise. Furthermore, it is basically a question of powerful journalists' associations evolving and insisting upon a code of ethics that guarantees substantial freedom of expression to a journalist. It is thus not improbable that journalists could effectively aid

¹⁰ I do not think that I am contradicting myself when I postulate the possibility of developing such mores in one sphere of activity among people who are otherwise ridden with prejudices. Prejudices operate in specific contexts. It is thus conceivable that though a prejudice operates in one context, there may be taboo against appealing to it in a different context. For example, though racial prejudice may not be totally absent in England for a large number of voters, it may be tactless for a political party to appeal to the racial susceptibilities of voters in an election.

other intellectuals in influencing the behaviour of politicians.

All the preceding presupposes that the intellectuals must be duly respected by the politicians. I have a feeling that the intellectuals, particularly the academicians, have alienated themselves from the political workers either by adopting a patronizing attitude bordering on contempt or by being subservient in the hope of material gain. No self-respecting intellectual would be guilty of the latter attitude. As for the former, though it is true that the intellectuals ought to be dispassionate and independent in their analysis of social problems they should not be hypercritical betraying a degree of 'superiority complex.' In the final analysis the intellectuals must realise that in the prevailing conditions they cannot hope to change the social reality appreciably in a direct manner. At the same time they cannot renounce their basic responsibility to society, particularly in a period of rapid social change. They must therefore prove not only the high quality of their intellect but also the depth of their feeling for the people of this country. This may raise them in the esteem of the political workers and enable them to play their role effectively. It is also pertinent to note that in a country in which political leadership is mainly drawn from the "lower" castes and intellectuals from the "higher" castes, an attitude of harmony underlying the relationship between these two groups may eventually result in a better emotional integration between different caste-groups.

That would render less difficult the task of promoting economic development in a framework of democratic institutions.

I am quite aware that in the foregoing analysis the *modus operandi* of the role of the intellectuals lies in the necessary realization by intellectuals of this role. It may be objected that this is just a pious appeal on par with the one which saints and moralists make to the people at large regardless of the social environment in which people live. I feel this criticism would be unjustified. An appeal to the people as a whole to be unselfish and sympathetic to their fellowbeings without reference to the conditions which make people behave otherwise, may be called utopian. The case with an intellectual is rather different. Equipped as he is with better training and education he could be legitimately expected to endeavour to understand what it would be proper for him to do in a given social situation to promote certain ends. Of course it would be unwise to assume away all practical difficulties that may beset an individual's effort to act up to his realization. All the same, realization is a major step, and action could be more effective when the realization is general for, in that case, there is a fair measure of certainty as to how others in the group would behave. It thus appears that intellectuals cannot cast away their responsibility to try to realize their role for purposes of effective action without forfeiting their claim to be called intellectuals.

Non-Violence in the Indian National Movement

SUDHIR CHANDRA

THE Indian National Movement, despite its violent streaks, was mainly non-violent. Though a number of attempts have been made to explain this characteristic, the heart of the problem has remained miraculously untouched. Some have asserted that the failure of the Great Revolt of 1857 was responsible for it. Others ascribe the phenomenon to inherent traits of the national character to which they (imaging their own bent) append the description 'cowardly' or 'peace-loving'. A third school, and a very large one, indeed, feels that India always had a tradition of non-violence; and that it was, therefore, natural for the Indian National Movement to have been based in this principle. To begin with, it will be useful to examine these ascriptions and determine their significance.

Let us take the Great Revolt first. The triumphant emergence of the English from the trials of 1857-58 and the crushing defeat of the Indians plainly indicated that the English might was unchallengeable. So further contest on these terms was obviously impracticable. But the experience provided no guidance as to the mode of future endeavour. Though abortive, this effort indicated—what might, indeed, be regarded as self-evident—that lack of physical courage was not a defect of the Indian national character. Moreover, the fact that Indians launched a non-violent movement to achieve independence does not reflect timidity, but is an eloquent proof, if proof is at all required, of their supreme fortitude, valour and readiness to sacrifice their lives at the altar of Freedom. It need not be emphasised that the basis of non-violence is moral courage. Physical courage is a mere preliminary to the higher fortitude demand-

ed by the sacrifice and perseverance so essential for the success of non-violence.

If the national character has not been cowardly, it has not been peace-loving either. Perhaps never in their long recorded history have Indians as a whole been conspicuous for their adherence to peace or even order. For this we need not peep into the distant past of the country. How we lapsed into a barbaric frenzy just before and after 1947 is too well-known to require narration. Even today we are stubbornly refusing to settle our affairs amicably, and are displaying a pathological inclination for riots, disorders and disturbances; it does not matter whether we do this in the garb of linguism, communalism or any other such sinister ism.

The third explanation, which ascribes the non-violent nature of the movement to a time-honoured tradition of non-violence in India, is only partially true. It is true inasmuch as the descendants of Mahavira, the Buddha and Ashoka found the methods of peaceful agitation in conformity with the principles of moral persuasion. However, this explanation utterly collapses when carried to its logical limits. Conceded that Indian thought had a venerable tradition of non-violence; but this tradition did not stipulate the projection of non-violence to the realm of politics. The Scriptures permit the use of force by the people in the event of unbearable oppression. Furthermore, they go to the extent of making force the constant companion of the Kshatriya kings and warriors whose duty it was to embark on conquest after conquest. Even Ashok, that apostle of peace and non-violence, had to deal with the people of Takshashila, who had been compelled, as a result of the excessive atrocities of provin-

cial officials, to raise the standard of rebellion. It is interesting to observe that at this juncture the Great Emperor did not think of eschewing the use of force. Besides that, such tradition of non-violence as India had, has been no peculiarity of Indian history. Christianity and, therefore, the West always had an equally ancient tradition of non-violence. In fact neither India nor Christianity can claim the privilege of having first broadcast the message of non-violence. The first man to do this was Isaiah who is alleged to have said something like the following: "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord... and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths...and he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Having ascertained the actual worth of these explanations, we may now begin our study of the factors really responsible for the non-violent character of the Indian National Movement. Ideas are very largely moulded by prevailing circumstances. The circumstances in which people are placed go a long way to determine not only the degree to which it is possible for them to attain their rights, but even their very capacity to conceive them. They modify both the definition of the rights and the mode by which these are to be achieved. While discussing the growth of non-violence in relation to the Indian National Movement, we have, therefore, not merely to analyse an abstract idea but also to examine the concrete realities of contemporary Indian History. Further, we have also to remember that the nature of movements and agitations in subject territories is determined not only by the character of the people under subjection, but also, and as decisively, by the character of the ruling nation. Unfortunately, this vital fact has so far received only scanty attention in our study of recent Indian history.

Since its inception the rule of the British Crown in India was based on the semblance of constitutional machinery. As the paraphernalia of constitutional machinery had been provided, the aspirations of the newly educated middle class took to constitutional ways. Besides that, the British rulers took good care to tell the Indian people that they were preparing the latter for participation in the administration of their own country. The piecemeal reforms, that these rulers were shrewd enough to grant occasionally, lent a similitude of reality to their pronouncements. This policy of granting reforms from time to time ensured that the politically conscious Indians would vent their grievances in a lawful and non-violent manner. It does not require great deal of historical acumen to imagine what the nature of the Indian fight for freedom would have been if the British had followed a diabolic policy of absolutely no concessions and no reforms. Undoubtedly, British imperialism was, in a very significant aspect, different from the imperialism of other European Powers. It was, so far as imperialism could be, more realistic and liberal than its counterparts. Hence the fact that Britain was not involved in an Algeria in India. In this connection it may be noted that its non-violent character is not a novelty of the Indian National movement; it is a trait common to similar movements in almost all British colonies. Commonplace though this statement may appear the astonishing fact remains that it has not been made so far. Every now and then we find leaders and scholars stating with obvious pride that non-violence was a unique characteristic of the Indian National Movement. Even no less a man than Dr. Tara Chand fell a prey to this widespread delusion when he wrote: 'And where similar struggles have been accompanied with bloodshed, the movement in India, though intense and accompanied with much suffering, was non-violent.' The sooner we, and with us the world at large, are cured of this delusion, the better for all.

Be that as it may, the interconnection between the character of the Imperial

power and that of the fight for freedom is obvious. In our country it has become fashionable to say that Gandhi saved the prestige of Britain and enabled her to leave India with a good grace. This statement, however, is, at the most, only a half-truth; the other, and perhaps the more important part of the truth lies in the fact that Britain, too, made it possible for India to win her independence by peaceful means: because the success of a non-violent resistance is always in exact proportion to the moral fibre of those against whom it is directed. The technique of such a struggle consists in appealing to and arousing the conscience of the opposite party. The degree of susceptibility of the latter will, therefore, invariably determine the extent to which a non-violent resistance can be successful. Theoretically it may be true that no man or community is absolutely devoid of conscience and that the non-violent satyagrahi will in due course succeed in his struggle with any man or any nation. But that is merely a hypothesis while we have to deal with known facts. And the facts about the Indian fight for freedom clearly assert that only ignorance or dishonesty can lead us to deny the British their glorious share in the success of the non-violent Indian National Movement.

Besides the nature of the British rule in India, its educational policy also paved the way for a non-violent political movement. Before coming into contact with the West, India had no tradition of public participation in political affairs. The layman scarcely felt any sentiment for the safety and security of the government of his land. The caste system, which delegated defence to a particular class, and the monarchical form of government (almost universal in that age) bear chief responsibility for this attitude. Rulers might come and go; old dynasties might be destroyed and new ones installed; but the ordinary citizen was not disturbed. His only concerns were his bread and butter, the welfare of his family and the day-to-day affairs of his community which constituted his universe. The business of the state being the sole concern of

a particular class, the common man had no occasion to meddle in such matters. But with the impact of the West it became apparent that conditions were changing and were about to effect a revolution in the thinking of the common Indian who had hitherto submitted meekly, despite his village panchayat, to the will of the ruler. The instrument that brought about this mental transformation was the educational policy of the British in India. This policy gave a severe jolt to the age-old isolation of India and exposed her to the currents of contemporary Western history and thought. This proved to be of singular value in the creation of a national sentiment in India. The commoners of the country, irrespective of the accidents of birth, realized that the governance of the land was the monopoly of no single person or class, and that they, too, could participate in it. In the dawn of these ideas there arose a movement for the first time truly national because in it, for the first time in the history of India, all sections of the nation participated equally.

Contact with the West through English education not only gave to its beneficiaries a new concept of liberty but also suggested a new approach — the approach of lawful political agitation. However tardy in political reforms at home and however untrue to their professions in the colonies, the English, in the 19th century, were the real pioneers of democratisation and liberalism. One of the most fruitful lessons that England had learnt from the Civil War was the distrust of force in the settlement of domestic problems. (How the experience of the American War of Independence extended this jurisdiction, falls beyond the scope of the present study.) Since then a new system had been evolving, so intricate and powerful that even the adverse influences of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars failed to check it. The protracted agitation preceding the first Reform Act, Chartism, with its sporadic yet negligible violence, and the perfectly constitutional and peaceful agitation culminating in the Second Reform Act, marked some of the stages in this progression. By

1885, when the Indian National Congress was established, this system had achieved the status of a recognised technique of political strategy. Impressive in its effectiveness, this new method attracted the attention of educated Indians; more so as they had at their disposal a constitutional machinery (however farcical that may appear from this distance of time) through which they could express their grievances and set forth their demands. This is eloquently borne out by the presidential address of Dadabhai Naoroji at the Calcutta Congress (1906). In the course of this historic address, the Grand Old Man explained how for every movement in England 'the chief weapons are agitation by meetings, demonstrations and petitions to Parliament.' He exhorted his audience to learn the lessons from Englishmen themselves — to agitate most extensively and most perseveringly by petitions, demonstrations and meetings, all quite peacefully but enthusiastically conducted.'

Indians of that era found in Burke their guiding philosopher. They, like him, did not deny the right of the British to rule over India. What they did was to fight against the abuse of that Right. Again like him, they invoked the interests of the ruling Power and advised it on that account to adopt a more enlightened and humane policy. They seemed to echo Burke when he said, in his famous speech on 'Conciliation with America', 'The question with me is, not whether you have a right to render your people miserable, but whether it is not your interest to make them happy. It is not what a lawyer tells me I may do, but what humanity, reason and justice tell me I ought to do.' The most remarkable thing about this speech, which embodies Burke's thinking in this regard, is its almost unconscious simultaneous appeal to self-interest and humanitarianism. This is precisely what his Indian disciples fully assimilated.

The character of the Indian National Movement was powerfully influenced in the direction of non-violence by one personality — Mahatma Gandhi. But even Gandhi owed a great deal to the West. His

ideas regarding non-violent non-co-operation, Civil Disobedience and Satyagraha were largely derived from Tolstoy and the Sermon on the Mount. It was Tolstoy's teaching of resistance without violence which Gandhi transposed into practical politics. He made no secret of this fact and described himself as a 'humble follower of that great teacher (Tolstoy) whom I have long looked upon as one of my guides...' Equally indelible and far-reaching was the influence of the Sermon on the Mount which persuaded Gandhi that renunciation was the 'highest form of religion'. In this precept he unified the teaching of all religions. To attribute to Hinduism the cardinal principles of Gandhi's philosophy is to take too literally his assertion that he was a Hindu. In the first place, Gandhi culled them from a number of religions and their re-discovery in Hinduism was the sequel rather than the prelude to his quest. Secondly the message of love and non-violence which formed the core of his philosophy is not an exclusive feature of Hinduism but is enshrined in all the major religions of the world.

We may need to remind ourselves that it was not Gandhi who introduced the idea of passive resistance into Indian politics. The first man to do this was Tilak who declared the principles of passive resistance at the Benares Congress (1905). It is true that Tilak had no faith in the British bureaucrat in India, and that he contemptuously ignored what Aurobindo Ghose described as 'petty botching with the administration'. But, as is evident from his visit to England, he did hope to arouse the sympathies of the ordinary British citizen for the country which was being ruled so unscrupulously in his name.

The non-violent character of the Indian National Movement, then, did not derive purely, or even pre-eminently, from indigenous sources. Rather, it borrowed heavily from the West, particularly from the British people and their institutions. This is a fact which so far only a few British and some other Western writers have cryptically hinted at. Karl Jaspers is

perhaps the only man of note who has vigorously emphasised the contribution of Britain. But the hint, as it comes mainly from the representatives of the erstwhile ruling nation, has not only fallen on deaf ears but has even produced, on the contrary, a strong reaction in India. For, the sad though natural fact remains that a subtle and, therefore, all the stronger national prejudice constantly works within us. This diminishes our capacity for impartial evaluation of the movement to which we owe our liberty. Anything said or written which does not conform to our somewhat roman-

tic idea of it disturbs us profoundly. A just balance of mind in matters so proximate in time, so pregnant with emotional significance, is not easily to be attained. Yet such is the ideal of historical writing, and this ideal, so far as conscious judgment serves us, we are bound to pursue. We must seek the truth with diligence and state it with clarity, honesty and due emphasis. It will be many decades yet before an Indian may write so of the Indian National Movement. But towards that objective we may, as here, make a tentative effort even in our own day.

note elegiac

they attacked in the mist at dawn and the others' watch
saw them and the still unwarmed blood of morning
was shed in the firing and the cries of men
and the grass that was, in the perimeter of this camp,
fresh and wet and silent.

L. N. P. Wickramasinghe

Technology, Government and Planning

R. SRINIVASAN

EVEN those most critical of governmental planning as a technique of social engineering have come to recognise that it is inevitable in all societies, affluent or underdeveloped. Despite critics of planning, planning in India has come to stay and it would be futile to ignore its importance or to take up mouldy problems concerning the alleged loss of liberties in a planned economy. Countries like England, France and Australia are moving in the direction of establishing some sort of planning agencies. The present paper will not examine the issue of planning versus democracy, instead it will dwell on the inevitability of planning in modern times; an inevitability arising not from the 'compulsions of a backward economy' (whatever the phrase may mean) but from the application of technology to social problems. In the near future more than at any time before, all societies will be compelled to look up more to the government for planning social issues. If the social scientists of our country do not pay attention to the impact of technology upon society, they will fail in their functions even as men in public affairs in England were taken by surprise in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by the onset of the Industrial Revolution. Neither can they seek for light in the writings of Keynes or Marshall, for they never foresaw the enormous revolutions that have been engineered in the postwar decades; they have no ready made solutions in stock which we can take over. It must be accepted that in the application of technology to the problems of society, a government could take totalitarian or democratic directions. Its path would be largely determined by the policies that we the social scientists will

be advocating in the coming years. It looks as though tomorrow's social scientists, in order to be competent to spell out the public policies with any clarity will have to be versed in the esoteric realms of technologies as well as in public administration. Otherwise the gap between the 'two cultures' will be filled by civil servants.

Control of a technological application can do much to reorganise a society on a new basis or to vest enormous power into the hands of a few. We know that the astronomer-priests of ancient times preferred to use their knowledge to consolidate their powers rather than use it for the common good. More often than not he who discovers a new drug would fain earn capital on his discovery; the tribe of Fleming and Franklin is rare enough, though the world cannot have sufficient numbers of them. The attitude of most business and corporate interests when it comes to the application of technology to social problems is: 'What is good for the General Motors is good for the United States.' This, unfortunately, as we in India know, is just not true; what was good for Haridas Mundhra was not good for the country. And we are beginning to fear that the benefits of modern technology will be exclusively taken advantage of by the business interests whose chief aim would be to turn a quick rupee. It is this that often makes them exploit the wealth of the nation with scant regard for the needs of the next few years. This class of 'waste makers' would mortgage the future of the country for their immediate profits. And let us not forget that the slick politician is not above this. We know that currently a great debate is afoot in the USSR bet-

ween Khrushchev and the agricultural experts. Corn or cotton if grown continuously for a long period over the same patch of land reduces the greenery to a desert bowl within a few generations. While Khrushchev would want to engage on a crash programme to harvest corn regardless of the future, his band of agricultural experts would not pawn the areas to future dust bowls and produce more corn to make Khrushchev popular with the people. It was this appalling fear of fertile agricultural lands turning to waste in a few generations that made an eminent American scientist advocate the alternating of cotton and groundnuts; for this would preserve the fertility of the soil. This of course raised another problem—what were they to do with the tons of ground-nuts produced by this policy?

Let us consider the resources of our planet and the exploitation that has been under way for the past few centuries. The fear has been expressed that the continuous exploitation of natural resources will make the most prosperous countries of to-day become the deserts of tomorrow. The Biblical description of the Fertile Crescent now sounds ironical; for the whole area is one great desert. Lebanon's cedar trees were famous once upon a time—now there are only a few thousand of them left. Libya, once the granary of Rome, today is in the midst of a desert.

Could it be that the newer deserts of tomorrow will be round the metropolis of Detroit and Coimbatore? J. C. Smuts once declared that the problem of soil erosion is more important for the future of South Africa than any contemporary political issue. In England there is no more of the tin that once was exploited from the earth; much of her higher-grade iron ore has been exhausted and the coal seams are thinning out; at the present rate of consumption, much of her China clay will be gone in another half a century.¹ The domestic iron ore reserves of Germany will not last another decade. In the U.S. too the picture is grim. The rivers of America wash out 5,000,000,000 tons of land every year; of

them, the Mississippi alone is responsible for denuding 750,000,000 tons of soil into the sea. For every one ton of commercial replenishment of the soil, 60 tons of soil are eroded away from the fields. To-day the U.S. is dependent upon foreign oil for her energy; once she had more than what she needed. This is because the average man consumes more energy than he did at any time in the past. A fear has been expressed that the U.S. in the future years will become a 'major "have-not" country in the world.' (The phrase is Peter Drucker's, *America Becomes a 'Have-not' Nation*, Harper's Magazine, April 1956.) The Paley Commission appointed by the U.S. Government to examine the resources of the country has given an idea of the average America's gargantuan consumption habits. In 1950, he used 14,400 lbs of fuels, 10,000 lbs of construction articles 5,700 lbs of agricultural produce, and more than 500 pounds of metals.¹ Wars and other conflicts have also raised the consumption of natural resources. The Korean War saw an increase of 35% in the daily cargo given to every soldier over the soldiers of World War II. In 1944, a jet fighter used 125 lbs of copper, 1,500 lbs of steel and 5,500 lbs of aluminium. In 1954, the same fighter required 513 lbs of copper 20,129 lbs of steel and 19,440 lbs of aluminium.¹

The situation in our country too is bleak. If we are to reach the annual production of 15 million tons of steel we would require 30,000 tons of tin and ten times the quantity of copper and large quantities of zinc and lead. And since these are not available in our country, we shall be entering into competition in foreign markets with other countries for copper, zinc and other commodities. Again, we all are aware that the coal available in India is of too poor a quality for processing our steel economically. If Indian consumption of energy were to be on par with the American, our entire national resources would not last for one decade.

If technological exploitation of our earth is going to result in a rapid depletion of our resources, we will have to plan for

their preservation and careful consumption. Otherwise, we will find ourselves in predicaments far worse than that of the Parisians. The problem of water supply in their metropolis is so acute that it is rationed in the months of July and August.²

The important question is whether there are private agencies which would be interested in examining the problem of the vanishing resources and formulate public policies for their conservation. Even to map out the entire territories of a nation requires an organisation that only the state can command. It is not accidental that the most thorough examination of the resources of the United States was undertaken by the government of that country and published in five volumes (*Resources of Freedom*—Paley Commission). No private enterprise could have undertaken the project and completed it in all its aspects; for the perspectives are different and the whole problem has to be national in scope. The examination of the problem, however, is only the first step. It is but the prelude to conserving whatever is possible and exploiting new resources.

Not merely the individual governments, but the U.N. as well is becoming aware of this and the need for considering some sort of coordinated international policy was highlighted in the eight volumes of the Proceedings of the U.N. Scientific Conference on the Conservation and Utilization of Resources. If the issue is international in its scope there will have to be more planning, not less, at the national level.

More than a century ago Darwin summed up the theme of these paragraphs by saying that the production of clover in an island is directly related to the number of cats that prowl there. Recently we read of the sad and revengeful consequences of the Operation Sparrow launched by the Chinese Government. With its characteristic determination the Government succeeded in destroying all the sparrows; but the insects which used to be eaten by these creatures increased as did the rodents. By

upsetting the balance of nature, China did not produce more crops, but less. And this is a persistent theme in all countries. Technology has made available to the farmer and to others a varying range of pesticides and insecticides which have been used widely but also sometimes unwisely. 'The ecological structure is so delicate and so complex that it is impossible to imagine all the effects of a given action'.⁴

The ecological disturbances arising out of the application of technology have been illustrated by the use of the DDT. 'One of the most admirable things about DDT was that it was said to be completely innocuous toward human beings. DDT was sprinkled over the whole surface of the globe. Then by accident it was discovered that in certain areas veal cattle were wasting away and dying. Research revealed that DDT in oily solution causes anemia. Cattle had been dusted with DDT in order to get rid of insects; they had subsequently licked themselves clean and ingested the DDT. The chemical in question passed into their milk and by this route found its way into oily solution, i.e., in the milk fat. Calves suckled by such cows died of anemia, and it is needless to add that the same milk was ingested by human infants.⁴ Therefore even before introducing any pesticide one has to think of the possible repercussions and chain reactions.

In the light of what has been said of the application of science and technology to problems of society, it appears as though increased state control over these spheres will be inevitable. One of the reasons (besides the stark necessity arising out of the enormous expenditure involved in the research programmes concerned with such applications) is that governments would be more interested in promoting such projects than any private industries. The Office of the Saline Water (of the U.S. Government) is spending \$ 75 million to find out the practicability of refining brackish and sea water for public use.⁵ It is difficult to imagine that any other agency would be prepared for this outlay. For one thing, research and experi-

ments of this nature do not yield any benefits immediately. The costs involved are very high and it may take decades before any of the findings of the research will be put to commercial advantage.

Already in well-developed economies, automation is being increasingly used and this in its train is forcing the government to reconsider social policies from a new angle. For example, in the United States, the passing of the Manpower Development and Training Act has created the Office of Manpower, Automation and Training. With this has dawned the recognition that it is the responsibility of the state to employ those who will remain unemployed thanks to automation. To give an example of the immediate unemployment that would arise: '... a single factory in America makes one thousand millions electric bulbs a year. It employs about 300 people, but it would take 25,000 men to make as many bulbs if they had to use the techniques of 1925;³ (Dr. B. V. Bowden). The United States now recognises the national responsibility of retraining the 400,000 persons who will remain unemployed because of the use of automation in industry. It has provided \$ 435 million for over three years for this purpose. The then Labour Secretary, Arthur Goldberg, declared: 'For the first time in our history we are setting out to make opportunity a matter of design and not of chance'.⁵ The social policies of a government like that of the United States stand in sharp contrast to that of our government sworn to planning and to a policy of social amelioration, yet having little to offer to the thousands of goldsmiths thrown out of their employment as a result of a *government policy*.

Automation also involves the use of computers one of which can do the work of many hundreds of clerks. The whole of the pay-roll of the 22,000 employees of the Ford Motor Company is prepared on a computer, and the stocks in the Ford Spares Depot are controlled by a computer. There are 45,000 different spares to be looked after (most of them for obsolete

cars). The machine decides whether a dealer is in good credit and entitled to order a part; it assigns priorities to the orders and makes sure that vehicles which are immobilised are got under way as quickly as possible.³

To-day it is not only possible to collect pyramids of figures and statistics, but with computers governments are in a position to make use of them meaningfully in interpreting social phenomena. For the first time in the history of modern societies governments are fitted scientifically to tackle social problems. For with the use of automation and computers they will be in a position to comprehend the dimensions of any problem by breaking it into interpretative statistics. With the aid of automation and computers, this analysis is possible to-day in a manner and with a speed and accuracy impossible in earlier times.

Apart from this, modern societies in the grip of a technological revolution are going to be further centralised. Professor Jacques Ellul has summed up with great insight the contradictory elements inevitable in all applications of technology to social problems. He points out that all progress in technology exacts its own price; that technology may raise as many as yet unrecognised problems as it may solve; that pernicious effects are as inevitable as the beneficial; and finally, society may find itself with consequences that are not quite what it anticipated. He instances all these tendencies in an eloquent example. 'An industrial complex for the exploitation of sulphur has been established at Lacq, a simple technological fact. But, from the economic point of view this is far from being the case, since a serious agricultural problem has arisen because of the excessive destruction of farm products in the region. Upto now, the government has not seen fit to take the matter seriously, although it has been officially estimated in reports to the Chamber that for 1960, agricultural losses have aggregated two billion francs. Now, the vineyards of Jurancon are being attacked by the

sulphurous gases and are disappearing, a not inconsiderable economic loss'.⁴ If these are the concomitants of the application of technology to society the only solution for them is more planning and more careful planning.

Thus both the hundred dollar societies and the thousand dollars societies (to use the telling phrase of Professor Blackett to describe the advanced and the backward economies and societies) are going to find planning inevitable though for different reasons. 'The pressures towards centralisation in our society are very great. Without deliberate planning at the centre they are going to become greater. The policies of dealing with emergencies, of creating *ad hoc* measures for problem after problem, multiply restrictions, regulations, laws and inhibitions on human energy. People misunderstand the true purpose of sound social planning. The purpose is to simplify, to rationalise, to provide a stable set of alternatives in which individuals are freer to act in security and in the exercise of their freedom of choice'⁵

But we have to ask if such centralised planning is going to raise more problems than it would be solving. One cannot assume in any spirit of unquestioned optimism that the governments will necessarily be sensible, that they will weave the many social considerations and public policies into a coherent and workable plan and allow the claim of the commonweal to dominate all decisions. Even in the best of governments there exist 'closed politics' operating at non-rational levels. C. P. Snow has given the classic example of the irresponsibility that can masquerade at the top levels of Government under the guise of scientific expert opinion. In the 'case study' that he expounds in his *Science and Government* this happened when there was a national government and when the entire resources of the country were mobilised for war efforts. An opinionated chief like Churchill who would not suffer opposing views even in normal circumstances, could become totally myopic to opinions

that did not accord with that of his scientific adviser, 'The Prof', Lindeman. The danger was that Churchill had no background in scientific method himself. In that situation can it be that the prestige of the scientists is so great that they are accepted as the only persons who would be able to solve the nation's problems? The limitations of the single unbalanced expert have been recounted too many times to require any fresh assessment. In the United States, people have put their trust in the five-hundred odd people with Ph.D. degrees in the civil service to prevent the misuse of technology. It is a moot question whether the functioning of government bureaucracies would be tempered by a few hundred Ph.D. graduates scattered among them.⁵ In our own country it has been widely believed that the combination of Mr. Nehru and Professor Mahalanobis makes for any but the dominant official opinion on planning to be cold-shouldered.

Short-sightedness need not be the monopoly of the business interests only. An enthusiastic government agency is potentially more dangerous than any profit-seeking venture; while in the former, unchecked enthusiasm may with impunity run away from commonsense, in the latter the fixed gaze on the profit may jolt it into sanity. Operation Chariot more than anything illustrates the danger inherent in any enthusiastic official venture and the possible unhealthy trends in government administration. In the U.S. the Atomic Energy Commission was anxious to demonstrate the peaceful uses of atomic energy. Project Chariot was a project for blasting out a harbour on a distant coastline in Alaska by detonating three baby atom bombs; the opposition of the scientists in the know of things forced the Commission to create a department of ecology within its wing to study the effects of such an action. Three months later the Project Chariot was given up. It is certainly creditable that the Project was given up after a preliminary enquiry; but how many enterprises have a similar sane ending? In our own country there have been two

projects born more out of enthusiasm than any other consideration. Though crores of rupees have been spent on *khadi* and on enforcing prohibition, it is yet to be demonstrated that these have produced anything beneficial to our society. Yet in the foreseeable years neither of these possibly wasteful adventures will be scrutinised rationally with an eye on the proper policy to be taken about them.

Obviously one cannot restrain the bureaucrats of planning once they have determined their minds on some policy matters. In our country the dangers of planning arise from two sources. One is the indifference of most academic people and institutions of higher learning to the social problems of a technological age. This is in sharp contrast to what is happening in other countries. In the West the inter-relations between technology and its applications to societies and the need for reviewing social policies is receiving great attention. In the last few months there were three conferences held in the United States which concerned themselves with the problem of adjusting social and public policies to the challenges of science. In the advanced graduate courses in political science, quite a few universities of the U.S. deal with the problem of science and government. We in India need such programmes of research and teaching; at present one does not know of any university where there is any course on the problems of applying technology to society, with special emphasis on underdeveloped societies. Most academic institutions in their discussion of planning and liberty deal largely with abstraction without going into

the practical details where such problems are in fact encountered. This lack of practical approach to the problems of planning has become more acute since most of our intellectuals have persistently minimised the need for enlightening the public on the shortcomings and the perils of planning. Most of them are bribed into silence by being drawn into the hundred and one odd agencies of the Planning Commission. By this most of the effective critics of planning are disarmed and silenced — or ignored in practice.

A still more unhealthy tendency has been the attitude of the civil servants to men in the academic professions. It is difficult to imagine any bureaucracy on its own initiating any breath-taking idea or programme; the intellectual powerhouses in all societies have remained the Universities. The attitude of the civil servants towards the academic people can be illustrated by the fable of the Christian Clock repairer. In the 'worst and most intolerant days of the Bukhara Emirate' there was in one of the cities of the Middle East a local Christian who was a repairer of clocks. The mullahs and the divines had an understandable contempt for the infidel. 'He was permitted to enter the mosque for repairing the tower clock only on the plea that after all in the matter of technical usefulness he was on par with the donkeys which had carried the stone slabs into the mosque in the first place'.³ Both the bureaucracy and the academic men have an important part to play in planning. Another danger in our country is that the academic men may betray their responsibilities. Should this happen we will be on the high road to serfdom.

¹ R. A. Brady: *Organisation, Automation and Society*, Berkeley, 1963.

² Ruth Gruber (ed.): *Science and the New Nations* (proceedings of the International Conference on Science in the Advancement of New States at Rehovoth, Israel), New York, 1961.

³ *Advancement of Science*, vol XVIII No. 71, 1961-62.

⁴ *Technology and Culture*: Vol. 3, 1962.

⁵ E. T. Chase: *Politics and Technology*: *Yale Review*, Spring 1963.

The Over-Integrated Society

T. K. OOMMEN

THE problem of the integration of Indian society has been taken up for discussion recently by Indian intellectuals as a result of the growing stresses and strains in the social structure. We believe that the problem has another dimension which has hitherto received inadequate attention. This new dimension will emerge in the course of this essay.

Many of the political movements or pressure groups active in India are but 'overflows' of community tensions. India's social system has both hierarchic (caste and class) and horizontal (religion, tribe, language) groupings and the effective operation of these groups is possible only in a locale. Inevitably a multiplicity of sectional groups comes to function in the sphere of political expression, economic motives and social goals. In this essay we propose (1) to inquire into the consequence of the existence of such groups, (2) to understand the stresses and strains they bring about and (3) to locate the source from which the trouble brews. As a pre-requisite to this enquiry an analysis of the essential nature of Indian society is attempted, the context and operational manifestation of the stresses and strains on the social structure is delineated, the group which is active on the 'distintegration-front' is located, and in conclusion the thesis that the social problems confronting contemporary Indian society are the result of the over-integration at the intra-group level which is the inevitable corollary of the over-involvement of the individual with the group, is propounded.

The peculiar cultural process in India where goods and ideas were being transmitted without necessarily effecting any transfusion of blood among the populace

involved in the exchange rendered the intergroup relations very complex. The Hindu *Yajmāni* system which depended on the exchange of goods and services effected through a system of barter, was facilitated by the institution of caste which provided the foundation for an 'unalterable division of labour'. While there was economic interdependence and a common cultural foundation, caste was socially self-contained resulting in an unintegrated system of relationships between the different groups in society.

Durkheim conceives a social situation where there may be interdependence of functions, but not necessarily social solidarity. A number of studies undertaken in rural India confirms this position.¹ Again the experience evinced in the context of planned economic development and social change in India also goes to demonstrate that there is far from enough evidence to assert that what we may call a 'community' exists in the Indian village or that the type of community that exists is an acceptable foundation for furthering individual aspirations especially those that are appropriate to a socialistic pattern of society.²

The three main bases which support the usual contention that the 'village' is the 'community' are the relative isolation of the village, the Hindu *Yajmāni* system, and caste and kinship. The relatively smaller village-world coupled with the *Yajmāni* system which effected the exchange of goods and services, together with the caste system which ascribed a definite status to the individual based on birth — all were instrumental in developing a 'community' in the village. The caste groupings institutionalised conflict in the social system and provided mechanisms for absorbing the

tensions released by it. Moreover, the villages in the past acted corporately because village lands in effect remained communal. This does not mean that individual ownership or cultivation of land was totally absent. 'What imparted corporateness to village property was the recognition by government of the exclusive right of the chief sharer to pay for all others in the village'.³ Small landholders and cultivators possessed no separate records of rights of their own, transfer of property outside the village became a rarity; for it was the chief sharer or headman who prevailed in the final effecting of transfer. Naturally transfer of land remained an intra-village phenomenon, which of course strengthened the in-group solidarity.

With the advent of industrialisation and urbanisation and the consequent migration the village world has been considerably enlarged, while the monetisation of the economy has threatened the *Yājñāni* system and the introduction of law has facilitated for the individual the free exchange of his property rights. All the bases mentioned earlier were mutually reinforcing factors in developing a sense of belonging to the village. When one or more of these bases are affected, naturally the net product namely the 'we feeling', which the bases created in combination, has also been thwarted. Assured membership of a group being the necessary condition for the emotional fulfillment of man, the necessity of a 'primary community' became inevitable. So the sense of belonging to the village has been weakened by the sense of belonging to the caste, sub-caste or jati. In rural India today the village competes with the caste for loyalty from the individual. Hence the village may be described as 'a vertical entity made up of several horizontal layers each of which is caste'.⁴ Thus in an Indian village there are a number of primary communities (caste or jati) co-existing in a wider community namely the village. Along with the economic relations that each caste-group pursues in the exchange of goods and services, the caste succeeds in securing the loyalty too of the members

who share certain common values. At the same time all these groups (castes) also share certain values: values of the 'secondary community' i.e., the village. These intricate and sensitive relations make rural social structure very complex.

Thus starting with the primary community namely the caste, one can clearly delineate a number of other groupings — the Village Community, the Region (State), the Linguistic Area, the Religion — which compete with one another to secure loyalty from the individual. These ever-widening circles of groups may be successively arranged according to their decreasing capacity for eliciting loyalty from the individual. Recognition of this feature of Indian society unfolds the existence of two elements of social structure namely the geographically contiguous and culturally homogeneous Linguistic Regional Societies, and the Urban Indian Society featured by market, factory, firm, class stratification within the caste, etc.⁵ Panchanadikar shows that the first thing that holds urban India together is the English-educated urban classes spread throughout the country constituted by the defence personnel, the university and non-university scholars, the union-government bureaucracy, the entrepreneurial elite, white collar professionals and white collar workers, along with the urban working-class. These classes have involvements that are 'all-India' in character, and institutions and organisations which knit them together on a country-wide basis. These urban groups are under the motivating influence of a value pattern which may be designated Democratic Secular Liberalism. Contrary to this, it is to be noted that the entire web of social life in any linguistic region is specific and exclusive and is structured by 'the Traditional Ethic or value pattern which is constituted of the twin loyalties to Caste and the Joint Family'.⁶ The prospects for the integration of Indian society viewed from one angle seem largely to depend on creating conditions for the interlocking of these two (Rural and Urban) structural elements. But the pro-

blem as it is referred to in India today does not reflect the perennial issue of amalgamating the two mutually exclusive if not inimical elements of the social structure. Herein lies the importance of stipulating the frame of reference for the present discussion.

Society in India as we refer to it in this paper is the result of the sudden and arbitrary creation of the Indian Union in 1947 — we are referring to a political society, not to a civilisation. It is to be recognised here that integration of such a society (a nation-society) means, to a large extent, developing a 'we feeling' between the constituents which have come to compose that nation. The possible existence of a lag between the nation-state and the nation-society is to be recognised here. However, recognition of this 'lag' is not to be equated with solving the problem created by the lag. As will be shown in the course of our discussion, the problem viewed in the long-term context lies elsewhere.

It is the constant endeavour of the social scientist to translate his concept into empirically verifiable facts. Social integration as an empirically observable phenomenon means the absence or the minimality of conflicts at various levels of social organisation. Social integration thus refers to the harmonious relations between the different parts and that of each part to the whole. Therefore, in our attempt to understand the degree of integration of Indian society the prudent method seems to be one of concentrating attention on those forces which are believed to have a dis-integrating potential and the manifestations they tend to take and the context in which they operate. It is widely accepted that linguism, regionalism, casteism and communalism are the usual stresses and strains which develop in Indian society today. Two questions are to be answered here: (1) what is the motivation underlying the action patterns which are said to be dis-integrating and (2) what are the characteristics of the group which is active on this front?

The process of economic development inaugurated by National Planning, it is felt in many quarters, offered a clear context for the genesis of stress and strains. In her National Planning India had accepted the practice of 'Balanced Regional Development'. The Region is not a political unit, but a unit of economic development. The attempt to identify the State, i.e. a political unit, with the Region, i.e., an economic unit, may be detrimental to economic development. Yet this is precisely what happens in India. The linguistically based States are the accepted units of development. Certainly different rates of progress between the different regions are universal in all countries backward or developed. These regional inequalities and dissimilarities appear to be a necessary condition for self-perpetuating processes of regional specialisation and hence economic development for the country as a whole, because development is a process and one has to recognise different stages in development. What is development for one region is not development for another. But what is meant and practised under the label Balanced Regional Development in India is total development of the region. This results, it is usually argued, in giving regional representation in recruitments to the detriment of administrative efficiency, in locating industrial projects overlooking economic prudence, in allocating educational institutions ignoring operational efficiency. Thus the economic growth and the consequent social changes affected through Balanced Regional Development in India are facilitating the development and not the diminution or sectional interests in Indian society.

Another context in which the stresses and strains come to the lime-light in India is provided by minority representation and uplifting of the weaker sections. Thus the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Christians (minorities), the Scheduled Castes, the Backward Castes, and the Scheduled Tribes (the weaker sections)—all claim special concessions and benefits. The relevant question to be posed here is, will there be integration of Indian society when these

minorities and weaker sections are assured of special concessions in terms of material benefits? We have a ready example at hand. The concessions that have been extended to the Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes had the latent function of fostering caste consciousness and encouraging sectional groupings. Thus it is interesting to note that in a country where the castes are competing for superiority, there has been a tendency recently among certain castes to claim membership of that group of castes which would secure economic benefits through reservations. But viewed in the context of the bases of group-formation in Indian society, a large number of 'minority' or 'backward' groups are unavoidable—now in terms of caste or religion, now in terms of language or region.⁷

Recognising that the motivations which structure the formations of those groups which are bringing about stresses and strains in Indian society today are predominantly economic and knowing that particularistic criteria like caste and kin, region, language etc. are the basis of group formation, it is to be examined how far the existence of these groups threatens the integration of Indian society. In the first instance) clamouring for rights and benefits on a group basis may sometimes develop into an institutional mechanism. When there are a number of groups competitively bargaining for the same or similar types of benefits, it is likely that a democratic culture may be evolved through that process. This is particularly relevant when we note that these groups are oriented to secure material benefits from the State and if so once their aims are fulfilled, which is possible either by special concessions or through sharing the benefits of India's development, it is likely that the basis of group-formation would tend to be weakened and that these groups might re-orient their action patterns. The very fact that the ritual basis of caste is less emphasised today in comparison with the promotion of economic interests by caste associations supports such a thesis. In a democratic society bargaining is no sin. But what is

insisted upon is that the basis of the bargaining groups should be 'universalistic', that is, merit-oriented. That is to say the basis of group formation should be changed from particularistic criteria such as caste and kin, region and language to universalistic standards, such as providing equality of opportunity, giving scope for individual merit, etc. To be sure, in this process of take-over there can be much stress and strain, confusion and muddle. We cannot, however, have a universalistically oriented State suddenly at a particular point of time. Probably the tendencies to develop a bargaining culture, the basis of these groups apart, itself may be viewed as a progress. Therefore, the existence and working of such groups are not to be taken as necessarily alarming. In fact these groups in the first instance are capable of creating an institutional basis for organised interests and demands, and secondly of helping to foster a democratic culture. When we note that the basis of Indian society was institutionalised inequality operating through the caste system which was scripturally sanctioned, and that recalcitrance on the part of the individual or the group itself was looked upon as defiance and was sufficient reason for social ostracism, the 'community groups' representing the secular interests of its members may be viewed as an advance in the right direction. The representative system not only provides a platform for voicing sectional interests but helps to amalgamate them into a dynamically balanced pattern of agreements through bargaining. The struggle to secure benefits through a system of representation trains the contestants to seek and reach maximum agreement. To quote Mannheim, 'Democratic agreement does not mean uniformity, but co-ordination of plural strivings limiting each other and producing a cooperative scheme. Such cooperation springs from day to day struggle aiming at a negotiated constructive compromise'.⁸

Our second task is to characterise the group which is releasing stresses and strains in Indian society at present. It is suggested

that the Indian urban middle class is the most active in releasing tensions. We have very little evidence to substantiate this proposition due to the near absence of data in this field. However, a historical perspective would indicate this conclusion. Tracing the conditions conducive to the growth of the Indian middle classes under the East India Company, Misra notes that the immediate circumstances resulting in the growth of a commercial middle class was the sharing of gain with Europeans; the industrial middle class cashed in on illegal gains made from a deterioration in the quality of the produce; the revenue farmer representative of the landed middle class misused the authority he received from the government in expropriating the hereditary and lawful owners of land; the educated middle class cooperated with the British in the exploitation of India's resources; and the bureaucracy had considerable power which extended the 'red-tape' to commercial and industrial undertakings where progress was the result of quick decisions. Yet, 'the professional classes were the first to break through caste or regional barriers and to develop a sense of unity and solidarity which made possible the development of nationhood in India, and paradoxically 'both the freedom and division were the work of middle classes',⁹

The dual role of the dynamic middle class in sustaining the stability as well as disturbing the equilibrium of Indian society found a unique situation with the inauguration of planned economic development and directed social change. With the rapid progress of industrialisation a floating middle class population – the jobseekers, and the status-seekers – appeared in industrial towns and urban centres. Educated and well-to-do as they are, there is a big gap between their mounting aspirations and the limited possibilities of fulfilment. Paradoxically enough, despite their 'all-India' characteristics and spread, this urban middle class happens to be the most active group at the social tension front. Admittedly the growth of urbanisation in India carries with it the seeds of corruption. And

the Indian bureaucrat, politician, and a large majority of entrepreneurs belong to this urban middle class. Thus, the group involved on the social tension front in India today is the urban middle class with a high level of aspiration. If so, one can conveniently reduce the problem of integrating Indian society to that of attending to the aspiration of a numerically – only numerically – insignificant group. However, viewed in a long term context the problem is much more serious. In the first instance, with the increasing industrialisation and consequent urbanisation, the numerical strength of such a group is bound to be greater. Secondly, by the time the impact of directed change in rural India becomes more felt, it is likely that the problem of bridging aspiration and fulfilment will crop up on a countrywide basis.

The dire consequences of the stresses and strains released by a numerically small middle class in India due to their unfulfilled aspirations is sufficiently indicative of the magnitude of the task of attending to the aspirations of the teeming millions in India once their ambitions are released. When the avenues of a better living are unfolded to the average Indian who has previously been in no position to see the possibility of augmenting his material possessions beyond a minimum level due to the sub-human standards of life he has so far been forced to accept, the problem of bridging aspiration and fulfilment will take a serious turn. Therefore, economic growth can be politically unstabilizing, because economic progress while bringing about possibilities of ending the inequalities between the different regions, castes, linguistic groups, etc. is likely to be accompanied by a rise in organised demands. If so, economic growth is not likely to check the political repercussions of scarcity, or prevent group formation with specific interests because we cannot postulate a constancy in demand. Even if voluntary restriction of wants is conceded to be desirable, the possibility of developing such an attitude among Indians in the face of modern social dynamics seems to be remote – Gandhian

influences notwithstanding. Therefore, the dilemma is that though stagnation is undesirable economic growth is not stabilising. Naturally, economics cannot solve our riddles and clear our muddles.

In their attempt to locate the factors facilitating the integration of Indian society, social scientists concentrate attention on inter-group relations or relations between the sub-cultures within the society and the relation of each group to the society as a whole.¹⁰ This would mean that once the pre-requisites or conditions for harmonious relations at these two levels of group interaction were created, the problem of integration of Indian society could be solved. But we believe that the problem has another dimension, viz., the relationship of the individual with the group; of the man with the society.

Social scientists constantly draw attention to the threatening influence of industrialisation and urbanisation on 'community' life. They have enthusiastically argued for the reinforcement of primary group values and the acceptance of the informal-group norms so that the individual may feel himself to be a meaningful member of society. Probably in India, the individual has not yet reached the stage of being 'rootless'. The Indian urbanite has generally retained his identity as a ruralite. His connexions with the village remain, he frequently visits his family and kin who continue to live there and his earnings are disbursed among them. He usually maintains caste-connexions and linguistic affiliations which are reinforced in the city, where a caste association or linguistic organisation caters for his interests. He is not uprooted, at least at the moment, and he does not seem to hunger for the psychological need of 'belonging'.

This brings us to a new perspective from which to look at the problem of the integration of Indian society. The problem, it is tentatively suggested, is that of over-integration, and the region, the linguistic group, the religious community—all are over-integrated groups in their spheres. The over-integrated in-group relations and

loyalties result in under-integrated inter-group relations and allegiances. Therefore, the problem of social integration in India is the problem of thwarting the over-integration at the intra-group level. The high value placed on 'community' life results in accepting it in totality, thereby overlooking the many disadvantages attendant upon such a closed life. Probably what is needed in India is to develop an indifference on the part of the individual to the group—an indifference which would free the individual to be an independent member of society rather than a mere spark in the collective current of group life.

It is pertinent to recall here a different trend of argument claiming that the assumed importance of the community over the individual in India is a myth.¹¹ The real problem here is one of understanding the personality of the Indian. Is he individualistic or egocentric enough to rise above the dictates of the group? There is no evidence to suggest this. On the contrary, it appears that the individual is in the clutches of the group. But even if the apparent predominance of the community over the individual is ruled out, the present position does not offer a firm foundation for building the super-structure of Indian society on the conceived socialistic pattern. For this we must manufacture the balanced man who is attached to but independent of the group. If the individual is to be emancipated from his traditional chains, he may have to develop to one degree or another the following characteristics: (1) ability to visualise and analyse situations apart from personal ones; and (2) capacity to recognise the importance of the individual apart from the group.

The Indian member of the linguistic regional society does not appear to be capable of developing such a personality at present, neither does he appear to be aware of the necessity for such an endeavour. On the contrary the urban Indian belongs simultaneously to two different social systems. On the one hand he belongs to a multiplicity of sectional groups, and on the

other he functions in various roles that are supposed to be independent of these group loyalties. The individual involved in this dilemma as noted earlier is the urban middle class man. On the one hand he is overwhelmed by the group loyalties of the traditional value system with which he has been indoctrinated through authoritarian institutions like the joint family and caste, and on the other hand he is attracted by

the Western liberal ethic unfolded to him in the avowed goal of building a Socialistic Pattern of Society. In such a situation, the emancipation of the social unit, the individual, from the group-oriented traditional ethic is the only possible release from the dilemma. Only thus can he become capable of making decisions as a free individual. Otherwise he might degenerate into a psychological case.

¹ See for example, Oscar Lewis: *Village Life in Northern India*, Urbana 1958 and Baljit Singh: *Next Step in Village India*, Bombay 1961.

² V. Nath: *The Village and the Community* in Roy Turner (ed): *India's Urban Future*, Bombay, 1962, pp. 151-154.

³ B. B. Misra: *Indian Middle Classes*, London 1961, p. 311.

⁴ M. N. Srinivas: *The Social System of a Mysore Village* in Marriott (ed): *Village India*, Chicago, 1955, p. 33.

⁵ K. C. Panchanadikar: *Determinants of Social Structure and Social Change in India*, in the *Sociological Bulletin*, October, 1961, Bombay, p. 32.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 21.

⁷ It is interesting to note that about 90% of the people in Mysore State are classified as 'backward'. Understanding the basic weakness of such a principle, certain States have abolished caste as a basis to extend concessions e.g. Punjab. See *Times of India*, March 25, 1963.

⁸ Karl Mannheim: *Freedom, Power and Democratic Planning*, London, 1951, p. 150.

⁹ B. B. Misra: *op. cit.*, pp. 80, 111, 121, 153, 307, 323 and 400.

¹⁰ A. K. Saran: *Emotional Integration of India*, in the *Journal of Social Sciences* (Supplement), Seminar on Social Integration in India, Agra, 1961, pp. 39-40. The same view has been expressed by B. Kuppaswamy in the Symposium held at Delhi on 'National Integration and its Specific Problems' in connexion with the recent Indian Science Congress. See *Times of India*, Oct. 10, 1963.

¹¹ Phyllis J. Rolnick: *Political Ideology: Myth and Reality in India*, in *Asia Survey*, California, Sept. 1962, p. 29.

DISCUSSION

Non-Violence and Cold War

ABU SAYEED AYYUB

Dear Dr. Raj Krishna,

I should like to offer a few remarks in criticism of your highly stimulating essay on Non-Violence, War and Peace. This criticism is irrespective of the fact that I am largely in agreement with your stand, and in no way affects my admiration for the masterly way in which you have developed your argument. My approach will be to point out that though you have satisfactorily demolished your opponents' case *as you have presented it*, perhaps their case could have been presented a shade better.

Your opponents fall into three (or at least three) categories: (i) those who uphold strict non-violence as a moral principle on the personal plane and raise it to a political principle by insisting on its practicability on the mass or national scale; (2) those who condemn cold war between the Communist and the Western power blocs; and (3) those who preach nuclear disarmament and are prepared to take considerable risks in other respects for the sake of minimising the risk of a global holocaust.

You have devoted more than half your paper to the 1st type of opponents, but in my opinion the most currently significant sections of your paper are those in which you argue against the 2nd and 3rd types. This plan of space allotment would be well justified, however, if the 2nd and 3rd types of views may be assumed to follow from belief in the Gandhian doctrine. In some cases the assumption may be valid, but I do not think all condemnation

of cold war or nuclear arms race is based on the principle of non-violence. At any rate I see no logical connection between the two, nor have you attempted to establish any. In which case won't you agree that the principle of universal non-violence is rather a dead horse to flog?

You appear to entertain the notion that pluralism and conflict of values is a new discovery or a new experience made possible by the complexity of modern times, (e.g., you say "many of the celebrated leaders of mankind have been moral monists"; and then again, "once we realise the complexity of moral choice in contemporary conditions, and give up moral monism";) you have also suggested that our ancient religious and moral teachers were aware only of the conflict between good and evil, not between good and good. May I point out that perhaps the earliest expression, and a most moving expression, of the experience of conflicting values is to be found in the Vedic singer who sang to the hills and dales beyond the Indus; "Kasmai devāya havishā vidhema" (to which god should I bring my offerings). The concept of purushārtha, which was in all probability developed well before the birth of Christ, is again as clear a formulation of the pluralism and conflict of values as any you could cite. Though some sort of difference was maintained between the trivarga (i.e., artha, kāma and dharma) and apavarga (or moksa), yet all four—artha, kāma, dharma and moksa—are affirmed as purushārthas or ultimate values, as the proper goals of human life. An

attempt to resolve the conflict between them was made by the parallel conception of the four āśhramas (four stages of life with different aims and obligations), but the Bhagvad Gita (presumably composed in the pre-Christian era) appears to reject that resolution insofar as it prescribes *niskāma kārma* for all the stages of a man's life, for the *grihi* as well as for the *sannyasin*. However, we have here a very different formulation of value pluralism (different, that is, from the conception of the 4 *purusārthas*): the ultimate values being conceived along the paths of *jñāna*, *karma* and *bhakti*, as truth, *lokasamgraha* (promotion of social well-being) and divine communion. The author of the Gita was evidently not apportioning these values to the different stages of life, but it is not quite clear to me whether he conceived them as simultaneously realisable by every individual, or, as Shri Aurobindo maintains, he was thinking of three psychological types of personality, each choosing one of the three values. But the conflict between them is obvious and is to be found in the pages of the Gita. Is not the *Ramāyana* the story of a conflict of values, the values of romantic love and love of the people? The *Mahābhārata* is too big and complex to have any single theme or *leit motif*, but surely one of its very important themes is Arjuna's despair at his awareness of conflicting loyalties. And the Greek tragedies too seem to revolve round some sort of conflict of values, often around the conflicting claims of family and State.

But in a somewhat different and almost contrary vein you also write: "Modernity has added little to the repertory of the primary value-concepts evolved by the religious-ethical traditions of all the great civilisations of the world", and you have said, particularly in reference to our own ancient thinkers and sages: "moral monism is un-Indian". Who then are the people you refer to as moral monists and charge with "a serious neglect of other important values". Gandhiji? But about Gandhiji you write in another context, "his commitment to non-violence was not unconditional; it

was conditioned by his simultaneous commitment to *other great values*." (italics added).

I think you should clarify what and whom you mean by "moral monist". In this connection it would be necessary to pay some attention to the distinction between end-values and means-values or final and instrumental values. Many people—more in modern times than in ancient times—are monists in regard to end values. Utilitarians and their modern descendants, who regard pleasure, happiness or satisfaction of desire as the final goal of all human action, are monists in this sense. I should regard you too as a moral monist in this sense, for you cannot add and subtract values in the way you have done without reducing them to a common denominator. On the other hand, I do not know of any one who is a monist in respect of means or instrumental values. Not the believers in non-violence, for they have never said a word against the diversity of means to be adopted in pursuit of whatever value or values may be chosen as the end. They only debar the adoption of such means as would involve the killing or maiming of other people in pursuit of your goals, save and except under very abnormal conditions.

Non-violence is *not injuring* a value, and that the most basic of all *moral* values, viz., the value of other human persons. (I would not describe art or knowledge as moral values, though they are certainly values of a high order). Naturally, therefore, non-violence becomes a primary negative injunction. It is not a primary moral law in all ethical systems; it is not, for instance, a duty in feudal or aristocratic ethics. There the central value concept is that of personal and/or family honour, and the promotion of such values requires to some extent the use of violence. But non-violence is a basic duty in all democratic ethics. Though basic, it is not absolute, that is, it is not obligatory under all conditions. The exceptional conditions under which it has to be counter-manded are well recognised, even by such a single-

minded protagonist of non-violence as Gandhiji—as you have yourself repeatedly pointed out.

Here again I would not describe, as you appear to do, the general condition restricting the practice of non-violence as the condition in which the value to be realised by violence out-weighs the value of non-violence itself. Violence, as such, is a sacrifice of values, and therefore it can be justified only in the situation in which recourse to it would prevent the sacrifice of more values or values of a higher order in some clearly discernable perspective. I think the condition must be stated in this negative and only in this negative way. Stated as a deliberation over the comparative value of non-violence and other values (which might be promoted by violence) leading to the choice of the greater value, the condition might easily prove disastrous. If I am the local boxing champion, would I be justified in beating up and bullying all the people in my neighbourhood to turn them into teetotalers—if they refuse to be persuaded by arguments? Some prohibitionists may well argue that I shall be promoting more value in this way than the value that I shall realise through non-violence. Communists do in fact argue that the value they promote by transforming a free-enterprise capitalist economy into a state-controlled socialist economy through violence, that is by liquidating the capitalists and their petit bourgeois intellectual henchmen, is far greater than the value of non-violence—realised by permitting the capitalist order to continue.

Violence, whether individual, collective or judicial, should only be justified by the demonstrable balance of evil or disvalue that it prevents, not by the balance of good or value that it may promote. Otherwise how would you argue against—I presume that you would argue against—wars of liberation. If in the course of its pursuit of “balance-brink-and-bargain” policy, the West suddenly finds itself in a decidedly advantageous position through the unexpected discovery of some clearly

superior nuclear offensive or defensive weapon, should it be justified in carrying a victorious war into Russia, Eastern Europe and China in order to enable their citizens to enjoy the benefits of democracy and freedom of thought. Should it not, according to your value-arithmetic involving the addition and subtraction of values?—assuming that the West has momentarily acquired that kind of military superiority over the Russians which the Americans had over the Japanese in 1945. Communists would clearly consider themselves justified according to their moral principles (and Mao is evidently a better Communist though a poorer diplomat than Khrushchev) in liberating the toiling masses of the non-Communist world from the power of the capitalist demon so that they might live happily ever after in the socialist paradise. No scruples about the use of violence whether of the orthodox or of the atomic variety would deter them. They (and particularly the Chinese Communists) are waiting only for the moment they can break with impunity through the “balance-brink-and-and-bargain” diplomacy into a triumphant holy war. The possibility of a disastrous nuclear unbalance even though for a short period suddenly emerging out of the ghastly race in nuclear weapons is the most important point which you should have discussed but have not. Those who consider such a possibility negligible would accept your policy of balance-brink-and-bargain. Those who regard it as by no means negligible would view acquiescence in your international policy as dangerous particularly if that policy is to be conducted in a spirit of cold war.

This naturally brings me to your condemnation of the condemnation of cold war. All kinds of people condemn cold war and there are many kinds of condemnation. Not all are silly or opportunist. There is one kind of condemnation which appears to me to be sensible, and this kind has not been discussed by you. This is the condemnation of cold war psychology, a topic which cannot be discussed without bring-

ing in the discussion of the principle of co-existence, another thing which you have left out of your paper. Am I wrong in presuming from the concluding section of your paper that you accept this principle? I must again ask what kind of coexistence? We may decide to coexist in the same neighbourhood—for we may have no other option—with a gang of thugs and bandits. But we can think of such coexistence as nothing but a temporary and compulsive choice, to last only until such time as we can make ourselves strong enough to get the better of them, or until adequate armed assistance from friendly sources arrives to help us out of such a detestable form of existence. This is how the Communists have chosen to coexist with the capitalist bloc of powers. They hate and abuse them all the time, are fully convinced that the capitalist ruling classes are blood-sucking exploiters and inveterate war-mongers, and it is part of their creed to believe and preach that peace, prosperity and goodwill on earth cannot be established without the disappearance from the earth of the capitalist system and the cultural superstructure which it supports. One must credit the Maoist Communists with greater sincerity and frankness on this issue. They refuse to pay even lip service to the principle of coexistence. They openly pursue the policy of ceaseless preparation for offensive war against and, preparatory to that, promotion in every possible way of armed insurrections inside the enemy countries. But they would of course keep the peace (disregarding little frontier wars with limited objectives) until they are ready to make war with reasonable chances of success. They are not too worried by the spectre of nuclear destruction. Khrushchevites, on the other hand, realise better the horrifying risks of a nuclear war, but their position seems more confused. They do not yield much ground to the Maoists in their detestation and abuse of the capitalist system and the States where that system prevails, and are equally determined to bring the whole world under Com-

munist. Disillusioned now of their earlier and more orthodox belief in the breakdown of capitalism as a result of its mounting inner contradictions, they appear to be veering round to another equally naive belief, viz., that when they beat the West in the economic race (of which they are pretty confident), the capitalist system would collapse or slowly wither away. This wishfulfilling phantasy too is wearing thin. Are they then coming round to the tough realisation that there is no reasonable prospect of the establishment of world communism in any foreseeable future, that communism and capitalism are both durable systems with merits and demerits of their own, and have to be accepted as such, particularly in view of the fact that they are both getting rid of their earlier more noxious features? Or is their talk of coexistence another instance of double-talk, and in their heart of hearts they do not differ much from the Maoists on this issue?

What about the West? From the way that most of their propagandists and not a few of their intellectuals berate and wholly denounce the communism of Russia no less than of China, it would appear that their belief in coexistence with the Communists is to all intents and purposes a belief in the coexistence with thugs and bandits, an abhorrent state of existence consequent upon nuclear parity, to be ended as soon as advancement in military science and technology enables them to end it. This kind of coexistence may well be described as a state of cold war, which naturally implies a cold war psychology, or may I call it, a cold war psychosis?

What I mean by cold war psychosis can best be understood by reference to hot war psychosis, the state of mind of people engaged in actual war. Since millions of them must slaughter and be slaughtered, the mental atmosphere that alone can supply the energy and impetus for such a carnage is naturally found to be the intensest possible hatred for the enemy and the constant wearing of smoke-glass spectacles which makes them see the enemy as the blackest of black devils. Whether or not

it is really necessary for peoples engaged in a cold war (as it is for those engaged in a hot war) to blacken their hearts and eyes, they do in fact blacken them. This is what makes the cold war so ominous, and so obvious a prelude to hot war. Military preparedness is one thing and may be a necessary thing under certain conditions; but it becomes a highly dangerous thing when combined with a mental declaration of war. I would define cold war as a mental declaration of war while keeping the powder unignited though at a temperature only one degree short of the ignition point.

The other kind of coexistence (which cannot be described as any state of war, hot or cold) is the coexistence of two systems accepted as enduring historical entities (nothing is everlasting in history) and developing along their respective lines and tempos from large scale poverty to comparative affluence, from the political bondage of the great majority to their comparative freedom. To be sure, we are convinced that in the material well-being of its people and to a far greater extent in the wealth of cultural achievement Western democracy has proved its superiority to Eastern totalitarianism. But the bearing in mind of this fact need not imply bearing any ill will towards the Communist countries or any wholesale denunciation of their way of life. Those who believe in this kind of coexistence, and this is the only kind which can be relied on to avoid a nuclear holocaust, must necessarily condemn cold war involving the psychology of hatred and angry denunciation. We must no doubt be proud of the values that we cherish and are in the process of achieving, and critical of the disvalues that we discern on the other side. But this criticism must be expressed in a dispassionate and civilised language, not in the immoderate language of hot or cold war. We must also learn to be wide awake to and sharply critical of our own vices, and well-disposed to the discovery and appreciation of such virtues as the other side may possess. If we find it difficult to forgive the wrong side of the iron curtain for having produc-

ed a Stalin, let us not forget we have forgiven (have we not?) the right side of the iron curtain for having produced a Hitler, a Mussolini and a McCarthy?

So long as mistrust and the grounds of mistrust continue, we must continue to live in a state of full military preparedness. But this does not necessarily involve the maintenance of a cold war psychology. To be ready for hot war does not mean to be in a state of cold war. We and the Communists cannot obviously be good friends for quite some time to come; but what prevents us from being good and civilised neighbours in the meanwhile? This applies to our relations with Pakistan as well, or even better. China presents a separate problem. It is arguable however that the present maniacal ambition of the Chinese leaders may best be checked by the Soviet Union and the U.S.A. (and their respective allies) working in collaboration, not by insisting that, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, China and Russia are both equally black thieves and thick as thieves.

As intellectuals, we must of course place the highest possible value on intellectual and artistic freedom, and condemn in the strongest possible language its suppression (to the extent to which the suppression is a fact) in the totalitarian States; but as intellectuals we must also realise (believing as we do in value pluralism) that intellectual freedom is not the only possible value in human life, that in regard to the progressive realisation of some other important values, e.g., racial and economic equality, the Communist East may claim some superiority to the democratic West. The kind of atmosphere in which the intellectual can best live up to his ideals of scrupulous regard for all available data, dispassionate examination of all sides of a question and strict impartiality in arriving at any conclusion or judgement is not compatible with the mental climate of cold war. This, I think, is the only sensible aspect of the condemnation of cold war. For the rest I am with you.

Trivial Attitudes

ASHIN DAS GUPTA

AS he advances into his own twilight years, Dr. Percival Spear speaks with a mellowed wisdom which carries him beyond general approval. It is a painful conclusion, but if you have read all that Dr. D. P. Singhal has to say about Spear's latest book *India, A Modern History* (*Quest*, Spring 1964), you cannot escape it. Dr. Spear stands accused of 'motivated writing' which, to put it more vigorously amounts to 'political pamphleteering'. In attempting to introduce Modern India to the American undergrads at Berkeley, Dr. Spear has sneaked in 'a substantial academic defence of the British record in India'. In the process he has presented a distorted image of India. He has emphasised the caste-system, mentioned the Black Hole and ignored such epochal events as the asphyxiation of the Moplas. (Who asphyxiated the Moplas, anyway?). Unfortunately for him 'rising Indian historians not only ask awkward questions but many of them take an aggressive attitude'. One possible escape for Dr. Spear was in the fact that specialists would ignore his book 'as of little academic value'. But alas, Dr. Singhal has now firmly closed that door and Dr. Spear must face the consequences of his own 'irresponsibility'.

But perhaps the consequences need not be as awesome as would appear from a first reading of the *exposé*. One set of doubts raised by Dr. Singhal can be dispelled by adequate quotations from the 'political pamphlet' itself. Dr. Spear has been accused of denying Hinduism its assimilative character and Indian history its continuity. In fact, he has done neither. He has only got into trouble by discussing other people's views. If you wish to ascertain Spear's own feelings about the Hindu faith from

this book, the chapter for you would be the second one where he makes a valiant attempt to search out the fundamentals of that religion and comes to the conclusion that 'Hinduism is a body of customs and a body of ideas, the two having such pervasive power and defensive force as to absorb or resist passively for centuries any system which comes into contact with it'. (p. 41). In the last chapter, 'Concluding Reflections', Dr. Spear considers some of the general views on Indian history, among them that of Professor A. L. Basham who can see 'no thread of meaning' running through the ups and downs of Indian development. He goes on to write that 'looked at from this level, it is indeed difficult to discern much trace of progress or detect a continuing thread of inner meaning. Indian history would seem to be a broken country in the world of time'. (p. 447). Presumably, it is this sentence which has incurred Dr. Singhal's displeasure. Fortunately for him, Dr. Spear goes on to add: 'But if we turn our attention to the society and culture of India we find at once a very different picture. We shall not indeed find a steady progression as was required by the optimistic historians of the nineteenth century, but we shall find a process of constant modification and development which gives meaning and significance to the whole outer drama of action and pageantry'. (p. 448). I am sure Dr. Singhal would agree with me when I say that it may not be strictly fair to Dr. Spear if we penalise him for views held by Professor Basham.

But these are only misunderstandings and must not be pressed. There is, however, another type of complaint, a little more serious because it contains vague but

disturbing points. The grievances in this category relate to Spear's undeniable habit of giving qualified praise where, say, the Tourist Department of the Govt. of India would have gone into rhapsodies. The major accusation is that the book does not give the deference and scope, to pre-British India which is its due. This is, indeed, true and if it were a general history of India, this neglect would have been serious. But Spear was not writing an outline of Indian development; he was presenting Modern India to an American audience. He would, in fact, have been within his rights if he had come straight away to the eighteenth century after a perfunctory preface. Actually he devotes about one hundred and eighty out of a total of four hundred fifty odd pages of the text to developments before the establishment of British power in India. I would have called it rare generosity, but I notice that Dr. Singhal has made it into a grievance and has in fact written a paragraph himself stressing the various achievements of Ancient India.

It is possible that what worries Dr. Singhal is not the large-hearted allowance of space to Ancient and Medieval India but the absence of eulogy. But in this, again, Spear does not quite deserve the censure he has got. Although you may not think so after reading the *exposé*, the cultural achievements of Ancient India have in fact been duly recorded. 'In the intellectual world', writes this disciple of Miss Mayo 'India not only made important progress in her own right...but also passed on her discoveries to the West via the Arab world. 'Arabic' numerals which replaced the clumsy Roman notation and made modern arithmetical calculations possible, were invented in India. So was the all-important zero'. (pp. 22-23) Further: 'The monistic ideas of the Vedanta influenced a series of German thinkers from Fichte to Schopenhauer and Deussen. Albert Schweitzer, while himself critical of Indian thought, is perhaps indebted more than he suspects to the Indian principle of oneness of all existence in his enunciation of the great doctrine of 'reverence for all

life.' More quotations could be added, but I shall now turn to a third type of grievance which merits serious consideration.

Reading this book, an impression can legitimately be formed that Spear dwells a little too frequently on the elements of diversity in India and underlines the social failures. But one should not overlook the fact that in this series of lectures Spear was introducing India to people of a vastly different culture who knew nothing about the subject. It was essential for him to bring out the immense complexities of the theme without losing direction. This job has indeed been performed well and anything else would have been less than honest. This brings us to another fact which has to be faced. The period which was central to Spear began in the eighteenth century. By and large this was one of the most vicious times for the Indians and a writer on this theme finds decay all round him. It is possible to present a brighter picture of India by falling back on more ancient lore. But then, I do not think it was Spear's job to build up a bright picture of the land but to write a history of Modern India. One last and vital thought. The way Spear handles the theme of caste is essential to his approach as a historian. He writes with the conviction that Indian history has to be discovered not in royal courts, nor even in towns, but in hamlets, temples and the poor man's shop. Put differently, he believes that if you wish to understand Indian history, do not turn to politics but look well in the society. In this Spear practices what Rabindranath preached. And one major conclusion reached in the process is that Indian Society had grown steadily over the centuries by assimilating numerous foreigners and accommodating strange gods. The chief instrument shaped for this purpose was the caste-system. Foreign invasions lost themselves in India leaving behind a few strange words, occasional outlandish customs and a sprinkling of new castes. One concrete example about the invasions which followed the death of

Harsha: 'But above all it was a time of assimilation of new peoples into the Hindu system. It was the last creative achievement of the Brahmins. Apparently without directing authority by means of a series of compromises and *ad hoc* decisions independently arrived at but unerring in their general direction, the Brahmins absorbed whole peoples into the Hindu fold (p. 87)'. And further: 'Political disunity and even anarchy, military impotence in face of foreign invasion, must not obscure the basic achievement of this epoch, the fundamental cultural unity of India (p. 93)'. Dr. Singhal complains that Spear has denied the assimilative character of Hinduism. He is wrong. Dr. Singhal further complains that Spear emphasizes the evils of caste because he is a concealed colonialist. He is wrong again. Spear comes back to caste from time to time because in this he has found the social instrument of assimilation.

This leaves us with one other major group of grievances. Spear thinks too much of the English. It is not only that he has not a word of criticism for them but that, for him, all that is good in Modern India can be traced to the English imperial connection. This type of allegation, like some of the others already considered, can be refuted from the text. Spear has few words of praise for the English in the second half of the eighteenth century. 'From this moment', writes Spear of Clive's departure in 1760 'the results of the financial and commercial settlements with Mir Jafar became visible. Their effect was to ruin the experiment of a sponsored Indian state, destroy the prosperity of Bengal, and bring the Company itself near to bankruptcy... The idea of an Indian state sponsored by the East India Company was wrecked by the folly and greed of the Company's own servants (pp. 198-99)'. Further: 'The five years after Clive's departure may rightly be described as the period of open and unashamed plunder (p. 199)'. And after a proper discussion of English failings: 'It is clear that it was not only the Company's servants who

required disciplining; their 'masters' at India House needed it as much (p. 207)'. This criticism is switched to a different plane as the British administration changes character. From now on Spear concentrates on British failure to work with the Indians for the good of both. A good example of this would be his criticism of Cornwallis for failing to enlist Indians in the Civil Service (p. 206). One major theme, which Spear has explored in depth in his first but perhaps the most important work *The Nabobs*, is the gradual estrangement between Indians and the English due largely to a growing arrogance among the masters. Echoes from this are scattered through the latter sections of the book (e.g., pp. 254-55). It is not at all true that Spear does not recognize the contributions of Indian intellectuals to the shaping of Modern India. Dr. Singhal seems to have overlooked chapter XXVI called 'the Mind of New India' (pp. 289-97) where, among other things, Ram Mohan's achievements (the absence of which has been so keenly felt in the *exposé*) have been acknowledged. Dr. Singhal also appears a little cross because he has not been fed with stories of British atrocities after the Mutiny. Much depends, of course, on how much he wants. Spear certainly touches upon this and tells us how 'the whole population of Delhi, mostly innocent victims of mutineer violence and cupidity, was turned out of the city (by the British) to fend for itself (p. 277)'. For further horrors I would refer Dr. Singhal to the *Twilight of the Mughals* where Spear has one full chapter called 'the Aftermath' devoted to the Indian tribulations after the Mutiny. The fact is, I think, that Spear has not much of an appetite for atrocities. Specially when he is busy condensing an eventful century within a thrifty chapter, he hurries past unpleasantness. Basically, I fear, T. G. P. Spear is not quite Dr. Singhal's cup of tea. The critic is obviously looking for a stronger brew.

There are, of course, quite serious difficulties for a historian who would rather not face unpleasantness, specially when he ap-

proaches our own troubled times. My enthusiasm for Spear—perhaps the last of the great English liberal historians—waned as he begins the tale of the twentieth century. A few of Dr. Singhal's criticisms begin to command respect. Even here, however, Spear remains above the level where Dr. Singhal's fire is concentrated. But the benign mastery of the previous epochs is gone and one becomes aware of the writer more as a participant than as a historian. There is a footnote to chapter XXXIV which says: "The author went to Delhi early in 1924. From this point in the book until 1945 there is an element of personal experience and reminiscence in the narrative." There lies the rub. Mellowed wisdom demands that discord be not stressed. The aesthete would rather not record pedestrian wickedness. And the spectator does not know where the events are leading. Caught among different fires Spear fails to carry conviction in the later sections of his book.

Dr. Singhal, however, misses the significance of Spear's handling of the Indian national movement. Quite clearly Spear believes that whatever may have happened before, in the last decades the British Government wanted sincerely to hand over power. There was, of course, to be no unseemly haste and wise Indian leaders should have cooperated along the way. Unfortunately for Spear he lived in India through the years of non-cooperation. In these pages therefore, you will not find even a muted echo of the tremendous excitement of the times. Spear would only inform you that 'an unwilling middle-class' was dragged to fight the British through some obscure magic practised by Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji is, in fact, only admired for his incomprehensible ability to rouse the people. Men like Irwin, C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru remain the heroes for the veteran liberal. If people like these had managed affairs throughout, then all the distressing business of satyagraha, mass arrests and so on and so forth, would have been quite unnecessary. Writing about the time immediately preceding the Salt March, Spear

has this to say: "The general middle-class, which had been greatly impressed by Irwin's character as well as by his gestures, was markedly reluctant. It wanted advance, but it wanted peace also. Irwin offered both, Gandhi ordered the former. They respected Irwin, but they revered Gandhi; eventually they preferred the Mathma to the Churchman. But the inner struggle was severe, and no one should suppose that the decision was easy or the conclusion foregone. India as a whole was not seething with discontent, but hoping wistfully for harmonious development' (p. 377). I suspect that this hope for harmonious development was more Spear's than India's.

This brings us to the last but, alas, not the least important problem: the creation of Pakistan. It is exasperatingly difficult to determine exactly where Spear stands about this. One thing fortunately is beyond doubt: Spear has no love either for the way in which Pakistan was made or for its maker. In fact he holds Jinnah "the master of the negative, the abettor of fanaticism in the clothes of Bond Street, the soft-spoken dispenser of doom to millions' (p. 441) responsible 'for Direct Action Day in Calcutta and all that flowed from it.' (p. 416)

This indicates how Spear feels about the problem but it does not explain what he thinks of it. I believe that to sort it out we shall have to face three major queries. Is this true that in Indian history Hindus and Muslims have been fighting perennially as hostile nations? What led to the demand for separate Muslim rights since the Mutiny? Could not this 'separateness' be contained within the federal structure of an Indian nation? The greatest failing of Spear has been his failure to face these questions squarely. In fact it is easy to notice a contradiction in his attitude to the whole problem. As a historian he is inclined to accept the accomplished fact of Pakistan and lean towards the two-nation theory in explaining it. His liberal, aesthete self with all its love for India finds the process distasteful and slurs over the de-

tails, withholding forthright statements. This means, of course, that most of the time you do not know where you are. Thus in criticising the Act of 1935, Spear writes 'A... weakness was the failure to recognize the plural nature of Indian society. There was communal representation. it is true... But there was no realization of the fact that India contained separate cultures as well as regions and communities.' Then, the agonized question: "Could a body of about ninety-million Muslims be seriously regarded as just a minority?" (p. 339) Notice the withdrawal from the brink: Could it be that these Muslims constituted a separate *nation*? Elsewhere the urge to account for an accomplished fact is more pronounced. In discussing the growth of Muslim separatism Sir Sayyad Ahmed has been judged the equal of Rammohun Roy and the contributions of Ahmed, Iqbal and Jinnah in the making of Pakistan have been strung together in a manner reminiscent of Mazzini, Garibaldi and Cavour's work for Italian Unification. (pp. 409-410) Throughout the recent decades, again, the Indian National Congress remains an overwhelmingly Hindu organization. Spear notes the existence of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad but would not concede him any importance. Finally after 1937 the Muslim movement snow-balls largely through the stupidity of the Congress and Spear acknowledges the inevitability of Pakistan after rioting starts in 1946.

This, I fear, does not leave us much wiser. Let us then return, even if briefly, to the necessary questions. Have the Hindus and Muslims been always fighting? The answer is yes and no. If you are looking for it you shall certainly find traces of tension even in the best of times. The closer you approach the royal courts of medieval India and the nearer you stay to its urban centres, the more likely you will notice discord. Things will, of course, get more difficult in days of general trouble. It would be worse than foolish to pretend that this was not so. Recent studies have however suggested at least two major avenues of research which promise reward. Regional

studies, like the one Professor N. K. Sinha has done on Bengal, can take us closer to village life and reveal a different type and tempo of living. Dr. Spear himself works with the commendable intention of going to the roots of Indian life. He will appreciate the necessity of waiting for the more considered judgement of the detailed studies, before one closes one's mind. The second attempt is to understand the general problems of the middle ages which will show you 'the communal situation' in a different light. Dr. Satish Chandra in his recent book *Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court, 1707-1740*, discusses the growth of a profound social-economic crisis in late medieval India. In a nutshell what happened was that the total production of Indian agriculture fell far short of the demands made on it during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Aristocrats all over the country were forced to break up into groups and fight for assignments of land. Naturally this sharpened existing rivalries. But occasionally it cut across them. Thus if you turn to that great 'religious struggle' of the Hindus against Muslim domination, this is what Dr. Brij Kishore has to say about the Maratha war in the closing years of Aurangzeb: 'He (Aurangzeb) knew the raging unscrupulousness of the Maratha character and their greed for *vatan*-lands or hereditary rights of revenue collection in land. With a lavish hand he distributed *jagir*-lands among them... and by the time the first round of the war of national liberation began, as many Maratha leaders were fighting for him as against him'. (*Tarabai and Her Times*, New Delhi, 1963, p. 39). This verdict is important because, as even this short excerpt shows, Dr. Brij Kishore is a firm believer in *clichés* himself.

The first question therefore must still wait on further investigation, but I believe communal tension will soon come to be seen in its proper perspective against the panorama of Indian medieval life. The second question has come nearest to an answer. Initial Muslim separatism is partly to be credited to the belated emergence of a middle class among the Musalmans and

partly to the encouragement from the British Administration. Dr. Singhal does well to stress the English role in this but his trouble is that he makes too much of it. The English did not manufacture the social antagonisms in India, nor did they encourage the demand for Pakistan. But they were certainly guilty of showing a motivated tenderness for the Muslims in India.

How then would we explain the creation of Pakistan? The two-nation theory would account for the theocracy of Pakistan but not the emergence of secular India. If there were only two nationalisms — Hindu and Muslim, Congress and League — then why did not the Congress build up a Hindu India? Spear appears haunted by the accomplished fact of Pakistan. But democratic India is not any the less concrete. The difficulty would lessen, I think, if we posit three nationalisms instead of two — Hindu, Muslim and Indian. Indian nationalism has throughout been secular and democratic, even internationally minded. Faced with collapse and chaos in 1946 it made a deal with fanaticism and has since concentrated on building up a modern state of new civilization. The struggle with the medieval mind — Hindu and Muslim nationalisms, if you like — is still on. Indian nationalists, be they Hindu or Muslim, in Pakistan are also in the fray — perhaps its bravest fighters. No historical judgment is of course possible at the moment. Consider two very different books which can be

written in 2064. One of them may say: 'The secular nationalism of India, however, proved to be a tender growth. Faced with pressure from Pakistan, the Indian leadership made compromises with Hindu reactionary forces within the country and ultimately, with the departure of its Old Guard, gave way completely. Since then the two countries have relapsed into their present primitive state through continuous internecine warfare from which the rest of the world has held aloof with great difficulty'. The other may record 'After an initial phase of difficulties, progressive forces gained the upper hand in both countries. The democratic movement which emerged in its eastern wing soon changed the character of Pakistan. The growth of an affluent society in India gradually weakened the forces of fanaticism in that country and its new leadership pledged all assistance to Pakistan in its programme of development. The Indo-Pakistan sub-continent has since been a haven of prosperity and peace in this part of the world'.

Which of these books will be written? I should say, that would depend at least in part on how seriously we try to understand the present predicament. Dr. Singhal is content to think that the communal problem was the handiwork of our English masters and communal rioting has left us with their departure. It does not give me even a melancholy satisfaction to assure him he is wrong. There is the grim thought that a people's failure often expresses itself in trivial attitudes.

POETRY

INVISIBLE TREE

On the snow I found prints
and for the first time knew
the world of small life, birds and beasts
in the forests:
squirrel, footprints down an old elm,
across the path . . . gone among firs —
no anxiety, hesitation, nowhere
a question;
a fox, coursing straight down the road
through the valley north of my village —
my hunger never drew so straight a line,
never in my mind so smooth, blind, sure
a rhythm;
a bird now, prints clearer than her voice,
claw-marks sharper than her life,
feather-flicks frozen in the sloping snow —
my terror could never tremble to such pattern,
in my mind never such a pagan, sensual,
affirmative beat.

Suddenly; sunset, big on the summit of Asama.
Something not known has built a forest,
pushed open the mouth of the valley,
split the cold air.
Back in my hut
I light the stove
thinking an invisible tree
invisible bird
invisible small things living
rhythm invisible.

RYUICHI TAMURA
(Translated into English by
Rikutaro Fukuda)

SUMMER IN CALCUTTA

What is this drink but
 The April sun, squeezed
 Like an orange in
 My glass? I sip the
 Fire, I drink and drink
 Again, I am drunk,
 Yes, but on the gold
 Of suns. What noble
 Venom now flows through
 My veins and fills my
 Mind with unhurried
 Laughter? My worries
 Doze. Wee bubbles ring
 My glass, like a bride's
 Nervous smile, and meet
 My lips. Dear, forgive
 This moment's lull in
 Wanting you, the blur
 In memory. How
 Brief the term of my
 Devotion, how brief
 Your reign when I with
 Glass in hand, drink, drink,
 And drink again this
 Juice of April suns.

KAMALA DAS

Kamala Das is the recipient for the year 1964 of the Annual Quest Poetry Award. The judges are appointed annually by the various P.E.N. centres in Asia; the Indian representative this year was Mr. Khushwant Singh. Her two poems and the preceding poem by the Japanese poet Ryuichi Tamura will be included in the first Asian PEN Anthology of English Poetry, to be edited by Mr. F. Sionel Jose of Manila and published this autumn.

—EDITORS

THE SIRENS

The night, dark-cloaked like a procuress, brought
 him to me, willing, light like a shadow,
 speaking words of love
 in some tender language I do not know.
 Aniruddha, dream-lover, hide from him
 this kind night's deceit, for I know too well
 that he loves me not.

With the crows came the morning, and my limbs,
 warm from love, were once again so lonely.
 At my door-step I saw a pockmarked face
 a friendly smile and
 a rolleiflex. We will go for a drive,
 he said. Or, go to see the lakes. I have
 washed my face with soap and water, brushed
 my hair a dozen
 times, draped myself in six yards of printed
 voile. Ah . . . does it still show, my night of love?
 You look pale, he said. Not pale, not really
 pale. It's the lipstick's
 anaemia. Out, in the street, we heard
 the sirens go, and I paused in talk to
 weave its veil with the sound of his mirthless
 laughter. He said,
 they are testing the sirens today. I am
 happy. He really was lavish with words.
 So happy, just being with you. But you,
 you love another,
 I know, he said, perhaps a handsome man,
 a young and handsome man. Not young,
 not handsome, I thought, just a filthy snob.
 It's a onesided love,
 I said. What can I do, or you? I smiled.
 A smile is such a detached thing, I wear
 it like a flower. Near the lake, a pregnant
 girl bared her dusky
 breasts and washed them sullenly. On the old
 canon-stand, crows bickered over a piece
 of lizard-meat, and the white sun was there
 and everywhere.
 I want your photo, lying down, he said,
 against those rusty, nineteen-thirty-four guns.

Will you? Sure. Just arrange my limbs and tell
me when to smile. I
shut my eyes, but inside eye-lids there was
no more night, no more love, or peace, only
the white, white, sun burning, burning, burning . . .

Ah, why does love come to me like pain,
again and again and again.

KAMALA DAS

NO HEART TO GIVE

I have no heart to give a country, shed no glory for a flag,
I stain no battle-field with red blood, fly no bomber in the sky.

Hold the world in your fist, you fool,
And lick your lush, livid wounds . . .

I have no passion to give a woman, no scalps of undone maids,
I have no memories of triumphant passion, satisfy no woman in her grave.

Seek refuge in the daylight, fool,
For your troubled, throbbing mind . . .

I have no scars of brawls, of drunken orgies, none shall call me brave,
No virile laughter, hard of fist and timbre, to pattern an unborn babe.

Sob into your smarting, salted wounds, fool,
For your night will never end . . .

. . . Swim, you fool, there is no kingdom under the sea,
No coral-red-acquamarine-turquoise-kingfisher-blue,
You fool, there is no promised land, no silent beauty,
No myth of rainbow ends or coral strands,
Save in the wild, wild bramble minds
Of sanity.

LESLIE DE NORONHA

SHORT STORY

Bit by Bit

M. C. GABRIEL

GURUMURTHY Subramaniam felt the call of the Muse as he returned home one evening after coffee with his friends at the South Indian Cafe, where they generally spent the earlier part of the evening in innocent non-committal chatting. Krishnan had said something that had started off Gurumurthy Subramaniam on his description of some very sullen-looking people he had seen in a district and had ended quite effectively and unconsciously with: 'You've got to walk a mile, to find a smile'. After he had said it the rhyme registered on the speaker and no doubt it had slightly reinforced his point. Raghavan and Krishnan too had been appreciative and had gurgled with amusement. But what had happened to Gurumurthy was a kind of pleasant revelation of his inner depths to himself. He was so overwhelmed by the discovery that it left him tongue-tied during the rest of the conversation. Later when alone he felt expansive, and saddened at the same time that he had not realised it earlier. The rhyming sentence that had quite thoughtlessly slipped out of his mouth, turned into a kind of boomerang and kept returning and buzzing through his mind, setting up vibration after vibration till it drove him half-mad. He longed to recapture it, get it well down his throat and release it afresh. Again and again. As he walked on his mind reassembled the scene — the two friends, the three tea-cups, the fluorescent tube reflected partially at the farther end of the glass-topped table, the fourth empty chair — tracked out the harmless conversation, guided it back to where Krishnan asked his

question and waited thrilling for his own description to come to the point where it heard him releasing that miraculous sentence upon his friends like a bolt from Parnassus. And every time he released it, it amazed him more than before. How was it he had never known! He couldn't forgive himself! He was appropriately contrite to the Muse for having neglected her so long! By the time he reached home he felt on the verge of an Epic about the evening, but when he sat down to write it he couldn't get a single sentence straight. Far from discouraged he told himself that he *must*, like all poets, wait humbly for his inspiration. A poem is never made; it is born.

After that for two weeks the last inspiration played hide-and-seek with him. Every morning he believed that the fateful day had arrived and before nightfall he learnt that it had been postponed. Sometimes it made him desperate, for he gradually began to feel that he was being cheated out of his rightful due. Because it did *seem* to come, though always at the wrong moment: just as he was going out, or getting into bed or worse when he was answering the call of nature. But he still waited for the day when the poem would, as it were, take him by the throat, master him and work itself out on to the pile of blank papers lying before him. In the meantime the idea of the Epic continued to haunt him and he scribbled lines and parts of lines, rewrote them in his best hand and treasured every slip of paper in the expectation of their being needed for the Epic. One day the head clerk caught

him at this and permanently freed the office from further visits of the Muse.

Then quite illogically it occurred to him that he could never be a poet so long as his name was Gurmurthy Subramaniam. The thought struck him with such force that he even saw the comic aspect to a name such as his. How could you have a poet with such a ponderous name as Gurmurthy Subramaniam! To hell with it, he resolved impulsively. The impulse landed him in a new predicament. Try as he might there appeared no chance of getting free from such a millstone. For days he struggled flogging his brains for a suitable name. As he struggled it became clearer to him that until he solved this problem there was no chance for that Epic of his, and he resolved all the harder that he should soon find a way out. At last in a flash it came to him that it would help if he was simply called Gurtys. Of course, it would have to be pronounced Ger-tis, otherwise the problem would remain as good as unsolved. Yes, Gurtys. That was good. He repeated it over and over to himself like an incantation. His enthusiasm for it grew. He told himself it was appropriately short and attractive — like Keats for instance. In fact he soon had a most irreverent suspicion that the English poet must have done something like that himself before he came to be known by it. He tried to think out what Keats's original name could have been. John perhaps was there, but Keats beyond doubt was a marvel of ingenious abbreviation. But when he tried to crack the riddle all his expansions came out in Tamil. Besides the final 's' in Keats had an obstinate and disconcerting way of turning into Subramaniam. He gave up. He gave up his Epic too, at least temporarily, for he thought it best to prepare for the grand project by dashing off a few lyrics and sonnets. In the meanwhile he got into all sorts of difficulties trying to persuade his friends to accept his new name. Intrigued and out of spite Krishnan started calling him Gurtys and soon the name stuck.

It was about this time he met Vasudevan, an interminably communicative fellow with a tendency to pomposity, who was a literary critic of sorts in English. Nobody in the group was sure whether he had known Vasudevan previously. He had become a part of the group before they found out how it had happened. One evening when they saw Vasudevan talking to someone at the entrance to the cafe, they had first wondered.

'Say,' asked Krishnan, 'How did this fellow come in?'

'Who?' Raghavan asked in reply.

'This chap Vasu. I'm sure I didn't know him. Not that I mind his company, but it is a bit funny that I haven't missed a day here and still can't say when and how he barged in.'

'Frankly now you mention it, I admit I've been wondering about him myself. These literary fellows have a way of getting in uninvited. He's alright, but he talks too much.'

'That's kettle calling pot black.'

'Alright. But how did he get into our company?'

'That's my question.'

'Maybe Gurtys brought him along. He has a taste for rare birds.'

'Maybe,' Krishnan said, following with his eyes Gurtys who had just come in, passed Vasudevan with a nod and drifted in that apologetic gait of his to the table. The question was apparently still annoying Krishnan or perhaps he was trying to make Raghavan feel guilty for he asked:

'Guru-Gurtys did you bring Vasu?'

'When?' Gurtys asked genuinely startled.

'Good Lord! I mean into our group.'

'Not guilty,' he replied with a comic grimace and fell to wondering if he couldn't have given a rhyming reply.

'Not that I object. Besides he is a literary fellow isn't he?'

'Yes,' Gurtys quickly affirmed, but as in reality this was information to him he added somewhat to himself, 'I wonder what sort?'

'He's written all sorts of things they say.' 'Must be quite unreadable,' Raghavan

chimed in and grinned pleased with his wit.

'O no! He has quite a reputation,' Krishnan replied just to snub Raghavan.

'I hope nobody brings up the subject before him. As it is, it's a job getting in a word edgeways, the way he carries on,' Raghavan feared.

'Yes indeed,' Gurtys agreed but in fact he was quite fascinated by the idea of knowing a literary figure in flesh and blood, though when they spoke of Vasudevan's reputation he felt a mild grudge and disinclination to accept it.

Vasu joined them in his usual unceremonious way and sat down. The fact that they had been discussing him just a minute past became a momentary barrier to conversation. Gurtys was the first to break the silence and he did it with a question to Vasudevan.

'Will you have coffee with me? I am starving for some' he said. As a special distinction to Vasu he did not include the others.

'I think I shall have something to eat as well,' Vasu replied.

When the bearer had gone away with the order for some *pakor*as and coffee, Vasu indicated his approval with a thunderous sigh and dragged his chair closer. All the time Gurtys watched him, as it were from, inside his eyes, without wanting to give the impression of doing so.

'What news today?' Vasu asked generally and with a sense of comic conspiracy added, 'Any minister shot?'

'No politics please,' Krishnan returned drily.

'Who's talking of politics? A minister getting shot is not politics, it's justice,' and he roared with laughter at his own joke.

'In that case no justice please,' Krishnan retorted refusing to be amused. Gurtys sensed how Krishnan was reacting and did not like it. He was inclined to be on the side of Vasudevan.

'That means you want to discuss politics,' Vasu suggested subsiding and looked at Raghavan with one ear cocked to Krishnan.

'Certainly not,' Raghavan protested with disproportionate warmth.

'O shut up,' Krishnan silenced Raghavan.

After this initial ripple conversation flowed on with usual cordiality and before they adjourned to their respective homes, Vasu had held forth with customary long-windedness undeterred by Krishnan's malice and Raghavan's pointless punctuations. To Gurtys this evening looked different from any other. He longed to get Vasu away from the rest and talk and talk to him; he believed that the beginnings of spiritual companionship had sprouted between them, and an understanding whose sweetness he could not bear to think of.

A week later Vasu was sitting in the cafe alone over a book and a cup of coffee that had from the look of it cooled quite a while ago. As Gurtys came up Vasu shut the book and turned to him genially.

'Now for my coffee,' he said.

'What are you reading these days?' inquired Gurtys feeling this was a question asked only among equals.

'Plenty of trash that comes to me for review and some that I manage to borrow.'

So he did reviews too!

'What kind of books do they send you for review?' he asked in a tone which seemed to suggest, if it were only possible to translate it aloud without being caught, I hope not the sort they send me.

'Just rot,' Vasu replied bored with the subject.

'That's a pity. I wonder if they send you any poetry occasionally?'

'That's the worst part of it. Especially this new stuff which you can make sense of in any way you please. And that's exactly the trouble, because you don't know how to judge. The technique part of it is all you can talk about; say so and so is a clever craftsman or that he is not or that he is not as good as some other and so on. After that, all you can do is discuss your own views and prejudices. Maybe I'm conservative, but I want a poetry of intentions, whatever that means.'

Gurtys listened all ears. Launched upon

one of his pet subjects Vasudevan could be interminable and there was no saying when he would succumb to fatigue, for he was fairly healthy. Nor did the discourse tire Gurtys. With something of awe mixed with admiration he saw the poets of whom he had read at college, resurrected; names of poets he had just heard mentioned by the college literary snobs, suddenly acquired being and were transformed from shadow to substance. He did not understand much of what Vasu was saying but was bewitched and delighted by a sense of participation as the critic spoke about personality in poetry, the lack of it, assonances, rhythm, metres and what not. Gurtys on his part did his best to keep it going by showing his appreciation though the need to agree all the time and to everything was becoming a bit of a strain. Then all at once he was horrified that Vasu might discover his ignorance; so when Vasu had finished Gurtys said:

'You have almost taken all the words out of my mouth.'

Vasu appeared startled and glanced sharply up at him.

'You read poetry?' he asked with genuine interest.

'By the mile.'

This slipped out before he could stop it was out, noticing the look in Vasu's eyes he left it alone with kind of disdain. He couldn't believe it was true that Vasu had accepted him. The next day he came to the cafe with a copy of Eliot's *Four Quartets*.

After this Gurtys sought more of Vasu's company. On occasions when they were together it was satisfying to note that Vasu spoke mostly of books and with much greater fervour too for he had a receptive and indefatigable audience. It was agreeable to him that there was hardly a book he mentioned which Gurtys did not know or had not read at some dim time or other and yet far from being annoyingly contradictory he was at once respectful and attentive. Vasu's only regret, if a passing one, was that for all reading poor Gurtys had no opinion of his own worth uttering.

This did not make him suspicious but in an obscure way it troubled him.

One day when Gurtys was not there Vasu remarked:

'Gurtys is a pretty well-read fellow.'

'Did you say well-bred?' Krishnan asked deliberately and Raghavan sniggered.

'Yes,' he replied looking too bored to explain.

Later when Vasu had left and Gurtys was there Krishnan conveyed Vasu's opinion as a joke which, he was sure, Gurtys himself would share. But Gurtys did not react to the joke. He took it as his due and when the company broke up for the evening, went to find Vasu at his house. They walked the street till early dawn and Gurtys reached home with a feeling of great things happening to him.

And with good reason too. At the time when Gurtys had reached the house, Vasu had just been finishing his column for the week. His rickety typewriter was making a terrible noise which sounded like pure music to Gurtys. Vasu did not allow Gurtys into the adjoining room where he worked and asked him to wait in what he called his drawing-room. Quarter of an hour later the clack-clacking stopped and Vasu came out with a roll of paper.

'Let's go and hand this in first,' he said.

'Where?' Gurtys asked and immediately regretted this confession of ignorance.

'Sentinel office, of course,' Vasu replied hurrying him out.

'Something new from you?' Gurtys asked with a slight emphasis on the last word.

'Nothing important. Just a scathing review of one of our Bharathi Bhai's books.'

'Is it his latest?' Gurtys inquired, to show his easy familiarity with this Bharathi Bhai.

'Whose?' Vasu asked.

Gurtys was immediately on his guard. He pretended not to have heard Vasu. It slowly dawned on him that the critic had used 'Bharathi Bhai' as a facetious term for an Indian writer. He had made a faux pas and any correction would be too late. He counted on Vasu's general inattentiveness and looked preoccupied, while he flogged

his brains for something appropriately important to justify his preoccupation.

'What worries me...' he began, and left it at that.

By now they had reached the newspaper office and Vasu made a hurried dash in and returned ten minutes later to find Gurtys still abstractedly gazing under the lamp-post.

'Any suicidal intentions?' Vasu asked good-humouredly.

'I'm worried about...' Gurtys repeated meditatively, ignoring Vasu's remark as he fell in step with him.

'What are you worried about?' Vasu asked more from habit than interest.

'This poem I'm working on,' replied Gurtys still somewhat lost.

Vasu's reaction is indescribable. It was nearer awe and consternation than surprise, yet it was none of them either. Of all the possible answers to his question Gurtys's reply was certainly not one of them. For a moment he even doubted if he had heard correctly, but Gurtys continued before his companion could recover and dispelled the doubt.

'You see, it came to me the last time I was on the train. It was late evening and as the train approached the station after a long run through darkness, I saw the lights come on one by one, very slowly, almost giving me a chance to watch the current flow from post to post. But it was not that. The darkness through which the train was winding and the lights coming on and giving a meaning to the utter loneliness of the time, it all held together as one experience. Now when I try to get the experience into words the picture comes without the experience. You see my difficulty?' Gurtys paused thoroughly astonished and convinced. For the first time too he had bereft Vasu of all words. He noticed this and for a moment was suspicious of Vasu's silence, but at the same time he could not deny the relief, it gave him, as if he had got something off his chest that had lain like blood. He felt sure that the stone had been laid on Bharathi Bhai for good.

'You must give it time. It will come out,' Vasu said slowly. 'Yeats (he's my favourite poet incidentally) used to take hours over a line. His birth-pangs, as someone called them, were notorious. You must wait.'

'Yes,' Gurtys replied resigned. 'Some fine lines but...'

'Do you remember any?'

Gurtys tried hard to manage an impromptu couplet, but the only line that came to his mind was 'You've got to walk a mile to find a smile.'

'Some other time,' he said giving up.

'Meanwhile I hope you get the thing right,' Vasu encouraged.

'Well,' Gurtys concluded cheering up, 'It's my problem. No point bothering you with it.'

Vasu then took over and spoke at length on Yeats, and towards dawn Gurtys got back home with that feeling.

The next day he bought himself Yeats' collected poems.

What was actually happening to Gurtys was another matter entirely. After the Epic had vanished, the lyrics had played hide-and-seek till he got tired of the game. He had then met Vasu and on a completely laudable impulse bought Eliot and Auden and a number of the Romantic poets and a paperback of Donne, whom he felt inclined to dislike because Vasu had somehow given him the kind of praise which he himself aspired for. Whenever he looked at Donne he was conscious of a grudging step-brotherliness towards the poet and this gave him a sense of equality with Vasu. Yet he gloated in the newness of the covers of his books, the faint smell of glue that new books have, and hesitated to sign his name on them. Soon his sense of possession got the better of him and he dashed off his signature with a tremendous flourish and avidly read up all the matter on the dust-covers. 'Tomorrow I start,' he solemnly resolved and went to bed with a ravenous appetite for the books and dreamt of himself sitting in a room stacked with books to the roof on every side, while he himself was consumed with a desire to

attack them. He did not know what was holding him back but he knew something was, for he found himself suddenly free and grabbed a book and opened it. He put it away after a glance at the title page and took another and then another and then a wave of anger and disgust overcame him so strong and urgent that he picked up the biggest and bit away a huge chunk and grabbed book after book and chewed them up methodically, gazing as he did so at the book in his hand looking strangely like a giant sandwich. In his dream he had enjoyed himself immensely but when he awoke it filled him with horror and he dared not repeat it even to himself because it made him feel so sickeningly close to an 'awful silverfish.' In this state he looked at his new books dismally and the resolution of the previous night seemed a tiresome ordeal. So he put off its execution to the next day. On the next day towards evening he did get down to reading a little of Keats. He told himself that it thrilled him when in reality he had just raced down to the last line of the Nightingale Ode, reassured himself aloud that he had finished it, and went out to meet his friends at the cafe.

His experience with Keats became painfully repetitive. He always found himself reading a bit of poetry just when there was something else to do, and he came to believe that he did not have the time and this began genuinely to worry him.

'I don't get the time,' he complained to Vasudevan one day.

'You must find it,' Vasu replied.

'Art is long and life is short.'

'You won't get anywhere if you start with that,' Vasu warned him earnestly and he was pleased with Vasu's earnestness.

'You're right,' he replied with a sigh. 'I still try. I have gone back to Keats and Shelley.'

'You will find,' Vasu replied in confirmation, 'that from the great poets you never get free. You go back to them and always discover new meanings. There's something so deeply true in them that you realise it only gradually.'

'That's what's happening to me with Keats and Shelley,' Gurtys added.

He went home saying that he must find the time come what may and again when he got to the books he realised with a shock that he just couldn't stand the stuff.

It was at this time that a small doubt came into Gurtys's mind. He wondered why everything appeared so simple and intelligible when Vasu spoke about it though when he tried to read some of the same things, the lines made no sense and failed to hold his attention beyond the first three or four lines. Vasudevan spoke of pictures coming to his mind and the lines running like rippling streams, but to Gurtys it was all just words, black on white paper and set in a style which obviously differed from prose. The doubt annoyed him and he felt scared of Vasudevan and even hated him a little inside himself. He should stop seeing him he thought but panicked at the thought of acting on the idea. He had a momentary and all too horrifying glimpse of spiritual orphanage bereft of Vasu. He sought refuge again in that line of his 'You've got to walk a mile to see a smile.' Of course, it was there all the time. Every time he thought of it his confidence rushed back in a flood and he nearly drove himself out of mind imagining the lyrics he could write.

While the crisis continued in private, an extraneous incident occurred to help him over it. Vasu had been holding forth about an Indian poet in English from another part of the country and concluded: 'ask Gurtys, as a poet he could tell you more.'

It was all too sudden and Gurtys was really undecided whether Vasu had meant the compliment when Krishnan said in disbelief, 'Say Gurtys, I didn't know about your poetry!' but when he saw the gravity with which Gurtys received the remark the disbelief gave way to amazement.

'You might have told us,' Raghavan complained.

'What is there to say? I just happen to be one,' Gurtys replied coolly.

'Besides,' said Vasu 'What's the use of

talking to you fellows about things like poetry?"

With that, like a switch turned off, the doubt that had dogged Gurtys for the past few days disappeared.

With the disappearance of the conflict he had an access of self-confidence. Though grudgingly, Krishnan and Raghavan had conceded Gurtys was a poet after all. Krishnan was indiscreet enough to make his acceptance known by his envious attitude. Somewhere down within himself nothing was ever justified to him, especially in matters that did credit to others. Raghavan, rather awed by the appearance of the hidden poet, withdrew into himself. Gurtys was aware of the slight changes in attitude and straight off put it down to his own future brilliance. He saw it coming one day like the sun itself dispelling the darkness and dazzling all his friends and enemies and proceeded to work out an idea for a poem on that basis. He was not at all sorry; in fact, he loved to be envied, for it made everything so real and invulnerable. But the greatest boost to his self-confidence came when Raghavan brought along a boy of not more than sixteen and introduced him to Gurtys.

"Gurtys this is my nephew, Raman. He appears inclined towards poetry. He's written some. He'll be grateful for any advice you can give."

Krishnan had hoped that Raghavan's request on behalf of his nephew would scare Gurtys into a confession of incompetence. To his annoyance however it did not turn out that way. Raman had come twisting his notebook to inconspicuousness and sat on the edge of a chair. Gurtys looked at him aware of condescending, and asked for the note-book. He opened and read a few lines and did not like the feeling they gave him. A couple of times he lifted one of his brows in appreciation.

"How do you write them?" he asked pompously.

"They come to me," the boy replied simply. Krishnan and Raghavan appeared busy talking but hardly missed a syllable.

Gurtys smiled compassionately.

"You must learn to wait," he said. "A poem is a great thing. It is not all technique, though that too needs working on in your case. Then you must read a lot of poetry. Especially the older poets. You will find how they come back to you again and again. Just now it is enthusiasm, only later will you know whether the gift is yours." This last he was wanting most to say.

"But I must write," said the boy.

The directness with which the boy said it made Gurtys uneasy. He did not know what to say, so he continued to turn the pages of the note-book definitely not wanting to read any more of the boy's poems. The long silence began to tell and Krishnan's eyes almost shone with expectation.

"You are a modernist?" Gurtys asked, picking on a poem with uneven lines mixed up anyhow.

"I try it out sometimes."

Finally he shut the book rather emphatically with relief and looking down at the table delivered himself of the judgement: "Good. Very good in places. You must wait."

"May I come and see you again?" the boy asked brightening up.

"Yes. I'm always prepared to help."

Raman went away quite cheerfully. Some time later when Vasu came, the subject of Raman's poetry was brought up by Krishnan.

"What did you think of them?" Vasu asked Gurtys who immediately sensed a catch in that question.

"Have you seen them?" he asked defensively.

"No. When Raghavan suggested I look through and give the boy advice, I told him, I was rather surprised that he should come to me when you were there."

"He's just beginning. He's made some modernistic attempts too," Gurtys answered reassured.

"That's bad. One should never attempt the modern style till one has mastered the old," Vasudevan gave his opinion straight off.

"I didn't want to be so discouraging. I

advised him to study the old poets.' As he said this he smiled, thrilled with his own extreme perceptiveness. For the rest of the evening he debated with himself if anyone could have given Raman better advice. Had Vasu looked at the poems he doubted whether he could have been of greater help. He lay in bed and pulled out *Four Quartets* from the shelf. He read through a dozen lines and they did not make sense, but intrigued him by all the turns and twists of words. He read another six lines and imagining how they 'held together' as Vasu had said once, he came to believe he had understood them. In that instant he was overpowered by a sensation which he could not explain, but caught in it he thought how much better he would have succeeded if only he had attempted his Epic in this style. All he had to do was to move the same words backwards and forwards so that they became profound. He shut Eliot and turned towards the wall to think with concentration upon his own poem. In the next instant he was fast asleep.

While poetry he found was generally outside his taste, though he would not admit it, he was genuinely attracted towards criticism of the simpler kind and life-sketches. He devoured blurbs, reviews and other little scraps. He loved to hear Vasudevan talk about writers and their works and was even amazed that he remembered so much of what he heard. Eliot did not matter to him very much in private but opinions on Eliot always did. Although his repeated attempts to read the poets had ended in open failure, he knew the names of most of their important works and could give reasons for liking some of them and disliking others. It didn't bother him that he hadn't read a word of any of them but he wondered with satisfaction how Vasudevan and he had come to similar conclusions.

One night he opened Keats and found himself face to face with *Lamia*. With the first line itself his distaste made itself

obvious but he read to the end of the page and found he didn't remember a single word or meaning. He decided it was a long and dreary poem and leafed through its pages to find out its length and came to the end where he found the extract from Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* on which Keats had based his poem. This he read avidly, and the discovery that the story had been borrowed in some indirect way justified his belief about the second-rate quality of the poem. But his interest in Burton got stimulated. The next day he went to the Public Library and searched for *The Anatomy*. When he found that the work was in several volumes, his interest died as quickly as it had shown itself and he left the premises. But now it became possible for him to say, if Burton was ever referred to, that *The Anatomy* was a great work running into several volumes. Besides, it was the book from which Keats had got his *Lamia*. And when they talked of *Lamia* he was always safe in saying that Keats had picked up the idea from Burton's great work in several volumes on Melancholy. This knowledge became more consequential because Vasu once failed to recall the source of *Lamia* and Gurtys had prompted him.

'It is added as a note at the end of the poem,' he said with very sure knowledge.

'Ah! yes! yes! it is there,' Vasu confirmed gleefully.

After that Gurtys decided that Vasu had to be kept in shape by him.

'I don't know if you will agree with me,' Gurtys said one evening to Vasu while Krishnan and Raghavan listened, 'But as far as I'm concerned Yeats is the greatest modern poet. He is my favourite poet.' As he said this he watched Vasu closely for any reaction. Vasu did not react; he looked away and said nothing.

Vasudevan did not react because it appeared pointless. This was the second time this had happened. In an obscure way he sensed betrayal. He had trusted Gurtys but now he thought he couldn't. On the first occasion he had overlooked it and even

forgotten it. Today when Gurtys held him with his eyes with a hint of defiance in them and made that statement, he could not. But he did not know what to say. Having kept quiet the first time, he felt completely gagged now. Why hadn't he spoken out then, he wondered crossly, though the matter had been minor enough.

On that earlier occasion Raman had come, and Gurtys with polite condescension had looked through the new compositions and begun to lecture him, when Vasudevan came and sat down.

'There appears to be some improvement but lots of hard work remains. I suggest, and it is only a suggestion, that you stick to older forms. This modern style doesn't seem to come off.'

As he spoke he noticed Vasudevan pick up the note-book and the gesture enraged him like an uncalled for insult.

'These your poems?' Vasu asked after a few minutes.

'Yes,' said the poet.

'You seem to manage some of your lines fairly well. This poem *The Camera Eye* is really good. Don't you think so Gurtys?'

Vasu had asked his question plainly and with no implications or suggestions. Gurtys, who from the moment Vasudevan had picked up the book, had felt his authority challenged, guessed an extremely malicious angle to the question. More than resentment he felt suddenly helpless like an unwilling child being stripped for its bath. With unaccountable vehemence he replied:

'I have seen the *others*.' Then to the boy he continued, 'You must first master the old styles if you want to write really good modern verse. At least I think so. Vasu here may not agree.'

And Vasu, too taken aback, thought it best to keep silent.

'The bastard! Thinks everyone is a fraud like himself,' Gurtys muttered to himself recalling the evening later.

Over the succeeding weeks Gurtys found reason to believe that Vasu was unfriendly towards him. Everytime he attempted to

bring up some literary topic for discussion Vasudevan looked bored. He sulked and kept silent as though he hadn't heard Gurtys. One day he apparently lost control of himself and burst out in the middle of something Gurtys was saying.

'For heaven's sake stop all that dither!'

Then three days later Vasudevan said something which Krishnan took care to bring to the attention of Gurtys at the first available opportunity. Gurtys was not there and Raghavan had said that Gurtys was changing rapidly into a real literary man and to the astonishment of himself and Krishnan, Vasudevan snorted explosively.

'Rubbish!' he said. 'He's just a case of conscience dying bit by bit. That's all.'

Krishnan in conveying the remark gave a needlessly realistic demonstration of Vasu's manner and added that while Raghavan thought the remark irrelevant, he himself had dismissed it as merely spiteful. Gurtys did not reply. He knew Krishnan had dramatised and exaggerated, but he winced nevertheless and told himself that Vasu had begun to hate him.

'Krishnan,' he said sadly after a long while. 'It is always like that with some fellows,' and he did not know whether he was speaking of Vasu or himself. After Krishnan left him, he felt lonely. He did not want to be hated and within himself he had the knowledge that Vasu had spoken more out of contempt. Maybe if he apologized all would be well again between them. But he couldn't just go and ask a man's pardon when he had done nothing to offend him. On the contrary, he had desired his friendship. He thought he should be angry but actually he wanted to cry.

So when later Vasu resumed his cordiality he was greatly relieved. Gurtys immediately offered to accompany him on his walk home, but Vasu pleaded an engagement at the newspaper office and went away. However, Gurtys was hopeful about their next meeting.

'What has happened to your poem about the lights?' Vasu asked, intending to be sarcastic.

'Ah! that one about the Camera Eye?' Gurtys fumbled.

Vasu looked at him first with consternation, then with contempt and then with tired pity and patted him on the shoulder and left without another word.

A couple of evenings later Gurtys sat chatting with Krishnan and Raghavan at the cafe. The conversation was trifling and personal as it always was when Vasudevan was not present. Krishnan had guessed the estrangement between Gurtys and Vasu and was thirsting for details.

'The politician hasn't come today,' he remarked.

'You mean Vasu?' Raghavan laughed. 'That's abusing the poor devil.'

'No false sympathies please. I still can't get over the way he sneaked into our group.'

'The trouble is nobody admits to having brought the chap along.'

'I don't say I have any objection to him. He's quite a literary figure I'm told,' he sounded impressed. Then seeing Gurtys still keeping silent, Krishnan asked directly.

'What do you think, Gurtys?'

Gurtys did not like Krishnan calling Vasu a politician; he didn't in his present state of friendliness towards Vasu, like any jokes at his expense.

'He's alright,' he said.

'Somebody brought him in,' Krishnan insisted.

'Well to tell you the truth I did. You know, birds of a feather,' Gurtys replied.

'But you denied it, Krishnan objected.

'Did I?'

'Of course you did,' Raghavan chimed in.

'Perhaps you got me wrong. I'm going to find him,' Gurtys stood up. The moment he left, Krishnan laughed and turned to Raghavan,

'The fellow has forgotten I brought him.'

'But you too denied it.'

'Yes,' he agreed and laughed all the more.

When Gurtys reached Vasudevan's house it was locked with a to-let sign hanging

on the door. At the newspaper office they told him that Vasu had left the station.

'When will he be returning?' he asked.

'Can't say,' the man replied.

'He must have left a word for me. My name is Gurtys.'

'What name?'

'Gurtys.'

'No. In any case I don't suppose your friend will come back.

'Why?'

'He's had another offer and I think he's gone for good.'

'Has he left his address behind?'

'No.'

Gurtys hadn't expected this. He felt depressed and stupid.

That night Gurtys had a dream. He sat at a glass-topped table and was scratching with his pen unable to write. Around him against all the walls were shelves stacked with books and he looked at them joyfully and with complete relaxation. In the empty space beside him Raman materialized without notice. He felt a foreboding as he turned towards him and when he looked up, Raman's face appeared indistinct and then more clearly, and it was not Raman, it was Vasu. The instant he recognised him, Vasu grinned horribly and jumped up and savagely tore down all the books from the shelves.

'Don't,' Gurtys shouted. 'I've got to help Raman.'

But Vasu didn't care. So he rushed up to stop him calling to Raman for help. But he couldn't stop him, couldn't even reach him, while Vasu amazingly enough fled through the door carrying all the books on his hands.

'They are mine,' Gurtys shouted after him but he was gone leaving him alone among the empty shelves and Raman grinning wickedly at him. He gave a shout and awoke.

He reached out his hand and put the light on and the sight of Shelley and Keats and his other books standing intact at his bedside brought him an assurance which he dared not accept.

B O O K S

**STUDIES IN THE SOCIAL THOUGHT OF
M. G. RANADE** by P. J. Jagirdar (Asia Publishing House, 140 pp. Rs. 12.50)

IN the history of modern India, Mahadev Govind Ranade has a special place. He it was who took the progressive religious movement started by Ram Mohan Roy in Bengal and gave it an all-India character and direction. This was the more significant because for a variety of reasons the Bengal initiative threatened to crystallize into a religious sect, distinct and apart from the Hindu community out of which it had grown. On the other hand, it has to be noted that, while the Brahmo Samaj had played a leading role in stemming the conversion of the educated Hindu to Christianity, the Prarthana Samaj failed to perform a similar function in Western India.

Mr. Jagirdar's main thesis is that Ranade was essentially a thinker in the Western tradition. 'Otherworldliness and religious enquiry is almost the only aspect of ancient Indian culture of which he was really proud,' observes Mr. Jagirdar. But if the idea of progress is 'Western in origin', the idea of gradualism, of 'change for the better by slow absorption' is peculiarly Indian. In a letter to the *Indian Social Reformer* written in defence of his friend K. T. Telang whose failure to live up to his professed reform views had evoked criticism both from the orthodox and from reformers, Ranade wrote:

In human affairs it is not true that our past is dead and buried. Nothing that we have done is really dead. Nothing that our fathers have done is dead for us. It is a living force, which drags us

upwards or downwards, and one has to choose between the two. Your present is not all yours. It must accumulate and overweigh the old past record of your and your forefathers' actions. In the case of the gifted, this is possible and that is our hope and salvation. If to resolve were the same thing as to act, life would have no difficulty and no discipline. Those who bury their past obtain ease. Those who live in the past secure popularity. Men who can neither hold by the past nor forget it altogether, by reason of that very fact obtain neither ease nor popularity.

Here briefly is the key to Ranade's social philosophy which helped to build up the social reform movement and keep it together for over forty years. It is significant that outlining the attitude of the Social Reform Conference he approved of three methods—reinterpreting the *shastras*, appealing to reason and humanity, and applying penalties imposed by the State or caste on those who infringed principles of reform—but rejected the fourth method of breaking away from Hindu society to form a separate caste or sect.

Again, his confidence in the British administration as functioning as a liberal secular State—to quote the words of C. Sankaran Nair—made him both tolerant of reactionary agitators and somewhat apprehensive of zealous reformers. This is demonstrated in his attitude towards Tilak and Malabari. Towards the former, he was patient and long-suffering, in the hope of winning him back to the reform fold; towards the latter, he maintained a somewhat apprehensive attitude, even hesitating

at first to support his agitation. 'Strength of numbers', he wrote, 'we cannot command, but we can command earnestness of conviction, singleness of devotion, readiness for self-sacrifice.' It would almost seem that he had an innate fear of popular support, as strong as his fear that the liberal secular administration might be too hastily persuaded to venture on social legislation which even progressive leaders would find it hard to live up to. But above all he abhorred any action or conduct which might lead to a break with the Hindu community. There have been in other societies similar leaders of thought but where Ranade was unique was that he started a movement and wielded an influence both of which went deeper than the more spectacular efforts of his contemporaries. The reason for this success is as much the traditional Indian feeling for continuity as the wisdom of Ranade.

Conventional biographies of Ranade have dealt with the Indian environment in which he lived and to which he reacted with extreme sensitivity. Mr. Jagirdar's study presents him against the background of Western thought and influence. It is a complementary study without which our understanding of Ranade would not be complete. There is a curious feature of Ranade's thinking which Mr. Jagirdar brings out in discussing his attitude towards State and Society. Ranade, says Mr. Jagirdar, expected much from the state but very little from society; yet in evaluating methods of social reform Ranade was more favourable to reform through caste associations than to reform by legislation. Mr. Jagirdar remarks that Ranade's higher regard for the state may have arisen from the fact that he suffered more opposition from society than from the state. There is a less personal explanation which deserves attention; the social reformers had been impressed as a result of experience by the dominating influence of caste. 'The mass of the people, wrote the *Reformer*, 'do not care a broken straw for the *shastras*. They do nothing for the sake of the *shastras*; they do everything for fear of the caste. . .

Their lives start not from the *shastras* but from the usages of the castes to which they belong.'

Ranade's confidence in the final outcome of the controversy with Hindu revivalists in the narrowest sense of the term grew out of his faith in the liberal secularism of the British government and in the force of reason. This made him tolerant of the Hindu conservatives and somewhat apprehensive of impatient reformers. He was partially justified in his optimism by Tilak's early association with progressive Maharashtrian leaders and later association with the Brahmo Bepin Chandra Pal and the Arya Samajist Lala Lajpat Rai. Mr. Jagirdar's analysis of the ideas of progress which were strongly held by Ranade's Western contemporaries suggest that they might have contributed greatly to Ranade's faith in the beneficial influence of British rule.

These studies are an important contribution to an understanding of the times in which Ranade lived. By fixing Ranade's place among the religious, political and economic thinkers of the West, Mr. Jagirdar has in a sense answered the question which he raises at the outset about India's reaction to the Western impact; it is a synthesis of East and West which, however inadequately realized, was the aim of India's leaders and, contrary to the views of extreme nationalists, this could only have been attempted in an India under British rule. Ranade saw this and it is to Mr. Jagirdar's credit that he faces Ranade's theory of Providence boldly and without attempting to apologise for it or explain it away.

S. NATARAJAN

How to Think

SCIENTIFIC METHOD by A. B. Shah (Allied Publishers, 120 pp. Rs. 8.)

THIS short monograph deals with a subject of considerable importance in India today because, as M. P. Rege points out in his Foreword, 'We have accepted from the Western civilisation modern

technology with the hope that it will ensure a better and more abundant life for the millions of our countrymen. . . . But . . . it cannot be said that we have made a serious and sustained effort to assimilate the essential values of that civilisation.'

The author is in many ways well qualified to write such a book. He is an experienced teacher of mathematics, and he is accustomed to bring his trained mind to bear on a wide range of problems outside his particular sphere of specialisation. Here he writes as a humanist whose thinking is centred only on man, and who is only prepared to consider religion and belief in God in terms of how useful these are to man. It is for this reason that the reviewer finds himself in frequent disagreement with him.

The first two chapters are of an introductory nature. They are concerned with showing the changes which have been brought about by the scientific method, firstly through the technology it has made possible, and secondly through the new way of looking at things which it has encouraged. The author admits that technology has placed in the hands of a few an undreamt-of power of oppression. Though he admits the danger, he is confident that scientific patterns of thought will enable man to preserve and increase human values. Scientific humanism has been fashionable in certain not uninfluential quarters for more than half a century now, but the present state of acute and dangerous tension in the world today does little to encourage the view that such modes of thought have done much to lessen 'man's inhumanity to man'.

The next four chapters are in the reviewer's opinion the most valuable in the book. They aim at explaining just what scientific method is, how valid are its concepts, and in what sense a given theory can be said to be true. It is not possible to define scientific method in such rigid terms that one can say 'every scientific worker must do this, and this, and this, in this particular order.' What he does will depend on the particular branch of science

being studied and the stage of development that branch has reached.

The initial stage of an investigation may be termed the natural history stage, in which one collects and classifies as much relevant information as possible by observation and experiment. The next stage may be termed (somewhat clumsily) the stage of the deductively formulated theory. Here an hypothesis is proposed from which the observed phenomena can be deduced as logical consequences of the hypothesis. Then a search is made for other as yet unobserved consequences of the hypothesis, and experiments devised to see if these are in fact realised. If not a new hypothesis is sought. All this is expressed by the author with the precision and terseness one would expect from a professional mathematician. But these very qualities make one doubt whether he will be at all easily followed by the educated layman, for whom he professes to be writing.

Having described scientific method, the author sets out to show how it can be used not only to make technological advances possible, but also to take over the functions of religion. These he takes to be primarily 'to give man a framework of reference in which he can order his experience . . . and to provide him with a set of norms by which he could arrive at a system of priorities in this life, and judge as good or bad his own actions and those of his fellow men.' (p. 22.) He begins by contrasting a number of theories or concepts, astronomy and astrology, allopathy and ayurved, the electron and God, democracy and Marxism. His criticisms of Marxism, ayurved and astrology are probably quite valid, but his rejection of the concept of God seems to rest on the assumption that all we know of Him has come through a combination of mystical experience and philosophical speculation. The claim that Christians make, that God is known because He has chosen to reveal Himself through certain events in history—events which can be fairly exactly dated—culminating in the life and death of Jesus

Christ, would require far more by way of refutation than the author gives in this book. He is content to assert that the concept is incapable of being tested; but though a Christian would not assert that one could devise a laboratory experiment which would prove the existence of God, on certain occasions God has allowed and does allow Himself to be put to the test. Such a claim, perhaps in a modified form, would also be made by Judaism and Islam.

From this the author moves on to claim that a whole system of ethics can be built up by the method of scientific enquiry from certain basic assumptions which would have to be verified empirically, i.e., subjected to the test, 'Does this lead to conditions desirable for the "individual-in-society"?' Such ethics he claims would be flexible, capable of change in different places and different generations, but would retain a certain continuity because men share in a common humanity. He does not explain how men like Socrates, Christ, Charvak and Gautam the Buddha (the list is his) could possibly propound ethical teaching of which he seems to approve, while basing it not on scientific enquiry, but on religious premises of which he disapproves. It is also very difficult to see how his definition of ethical value differs from expediency, though he says it does. In fact the concluding chapters seem to the reviewer to be simply an attempt to throw away the religious basis of traditional ethics without producing complete moral chaos. If his views on sexual morals are a fair sample of such 'scientifically based' ethics, one is tempted to wonder if the attempt has any chance of achieving this end, and would not lead to the chaos it seeks to avoid.

LEWIS SIMMONS

The Third World

THE DAMNED by Frantz Fanon. Foreword by J. P. Sartre (*Presence Africaine*, Paris 255 pp.)

THE continent of Africa, plunged till now in darkness and obscurity today stands bathed in the 'glare of history's

floodlights'. It is too early for us to prophesy the future lines of its evolution and development. African intellectuals are seething with new energies and newer visions and naturally those who are interested in the future of this continent turn to them for enlightenment and information. Monsieur Fanon is one among them. He is from Algeria and yet his right or liberty to think in continental terms need not be questioned. His vision of the future of Africa is full of optimism and courage. In his eyes the 'Third World' as he describes it, will be formed and fashioned by ideals and values totally different from those prevailing in Europe. 'Swayed between atomic destruction and spiritual disintegration', Europe has entirely lost its capacity to lead and enlighten the world. Africa should now take up those problems left unsolved by Europe. Its mission is nothing less than starting 'a new history of man.'

How does Mr. Fanon set about resolving the new problems? '*Alles Versteht ist befindliches*' says Heidegger. Roughly speaking it means that all understanding is influenced by the situation in which one finds himself. Though clothed in philosophical terms, the observation is confirmed by the sociology of knowledge also. A cogent application of these principles can be seen in the somewhat hot and often very provocative cogitations of our author. Being an Algerian negro and having been a constant witness to the manifold atrocities of the French army against the Algerians, he is naturally led to think in inimical terms about the Europeans and their culture. But he cannot, try as he may himself, escape totally the impact and influence of Western culture. Hence his attempt to start from an African *tabula rasa* fails at the very beginning. Nor, in spite of his French education and culture has he been able to absorb the best that is in Western civilisation. Marxism and the cult of violence—that is all that he has been able to learn from his long contact with the Europeans.

The book begins with an analysis and

description of the process of decolonisation. The author is of the opinion that it is a violent phenomenon, a programme involving complete disorder and confusion. 'Dien Ben Plus' are necessary and indispensable for decolonisation. Of course the author cannot be ignorant of many other countries which have become independent through peaceful and legal processes; he must have heard of an Asiatic country known as India. But in the whole book there is not a single mention of India or her struggle for freedom. It is evident that this enthusiastic follower of Sorel and Marx cannot but ignore and pooh-pooh the methods of non-violence and satyagraha adopted by Gandhi. Non-violence, in the eyes of the author is a creation of the colonial situation, invented by the colonialist bourgeois. Does the author, who is so eager to ape the Marxian method of thought and action, seriously think that repeating a few Marxian clichés and formulas will explode all the great heritages and values of humanity?

Mr. Fanon's advocacy of violence sometimes reaches fantastic proportions. What for instance, does he mean by saying that violence is a 'cleansing force for individuals'? He has also borrowed some notions from Freud and his followers without being able to assimilate or evaluate them. How can one be 'illuminated by violence'? Mr. Fanon alone knows the modalities of such mysterious phenomena. We can only say that his power of mystification is immense. Perhaps among others, only Mr. Sartre can understand the workings of such an ingenious mind. Mr. Sartre says in his Foreword that since Marx no one has succeeded as well as our author in discovering and describing the great laws of history. Reading through the whole volume one has great difficulty in discovering what these abstruse laws are. The author is an adept at grandiose generalisations, but except in a very few instances he has not tried to substantiate his generalisations. It should also be noted that his so-called laws of history usually apply only to the Algerian situation and

only in a few instances to the other regions of Africa or the underdeveloped countries in general.

There is very little argumentation or reasoning in the book. On the other hand passions and prejudices abound on every page, which considerably diminishes its value. Europe, the author says, is literally the creation of the Third World. Which Europe does Mr. Fanon mean? If he means that Europeans have unjustifiably enriched themselves at the expense of the Africans we can surely agree with him. But it is not that aspect of Europe that should attract our attention and elicit our admiration. There are values and traditions that are the specific contribution of Europe to the world, such as Christianity, Science, Philosophy etc. Does Mr. Fanon claim that they are all creations of the Africans? Even Africans must admit that this is a tall claim.

Mr. Fanon's picture of emerging Africa is a very distorted one. We are sure that there is much more in Africa that is laudable than is found on the passionate pages of this book. We hope that there are and there will be more sensible and less prejudiced leaders in that continent to lead and serve the masses. Let us hope that Africa will not be the tragic victim of that monstrous phenomenon known nowadays as the 'Treason of the Intellectuals'.

Mr. Fanon's description of some aspects of the colonial situation are not without their value. His observation that the Nationalist parties lose touch with the people after Independence is largely true. His analysis of the role of political parties in underdeveloped countries is applicable in every country that is developed as well as underdeveloped. He says that such parties must not have their headquarters in the capital city, but in the countryside so that they may be in constant touch with the people. The capital must be, so to say, deconsecrated and its importance taken away. He cites with approval the case of Brazilia. He also insists that in underdeveloped countries the intellectuals should not lose touch with the people. The

youth of underdeveloped countries should not be sent to the sports stadiums but to the fields. Their soldiers must be in the service of the country and not of the commanding officers. They—the soldiers—should be given political education to avoid *coups*. Very good ideas, but their acceptability cannot be based on *a priori* grounds. Only the testing will prove their worth.

There is a chapter in this book on the mental disorders that result from the colonial situation. It describes the psychological effects of the various kinds of tortures employed by the French army and the police on the Algerian rebels. That a civilised nation of the status and prestige of France should employ such bestial and inhuman methods on their fellow human beings, is almost unbelievable. Perhaps they have their parallel only in Angola.

The book cannot be considered by any sensible man as an acceptable philosophy of history or even as an effective programme of social and political action in the colonies. But the stray suggestions found here and there, as I have pointed out, will be found useful and enlightening. It may also be suggested, that, psychologically, the writing and reading of such books can be a method of giving vent to one's pent-up passions and emotions which can be relieved in no other manner. Needless to say, such exercises can scarcely be considered serious contributions to the field of political, sociological or philosophical thought. That does not, however prevent philosophers of the persuasion of Mr. Sartre from writing furious Forewords to such thunderous tomes.

P. T. CHACKO

A Raga of Life

THE GREATER DARKNESS by David Rubin
(Farrar, New York, 320 pp. \$ 495)

THIS multilevel novel—as the publishers' blurb describes it—depicts the cultural conflict on three planes—Indian, British

and American. The confluence of this *triveni* takes place at the spacious mansion of K. M. Rau, whose granddaughter Kiran returns to India for the first time after her education in England. The next day, an American sociologist Bill Ames, who comes to India on a teaching assignment and his wife Carol arrive at the same house as tenants of Rau. Both Kiran and Ames find it difficult to stay in India for more than one academic term. This one year of their life is vividly depicted in this novel.

The action of the novel takes place in Gauhar—an imaginary town of U.P. which resembles Allahabad. K. M. Rau, the key figure in this novel, is one of those Indians who are foreign to their own traditions. In spite of this, his anglicised granddaughter finds it difficult to adjust herself to the new surroundings, while Ames finds in India the bewildering complexity which defies any sociological generalisations. The life of Ames becomes the more miserable in so far as his wife reacts favourably to India. Their varying attitudes subsequently become the cause of their divorce, which leads to the death of Carol in the communal riots.

The story is not as impressive as the characters whose different responses to India have an amazing diversity of outlook. Sceptical, witty and ironical K. M. Rau reacts sensitively to all the absurdities and incongruities that India provides for a sensitive person. He remarks: 'India's greatest problem is precisely the same as every one else's: I mean a want of common sense and love' (p. 46); or again, he says: 'God is for coloured people and retired actresses' (p. 160). The majority of the characters are rootless and desperately desire to cling to certain traditions. For Dr. Muskett, a man with British reserve and a 'clinical stare': 'every man is a different race, a different country' (p. 238). We find amiable Leslie, wife of K. M. Rau, telling Carol: 'Nobody belongs anywhere until he makes his place' (p. 32). This existential approach, which the characters belonging to different nationalities show

to the same environment, makes this novel fascinating.

The other typical Indian characters are talkative Dean Saxena, submissive Shekhar, and the exponent of Indian music, sitarist Dr. Janners. Among the foreigners, there is Edna Boxall who does not want to go back to England because she cannot get servants there; sociologist Ames, who gets disgusted with the informality and volubility of Indians; Carol, who is out to experience life and finds every novelty a source of delight.

David Rubin reveals a sensitive response to Indian music. The novel starts and ends with the two seasonal modes—*malhar* and *vasant*. The rest of the action is depicted in the ascending scale of poignancy by 'ragas' round the clock—*bhairvi*, *todi*, *pilu*, *purvi*, *sindhura*, *jayjawanti*, *darbari kanhara* and *sohni*. Each chapter corresponds to the dominant mood of a 'raga'. For an American novelist to have such an insight into Indian 'ragas' is a tribute to his intimate knowledge of Indian music. There is however a slight lapse when Dr. Janners refuses to play *chandrakauns* because it is not a moonlit night. No treatise on Indian music prescribes that *chandrakauns* ought to be played on moonlit nights. There is one more inconsistency. On p. 126 Bhatnagar is described as a lecturer in history while on p. 180 he becomes a lecturer in English.

Many descriptions in this novel might appear over-obvious to Indian readers. They are almost the author's diary woven into his novel, and can be tolerated only when one regards them as the perceptions of an American novelist. The novel would have had a greater impact if the author had ceased to be a tourist guide at many places. The only exception is the minute description of Ames' experience with the rituals of an Indian barber. (p. 145).

What gives this novel a real interest is the author's psychological interest in his characters combined with his sociological concern with the different culture-patterns. Considering that this is the author's first novel, it is an impressive work, subtle and

incisive, brilliant and critical. It is to the credit of Dr. Rubin that he could penetrate as far into Indian culture as any outsider can.

CHETAN KARNANI

Language or Literature

THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH LITERATURE OVERSEAS edited by John Press (Methuen, 168 pp. 80s.)

ONE wonders, on going through this book whether records of conferences make interesting reading. But to those who are concerned with the making of a syllabus for schools and universities, the views of the delegates who participated in the conference organised by the British Council, and held at King's College Cambridge (16-18 July, 1962), dealing with the teaching of English literature overseas, should be of some interest.

The Conference was attended by English teachers from all over the world, and every aspect of the subject seems to have been discussed, including techniques such as visual aids in teaching. John Press has included in this book discussions on such varied subjects as syllabuses, examinations, periodicals and broadcasts as well as a report on the recommendations of the various commissions.

Every country looks at English teaching, quite naturally, from the point of view of its own needs, and English is many things to many people. It is practically a mother-tongue to some of us, it is the *lingua franca* in several Afro-Asian countries, and a second language in most. It is obviously the door to technical and scientific knowledge, and it is inevitable to think of it as a source of intellectual and moral power as well. At least the Englishman is convinced that the Afro-Asian nations will gain something more than information.

In most of the countries represented at the Conference English is, first and foremost, a means, to be studied for some other purpose. In these circumstances, is a study of English literature necessary? This

question seems to have been unanimously answered. Literature is essential—no language can be learnt except through its literature. But the word literature must be made to include all good writing, according to Dr. I. A. Richards, whatever the subject. Quite a number of teachers in schools and Professor Pattison are convinced that books by popular writers like Nevil Shute should be included in the syllabus rather than 19th century writers. They have a point, if the idea is to learn English as it is spoken today. (19th century prose is not going to help any one, neither will someone like T. S. Eliot). At the school level exciting adventure stories will be read while anthologies of prose and poetry are loathed by most school children; the very few who even at this stage find what we normally regard as literature exciting should be separated from those who do not.

At the University level English is sometimes the medium of instruction, some-

times a second language, and very often there is a specialised course in English literature for those who are interested in this subject. (Of course very often, as we know to our cost, it is a subject taken by those who are merely interested in spending a few years at a University and do not want to study anything else). The syllabus for each of these groups must take into account the needs of the students. Is it necessary to follow the pattern of so much prose, so much poetry, a general paper for all groups? If so, what kind of prose and which poets? I am not quite clear what the final answer arrived at by the participators in the conference is. There seems to be a general demand for literature at this level too. We all know that literature broadens the mind, it 'satisfies human needs and if they are not available it is necessary to invent them'. 'It fosters', according to John Holloway 'many qualities of mind; maturity of understanding, and a sense of evidence, of detail, and of history

Verrier Elwin

1902-1964

His autobiography *The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin* was published in April. The price is Rs 20 and copies are available at booksellers.

WITH this should be read *Leaves from the Jungle* which consists of extracts from a frank and amusing diary kept when the author first went to live in a village.

OTHER books still in print are: *The Tribal Art of Middle India* (with 229 illustrations), *India's North-east Frontier in the Nineteenth Century* (extracts from the writings of nineteenth-century travellers), *Maria Murder and Suicide*, *Bondo Highlander* and *Tribal Myths of Orissa*.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

being among them', and of course the study of English literature is a key to the understanding of the character of the western world for most Afro-Asian countries.

I find some of this very doubtful when it refers specially to English literature, just as I find John Holloway's other remarks that English provides 'a broad, flexible and liberal discipline, concerned with a literature which is not clearly excelled by any other, either in quality or in continuity over a long period of time,' a trifle hard to swallow and not because I happen to be chauvinist in my thinking. One wonders whether 'maturity of understanding can come from literature rather than life; a sense of evidence—of history—surely law or history would be better for these, and Mr. G. C. Morris certainly thinks this is true since he pleads for a sense of history that is woefully lacking in students of literature. As far as discipline is concerned, the broadness, flexibility, are not necessarily virtues; certainly for young minds a more rigorous discipline might prove more useful. And finally must we continue to believe that English literature is the best there is? I agree that I do not know of any writer clearly better than Shakespeare but surely that is all one can say.

Professor Gokak's contribution to the conference is of some interest to us. He says 'there is a danger which students of English literature in emerging countries will have to avoid if they are to assist in the development of an indigenous culture. Their literary study will be invaluable for them if they choose to become pioneers of a national literature' but not if 'they surrender themselves utterly to a kind of colonialism in their intellectual and aesthetic life in spite of their political emancipation. In that case they will be a lost generation...'. He is right in thinking this is a very real danger—so many of us have, to use Prof. I. A. Richards' phrase, become 'transmogrified Englishmen', and in India the student of English literature does tend to become denationalised, an alien in his

own country, and what is worse, uncreative.

Professor Pattison is right, I think, in stressing the functional character of English teaching, even the teaching of English literature. Why not think of the students as future writers and critics, perhaps if we do, these will think it useful to join courses in English literature. As it is, there is a general belief that the last thing you should do if you want to become a writer is to study English literature. As for criticism in India, an acquaintance with the honesty and meticulousness of some English critics might serve as a model for those examining the work of writers in our own languages.

The use of various techniques for the teaching of a language or its literature, it seems to me, is less important than the human being who teaches in a class-room. Can we really hope to replace this person and use instead films, broadcasts, records? They are strictly speaking 'aids' and let us use them by all means. Certainly a film on the Lake District is interesting, and the record of a poem by the author himself has a fascination of its own for most of us, though the readings of T. S. Eliot are not exactly likely to lead any student to a love of his poetry! But the amount of space devoted to these by John Press suggests that they are far more important than we have ever regarded them, and this seems dangerous.

As for the recommendations of the various commissions there is one that I consider very important. In schools and universities, not only in adult education classes, 'wherever possible the relation of literature to such subjects as history, sociology, philosophy, politics and science should be explored by means of joint courses in literature and these other subjects'. Our universities and schools are taking specialisation so seriously that we have students of literature who truly believe that it exists in a vacuum unrelated to history or philosophy. It goes further, we have teachers of philosophy who are completely ignorant of history, students of

economics who are unaware that Aristotle or Plato ever existed and so on. We can multiply instances without number. We need not take all knowledge for our province but must we devote ourselves to tiny slides?

KRISHNA ESSAUOFF

Comparative Malpractices

CORRUPTION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

by Ronald Wraith and Adgar Simpkins (George Allen and Unwin, 208 pp. 20s.)

‘**T**HROUGHOUT the fabric of public life in newly independent states runs the scarlet thread of bribery and corruption’. The book however deals not with these states or even a representative selection of them, as its misleading title would suggest, but with corruption in Nigeria and Britain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Nigerians who might complain about this invidious distinction are told in consolation that theirs was the country ‘outside Britain where the authors have lived longest’.

‘Can any threads be traced in the pattern which are meaningful for Britain’s former African and Asian dependencies?’ This is the crucial question. The authors have certainly done a fine job of documenting the extent and effect of corruption in Nigeria and old ‘developing’ Britain. However, as they admit ‘the story in Britain reveals no short cuts to integrity, any more than it does to democracy’. Is the story of tribe-ridden Nigeria any more instructive?

The meaningful threads in the pattern are very few. Even so they are useful. The book disappoints only because it arouses high expectations and fails to fulfil them. But it does contain a good deal of useful material. The ‘cures’ for corruption in the authors’ opinion are ‘the passage of time, during which, given steady economic progress, loyalties will gradually move from family, clan and tribe to nation-state’. (Is ‘steady economic progress’ possible without first eradicating corruption?) The

spread of education, the evolution of public opinion, the growth of commerce and industry and of a professional class, the diffusion of power, wealth and status are some of the others. ‘There are no shorter cuts than these’.

Corruption is, therefore, certain to live long in the midst of the ‘developing countries’. It need not hurt their pride for, as Gibbon said, corruption is the most infallible symptom of constitutional liberty.

A. G. NOORANI

A Home from Home

THE INDIAN IMMIGRANTS IN BRITAIN by

Rashmi Desai. Issued under the auspices of the Institute of Race Relations, London (Oxford University Press, 149 pp. 21s.)

THE highest social ambitions of the Indian immigrant in Britain can be described in one sentence. It is to overcome the strangeness of an alien physical and social environment and to reconstruct, as nearly as possible the huddle of a typical Punjabi village. Or a typical Gujarati village, naturally, if that is where the immigrant comes from. It is this central fact which Mr. Desai has expanded, with the help of case histories, tables, statistics and other scholarly impedimenta, into a hundred and fifty page book.

The immigrant Indian is not to be confused with the Indian student, business or professional man who has settled in England. The immigrant is an unskilled or semi-skilled labourer who has gone to England solely in order to earn, and remit to his village, a bigger wage packet. Most of the immigrants belong either to Gujarat or the Punjab, where pressure on the land is heaviest, and nearly all of them migrated between 1950-60, after which it became almost impossible to get a passport, either real or forged.

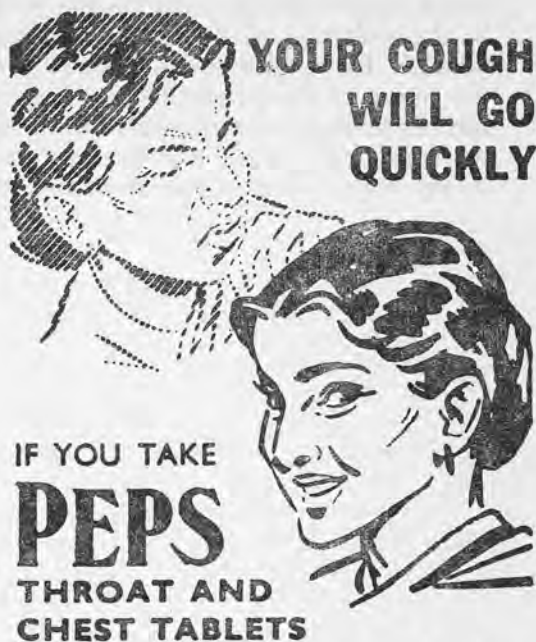
One naturally supposes that at least a part of the motive for settling in a foreign country must have been an unformulated wish to get away from family and group pressures. Not at all. The moment an

immigrant arrived in Britain his most strenuous activity was directed towards maintaining the strongest links with his village-kin and towards building, in his new environment, an identical replica of the conditions he had left, even unto collecting a joint family household around him. He had no hankerings either for better physical conditions nor for greater mental freedom. The one undisguised, and for him honourable reason for his coming to England was to earn money to send back to India.

The refusal to spend money in the country in which it is earned has made the Indian immigrant unpopular in many parts of the world. The incapacity to accept the norms and standards of the host country is explained by the tenacity with which we are taught to cling to our values. The only concession to a foreign culture is made in matters of dress, and then only by the men. Otherwise we are insensitive to the need for making even the smallest adjustments in order to conform to the norms of behaviour of the host community.

An unexpected fact about Indian immigrants in Britain is that after ten years in the country many of them still cannot speak English. That this could happen is a measure of the isolation in which immigrant communities manage to lead their lives. I have known some of the Indians who had settled in China and Japan before the last war. The only point on which they were able to pride themselves was their ability to attain a racy fluency in the local patois sooner than other foreigners, a feat which seemed to prove an inborn gift for languages. The experience of the migrants to Britain seems to show that it was not any special talent but the fact that the Japanese grammar forms were basically similar to ours, that was responsible for our success. We have, then, been deprived of our one slight excuse for self-congratulation.

Mr. Desai is careful not to pass any judgments but it is easy to see the reasons



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which keep alive the tensions between the local populations and the Indians. Neither does Mr. Desai attempt any predictions on the future of the Indian migrant community. Experience in other parts of the world has taught us that we can have a future in any foreign country only if we are pre-

pared to lose our identity gracefully and merge with the host society. From Mr. Desai's book it seems clear that this is a process which has not even begun to be thought about by the immigrants in Great Britain.

LAEEQ FUTEHALLY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Cultural Unity of India

Sir,

Asaf A. Fyzee's essay on the cultural unity of India in QUEST-41 raises certain questions I should like to comment upon.

The starting point should not be an aspiration asserted as a possible fact. India as a cultural unity has been an early aspiration, as words like Bharatvarsha, Jambudvipa or Hind should remind. But a cultural unity is nowhere real as amenable to proofs of the scientific or the legal kind. The cultural unity of Europe or of Britain is not less unprovable.

What demonstrably exists is the legal reality of the Indian republic since 1947. The unity imposed by its existence involves some very definite rights and obligations. But almost anyone can become an Indian citizen by satisfying the legal minimums. Asylees from old Czechoslovakia, newborn babies, even institutionalized lunatics are Indian citizens. Is it necessary at all that India should have any cultural unity in addition to this legal one? Is it not sufficient that Indian citizens should learn to live 'civilized' lives, that is, in communities that are creatures of human legislation?

The grain of truth in such a demand is in the fact that a strong community of persuasion must back up any legality if that is not to be a fragile legal fiction. Such a community of persuasion may not exactly coincide with a legal community. It does not include anyone until that person is actually participating in the culture. Potentiality alone does not count, for potentiality excludes none but the clinically proved idiot. It includes many who do not take part in the legal community. British culture in the sense familiar to us does not include the cockneys of London slums. German culture includes Austrians and Swiss, who will not fight to save Germany. Essentially, a cultural community is the conscious, personal and mutual allegiance of a dominant number of opinion moulders.

A cultural unity of India already exists in this sense, consisting of people united by their appre-

ciation for the government of India in the opportunities for intellectual, spiritual and social freedom it has sought to create for its citizens. It cannot be separated from the love for four dead men in their intentions and achievements, namely Gandhi, Patel, Azad and Nehru. (I include Patel here even though his genuine will to unity in reconciliation has been marred in the public view by his disastrous failures to understand Nehru.) Both the negative and the positive minimums for participation in this cultural unity are defined by their personalities.

Much of the older traditions, whether Hindu or Islamic or other, is not compatible with this new culture. As long they do not break the law, there is no need to disrespect or persecute them. It is not true that a Hindu can not commit treason. Gandhi was murdered by a Hindu, and Nehru might easily have been. And far too many actual cases are on record since 1947 of apparently orthodox Hindus giving away state secrets for money or women or what not.

Yet there is a real problem with the Indian Muslims that should be faced fairly and squarely. The mass of them is still largely convinced that their material and spiritual interests are not quite safe in the state of India, or for that matter in any state where the ultimate authority is not Muslim. For every Hindu active to alienate Indian Muslims, there is at least one if not two or three Indian Muslims who already feel alienated. This excessive fear is the root of all the trouble we have seen so far. Fear calls forth more fear in an unending cycle, through the violent acts committed, or through the violence suggested upon the feared.

The fear is due to ignorance more than anything else. It is useless to try to infer a fact of knowledge from the fact of prolonged physical proximity. Too few Muslims are familiar with the best elements of the Hindu tradition, and are able to appeal to these for aid. When Gandhi demanded justice from the British, he could quote with transparent sincerity the Bible or John

Stuart Mill. I wonder how many Muslims can quote the Gita or the Mudraraksasa or any other revered text that preaches the kind of justice now needed. Is there nothing in the Hindu tradition worth making friends with other than the tiny influence of Bertrand Russell? That Hindus are almost equally ignorant of Muslim traditions is not a good excuse. In any case, this is not a time for making excuses, but for seeking and winning every possible friendship across even the most serious differences of history.

It is necessary to love if love is asked for. The Indian Muslim masses must be thoroughly educated for their own safety. For education is love arising out of intimate knowledge. Educated Indian Muslims have to write, speak and teach with all the science and all the art they can muster. They are not hindered now as they were under the British or under the Nawabs. They should not hinder themselves by too overt dependence on the government for their personal individual livelihoods. Their dedicated energy must be the principal lever by which to bring out the Indian Muslim mass from the hell in which it now lives, suspected and suspecting, frightened and frightening, unhelped and unhelping, a menace to itself even more than to its neighbours and friends.

But of course there are other actors to be told their parts in the drama. Hindu opinion moulders may certainly do more to lose their ignorantly hysterical fear of crypto-Pakistanis, to be less ready to believe that the momentary military advantage gained by Pakistan will prove lasting or decisive, and to understand that, under the peculiar conditions prevailing in the world of today and of foreseeable tomorrow, a purely Hindu state can only be much less influential in world affairs than a secular India, even less influential than purely Muslim Pakistan.

And as I write these lines there might already have occurred that turning of the ways for which many of us have been praying long enough. President Ayub Khan may yet be able to carry through his change of heart, and thus Pakistan may yet become a safe neighbour, even if not ally, instead of an ungenerous and irresponsible enemy. If this happens, a Pathan from Sandhurst will share with a Brahmin from Cambridge that ultimate honor which was denied to Gandhi and Azad.

PUNYA SLOKA RAY

The University of Chicago
June 17, 1964

Dear Sir,

In this brief note, I do not intend to contradict Prof. Fyzee's basic point with which I am in agreement and which has been anticipated by dispassionate writers with an objective outlook, outside, of course, the narrow official circle of post-independence pseudo-nationalistic historians — the latest illustrious name being that of Dr. R. C. Majumdar. Compare for instance, Prof. Fyzee's assertion that the cultural unity of India is a 'sheer self-deception' and his call that 'the secret of unity in future seems to be the recognition of diversity of thought in all aspects of life and particularly in matters concerning religion and the problem of ultimate destiny', with the following lines from Dr. Majumdar's *History of the Freedom Movement in India* vol. I, preface: 'An impression was sought to be deliberately created (by the official viewpoint) that the Hindus and Muslims had already shed so much of their individual characteristics, and there was such a complete transformation of both and a fusion of their cultures that there was no essential difference between the two. Though every true Indian must ever devoutly wish for such a consummation, it was unfortunately never a historical fact.... Real understanding can only be arrived at by a frank recognition of the facts of history and not by suppressing and distorting them'.

There is one more point. Prof. Fyzee says that if by 'Indian' culture is meant Hindu culture, then the assertions about the cultural unity of India are 'perfectly true'. Strictly speaking they are not, and even in Hindu India there existed a wide diversity, without subsequent rigidity, in thought and approach consequent upon the meeting of so many diverse ethnic groups with distinct backgrounds within the ever-expanding fold of the 'Indic' society. The fact of the case is that almost at the end of each epoch, fresh hordes of new-comers were added to the Indic society with the consequence that loyalty to a few common deities apart, there came to exist in this country not one culture, but a wide variety of cultures, the external expressions of which were noticeable in language, dress, food-habits, even modes of religious worship. Even classical Sanskrit, itself a variant from the language of the Vedas and the outcome of a first-rate linguistic reform, failed to provide the necessary unity to the Indian culture. And though the north Indian languages, including Gujarati and Marathi on the West Coast, all claim common descent from Sanskrit, for all practical purposes (including that of adoption of a *lingua franca* in place of English) the children of the same parent exhibit an un-

bridgeable divergence. In other words, the social, religious and linguistic patterns of this sub-continent, including the four dominant linguistic groups in the Dravidian South, their mode of religious worship, social salutations, manner and customs, dress and food-habits — in brief, the entire mode of living and thinking, are as much varied as the physiography and climate of the country. Hinduism became a common religion of these divergent groups and yet could not reconstitute them into a uniform people, as in the U.K. and the U.S.A. Even popular Hinduism is widely divergent in different parts, being a sort of compromise between the new currents and the still extant local archaisms. Even such other cultural elements as art, architecture, painting, music, calligraphy have wide divergences between one

part of India and another, and hence the cultural unity is a grand fiction. With the coming of Islam, the situation became all the more complicated and a few more alien groups, the Turko Afgans, the Mongols, not to speak of the local converts, were added to the divergent culture-groups of India. Islam in this country raised a ferment without properly effecting a fusion. The fault may, in part, have rested with the 'barbarians' — as distinguished from the classical Arabs — who imported it to this country, but in the main it rested with a degenerate Hinduism which had taken shelter beneath a thick crust and was unable and unwilling to absorb the new currents that came from the eleventh century onwards.

Yours faithfully,
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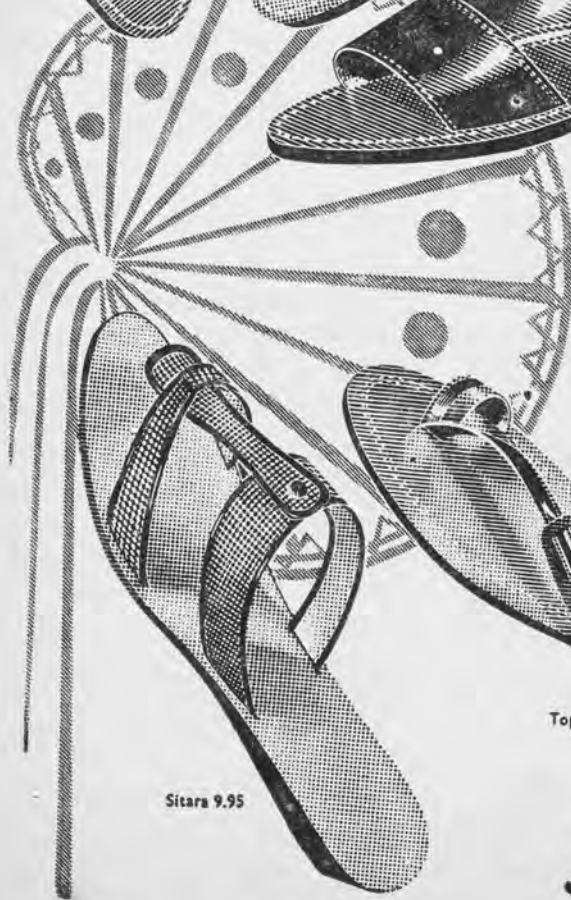
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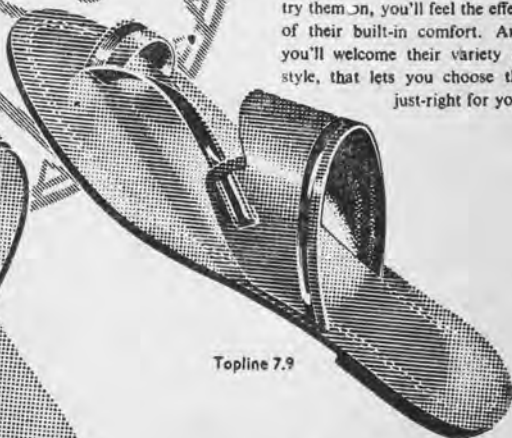
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