

# quest 44

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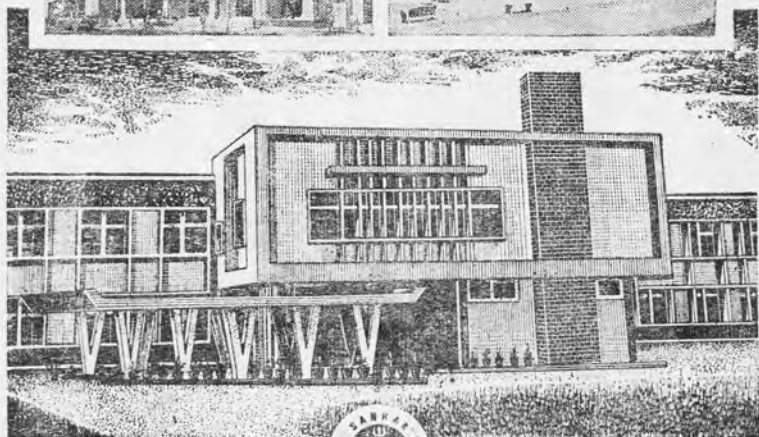
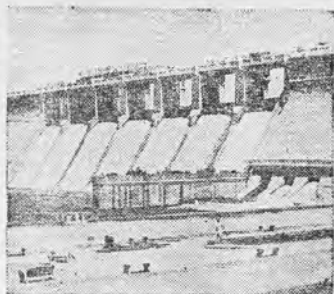
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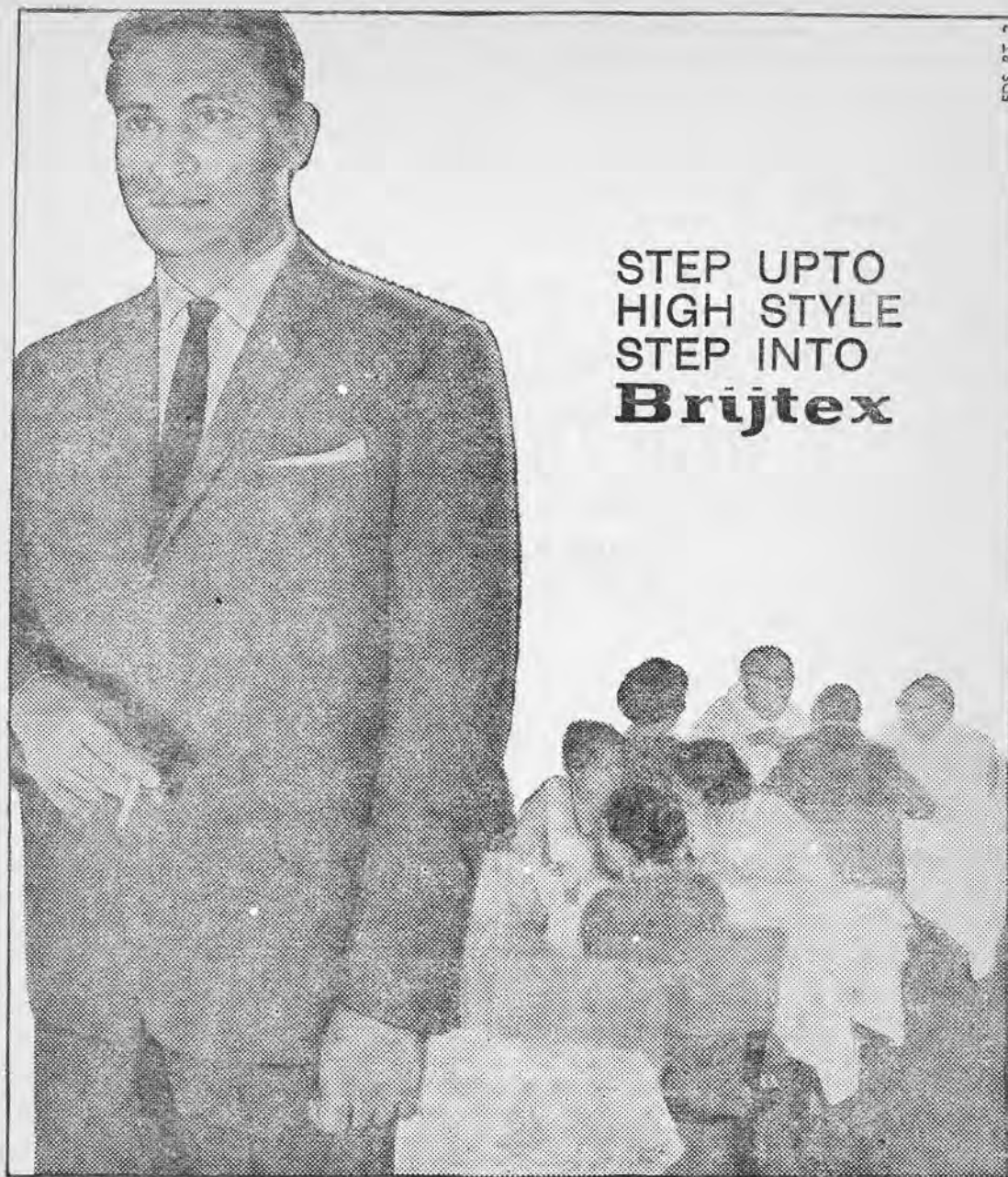
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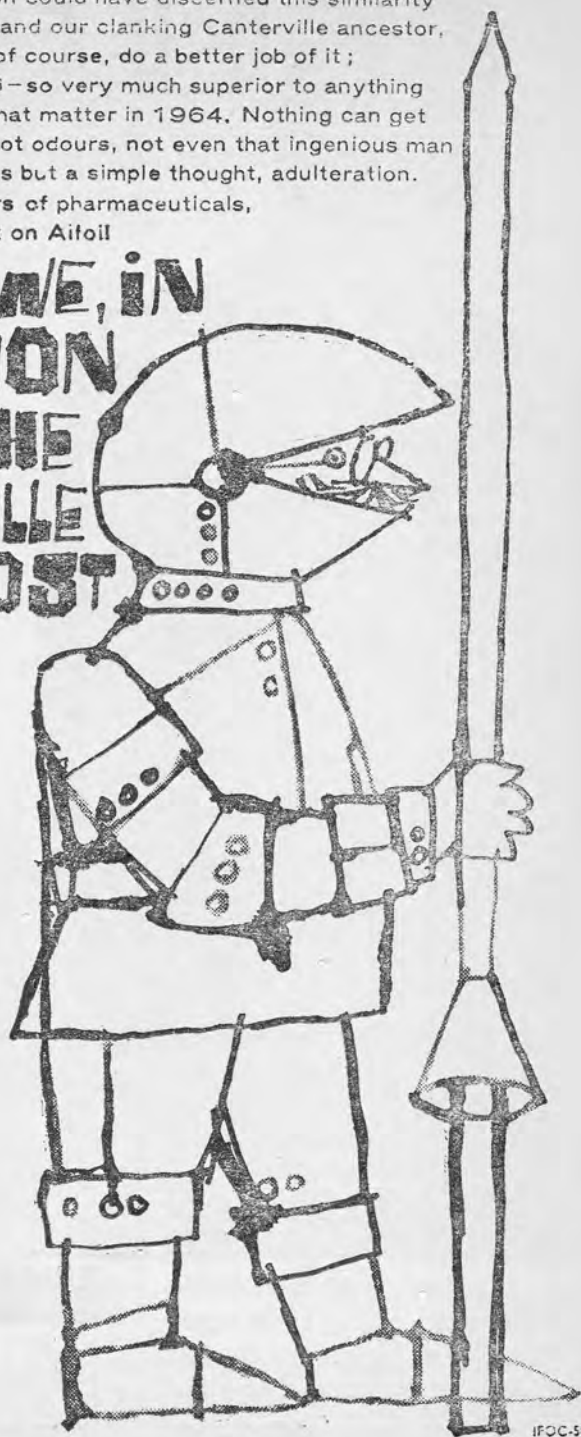
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## *Some Reflections on the Indian Philosophical Tradition*

M. P. REGE

‘EXCEPT for the blind forces of nature nothing moves in the world which is not Greek in its origin’. In saying this Sir Henry Maine appears to have forgotten the claims of the Indian philosophical tradition, the only authentic and original philosophical tradition other than the Greek, which has formed and directed the cultural life of a people and furnished a theoretical basis to an enduring civilisation. But perhaps Sir Henry Maine is essentially right. For, if we consider the intellectual and moral values of our modern civilisation, the political and social institutions in which we seek to embody them, the scientific attitude which, on the one hand, is an expression of our loyalty to truth which is an intrinsic value of this civilization and, on the other, by creating scientific technology, gives material sustenance to this civilization — then we find that we can trace all these to their Greek origins. This is not to say that the whole course of modern thought in all its aspects is a mere unfolding of the consequences which were implicit from the beginning in Greek thought; but only that there is an essential identity of approach and method between Greek and modern thought which makes it meaningful to describe them as two phases of the same tradition. The Indian philosophical tradition, on the other hand, remains distinct, self-contained and cut-off from modern thought. The question we have to ask as modern Indians is what significance can this tradition have for us as citizens of the contemporary world and as aspiring to share in the universal cultural heritage of mankind? The task of interpreting and assessing the Indian philo-

sophical tradition as a whole is a large and difficult one. In this paper I have only tried to take note of some of the characteristic features — or what have appeared to me such — of Indian philosophy.

What is philosophy? This is, partly, a linguistic question and the safest way to answer it is, perhaps, to follow established usage and admit as philosophical any work which usage would recognise as such. But it is also, partly, a question of substance and an attempt to answer it presupposes a certain conception of a scheme of human knowledge in which philosophy is assigned a determinate position and function. But the conception of such a scheme of knowledge which distinguishes between different kinds of theoretical inquiry using appropriate methods pursuing various theoretical goals, and recognises a certain, perhaps hierarchical, order among them, is itself one of the fruits of philosophical inquiry. It is a consequence of and lends support to the adoption of a particular philosophical standpoint. In other words, the question ‘what is the nature, aim of philosophical inquiry?’ is itself a philosophical question; and the answer to it varies with one’s philosophical standpoint. It is, therefore, futile to search for a neutral answer to this question which could be acceptable to philosophers of different persuasions. All that one can do it to take a look at the course of philosophical tradition defining it in a broad, liberal way and try to see what different intellectual tasks have been engaging philosophers and have been traditionally recognised as proper and peculiar to philosophy. We must not assume that

there must be a common feature pervading all these inquiries which determines the essence of philosophy. These inquiries may, at best, exhibit 'family resemblances' to each other; and this family of inquiries will define for us broadly the area of philosophy.

Approaching the task of defining philosophy from this point of view we may say that one of the most important questions which philosophy can ask is 'What is the nature of the universe?' Indeed, it has been held that this question when sought to be answered in a certain manner marks the beginning of the philosophical mode of thinking as distinguished from the previous magical and mythological modes of thought. The philosophical way of answering the question is not to invent a likely fable but to support the favoured answer with evidence and argument. It must be noted that answers to this question belong both to the history of science as well as to the history of philosophy. The question itself is possible in a period when the sciences have not yet separated themselves from philosophy. The attempted answers belong to the history of science because they are systematic attempts to explain the nature of things. They belong to the history of philosophy because they seek to grasp the nature of the universe as a whole and this cognitive interest retains its strength even after the emergence of a number of positive sciences, each concerned with a determinate part of reality.

It is obvious that this question cannot have the same meaning for us now. The rise and development of the positive sciences each dealing with a limited domain or aspect of the universe have rendered it meaningless for us. Even if we accept the assumption on which this question is based that there is some one stuff of which everything is made (e.g. the fundamental particles of physics) any attempt to answer it in these terms will leave out so much of our relevant knowledge of the nature of things as to render the answer highly misleading. But we can

still ask this question of Thales with a slightly different meaning.

The question may be prompted by an urge to synthesise knowledge yielded by the positive sciences so as to form a picture of the universe as a whole and man's place within it. Our ultimate attitude to things and life will be determined by this picture. This picture and this attitude will lead to a certain ordering of human life and lend sanction to a certain way of life and a scale of importance in human goals. Materialism and Idealism, Determinism and Indeterminism are such differing, rival pictures of the universe on which are based divergent conceptions of human life and its significance. As such a synoptic view of the universe can only be validly based on a synthesis of all available knowledge, it cannot be the function of any particular science to formulate it. That task must be assigned to a distinct inquiry. It is a philosophical task. And it is a task to which rational beings who care to maintain harmony between their knowledge and conduct must perennially address themselves.

The question can be asked with yet another meaning. The question 'What is the nature of the Universe?' may be taken as equivalent to 'what is the nature of the real universe?' or 'what is the nature of Reality as opposed to phenomena or appearances?' This question will inevitably come to be asked if one holds that scientific knowledge is somehow confined to appearances and fails to reveal the nature of the ultimate reality. Scientific knowledge will then have to be supplemented with philosophical or metaphysical knowledge of ultimate reality, if this is at all knowable.

Now it may further be held that metaphysical knowledge of ultimate reality can take the form of an immediate, mystical experience. Such a view acknowledges that scientific knowledge is the only form of rational knowledge but also insists that the ultimate reality transcends reason and can be grasped only in a direct experience. The other possible view is that though the ultimate reality transcends empirical know-

ledge it does not transcend reason. Metaphysical knowledge of reality assumes the form of a system of *a priori* knowledge which is deduced from first principles which are non-empirical and rational. In any case, room can be made for metaphysics which claims to reveal the nature of the ultimate reality which transcends science by putting a limit to the claims of scientific knowledge. And this can be done only on the basis of a philosophical criticism of scientific knowledge. It is only by making explicit and examining the 'postulates' or 'presuppositions' of positive sciences and showing them to be inherently defective that we can make room for metaphysical knowledge.

I am not saying that the quest for mystical experience is necessarily based on a *a priori*, conscious rejection of the ordinary view of the world or its scientific extension and systematisation. An individual may, somehow, directly enjoy a mystical experience and returning to his ordinary consciousness feel profoundly dissatisfied with the reality it reveals. But such a mystical experience is not philosophy. It can by itself only pose a problem and furnish a datum for philosophical construction. The claim of the mystical experience to reveal ultimate reality must be rationally vindicated; to subordinate ontological status attributed to every-day reality must be rationally justified. This involves critical and constructive philosophical reflection using its own criteria and method.

We can thus see that the old philosophical question 'what is the nature of the universe?' first asked in an age of innocence acquires a new significance when asked in what might be called the scientific age. The critical side of philosophical thought consists in an examination of the concepts which underlie our ordinary, common-sense view of the world and determine its general character, as also of the more sophisticated concepts evolved in the course of scientific thinking and the principles which scientific thought assumes or discovers. It comes to be one of the

essential tasks of philosophy to make explicit such concepts as thing, change, cause, space, time, member, law and so on, analyse and define them, determine their interrelations and bring out the hidden tensions and conflicts between them. If a philosopher accepts the possibility of rational metaphysics he will have to examine critically such normative concepts as truth, knowledge, validity, proof and so on, so as to prove that our ordinary scientific knowledge does not really satisfy these norms and, therefore, has no valid title to the status of knowledge. However, philosophical motivation behind such a logical examination of concepts need not always be critical or destructive. It is possible to undertake conceptual analysis merely for the purpose of understanding better the logical structure of scientific thought or for defending the validity of our ordinary or scientific concepts. Such a defence, if successful, will result in a repudiation of the necessity or validity of metaphysics. In any case this kind of critical philosophy leads to a growing self-consciousness of the human spirit, to an explicit awareness of the structure of human thought and conditions of its validity.

It must also be pointed out here that philosophical thought concerned with scientific thinking need not always be retrospective; it can occasionally be prospective. It need not always be engaged in a critical examination of the logical foundations of an established discipline which has already attained the secure path of science. It may visualise a new speculative programme. It may criticise and reject accepted methods of inquiry or canons of validity and invent new methods and new conceptions of theoretical goals to take their place. These new methods and theoretical objectives may embody a radically different conception of knowledge and give human thought a new direction. This is the creative role of philosophical thought and this kind of philosophical achievement is possible only to those who are also field-workers in the special

sciences. Plato and his disciples in the Academy who laid the logical foundations of deductive geometry also made notable contributions to the subject. And Galileo, Descartes and Newton who gave shape to the new science of mathematical physics were both philosophical critics of the scholastic conception of physics as well as practising physicists and mathematicians.

Philosophical reflection is only one form of self-consciousness of the human spirit; there are others. Philosophical thinking need not be exclusively concerned with analysis and direction of human thought. Besides pure reason there is practical reason. Men are not merely thinking subjects; they are also practical agents struggling to mould their environment in conformity with their needs and impulses. Philosophical self-consciousness naturally extends from the realm of thought to that of feeling and willing. Corresponding to the pre-philosophical, magical and mythological modes of thought there is a pre-philosophical morality in which the individual consciousness is submerged in the tribal consciousness. At this stage the distinction between what is right and what is customary, between an ideal normative order and the established ways has not yet dawned. The same concept may cover the natural order as exemplified in observed uniformities in natural phenomena, established tribal ways and an ideal moral order. This primitive innocence of the tribal man is soon lost when confronted with conflicting tribal customs and moral codes. Men begin to reflect on the variety of human needs and activities; conditions of their satisfaction; the goals they are directed to and the possibility of integrating them into a rational order. The result of such reflection is to delineate a form (perhaps, *the* form) of good life and the social institutions, customs, and subjective attitudes and qualities of character in which it is embodied and which sustain it. But such critical reflection, again, has a creative side to it. Conscious delineation of one form of good life involves at least

an implicit awareness of alternative possibilities of human fulfilment. Changes in material conditions of life or in social institutions, accidents of individual temperament and sensibility may result in intuitions of new possibilities of good life. Philosophy will then try to formulate and explicate these intuitions and criticise prevalent moral attitudes and institutions which hinder the realisation of these possibilities and define the attitudes and institutions which will embody this form of good life.

These have been some of the essential tasks which philosophy has performed in the history of thought. In assessing the achievements of the Indian philosophical tradition the question we have to ask is: To what extent and with what success has Indian philosophy applied itself to these tasks?

The question 'what is the nature of existence?' was raised early by Indian thought and Indian thinkers have been much exercised by this question. The Nasadiya Sukta is the earliest recorded expression of philosophical wonder and perplexity. The vedic seer expresses his profound metaphysical wonder and puzzlement at the actuality of Being and gives free rein to his imagination in trying to account for it. The Upanishadas contain a sustained quest for the unity which according to them must be within things or behind or beyond them. The Sankhya concept of *prakriti* which is composed of three diverse kinds of *gunas* is one solution of the problem of how different kinds of things could have emerged from the one stuff. The Vaisheshika theory of indivisible atoms of various kinds is another solution to the same problem.

Students of Indian philosophy very often regard it as a unique and supremely valuable feature of Indian thought that it formed so early in its history this conception of the unity of things and held fast to it throughout its course. Actually, such a monistic conception of things is a widespread feature of primitive thought. It is

perhaps true, as suggested by many sociologists, that primitive thought is dominated by social categories. These thinkers are haunted by memories of early tribal unity and the process of its fragmentation into distinct classes held together by an ambivalent relationship of conflict and cooperation. The emergence of such separate classes, or of the individual carrying the burden of determining his individual destiny, had a tragic aspect to it; it involved loss of the pervasive, enveloping unity and harmony of the original tribal state of existence. Existence of the separate class or the individual was regarded by many of these early thinkers as a transgression, as an instance of sinful egotism requiring expiation by a return to the original unity of the tribe. It was natural for these thinkers to use these emotionally charged categories when trying to solve the riddle of the universe.

We find something like this emotional attitude dominating early Greek thought. Thales, Anaximander, Heraclitus, Parmenides regard the unity of things as essential or fundamental and the separate existence of things as only secondary, temporary, a transgression to be finally wiped out or even somehow illusory and unreal. On the other hand, Empedocles regards the existence of separate elements and the relation of love and hate between them as constituting the ultimate order of things. Another feature of primitive thought is that it is hylozoistic. The categories of matter, life and mind are not clearly distinguished and held apart. All things are regarded as sharing in the same, common, universal form of Being. The distinction between matter and mind and between inanimate forms of matter is a much later analytical achievement. According to Anaxagoras 'Nor are the things that are in one world divided nor cut off from one another with a hatchet.' The principle or principles of Being recognised by the Milesian thinkers exhibit qualities of life and mentality. The 'All' of Melissos which

is infinite in magnitude is also something which is capable of feeling pleasure.

We find that these features characterise early Indian thought also. It is preoccupied with the notion of the fundamental unity of all things and the resulting problem of one and many. Secondly, it is also hylozoistic. The gunas of the Samkhya are the common stuff of which both mind and matter are composed. One of the kinds of atoms recognised by the Vaisheshikas are mental atoms. Now, as remarked earlier, these early speculations belong to a period when philosophy has not yet distinguished itself from science. Thought has not yet reached the level of abstractness necessary for the posing of a philosophical problem in its purity. The concepts, and the logical relations between them with which philosophy mainly deals were yet represented in crude and distracting symbolic material. As scientific theories attempting to give an account and explanation of the nature and behaviour of things they can now be for us only objects of historical curiosity. They are interesting as marking stages in the growth of scientific knowledge and even as representing some of the wrong turns that science took in the chequered course of its development. To a sophisticated curiosity they are interesting as embodying outmoded models of scientific knowledge. They may also become objects of our retrospective interest as they sometimes contain concepts, hypotheses which have long lain sterile and dormant, suddenly to receive application in an important area of knowledge in novel and unimagined ways — as happened with the atomic hypothesis. Some of these theories e.g. the Samkhya theory of gunas have penetrated deeply into the popular mind and come to colour its ways of thought and expression. The Samkhya theory retains some appeal and even validity as an imaginative, almost dramatic description and classification of the phenomenal qualities to be found in the psycho-physical microcosm and their analogical counterparts in

the macrocosm. In the same way the Epicurean theory of nature and life presents a picture of the universe which we may still find valid in its broad essentials. From all these various points of view the speculations of these early thinkers retain their importance and value. But as giving a sober, matter-of-fact account of the nature of things and their behaviour in the manner in which science tries to do this, they have long ceased to be acceptable.

It is necessary to emphasise this obvious point because many Indian commentators take an ambiguous approach to traditional Indian systems. When a Western commentator tries to give an exposition, say, of the philosophy of Anaxagoras, he approaches his task as a historian of ideas. His aim is to achieve a sympathetic understanding of Anaxagoras' thought; to reconstruct as accurately as possible the meaning which it had for him and his contemporaries. He may, in addition, try to trace conceptual affinities between it and some later theories which have intellectually better survived the test of verification. But there is no suggestion whatever that Anaxagoras' thought remains valid for us even now. An Indian commentator approaches his task in a different spirit altogether. In the Indian tradition the question whether a writer on, say, Samkhya is writing as a historian of ideas or is actually engaged in philosophical thinking on his own is never sharply posed. He is, somehow, taken to be doing both at once. This traditional approach seems to have been continued by modern Indian commentators. Thus, the *Gitarahasya* of Tilak is both a commentary on the Gita as well as an exposition of Tilak's own ethical views. Now, the Samkhya theory of gunas, for instance, tries among other things to give an explanation of physical and mental phenomena. It is, therefore, to this extent in the same line of business as modern physics and psychology; and as a system of ideas must stand the test of competition with them. And if it fails in the test it must receive the logical penalty of being

rejected in favour of a superior theory. Furthermore, if the theory of gunas is rejected as unsound all the super-structures based on it must also be given up or attempts must be made to give them a theoretically more secure foundation. Thus, the Yoga system of philosophy elaborates a set of practices as a part of spiritual discipline and it describes and assesses the results said to follow from them in terms of the theory of gunas. Now, it may indeed have been empirically verified that results answering to certain broad descriptions do actually follow from the yogic practices; this fact, then, must be accepted. But, it must also be clearly realised that once the theory of gunas is given up the job of giving a satisfactory description and explanation of these results remains to be accomplished. The reason why this theoretical need is not felt and recognised by many modern adherents of Yoga is that they have not really given up the theory of gunas; they do not bring the theory to the arena where rival scientific theories struggle with each other for survival. The theory is saved from the logical consequences of such a clash because it is vaguely thought that the theory of gunas is not a scientific theory at all; it does not function at the level at which a scientific theory functions. It is regarded as a philosophical theory functioning at a higher or deeper level though somehow concerned with the same facts with which a scientific theory is concerned. But, then, what is a philosophical theory? How does it differ from a scientific theory though both kinds of theory are concerned with the same facts? And, most important, what is the criterion of its validity? How does one proceed to establish such a theory? All these questions become relevant if the distinction between the philosophical and the scientific accounts of facts is to be maintained. It cannot be said that these questions have been properly faced by most exponents of Indian philosophy. If they had been, large portions of traditional Indian philosophy would have been given

up as so much theoretical dead wood.

If we deduct from the total contribution of Indian thought those portions which are really obsolete scientific theories, what remains? What remains, I believe, which is still capable of engaging our philosophical as distinguished from historical interest, is what Indian thinkers have achieved by way of (i) analysis of concepts and (ii) development of some original, fresh perspectives on the universe and human life. The critical parts of Buddhist, Nyaya-Vaisheshika, Vedanta systems contain much subt<sup>le</sup>, penetrating acute analysis of our ordinary concepts of substance, cause, person, knowledge and so on; and the constructive parts of the Gita, Buddhism, Vedanta, etc. contain sensitive and deeply realised portrayals of ways of life which represent perennially valid moral ideals. These contributions remain permanently interesting and relevant.

It would be taking a narrow view of the aims of philosophical analysis to reject Nyaya or Buddhist analysis of epistemological and ontological categories as irrelevant to us now because pre-scientific. The logical scope of the basic categories with which we operate extends very much beyond the narrow realm of scientific thinking. Analysis of the scientific method and of the concepts which scientific thought has evolved in the course of its development is certainly an important aim of philosophical inquiry; but it cannot be its whole aim. There may be genuine philosophical puzzles connected with the use of our ordinary, non-scientific concepts in our everyday thinking, in moral discourse, and so on; and to clarify these puzzles is an important and useful aim of philosophical activity.

The achievements of Indian thought in this region of what might be called analytical philosophy are very impressive indeed. Indian analytical thought is of the highest philosophical quality. It exhibits a great intellectual passion for clarity, precision and explicitness. It shows a marked

distaste for anything that is slipshod; for loose ends or abrupt beginnings. It constantly strives to make explicit the hidden assumptions on which conclusions are made to rest; and is quite ruthless in driving home the consequences which follow from accepted premises. In critically examining philosophical theories, whether one's own or those of opponents, Indian thinkers neither give nor seek any quarter. These are admirable intellectual qualities which are displayed to the best advantage, perhaps, by Navya-Nyaya which was the last creation of Indian analytical thought. The cultivation of these qualities by Indian philosophical thought and the respect for them which was diffused in the Indian intelligentsia kept alive the vigour and keenness of the Indian intellect. This disciplining of the Indian intellect not only led to the achievement of valuable philosophical results, but also made possible a rapid and thorough assimilation of the Western intellectual tradition. A mind which cared for the subtle distinctions of the Navya-Nyaya, its straining after absolute precision of statement, was formed to appreciate and respect the intellectual spirit behind, say, the law of evidence.

It would, therefore, be wrong for a modern Indian to belittle either the intrinsic importance of the achievement of Indian thought in the region of analytic philosophy or the part this thought has indirectly played in making real assimilation of an alien intellectual tradition possible. Particularly, it would be unfair to base a total, adverse verdict on the Indian philosophical tradition on the ground that it did not lead to the discovery of the scientific method and to the rise of natural sciences. The rise of natural sciences in the West itself may be a lucky accident for which a fortuitous concurrence of many unconnected factors was responsible. The scientific attitude is based on an intellectual respect for particular facts. It accepts the supremacy of the hard, brute facts, conformity with

which is the final test of the acceptability of any theory. At the same time, it expresses itself in a persistent search for universality. The particular fact, for it, is significant only as exemplifying a universal law or laws, and its constant endeavour is to reduce the less general laws to special cases of the more general laws. That these two mutually opposed attitudes should be fused together to give a certain direction to the intellectual interest of a few men of genius at a time when the conceptual tools necessary for a successful pursuit of their interest were already at hand — this may surely be regarded as a lucky accident.

At the same time, it must be remembered that scientific knowledge is the only rational form of knowledge of the nature of things. If some of the intellectual attitudes and norms which shaped the Indian philosophical tradition prevent us from fully participating in this greatest intellectual adventure of mankind then our philosophical heritage becomes a burden. Moreover a post-mortem should be instructive. Why did the Indian philosophical tradition in spite of its brilliance, subtlety and fecundity fail to discover the sure path of scientific knowledge? What were the intellectual ideals and attitudes which gave a different turn to its development? We have noted that some features of the Indian philosophical thought were favourable to the reception and assimilation of Western thought. Are there any features of it which prevented it from developing in the same way as the Western thought and which may come in the way of our assimilating certain vital ingredients in the Western tradition?

When we consider the Indian philosophical tradition from this point of view, its most striking feature, I think, is the method of philosophising followed by Indian thinkers. This method is to comment on a commentary which is a commentary on . . . . . a commentary on the sutras. To comment on a work is to attempt to elucidate its meaning. This method of philosophising reduces the aim

of philosophical inquiry to clarification of the meaning of a received system of ideas. It is owing to the almost universal prevalence of this method that the charge often gets made that Indian philosophy is not really philosophy at all but essentially something like theology. It is not the result of free and active speculation, but merely a systematisation and clarification of passively accepted dogmas. This charge, of course, is formally false. Not all Indian systems take as their point of departure a scriptural revelation. It is only the various branches of Vedanta that take their stand on revealed scriptures and conceive their task to be limited to establishment and explication of the meaning of scriptural texts. Other systems like Samkhya, Vaisheshika, etc. even if they are orthodox and accept the validity of scriptures as an independent means of knowledge do not regard definition and clarification of the meaning of scriptures as their sole business or the only way to the knowledge of the ultimate truth. The fundamental tenets of these systems have been arrived at by free speculation unhampered by any initial adherence to a revealed dogma. These systems trace their origin to the sutras which are the deposits from a period of intense philosophical speculation — the period which roughly coincided with the rise of Buddhism which was, indeed, its most remarkable contribution to Indian thought. These early speculations are truly philosophical in form and content; they are daring, uninhibited and radical in character. The sutras which are now taken as the foundations of the various systems are merely the terse summaries of these free philosophical discussions. They are mnemonic devices for reminding one of the views entertained in the course of these discussions, and the arguments and counter arguments, illustrations and analogies used in the course of the debate and the conclusions reached. The sutras, therefore, lay down no dogmas; they are merely the signposts which mark the course which previous discussions had taken. In employing

the method of commenting on these sutras for the purpose of expounding their views, these systems may be said to be guilty at worst, of a *form* of dogmatism; the actual contents of these systems are the results of free, uninhibited philosophical thought and free from any taint of dogmatism.

All this, of course, is true. But it must be realised that this form in which philosophical thinking is presented is symptomatic. When after the early, brilliant explosion of speculation Indian thought settled down to a steady, systematic pursuit of truth the method it adopted was the method of commentary. This method is fatal to the spirit of free intellectual adventure. It accepts for thought the subordinate role of explicating, systematising, clarifying the given truth. The philosophical activity of the early, unknown thinkers is not carried on in the same spirit by their successors who are addicted to systematisation. They are merely content to elaborate on the achievements of their predecessors. Thought or reason in their hands becomes merely an expounder of truth; it may in addition prepare the mind better for receiving and accepting the truth by removing possible misconceptions about it and apparent inconsistencies from it. But thought does not have to discover the truth. It has already been discovered and handed down by tradition. This reverence for, dependence on, tradition maimed the free spirit of Indian philosophy.

The Western philosophical tradition is the creation of a succession of individual thinkers. Of course, great thinkers have founded schools and movements, or schools and movements have been named after great thinkers, and lesser men have made it their life-work to contribute to the development or defence of a school. It would be impossible to write a history of Greek philosophy without making a reference to the rise, development and decline of philosophical schools like the Pythagoreans or the Academy or the Peripatetics or the Epicureans, and so on. The Pythagorean school was a mystery-cult formed on the

pattern of tribal life with its machinery of taboos, initiation rites comprising ordeals and revelation of mysteries by the elders. The mysteries revealed were of course philosophical even arithmetical wisdom; and the elders were the Master, the Founder of the Sect and his successors. The other Greek schools of philosophy also seem to be modelled after the same pattern. A school consisted of men drawn together because they shared and pursued together not the same tribal way of life but the same conception of the good life and this conception was best embodied in the personality and teachings of the founder. But though there were schools of philosophy in Greece which in their structure imitated the tribe and the mystery-cult, not all Greek philosophers belonged to or founded schools; for instance, Thales, Anaxagoras, Heraclitus did not. A philosopher would naturally be influenced by the views, arguments, methods of his predecessors; he might gratefully acknowledge his debt to them and point to similarities between their positions and the doctrines he had reached. But the notion that it was the responsibility and privilege of the individual thinker to discover the truth for himself was implicit in the way in which early Greek thinkers philosophised; and this notion on the whole, remained alive and valid in the entire course of Greek thought. Plato was not merely a minor or even a major Socratic; nor was Aristotle a Platonist. These thinkers were directly concerned with certain philosophical problems; they considered and criticised the views of their predecessors and the arguments used by them in support of these views; and finally arrived at their own views by a process of rational argument. Thus rational argument remained the means of discovery and defence of the truth. It can, therefore, be said that the attributes in which the schools of philosophy resembled mystery-cults, though striking, were really superficial.

Things were different with Indian thought. While in the West it could be

said that a philosopher belonged to a certain school because he had come to form certain views, in India it could be said that a philosopher held certain views because he belonged to a certain school. In the systematic period when a number of schools had crystallised after the early turmoil of speculation, every philosopher wrote as belonging to a school. A philosopher was essentially an exponent of a certain school. All the Indian systems developed together through mutual dialogue. Every system became more precise, articulate, coherent and better defined in the process of meeting the attacks of other systems. But no system was finally demolished, finally superseded. Every system redefined and re-affirmed itself in the face of other systems. There was no court of appeal transcending rival systems, for the final court to which a system appealed was internal to itself; and those were the fundamental tenets adumbrated in the sutras which demarcated the boundaries of orthodoxy which no adherent to the system could cross. Attempted refutations by rival systems based on rival orthodoxies were soon seen as irrelevant. Thus, every system was a closed system. Philosophical thought became stabilised into peaceful coexistence of rival systems. There were no invasions, only border-raids. One finds the social structure of closed castes reflected in the realm of speculation. The anonymity of Indian thinkers is a symptom of this. The individual has not yet quite emerged from the tribe; or rather, having emerged from it, he has re-entered the shell of a philosophical system.

The Nyaya system of logic recognises and gives sanction to this situation. Logic, in the West, aims at discovering the fundamental principles of valid reasoning. Aristotle, in developing his logic, had before him the model of deductive geometry. For him scientific knowledge is demonstrable knowledge and all demonstration must have a point of beginning which is furnished by definitions of universal concepts and must proceed from

these according to valid principles of reasoning to conclusions — the theorems — which necessarily follow from them. The realm of science is, therefore, the realm of universal, rational knowledge as distinguished from the realm of perceptions or opinions which may differ from subject to subject. Logic has to analyse the structure of such universally valid knowledge and bring out the fundamental principles on which it rests. Nyaya, on the other hand, does not undertake analysis of the logical structure of a universally valid system of knowledge. The model before it is that of a number of rival schools debating with one another. It does not classify tenets into those which lie at the basis of demonstration — definitions, those which are demonstrated — theorems, and those according to which demonstration proceeds — principles of reasoning. Rather it attempts to formulate the code of fair debate among rival systems. It classifies tenets into those which are exclusively held by one system and those which happen to be commonly held by all systems and those which follow from the tenets held exclusively by a certain system and therefore are binding on the adherents of that system only. The Nyaya attempts to map the internal structure of any system and in doing so has necessarily to make a reference to other systems.

Now, it may be said that this kind of circularity, this being a closed and rival structure, is a distinguishing mark of philosophical systems. A positive science uses a method the validity of which it does not undertake to establish; and it pursues certain theoretical goals the possibility and validity of which it does not feel the need to prove. It is otherwise with a philosophical system which sets out to explain everything including itself, its own possibility and validity. Thus, empiricism is a philosophical theory of knowledge and any proof of empiricism must either be empiricist and therefore circular or non-empiricist and therefore invalid. There is a sense in which a philosophical system cannot be established from outside; the method and

canons of proof we have to use for proving it, its final court of appeal, can only be internal to it. The only way to test a philosophical theory is to work one's way to its centre and from there view it as a whole. And if one finds that its centre and periphery support each other, and if the whole system is in accord with one's intuitive vision of things, one gives it the seal of one's approval. There is no other way. It cannot, therefore, be held against Indian philosophical schools that they are circular. This contention must be accepted. But the point is that philosophical speculation and analysis in the West succeeded in creating the ideal of scientific knowledge, a system of knowledge which is open, which constantly invites and welcomes correction by being put to the test of more and more facts and which is progressive. This form of rational knowledge serves as a corrective to the speculative extravagances of philosophy. After all a philosophical system, though it may claim to be autonomous and to validate itself, cannot fly in the face of established scientific knowledge. It must account for it, come to terms with it, square itself with it. Secondly, though philosophy, in the final analysis, is only an attempt to give rational form to our intuitive vision of things, this vision of things itself is influenced, transformed in more or less subtle ways, by the existing body of scientific knowledge. A scientific discovery may lead us to see the universe and man in a new perspective and new philosophical problems will arise in our trying to adjust old ways of thinking and the old mapping of the universe and the old scheme of values to this new perspective. Thus, philosophical activity itself which aims at developing a coherent view of the totality of things receives a constant challenge and direction from developments in science. In the absence of such a challenge philosophy is in danger of becoming stale and stagnant. And this is what, I am afraid, happened to Indian philosophy.

It wouldn't be true to say that Nyaya

did not attempt at all to formulate principles of rational demonstration. Their doctrine of *vakya* which analyses the structure of a valid argument and of *vyapit* which tries to formulate the conditions under which universal propositions can be established, would go against such a contention. After all in the course of a discussion arguments are bound to be advanced and demonstrations attempted and these have to be criticised and met. Nyaya was, therefore, bound to take note of arguments and proofs, analyse them and determine the conditions of their validity. The point that I am making is that Nyaya does not have before it the concept of a universally valid system of knowledge and therefore does not attempt to evolve or analyse a method which will result in such knowledge. The reason for this is that thought or reason is not taken seriously as an autonomous means to the attainment of truth.

What, then, is the highest or the primary means of attaining the truth according to the Indian tradition? The answer is 'revelation'. Indian philosophy is haunted by the possibility of revelation. This is true not only of those schools like Vedanta which take their stand consciously and explicitly on formal scriptures. This is also true of those schools like Samkhya or Nyaya-Vaisheshika which are not tied up with any scriptural revelation. The Upanishadic view is that the ultimate truth can never be grasped by thought; it can only be revealed and when the truth is revealed one becomes the truth. To know the truth is not to know that the object has certain properties. Knowledge of the truth transforms the being of the subject; in fact it is the highest form of being of the subject. It is obvious that these concepts of knowledge and truth are closely connected with magic-rituals, particularly, the initiation ritual. When the tribal mysteries are revealed, the individual's being is transformed; he really comes to be what he always potentially was, a full-fledged member of the tribe. Buddhism is often

taken to be a form of rationalism because Buddha took his stand outside any revealed scripture. This is, I think, a profound misconception. For Buddha also truth is received in revelation the precondition of which is that the self is in a certain spiritual state. Buddha lays down an elaborate discipline for enabling one to fulfil this condition.

Two consequences follow from such acceptance of revelation as the primary vehicle of truth. One, denigration of the notion that all rational creatures are equal sharers, in truth, that all men have an equal duty and right to examine things critically in order co-operatively to arrive at the truth. There arises a distinction between the elect and the others, between those *adikaris* who have a right and access to the truth and others who have not. Secondly, once revelation is accepted as the primary mode in which the truth is attained, one is driven, in the absence of personal revelation, to fall back on tradition, established and perpetuated by those who have enjoyed revelation, as the repository and custodian of truth. That is why every respectable Indian system likes to trace its descent from a body of sutras in which the truth is stored. It is well known that the Samkhya sutras are quite late in their origin. The system went without any sutras for sometime and someone wrote them in order to make an honest system of Samkhya.

For the main body of Indian tradition, then, truth is given in revelation, not achieved by reason. Comparison of the Indian tradition with the Greek tradition in this respect will be illuminating. The content of the early Ionian speculation is to a large extent derived from myths. Commentators have pointed to many archaic features in the early Greek thought. However, the form of these speculations is rational. For philosophy is taken to be the individual vision of the universe, clarified and defended by reason. This vision is achieved by individual thought. It is not given to the individual

but is thought out by him. But when there is a succession of such mutually conflicting visions how does one choose between them? What is the court of appeal?

One of the running threads in the course of Greek philosophy is the contrast between 'nature' and 'convention', between things as they really are in themselves and our changing, variegated opinions of them. Now, truth is not a matter of convention; it is something which must conform to nature and therefore is objective and not subjective, and is the same for all. This implies that the variety of traditions must be given up in the favour of truth. Thus, the Greek tradition is from the beginning radical and free. The final court of appeal is the nature of things. But, how to reach the nature of things?

There are three possible positions here. (a) It is possible to hold that there is no 'nature' at all but only 'conventions'. This was apparently the position held by Protagoras. 'Man is the measure of all things' really means that the measure of things does not have to conform to or spring from the nature of things; it lies essentially in man's attitude to them. There really is no measure. Given this position the proper task of reason can no longer be regarded as discovery of the truth because there is no truth to be discovered. It can only be on the one hand, to clarify established conventions and on the other, persuade people to accept them. In fact, this is how Protagoras defines the nature and goal of education. The aim of education is not to impart truth but to persuade men to accept the conventions of the society to which they belong. It is significant in this context to remark that Protagoras regards sensation as the 'paradigm' case of knowledge. In sensation we are utterly passive and have only to receive. Truth is not to be discovered by mental activity; it is only passively to be received. (b) The second possible position is that there is 'nature' and also 'conventions' but 'nature' is inaccessible to us. This is the sceptical position. (c) The third position, the position

accepted by the most significant Greek thinkers when the contrast between 'nature' and 'conventions' was forced on their view and they had to reflect on the possibility and method of discovering the truth, was that the nature of things can be grasped by reason. Invention of the deductive method of geometry helped here by furnishing a model of rational knowledge which was free from the vagaries and idiosyncracies of perception. Rational deduction from universal rational principles was acclaimed as the method which led to the discovery of the real nature of things, of objective truth; and this was the final court of appeal raised above the welter of conflicting conventions. It is true that for Plato who championed this position the real things formed a realm apart from and transcending the sensible things around us. But Plato also held that the sensible things were appearances of the real and for him one of the functions of the rational construction of truth was to 'save appearances'. In other words, the system of rational principles must explain consistently *all* the relevant sensible appearances or perceptions. Here we have the hypothetico-deductive method of empirical sciences in a nutshell and inchoate form. Plato, and Aristotle who followed him, are speaking essentially the same methodological language as Archimedes, Galileo and Newton.

The vital point for us to notice is that for Plato truth is not something passively to be received but to be attained by rational activity. And this remained the leading conception which inspired the main current of Greek thought. The leading Indian conception seems to be truth is grasped by directly confronting the real by experiencing it. The form of truth is not a system of rational principles but a direct experience. Or truth may be attained at second hand, by eliciting it from tradition in which these direct experiences are deposited and preserved. When direct experience is reached, thought has already fallen away. According to the spirit of

Greek philosophy, the aim of philosophical thinking is to discover the nature of things; that is its measure of success. According to the Indian tradition it is to interpret, develop, restate and purify tradition. This view of the basic function of thought fosters certain intellectual attitudes. (a) Conservatism: a deep respect for tradition becomes ingrained in the intellectual character of the people. A curious example of this is Shankara's attitude to Buddhism. It is well known that there is such a close resemblance between the philosophical outlook and views of Shankara, and those of the Buddhist schools he criticizes, that some of Shankara's critics have dubbed him a Buddhist in disguise. And yet we find that Shankara criticises Buddhism vehemently. This vehemence may partly be explained by his anxiety to distinguish his philosophical position from that of the Buddhist from which it essentially differs so little. But to a large measure it is an expression of Shankara's deep rooted antipathy to Buddhism for the way in which it breaks away from the tradition of the land. It is not the philosophical message of Buddhism that Shankara dislikes; it is rather its manner of arriving at it. It is the Buddhist substitution of the intuition of an individual for the scriptural tradition that Shankara finds most objectionable in Buddhism. (b) Revivalism: if tradition is the vehicle of truth it becomes necessary to determine the original or the pure tradition. The only way to do this is to go back to the sources of the tradition before its pure stream has been sullied by the admixture of error and heresy. (c) Eclecticism: with so many rival traditions with their conflicting deliverances, it is natural to suppose that the whole truth can be found only in a synthesis of all the diverse traditions. Indian thought revels in synthesis. It has a distaste for sharp logical incompatibility. It moves on the implicit assumption that as all traditions are vehicles of truth and truth is one, all traditions must in the end be reconcilable

with one another. Indian thinkers, therefore, expend a remarkable amount of patience and ingenuity in ironing out the differences among the rival systems. Their constant endeavour is to take the sting out of differences, and show how what appear to be mutually incompatible views are different aspects of the same truth. Thus, persistent attempts are made to establish that the six orthodox systems which actually differ sharply from one another in their motivation, methods and conclusions, are really stages on the path to the same one supreme truth. This is actually unfair to these systems, robs them of the distinctiveness of their contributions to philosophical thought, and spreads an impression which is certainly wrong that Indian philosophical thought is a twilight in which all cows are grey. (d) Anti-intellectualism: if immediate experience is the mode in which truth is revealed, ideas, concepts, logic lose their importance. People lose their interest in ideas, in clarifying them, testing them by following their consequences, applying them to problems of individual and social life.

It has already been remarked that Indian thought exhibits a deep intellectual passion for clarity, precision and explicitness. This is the brighter side of the Indian mind. The anti-intellectualism inherent in the revelatory conception of truth is its darker side. It appears to me that this ambivalence, this internal conflict brought about a kind of demoralisation. Indian thought lost its nerve, its creative impulse, and in the absence of the challenge of an adequate subject-matter turned back upon itself, upon its own past creations, analysing them and refining its analytical tools *ad nauseam* until at last it was overwhelmed by its own sense of futility.

A consequence of this anti-intellectual strain in Indian thought is that there is no methodology in Indian philosophy. Plato and Aristotle were methodologists. Platonists contributed to the development of geometry. The contributions of the Peri-

patetics to positive sciences are well known. We find nothing similar to this in Indian philosophy and science. Indian philosophy did not perform its function of reflecting on the nature of thought, organizing, deploying it. The result was that our sciences in many cases did not attain the form of science. They remained haphazard collections of isolated facts and insights. Not having attained the secure path of science, they did not progress in a steady, systematic manner. Additions to the stock of knowledge were entirely at the mercy of accidents of individual genius. There was no grand design of a science progressively reducing the chaos of facts to rational order; no conception of a theoretical order, a scheme of sciences such as we find in Plato and Aristotle. It is significant that there is no philosopher scientist in India.

The Greek conception of reason as a faculty which independently of perception explores a rational order embodied in a system of general principles made possible the rise of sciences and of the scientific method. For the scientific method is essentially the hypothetico-deductive method which explains particular facts by showing that they exemplify general principles. But these general principles cannot be discovered by analysing particular facts. In a way they are a free creation of the imagination. Reason can use them for its own purpose by clearly defining their content and rigorously developing their consequences; and by modifying them until they come to conform to observed facts. All this procedure is possible to a mind which is liberated from the tyranny of perception, can freely play with ideas and yet can control this play rationally. The Platonic conception of reason as an autonomic faculty transcending perception which freely explores the structure of an ideal realm of being (which, in fact, is supremely real) of which sensible things are copies, made this kind of intellectual approach possible to the Greek minds. It did two things for

science. It accustomed men to the notion that the truth of things is not to be discovered on their surface, but in general principles transcending them. It also accustomed them to the notion that perceived facts are explicable because they exemplify ideal structures which may be rationally explored and determined. On the other hand, the Indian way of thinking remained wedded to perception as the supreme means of knowledge.

This ascendancy of perception as a means of knowledge in Indian Philosophy is one curious consequence of the anti-rationalism of Indian thought. At the same time, the notion of perception becomes vague and elastic. The concept of a hard, theoretically neutral fact which is observable is a modern, sophisticated concept. It is sustained by its contrast with 'hypothesis' which can only be conceived and deductively developed. Such a hypothesis, and the theoretical constructs in terms of which it is stated, become acceptable if the deductive consequences derived from it are consistent with observed facts. This kind of validation was not possible for Indian systems as the conception of deduction was lacking. The whole Samkhya theoretical apparatus of *prakriti*, *mahat*, *tanmatra*, etc. consists of unobservable entities. How is their validity established? One way of course, is to depend on the sutras, on tradition. But tradition itself must finally be rooted in a veridical experience; and this experience was taken to be the direct perception of these transcendental entities by the Yogins. Nothing, therefore, falls beyond the scope of possible perception. Perception is raised to the status of the primary means of knowledge. Again, the only way of establishing a universal proposition recognised by Nyaya is empirical generalisation.

This ascendancy of perception and the consequent denial of the creative role of reason has led to the stunting of metaphysical speculation in India. We do not find here grand metaphysical constructions in the manner of Plato, Leibnitz or White-

head. There is no conception of a pure deductive method developing the necessary consequences of a priori premises. And the premises necessary for such a rationalistic metaphysical construction are not available. Such premises can be obtained only through an a priori apprehension of rational principles. The possibility of this kind of a priori knowledge is not entertained in Indian philosophy. The premises of any metaphysical construction here must be derived from the immediate experience of the founder. There is much fine critical philosophy in the Indian tradition but no rational metaphysics.

We saw that the Greek distinction between 'nature' and 'convention' and the notion that reason transcends 'convention' and reveals 'nature' to which truth must conform, made possible the rise of science. But the distinction between reason and convention has a moral aspect also. When applied to moral phenomena this distinction enables one to take a detached reflective attitude to the conventional morality, the customs of one's tribe. It also gives rise to a need to justify them rationally. Just as there is a rational structure which is exemplified in perceived facts, there must be a rational ordering of individual and social life which ought to be exemplified in the conventions of every tribe. And just as truth is universal and the same for all, and a man, after discovering it, must hold fast to it and ignore the medley of opinions, so also one must after discovering the universal, ideal way of life, spurn all the conflicting tribal customs. He may aspire to live like Diogenes, not as a member of a tribe or a city, but as a citizen of the world. It is the function of reason in the moral sphere to discover the moral law which conforms to nature, the natural law which is also the rational law. Thus, respect for reason which reveals the ideal nature of things (which is also their real nature) leads to a search for morality according to nature, that is, according to reason. It is significant that the Stoics, who valued the concept of natural law greatly,

made the greatest contribution to ancient formal logic.

Now, such a conception of rational ethics was lacking in Indian thought. It seems that questions like 'What is the ideal or natural or rational way of life?' or 'What is the ideal or natural or rational constitution of the State?' never got asked in the course of Indian ethical thought. I am not suggesting that rational ethics cannot begin until these kinds of question are asked. The words 'Nature', 'Reason', as used here, are ambiguous and demand clarification. But if the question takes this form, it shows that the mind is already released from the tyranny of established custom, and that it can freely form conceptions of alternative patterns of human relationships or schemes of human ends; and that it regards the basic principles supporting these constructions to be universally valid, and is prepared to apply them to established institutions and customs and modify or reject the latter if they conflict with these basic, rational principles.

Ethical thought in India is roughly made up of three strands. There is, first, the tribal morality based on socially inherited custom. Secondly, there is the ritualistic morality enjoying the sanction of the Scriptures. And, lastly, there is philosophical morality which describes an ideal way of life dedicated to the pursuit of 'emancipation' and the virtues, attitudes and actions through which such a life expresses and fulfils itself. There can be no doubt that this philosophical morality is an expression of a most refined and pure moral sensibility and the portrait of the *sthitpragna* or

*vodhisatva* as delineated by Gita and Buddhist literature embodies a noble moral ideal. However, this refined and pure moral sensibility co-exists in a spirit of happy mutual tolerance with the most barbaric practices which have received the sanction of ancient custom. The moral intuitions embodied in the Gita ideal of *sthitpragna* lead to the transformation of the inner life of an individual; but they never led to a criticism and revaluation of the established moral codes. The reason for this was that these intuitions were never translated into a system of principles which claimed to be rational and therefore universally applicable and which could serve as criteria for critically appraising established codes and practices.

Such a concept of rationality was not developed. As a result of this, the new way of life and the moral code, and the values in which these intuitions express themselves, instead of bringing about a transformation of established codes and institutions, make anxious attempts to fit in with them. Thus, we find that Shankara instead of rejecting the archaic, ritualistic practices as meaningless and incompatible with the insight of Vedanta tries hard to defend them and retain them as a necessary stage in the ethical discipline which leads to Vedantic illumination. This kind of amorphous eclecticism blunts the keen edge of moral thought. The constant need for these intuitions to compromise with practices and codes which are really incompatible with them leads to a gradual coarsening of the former which in time lose their purity and intensity. For, intuitions without reason are blind and helpless.

# *Capitalism, Colonialism and the Underdeveloped Areas*

## *The Political Economy of (Anti-)Imperialism*

HANS DAALDER

A CENTURY ago, capitalism and imperialism were widely regarded as inherently opposed to one another. The word imperialism was coined by English liberals around 1860 to stigmatize the vainglorious militarism of Napoleon III's Second Empire. French expansionism was then felt by many to constitute a major threat to British security, so much so that the British army started to build fortresses on the Kentish and East Anglian Coasts to ward off any possible attack. But then, in 1860, Liberals like Cobden and Chevalier succeeded in uniting the political foes in a commercial treaty which was pregnant of free trade doctrines. The example was soon followed by other European powers. Was better proof conceivable that commerce finally was on the way to becoming what Adam Smith had said it "ought naturally to be among nations, as among individuals, a bond of union and friendship"?<sup>1</sup>

In this same era, colonies were often regarded with Disraeli as mill-stones round European necks, unprofitable charges on the national exchequer, and undesirable objects of international discord. Cobden had warned his compatriots that their national pride alone gave cunning people the chance to extract money for militarist and colonialist adventure.<sup>2</sup> Did not the figures show that emancipated colonies, like America, and self-governing dominions like Canada and Australia, were Britain's best customers by far, unlike other colonial dependencies of a rapacious mercantilist era? Did not the opening up of Japan in

1854 and the breakdown of the xenophobic seclusion of Ottoman Turkey and Imperial China for the sake of progressive traders augur well for the modernization of these antiquated structures, now given the chance to become equal members of a cosmopolitan universe? Would not free trade, allowing the unfettered working of the principle of comparative costs, most quickly increase the wealth of all nations?<sup>3</sup>

Within half a century this image drastically changed.

A resurgent protectionism destroyed the ideal picture of a world in which individuals rather than states would be the basic units of economic exchange. For a time some lip-service was still paid to the ultimate ideal. Protection, so it was argued, was only a temporary expedient, necessary while infant industries were being nursed to maturity. But once (re-)introduced, protection itself created strong vested interests, powerful enough to block any attempt at restoring free trade. In addition, the danger to which cheap Russian and American grain exposed the agricultural world in the latter part of the 19th century, rallied another powerful sector of the national communities in favour of protectionism. The very principle of comparative costs, working in a *world* market was challenged by those who, like Germany's *Nationaloekonomen*, argued that socially balanced economies within the existing state boundaries were preferable to the theoretical gains of international specialization.

The rapid rise of Germany and the U.S.A. as powerful industrial competitors, in turn, kindled somewhat similar doctrines in the bastion of free trade, Britain itself. Influential publicists came to argue in favour of a *Greater Britain*, linked to the Mother Country by a programme of what later ideologues were to call 'Imperial Free Trade.' Protection of the home market, and safeguarding colonial markets, so ran their exhortations, were necessary if Britain were to retain its prosperity and political predominance. The argument met with small favour from the Little Englanders. True to the tradition of the classical economists, anti-colonialists found as little economic profit in *neo-Mercantilism* as their forefathers had found in *Mercantilism*. Yet, the economic argument stuck. Once the problem of colonial expansion came to be argued in economic terms, protagonists and adversaries alike came to attribute causal significance to economic interests. If the first pointed to the profits which were to be reaped by the entire nation, the latter attempted to show that small profiteering groups tried to make the nation bleed for selfish interests.

By the end of the 19th century these diverse currents crystallized into a full-scale theory of imperialism which linked colonial conquest to the machinations of capitalism. Originally a term of abuse flung at French immorality,<sup>4</sup> the word had already been converted into a domestic invective by British opponents of Disraeli's expansionist policies. With the Jameson raid and the Boer War, Britain so it seemed, stepped down publicly from its self-chosen pedestal of high morality into the dirty world of *Realpolitik*, out for prestige and profit at the bidding of the capitalists of the South African Rand. Did not the South African War show that capitalist search for profit, colonial domination and international aggressiveness were one? The image of the *Pax Britannica* stood condemned as a pure ideology. In 1900, a Congress of the Socialist International,

meeting in Paris, passed a resolution affirming that the development of capitalism led inexorably to colonial expansion, and hence to intergovernmental conflicts, imperialism, chauvinism, militarism, cruelty and exploitation of subject races. Two years later, J. A. Hobson published his *Imperialism, a study*, which quickly became a classic document in the English language. The book attempted to show how the underconsumptionist tendencies of capitalism, and the profiteering proclivities of individual capitalists, were the cause of the *New Imperialism*. In the next decades similar doctrines were elaborated, in greater detail and with more analytical rigour, by a number of Marxist authors in Germany and Austria, of whom Rudolf Hilferding, Otto Bauer, and Rosa Luxemburg were the most prominent. They were finally presented to the layman in loaded phrases by Lenin in his *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (Petrograd, 1917, published in other European languages in 1920).

The theories which attributed colonialism to capitalism were formed to a considerable extent *post factum*. Colonial conquest had been practically completed, before the theories were formulated. This theoretical (as well as emotional) lag has since persisted. Political developments and academic criticism by economists and historians may have eroded the academic respectability of Marxist theories. They may have failed as an explanation of past history. But their emotional impact has continued to be such that they had, and continue to have, substantial influence on the history of the relations between the West, the Communist bloc, and the newly emerging nations.

## SECTION I

### THE ECONOMIC THEORIES OF IMPERIALISM

The theories of imperialism which attribute European colonial expansion to the

specific workings of capitalism, logically divide into two groups.

One body of theory holds that imperialism was an absolute condition for European capitalism, as a system, to grow. Of this theory, three distinct variants deserve separate treatment: one variant concentrates on the need of capitalism to establish, by imperialist policies, *exchange relationships* with non-capitalist economies; a second group holds that capitalism needed *investment opportunities* which could only be obtained and safeguarded through forceful conquest; finally, a third group of more limited theories stresses the role of colonial economies as a *regulator of the European business cycle* in a particularly crucial stage of capitalist development.

Against these somewhat deterministic theories, a second body of theory concentrates less on capitalism as an economic system, as on *capitalists* as a particularly powerful elite, bending European states to colonial adventures which brought them profits not otherwise obtainable.

As these theories are all *economic* explanations of a *political* phenomenon, they should be considered from two angles, that of economic theory and that of historical explanation. In principle, these aspects are independent of one another. The economic analysis may be valid, or faulty, and yet the historical connection of capitalism and imperialism may hold, or not hold, in either circumstance. The ultimate question at stake is the familiar one: did and do economic factors ultimately determine political relationships of such fundamental importance as the origin, the extension, and the demise of the colonial system?

### 1. *The expansion of capitalism and the existence of non-capitalist economies*

The most detailed formulation of the theory that capitalism could only continue to expand because non-capitalist territories and social groups provided it with markets, was the theory of Rosa Luxemburg. She

laid down her views particularly in two publications: *Die Akkumulation des Kapitals* (1913, English edition by Joan Robinson, 1951), followed by a polemical pamphlet, *Die Akkumulation des Kapitals, oder Was die Epigonen aus der Marx'schen Theorie gemacht haben, eine Antikritik* (1915).

The fundamental theoretical question posed by Rosa Luxemburg was: how could capitalism continue to expand, at a time when workers lacked adequate purchasing power, and capitalists limited their consumption of surplus value because of their ever-present drive for further accumulation of capital? Marx himself had wrestled with this question. At the end of Volume II of *Capital*, he had attempted a solution by constructing an arithmetical scheme of capital accumulation. This scheme rested on certain specific assumptions, however, which had been rejected as unrealistic by Marx himself in other parts of his writing. Marx and his disciples had therefore continued to look for a solution for the *prima facie* absence of effective demand in capitalism. They had mentioned gold, credit, additional labourers employed in capital formation, a growing population, or foreign trade as possible explanations of the continued expansion of the system. But so far, all these attempts to solve the dilemma within the general framework of the Marxist scheme had not been very satisfactory.

After reviewing these suggestions, Rosa Luxemburg rejected them all. She concluded that Marx's assumption of a closed economy, which consisted of capitalists and labourers only, was in itself unrealistic and untenable. Capitalism, she stated, could not exist as a self-contained system. It could only continue to grow by being parasitical on non-capitalist economies. Only if non-capitalist producers (like farmers at home or producers in virgin areas overseas who had not yet been brought within the ambit of capitalist production) continued to buy otherwise unsaleable capitalist products, could capita-

lism develop. Consequently, once the entire world was drawn fully into the system of capitalist production, capitalism was bound to succumb to its inner contradictions. 'Imperialism', to Rosa Luxemburg, was therefore 'just as much a historical method to prolong the life of Capital, as the most certain means by which it will be set a definite end in the shortest possible time-span.'<sup>5</sup>

### *Theoretical flaws in the argument*

Theoretically, Rosa Luxemburg's theory suffered from three basic defects: (1) she underestimated the extent to which investment could provide a continuous effective demand without increasing at the same time the output of consumer goods in search of effective buyers; 2) like other Marxist writers, she also underestimated the general increase of consumer demand which accompanied the rise of national income in European countries; and, finally, 3) even if the tenability of her argument were granted *quod non* the solution she offered that non-capitalist buyers could provide the effective demand which was supposedly lacking in a closed capitalist system was little but an escape from the problem she herself proposed to elucidate.

(1) *The relation between investment and consumption.*—Rosa Luxemburg had indignantly rejected Say's Law, which held that each new product which is brought to market creates its own demand. Investment, she argued, could not but increase the eventual production of consumer goods. As these goods would find no buyers, investments themselves would necessarily come to a stop. In putting this, she disagreed with certain passages in Marx's own writings; and she disagreed emphatically with the theories of the Russian Legal Marxist, Tugan Baranowsky.<sup>6</sup> Reviewing Marx' writings, Tugan Baranowsky had concluded that in a closed capitalist system no difficulties need arise provided capitalists were to accumulate indefinitely, in one continuous process of investment

for investment's sake. He had granted that crises might and did arise in the process, when *partial* overproduction of *certain* investment goods might lead to *temporary* dislocations. But he had not hesitated to state bluntly that, as long as investments were to continue unabated, consumer demand could, theoretically, even actually decrease without causing an underconsumptionist crisis.

Rosa Luxemburg had branded this theory a picture of a tireless merry-go-round turning in a vacuum,<sup>7</sup> as a 'vulgarized-economic *fata morgana*'.<sup>8</sup> But was it? The 19th century showed empirically the long distance which separates the laying of the basis of industrialization and the production of consumer goods. The establishment of heavy industries in Western Europe itself, the building of steamships, the construction of railways over the globe, were one long haul of investment, financed effectively by the "waiting" of Europeans, their non-consuming of a rising national product, which was basically geared to increasing investments. To quote the famous passage from J. M. Keynes' *Economic Consequences of the Peace*:

'The railways of the world, which that age built as a monument to posterity, were, not less than the Pyramids of Egypt, the work of labour which was not free to consume in immediate enjoyment the full equivalent of its efforts.'

Thus this remarkable system depended for its growth on a double bluff or deception. On the one hand the labouring classes accepted from ignorance or powerlessness, or were compelled, persuaded, or cajoled by custom, convention, authority, and the well-established order of Society into accepting a situation in which they could call their own very little of the cake, that they and Nature and the capitalists were co-operating to produce. And on the other hand the capitalist classes were allowed to call the best part of the cake theirs and were theoretically free to consume it on the tacit underlying condition that they consumed very little of it in practice. The

duty of 'saving' became nine-tenth of virtue and the growth of the cake the object of true religion. There grew round the non-consumption of the cake all those instincts of puritanism which in other ages has withdrawn itself from the world and has neglected the arts of production as well as those of enjoyment. And so the cake increased; but to what end was not clearly contemplated. Individuals would be exhorted not so much to abstain as to defer, and to cultivate the pleasures of security and anticipation. Saving was for old age or for your children; but this was only in theory—the virtue of the cake was that it was never to be consumed, neither by you nor by your children after you."<sup>9</sup>

In the country of Tugan Baranowsky itself, Marx' own disciples were to learn and to prove in the 20th century that investment is indeed for a considerable time independent (and actually preventive) of increased consumer demand.

(2) *The rise in consumer demand.*—If investment could supply part of the effective demand of a rising national product, there was equally an increase in consumer demand. As the Revisionists were to recognize, the Marxian tenet of an absolute, or even of a relative, increase in the poverty of the masses under capitalism (*Verelendung*) did not actually take place in Western economies. In fact, workers' incomes have risen at least *pari passu* with the rise in national income generally. It is somewhat strange to believe with Lenin that such an increase was only possible through imperialist gains, and to hold at the same time that imperialism was necessary to get rid of the surplus products of the Western economy itself.

(3) *The fallacy of extra-capitalist demand.*—As she over-exposed the contradictions of a capitalist economy, Rosa Luxemburg paid strangely little attention to the effects of her own solution: trade with non-capitalist buyers. It is clear from her analysis that she meant mutual exchange, not investments or cyclical effects. Even a child knew, she wrote, 'that goods

when they are exported, are not destroyed, but *exchanged*, and that from those non-capitalist areas and strata generally other goods are bought in their place which serve to provide the capitalist economy again with producer and consumer goods'.<sup>10</sup> Or, as she wrote in another passage: it was not necessary 'to destroy a certain portion of surplus value, to chase it from the earth', all was a matter 'of realization, of the metamorphosis, hence of the "changed form" of surplus value'.<sup>11</sup> But if so, why did her *dei ex machina*, non-capitalist buyers and sellers, fundamentally alter the problem? If the capitalist economy was provided in return with consumer goods, from where then would suddenly spring the effective demand for them? It is no answer to say that non-capitalist products were different, or more attractive; the most characteristic quality of capitalism has proved to be its extraordinary potential to diversify products, to stimulate the desires of new consumers. Even many products of colonial economies were only discovered through Western invention. If, on the other hand, capitalists obtained producer goods in return for the goods which they themselves sold to non-capitalist buyers, what else, then, is this but an investment transaction, exactly as Tugan Baranowsky had described?

### *The theory in the light of actual data*

In Table I figures are given of the percentage of colonial trade for each of the main imperialist powers between 1894 and 1934. From these figures it is quite clear, that throughout the heyday of imperialism, colonial powers traded far more with areas they did not control than with their own colonies. Also, they generally found little difficulty in selling to colonies dominated by another power. Conversely, non-colonial powers were rarely excluded from markets, whether in the imperialist mother countries, or in the colonies of the latter. Trade followed first of all not the flag, but effective demand. Most of the effective demand

TABLE I

*Trade with colonies and self-governing territories of the main imperialist powers, as a share of their total foreign trade (1894-1934)*

|               |           | Imports | Exports | Total  |
|---------------|-----------|---------|---------|--------|
| Great Britain | 1894-1903 | 21.27%  | 30.42%  | 24.92% |
|               | 1904-1913 | 25.71%  | 34.75%  | 26.73% |
|               | 1919-1928 | 33.01%  | 40.53%  | 36.07% |
|               | 1929-1934 | 32.89%  | 44.62%  | 37.22% |
| France        | 1894-1903 | 9.86%   | 11.20%  | 10.49% |
|               | 1904-1913 | 10.58%  | 12.61%  | 11.53% |
|               | 1919-1928 | 10.80%  | 14.91%  | 12.72% |
|               | 1929-1934 | 16.43%  | 24.06%  | 19.74% |
| Germany       | 1894-1903 | 0.10%   | 0.35%   | 0.21%  |
|               | 1904-1913 | 0.37%   | 0.62%   | 0.48%  |
|               | 1919-1928 | —       | —       | —      |
|               | 1929-1934 | —       | —       | —      |
| Italy         | 1894-1903 | 0.04%   | 0.30%   | 0.16%  |
|               | 1904-1913 | 0.21%   | 1.55%   | 0.75%  |
|               | 1919-1928 | 0.49%   | 1.66%   | 0.97%  |
|               | 1929-1932 | 0.56%   | 2.47%   | 0.94%  |
| Japan         | 1894-1903 | 1.66%   | 2.72%   | 2.15%  |
|               | 1904-1913 | 6.85%   | 7.80%   | 7.30%  |
|               | 1919-1928 | 17.29%  | 14.40%  | 15.97% |
|               | 1929-1932 | 23.12%  | 20.84%  | 22.02% |

was increasingly concentrated, not in colonial territories, and certainly not in the more recently acquired territories which were the poorest of all, but in rival capitalist markets and in the large areas of the Americas and Australasia, to which European capital and European labour migrated. Britain consistently sold more goods to Germany than to India; its total trade with Germany was almost two-thirds of all its trade with the British dominions. Within the Empire, the self-governing dominions (which often raised tariffs against Britain) were far more effective markets than all other colonies together. The trade of recent colonial powers, Italy, Germany, and Japan, with their own dependencies, was pitifully small. If foreign markets were indeed necessary for their massive expansion of industry, colonial rule was patently not.<sup>12</sup>

## 2. Imperialism and the need for investment opportunities

Rosa Luxemburg had paid little attention to colonial investment (as against colonial trade) in her analysis. Before she wrote, J. A. Hobson (*Imperialism, A Study*, 1902), Otto Bauer (*Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozial-Demokratie*, 1906), and Rudolf Hilferding (*Das Finanzkapital*, 1910) had given more attention to the supposed need of capitalism to find investment opportunities. As we saw earlier, investments were indeed a means to fill a possible gap in the effective demand within capitalist economies, and Hobson had stressed this fact. He began his analysis by pointing out the fantastic discrepancies between the cost of imperialism to the tax-payer and the actual profit

to be derived from colonialism, summing up his conclusions as follows:

'First, the external trade of Great Britain bears a small and diminishing proportion to its internal industry and trade. Secondly, of the external trade, that with British possessions bears a diminishing proportion to that with foreign countries. Thirdly, of the trade with British possessions the tropical trade, and in particular the trade with the new tropical possessions, is the smallest, least progressive and most fluctuating in quantity, while it is the lowest in the character of the goods it embraces.'<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, Hobson said, imperialism created investment opportunities which were profitable to influential capitalist circles, and an imperative necessity for capitalism to maintain full employment.

His theory was best set out in the following passage:

'An era of cut-throat competition, followed by a rapid process of amalgamation, has thrown an enormous quantity of wealth into the hands of a small number of captains of industry. No luxury of living to which this class could attain kept pace with its rise of income, and a process of automatic saving set in upon an unprecedented scale. The investments of these savings in other industries helped to bring these under the same concentrative forces. Thus a great increase of savings seeking profitable investment is synchronous with a stricter economy of the existing capital. No doubt the rapid growth of a population accustomed to a high and an always ascending standard of comfort, absorbs in the satisfaction of its wants a large quantity of new capital. But the actual rate of saving, conjoined with a more economical application of forms of existing capital, has exceeded considerably the rise of the national consumption of manufactures. The power of production has far outstripped the actual rate of consumption, and, contrary to the older economic theory, has been unable to force a corresponding in-

crease of consumption by lowering prices'.<sup>14</sup>

As we shall see presently, Otto Bauer and Rudolf Hilferding based their theories of imperialism in the main on different grounds. Unlike Hobson or Rosa Luxemburg, Hilferding did not hold an under-consumptionist theory of capitalism; he agreed with Tugan Baranowsky that capitalism could theoretically expand indefinitely as long as capitalists continued to buy one another's products for the sake of further investment. But Bauer and Hilferding, too, attributed considerable influence to the need of surplus capital to find investment opportunities. Hilferding particularly stressed the declining rate of profit, caused by the increasing capital intensity of the production process (which diminishes the amount of surplus value produced per unit of constant capital). He furthermore believed that the concentration of ownership in trusts, would increase the amount of idle capital in search of investment.

### *Theoretical flaws*

Whatever its motives, it was argued that capital export was an imperative need for capitalism; without it, so the argument ran, total production was bound to be restricted to levels well below the effective productive potential of the capitalist economy.<sup>15</sup>

Against this, it should be reiterated, in the first place, that consumption did not decline in the west, not even relatively, as Hobson and Hilferding, just as Rosa Luxemburg, still held to be true.

In the second place, stating that capital *was* sent abroad in the heyday of imperialism is not the same thing as saying that it *could not* have been employed at home. The rates of profit on British foreign investments tended to be not at all, or only marginally, higher than those on home investments during the imperialist era.<sup>16</sup> If Hobson or Hilferding had maintained that not the fact but the lure of greater profits

held out by investment bankers made capital move from the main capitalist countries to distant territories, they would probably have been correct. But then the actual returns greatly disappointed the investors. The export of capital was in that case not an economic necessity, but a psychological deception. It is an interesting commentary on the *Zeitgeist* that Marxist writers, imperial propagandists, and capitalist investors, were equally wrong in overestimating the profits to be obtained from colonial investments.

In the third place, the complex mechanism of long-term capital movements is often misunderstood. Some authors have pointed to the supposed need of capitalist economies to dispose of their own surplus products by foreign investments. This would *ceteris paribus* imply an active balance of trade on the part of capitalist nations, and a passive one on that of the underdeveloped areas. If true, this would imply that during the imperialist era more aggregate value was shipped to these latter areas than was drawn from them—a situation which could hardly be described as exploitation. Others have argued, on the contrary, that nations like Britain were essentially *rentier* nations. They have adduced in evidence the circumstance that Britain tended to have a passive trade balance during most of the 19th century. But in doing so, they have often confused the balance of *trade* with the balance of *payments*, and forgotten to take into account British invisible exports which allowed a continuous new flow of capital from Britain to outlying areas. There is some evidence that in the period after 1870 dividends from earlier investments and new foreign investments cancelled one another out, so that in fact little *net* transfer of goods and services occurred.<sup>17</sup> Profits, in other words, were *in toto* reinvested. This increased the indebtedness of non-European areas to Europe, but did not necessarily increase the economic burden on their economies. *In so far as these investments and re-investments increased the*

*productive capacity of the debtor nations, beyond that necessary to pay the increased interest, the economic advantage was theirs. This is, of course, even more true at the moment that borrowers defaulted in their public debts, or nationalized the assets of private foreign investors within their boundaries.*

Finally, it is rash to conclude that capital would not eventually have been invested at lower rates on the home market, if a surplus of capital had pressed for employment there. Nor is it enough to say, that the one-sided character of early industrial capitalism (textiles and steel!) prevented capitalism from finding markets in a satiated domestic economy. There may not have been a market for more railways, but there could have been for other steel products. It is even arguable that the availability of foreign investment markets postponed the differentiation of the European economies, which might otherwise have been forced at a much earlier stage of industrial development.

#### *The theory in the light of actual data*

Much more important than to engage in speculations on what might have been is it to test the theory against the actual facts of foreign investment in the imperialist era. Even if it were granted that capital exports were a *sine qua non* for Western development, *quod non*, this still falls short of proving that *capital exports were only possible through imperialism*. Actually, the entire theory that 'imperialism is the policy of forcefully creating opportunities for capital export' is a classic example of a tautology. The definition is postulated. Then it is proved to one's satisfaction that capitalism needed capital exports. As capital exports could only be effected through imperialism, capitalism inexorably produced imperialism. The entire argument is a *non sequitur*. It is a matter of historical record that the greater part of Western capital exports did *not* go to areas controlled by the imperialist powers. Table II shows the foreign debts of the

TABLE II

*Foreign indebtedness, in billions of dollars, of the main debtor nations in 1929-1930*

| <i>Colonies</i>  |     | <i>British Dominions</i> |     | <i>Independent States</i> |     |
|------------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| India            | 2.8 | Canada                   | 6.1 | United States             | 4.7 |
| Malaya           | 1.6 | Australia                | 3.8 | China                     | 3.3 |
| Cuba             | 1.3 | South Africa             | 1.3 | Germany                   | 3.2 |
| all others less  |     | all others less          |     | Argentina                 | 3.1 |
| than 0.5 billion |     | than 0.5 million         |     | Brazil                    | 2.6 |
|                  |     |                          |     | Mexico                    | 2.3 |
|                  |     |                          |     | Great Britain             | 1.9 |
|                  |     |                          |     | Chile                     | 1.3 |
|                  |     |                          |     | Japan                     | 1.3 |
|                  |     |                          |     | Belgium                   | 1.2 |
|                  |     |                          |     | Spain                     | 1.0 |
|                  |     |                          |     | all others less           |     |
|                  |     |                          |     | than 1 billion            |     |

Source: E. W. Staley, *War and the Private Investor*, 1936, p. 13

TABLE III

*Total long-term investments from abroad per capita of population, 1929*

| <i>Dollars per capita</i> |     |                |     |
|---------------------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Canada                    | 623 | Denmark        | 102 |
| Australia                 | 592 | Honduras       | 85  |
| New Zealand               | 555 | Paraguay       | 84  |
| Cuba                      | 360 | Dominican Rep. | 83  |
| Chile                     | 310 | Bolivia        | 67  |
| Uruguay                   | 303 | Sweden         | 65  |
| Argentina                 | 268 | Brazil         | 64  |
| South Africa              | 163 | Peru           | 63  |
| Belgium                   | 149 | Switzerland    | 62  |
| Norway                    | 143 | Persia         | 56  |
| Mexico                    | 141 | Finland        | 52  |
| Costa Rica                | 129 | Germany        | 52  |
| Venezuela                 | 127 | Guatemala      | 51  |

Source: E. W. Staley, *War and the Private Investor*, 1936, p. 14.

main debtor nations in 1929-1930, divided between dependent territories, self-governing British Dominions and independent states. Table III shows the main capital importing nations, ranked according to their per capita indebtedness to foreign investors during the same years.

These tables establish beyond doubt

that the main imperialist powers exported more capital to independent states than to their own colonies. Conversely, non-imperialist powers have found it perfectly easy to lend their moneys abroad without resorting to any imperialist policies. The country with the highest *per capita* foreign investment was neutral Switzerland, to

Lenin the one country destined to stay a capitalist museum once the world revolution would be successful. Again, whereas many capital-exporting countries showed little tendency towards imperialism, various capital-importing countries, such as Russia and Italy, did do so. It is somewhat hard to believe that their imperialism was one of the international capital pressure by proxy. Should one really stretch the alleged cosmopolitanism of capitalism so far, as to believe that the patently political investments of Czarist Russia near the Yalu River by the 1890's<sup>18</sup> or the deliberate manufacturing of investment interests in Tripolis by ruling Italian circles in the early 1900's<sup>19</sup> was the indirect outcome of the investment need of Dutch, or French, or Swiss capitalists?

The proposition that capitalism needed imperialism to continue to expand is therefore disproved by the facts. It was not necessary for European capitalists to reconquer the U.S.A. to force it to take their money: the money was as secure as circumstances permitted, the eagerness great. Nor did European investors have to resist the granting of self-government to British dominions, for fear that they would lose their investments or investment opportunities in those areas.

### 3. *Imperialism as a regulator of the business cycle*

It has been argued, incidentally, that imperialism was an important factor in the regulation of the business cycle of Western capitalism, during a period when other means to ensure a regular growth pattern of the capitalist economies were not readily available. Before the turn of the century, Tugan Baranowsky had laid considerable stress on the important function of overseas exports to renew an expansion of the capitalist economies after a depression. Almost sixty years later, A. K. Cairncross again found 'plenty of evidence that it was foreign rather than home investment that pulled Britain out of most depressions

before 1914'.<sup>20</sup> Zimmerman and Grumbach have given a detailed econometric analysis, purporting to show that between 1890 and 1910 imperialism provided a particularly happy expedient to compensate for a lack of effective demand at home during a depression by a rising demand abroad.<sup>21</sup> It has also been shown, in more structural terms, that there tends to be a peculiar relation between foreign trade and economic development according to a rather specific pattern. Foreign trade has generally been small for stagnating, underdeveloped economies. As economies have expanded, foreign trade has tended to increase disproportionately, to decrease again relatively against the domestic sector as and when the economy has reached a certain level of maturity.<sup>22</sup> Such theories make it possible to hold that imperialism, while not a perennial necessity of capitalist enterprise as Rosa Luxemburg and other Marxist authors held, was yet a *temporary* requirement of capitalist development at a certain stage.

This argument, too, is deficient as a general explanation of imperialism. In the first place, the same tautological fallacy often underlies these theories as it does the more absolute theories which hold that foreign investments were not a cyclical but a structural necessity. Typically, Zimmerman and Grumbach define imperialism as 'the foreign policy, which tries usually with the aid of military operations but sometimes with political intrigues only, to get control over underdeveloped countries to guarantee an outlet of merchandise or capital in those territories'. But in their more detailed econometric analysis, they do not differentiate between trade with colonies and trade with territories outside Europe and the United States generally. Nor do they analyse in detail the relative importance of self-governing territories as against colonial dependencies *within* the British Empire. It is difficult to find figures to prove or disprove what they themselves have only assumed, i.e., that colonies rather than extra-European economies *in toto*

provided the cyclical regulator they seek to establish. Tables given by Werner Schlote about British trade in the imperialist era show little difference in the relative percentage of trade within the British Empire and that with other trading partners, in years of depression as against years of prosperity.<sup>23</sup>

Also, is it so surprising to find that foreign investments increased in times of a slackening investment demand at home? Unlike the post World War I period when, according to the findings of Zimmerman and Grumbach, home and foreign investments rose and declined together, the period between 1890 and 1910 was one of long-term prosperity. Is it not rather logical that during steady employment foreign buyers and foreign borrowers had better chances when a temporary lull in the domestic economy made producers and investors more sensitive to the opportunities of foreign markets?

If attention be paid to the long-term effects of capital investments for European economies at this time, it is likely that more attention should be given to the technical qualities of European industries. Was it really only imperialism which gave investment opportunities? Or railways? Why did European colonies not save Europe from the depression of the thirties? And why has the end of colonialism not thrown Europe into a long depression? As Schumpeter correctly observed in 1942, before the demise of colonialism: 'We must not confuse geographical frontiers with economic ones' ... 'The conquest of the air may well be more important than the conquest of India was.'<sup>24</sup>

#### 4. Imperialism as the policy of finance capitalists

The most important proponents of the theory that imperialism was essentially a consequence of attempts by rival capitalist trusts to conquer the world market, were Otto Bauer and Rudolf Hilferding. Cartels and monopolies, so they argued, were only possible behind protectionist

walls. Monopolies allow capitalist interests to exploit the home-market. Both producer and banking interests which have a strong general influence on the economy, therefore do much to create cartels and monopolies. The increased monopoly price, however, curtails production, and increases cost per unit. To achieve the economies of largescale production, capitalist manufacturers are quite willing to dump some of their products on foreign markets. Tariffs prevent competition of their own cheaply sold products on the home market. Offering cheap manufactures abroad will moreover help to oust competitors from foreign markets, and hence to extend the sway of monopoly.<sup>25</sup> The extension of the political area of a given monopoly-controlled economy may also enable particular trusts to dominate precious raw materials. Basically, then, imperialism is a conflict between cartel- and monopoly-dominated governments for the world market and for basic raw materials. The larger the economic area which is protected, the more powerful the position of the monopolies of particular countries. Hence, an unceasing drive for further expansion: imperialism (or, as Shaw had it, *Emporialism*).

#### *Theoretical flaws of the argument*

Although couched in economic terms, the basis of the argument is highly political. The unmentioned assumption is that capitalists have ultimate political power to force states to do their bidding. The history of Western capitalist development since the writings of those authors, has shown that both economic and political forces have successfully resisted the tendency towards an absolute concentration of power which Hilferding's concept of *Finance Capital* assumed. Traders have not become so dependent on industrial interests as he suggested they were becoming, nor industrial interests so much at the beck and call of banks as his theory of *Finance Capitalism* implied. Monopolies have been established, they have also been broken up. Practically all monopolies have been effec-

tively challenged by producers of new products or independent producers of the same product. Nowhere has Hilferding's *Generalkartell* of a *Gesamtkapitalist* been realized in practice. Capitalist interests have continued to be rivals. Some have sought protection, others have combatted it.

The raw material argument, although *prima facie* more realistic, is also not acceptable. Cartels of raw material producers have often been coveted, they have as regularly failed, because of the disparity of the geographic and economic interests to be combined. The very assumption of a world cartel based on a particular product conflicts with Hilferding's assumption of Imperialism as a contest of rival trusts and imperialist states for exclusive political and economic domination. Generally, raw material producers have not made difficulties in selling goods indiscriminately to the highest bidder, whatever his national origin. Actually, therefore, the raw material scare was not an economic argument, but one emotionally, and unrealistically, political.<sup>26</sup> Enemy states, so it was held, should never be in a position to choke the lifelines of a particular economy. But, then, overseas possessions would only help those who had the military means to preserve them in times of war. Perhaps the loudest clamour for raw material control was heard in Germany. But Bismarck, for one, knew that German colonies would be of little help, as in case of war they could only be hostages to a British enemy.

The limitations of this article, make it impossible to pursue further the very complicated issue whether protectionism is a necessary condition, or at least a powerful instrument, for rapid economic growth. On the one hand, the experience of a number of smaller states, oriented towards a large measure of free trade, would seem to militate against a too easy affirmative answer. On the other hand, the strongest argument of those who attribute colonial underdevelopment to the *political* control by European states is the affirmation that

a lack of independence on their part prevented colonies from erecting protective barriers to nurse their own industries (as did the U.S.A. and some British dominions). In this context, one might note an interesting reversal of the protectionist argument. The Liberal economist, Lionel Robbins, argued in his *The Economic Causes of War* (1939) that the danger of protectionist policies by other colonial powers made British colonial conquest necessary. Not to ensure trade, but to prevent others from closing open doors, British colonial policy, he held, had been morally justified!

### *The actual record*

Not without justice, Hilferding's theory has often been called a typically German theory. The imperialist disposition of heavy industrial interests in Germany, the powerful influence of banks on industry, and the German historical economists' genuflection for protection and supposedly necessary *Raumwirtschaften* have had few resemblances in other imperialist countries.<sup>27</sup>

This influence had two consequences: it made the Austrian and German Marxist writers exaggerate the bellicose disposition of capitalists generally, (whereas they in practice only thought of certain imperialist capitalist interests in Germany); and having proved capitalist causation to their own satisfaction, they came to underestimate the influence of other imperialist forces. Although disapproving of German imperialism, they were nevertheless led to take German imperialist complaints about 'a place under the (colonial) sun', the clamour for raw materials, and the militarist urge for a strong army and a newly built navy, as representative of conditions in capitalist states generally. Writing in the aftermath of the Boer War, they thought they had seen the undisguised face of capitalist imperialism, instead of an exceptional and controversial manifestation of British colonial policy. They projected the German situation on to Britain and France,

even though the economic structure of industry and the banking world in those countries was dissimilar,<sup>28</sup> and their political outlook fundamentally different. Consequently, they failed to take note of the strong anti-imperialist tradition of important British capitalist interests. They neglected to draw their conclusion from the fact that French imperialism was not so much the product of the small-scale bourgeois investor in a country which would not be a mature capitalist economy for another sixty or seventy years, as of the *revanchist* and monarchist Right.<sup>29</sup> For similar reasons, they also failed to see that political interests in practice manipulated French foreign investments. No foreign loans were permitted on the French exchanges without government approval, and some, like the famous Russian loans, were little but the buying of uncertain political favours with the aid of private savings, presently to be victimized on the altar of political expediency.

A deductive explanation of imperialism from capitalist interests generally, therefore falls to the ground.

Even so, it is still possible to hold that although capitalists as a group could not be proved to be imperialists *par excellence*, individual capitalists pushed governments into certain *concrete* imperialist adventures. Obviously, particular interests can always be found to have played a role in particular colonial adventures. (So could explorers, missionaries, anti-slavery humanitarians, etc.) In view of the fairly widespread anti-capitalist attitude of the Western intelligentsia, it is no wonder that proof of influence has often been constructed by historians to imply actual causation.

Yet here again, renewed historical enquiry was to show differently. Eugene Staley has subjected all possible cases in which historians have held capitalist interests responsible for imperialist policies, to detailed scrutiny in his important study, *War and the Private Investor* (1936). His cases make interesting reading. He showed

how time and again capitalist interests have been used by imperialist interests to manufacture pretexts for intervention. Of course, individual capitalists have often ridden the crest of imperialist waves. But like Cecil Rhodes, they have also often spent millions for no apparent financial, though much emotional, satisfaction. Rhodes' *Chartered British South African Company* did not pay a single dividend in all thirty-three years of its existence. Nevertheless, its shares continued to be popular on the London exchange. George von Siemens was to call Rhodes' invention of £1-shares 'die Trägerin des neubritischen Imperialismus'. No better example could be found of 'capitalist' sacrifice of money for none but emotional return, amongst practically all strata of British society. Staley's basic conclusion is unmistakable:

'...Private investments seeking purely business advantages (i.e. unmotivated by political expansionism, balance of power strategy, military considerations or other reasons of state) have rarely of themselves brought great powers into serious political clashes. It is where an aura of political ambitions has attached to their investments, and especially where the investments have been pushed for political reasons from the start, that most of the dangerous investment frictions between great states have occurred... Thus it is that private investors have received strong, even outrageously exaggerated governmental backing where they have been tools and agents of power and prestige politics while other investors, whose projects seemed to run counter to the governmental line of political endeavour, have experienced official indifference or even active opposition.'<sup>30</sup>

### 5. *The changing perspective on imperialism*

The earliest and most effective criticism of the entire body of Marxian theories of imperialism was Schumpeter's *Zur Soziologie der Imperialismen* (1918–1919, translated into English under the inadequate

title of *Imperialism*, 1951). Schumpeter's essay had the basic merit of assessing recent imperialist policies in the light of general history. He reviewed extensively past cases of expansionist empires, from the Egyptians and Assyrians onwards. Although he found certain economic interests to have played a role in some cases, he discovered as many or more in which this was not the case. Hence, Schumpeter defined imperialism as 'the objectless disposition on the part of a state to unlimited expansion'. Schumpeter sought the roots of aggressiveness in particular social structures, differing from one expansionist policy to another. Instead of imperialism, in the singular, one should therefore speak of *imperialisms*, in the plural. Realistic analysis moreover showed that the main forces in 19th century expansionism were feudal remnants rather than capitalist interests, such as the nobility, the officer castes, nationalist memories of past military prowess, tariff policies from a mercantilist past, etc. To Schumpeter, capitalism was, on the contrary, essentially a rationalizing and individualizing force which diverted natural aggressive instincts to non-political fields like economic enterprise. In fact, imperialism should therefore be regarded as an atavistic phenomenon.

Schumpeter's essay was dated. It partook of the fairly optimistic atmosphere of a pre-nazi era, and was still firmly, if negatively, tied to the debate about the capitalist causation of imperialism. In later life, Schumpeter was himself to reject the rosy implications of his own theory. In 1919 he still thought popular imperialism a logical impossibility. Later he came to associate himself with the theory about 'social imperialism' of another former Marxist, the Austrian Karl Renner.<sup>31</sup>

If Schumpeter called in early history, contemporary history, too, was moving away from a close connection between capitalism and militarist expansionism. The rise of Nazi-Germany, of Fascist Italy, and of ultra-nationalist Japan made many observers aware of the unwarranted opti-

mistic element in the theory that imperial aggression was simply the product of a passing social system, like capitalism, or particularly 'evil' men like capitalists. Some still tried to salvage something of the earlier theories by interpreting fascism as a particularly vile issue of a dying capitalism. They pointed to the fundamental anarchical nature of capitalism as responsible for the long drawn-out depression of the 'thirties'. If it had not been for this basically chaotic feature of capitalism, and for the active anti-socialist support by individual capitalists, madmen like Hitler could never have risen to power, by mobilizing the masses and showing that war preparation only could restore full employment. In themselves, such arguments already presupposed a host of sociological and psychological factors entering into the explanation. Since then, the later developments of Nazism in which capitalist interests were sacrificed to racial megalomania, did much to undermine this last stand of a capitalist theory of imperialism. At the same time, the New Deal and Keynesian economics restored the image of Western economies as being after all viable, self-sustaining social systems. Finally, the new expansionism of the U.S.S.R. came to free capitalism from its exclusive responsibility for imperialist policies.

Thus, three aspects of history have broken the specific link between capitalism and imperialism in the minds of many: (a) the more ready awareness of imperialist expansionism before the rise of capitalism, (b) the contemporary insight that capitalist interests could be anti-imperialist forces, and non-capitalist interests imperialist forces, and (c) the pervading fear for a future in which national interests rather than economic interests, ideology rather than capital exports, weapons more than trade monopolies, seem to endanger human existence.

This reorientation cannot but fructify renewed enquiry into the actual causes of the establishment (as of the demise) of

the colonial system.<sup>32</sup> Much more influence is now being attributed, for instance, to the mechanism of intra-European power politics at this period. We have come to see that the Free Trade Era was only a short and not even a complete pause in European expansionism. Between 1815 and 1870 a peculiar pattern of European politics made for a period of relatively little international conflict. At the same time the British Navy ruled supreme. It is now realized that the advent of steamships, and later the discovery of oil, changed the requirements of global strategy. We more readily appreciate the long-term effects of the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, which gave Britain a new preoccupation in her traditional wish to safeguard the lifelines of the Empire, notably against Russian expansion. In 1870, also, the Franco-German War profoundly upset the international scene. Henceforth, a complicated and shifting system of international alliances was to determine world politics. It was this new internal European power game which made Bismarck somewhat reluctantly stake a claim for German colonies in 1884 and 1885. He thus provoked anew the scramble for colonies, not for gain, only to some extent for prestige, and to a large measure, at least on the British side, for fear that rival powers might enter the areas concerned.

Perhaps the finest example of this new historiography is the recent study by Robinson and Gallagher. In their *Africa and the Victorians – the official mind of imperialism*, they have carefully documented the actual motivations of British statesmen and officials during the imperialist epoch. They stress the basic role of India in the British Empire, as the military counterpart of the British Navy, an 'Eastern barrack in the oriental seas'. As long as communications with India were safe, no British statesman was greatly interested in further imperialist exploits. England, Derby was to say, had enough black subjects already. Africa itself was little but an 'empty' space, by-

passed on the way to India and the Far East. Typically, documents on Africa were filed for Egypt under *Turkey*, for East Africa under *Bombay*, for the rest of Africa under *Anti-Slavery*, except for Natal and the Cape which had their own files.<sup>33</sup> Robinson and Gallagher found therefore little trace of:

'new, sustained or compelling impulses towards African empire arising in British politics or business during the eighteen eighties'... 'The late-Victorians seem to have been no keener to rule and develop Africa than their fathers. The business man saw no greater future there, except in the South, the politician was as reluctant to expand and administer a tropical African empire as the mid-Victorians had been; and plainly Parliament was no more eager to pay for it. British opinion restrained rather than prompted ministers to act in Africa. Hence they had to rely on private companies of colonial governments to act for them.'

And again:

'West Africa seemed to offer better prospects of markets and raw materials than East Africa and the upper Nile; yet it was upon these poorer countries that the British government concentrated its efforts. These regions of Africa which interested the British investor and merchant least, concerned ministers the most... Territorial claims... reached out far in advance of the expanding economy. Notions of pegging out colonial estates for posterity hardly entered into British calculations until the late eighteen nineties, when it was almost too late to affect the outcome. Nor were ministers gulled by the romantic glories of ruling desert and bush. Imperialism in the wide sense of empire for empire's sake was not their motive. Their territorial claims were not made for the sake of African empire or commerce as such. They were little more than by-products of an enforced search for better security in the Mediterranean and the East. It was not the pomp and profits of governing Africa which moved the ruling

elite, but the cold rules of national safety handed on from Pitt, Palmerston, and Disraeli...<sup>34</sup>

## SECTION II

### THE PERVASIVE EFFECTS OF THE MARXIST THEORIES OF IMPERIALISM

The remnants of the Marxist explanations of imperialism continue to have a powerful emotional sway, on the West, on the policies of the Communist bloc, and on the outlook of the new elites in the emerging states. Although discredited as a causal explanation of imperialism these theories still have a causal influence on national and international politics.

One consequence of the theories of 'Economic Imperialism' is that economic and political factors are insufficiently distinguished. Hence the importance of political factors for economic development is often exaggerated and, conversely, too much influence is attributed to the role of economic factors in political developments.

It is held widely, for instance, that imperialism *explains* the rapid development of the European economies, as it also *explains* the retarded state of the economies of the poorer regions of the world. Thus, more important factors, like the social preconditions of industrialization, population movements, the international migration of capital and labour, and the importance of infrastructural investments and external economies have often been lost sight of, even though they are only distantly affected by political factors. The rapid growth of European settlements overseas, and their interaction with the European economies has not been adequately dealt with: the blanket concept of *British Empire* seemed sufficient, to indicate that this, too, was a process of colonial domination, rather than a drastic shift in the development of the world economy. The fact that most of these nations were independent nations (or became inde-

pendent) during the imperialist era is minimized, as the absence of political domination could easily be waved away with a hasty reference to a continuing 'economic imperialism'.

The conventional argument, that imperialism reduced the non-European economies to servitude, in making them mere suppliers of raw materials and foodstuffs to their industrialized colonial masters equally illustrates the confusion of economic and political factors. Political factors, like colonial domination, are hardly necessary to explain why the development of non-European economies took such a one-sided course until now. If the newly independent states continue to find themselves heavily dependent on European markets, this is because many of their export products were first developed under the impact of Western technical and managerial skills. If Western entrepreneurs concentrated in their economies on raw materials and foodstuffs, this was not because Western capitalists as a class, or Western nations as a group, refused to let new industrial competitors arise in other areas of the world, but because individual capitalists found it generally unprofitable to start new industries in distant lands, until such time that external economies and an expansion of the internal market offered reasonable chances of economic profit. The argument that political power was used to prevent indigenous (or foreign) capital from engaging in industrial projects in the colonies is more easily stated in debate, than concretely documented. The most one can say is that colonial economies, unlike Japan or the U.S.S.R. for instance, lacked the positive lever of the state and the aid of protection. But it does not follow from this that colonial economies would have developed more quickly but for Western domination. Nor should it be affirmed too easily that non-industrialization is tantamount to under-development. It is an unfortunate though lasting effect of Liberal and Marxist thought that its industrial bias has often blinded statesmen to the fact that

investments in agriculture could conceivably do more for an increase in economic growth than *Fehlinvestierungen* in industrial projects. It is not generally noted that countries like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Argentine and Uruguay owed their initial growth to agricultural improvements and heavy capital imports, industrialization only coming in as an aftermath at a time when the domestic market had sufficiently expanded.<sup>35</sup>

Conversely, the fargoning autonomy of political factors has often been lost sight of. Imperialism, as an all-embracing term apparently was sufficient explanation for the appearance of new powerful states on the world scene. The rise of Russia, Japan and the U.S.A. was shrugged off as yet other manifestations of the inevitability of 'capitalist imperialism'; they were not assessed as basic shifts in the pattern of world politics. Differences in the political intentions and social systems of each of the world powers, in their foreign policies, or their geo-political interests have been inadequately understood. Too much importance is still being attached to economic policies as weapons of imperialist penetration, or anti-imperialist defence, while too little attention is paid to more basic social and political processes which may make or mar the independence of nations.

### *The Influence on the West*

The first major consequence of the attribution of imperialism to capitalism was to sap the self-confidence of Western colonial powers. For decades, the morality of capitalism itself had been more than dubious. Hence it was fatal for the imperial idea to be tarred by the capitalist brush. The White Man's Burden was reduced to the nefarious money grabbing of sinister interest. Missionary activities came to be regarded as an ideological umbrella for economic exploitation. Guardianship came to be felt as an imposition, a sense of superiority gave way to a definite sense of guilt. Obviously, this did not only weaken the

case in the minds of Europeans themselves, but also darkened the chances of success with which they might seek to defend their good intentions (if any) in the international community. The protest of colonial peoples, often in the name of Western ideals themselves, was one major factor in the demise of the colonial system. Lack of confidence among the colonial powers was another. The economic necessity (or desire) to reduce outlying commitments which the existing power felt unable to hold after the Second World War was a third. In addition, constant suspicion of 'imperialist intentions' joined the U.S.A., other non-colonial countries in the West, the communist bloc, and a rapidly increasing number of emancipated former colonies, into one strong anti-imperialist front.

Secondly, there is curious inverse relationship between the sense of guilt and the type of economic relations which prevailed in past history between the European powers and the rest of the world. The predatory exploits of pirates of the 16th and 17th centuries, when a relatively poor Europe was superior to other civilizations in little but warfare, navigation, and arrogance, are still glorified in European history books as acts of great and good men. When, with the advent of industrialization and improved means of transport, plunder was to an increasing extent replaced by trade, this was considered to be of suspicious portent. But Western enterprise came to be regarded as basically perverse, when it came to *invest* in underdeveloped areas, even though this was technically accompanied by a transfer of substantive capital assets from the West to those areas. This paradox is not really difficult to understand, unless one continues to cling to a purely economic view of these relationships. Not the direction of the transfer of *economic* wealth, but the extent of European intervention in the *social* life of the communities they conquered and ruled, created the fundamental psychological tensions between colonial rulers and sub-

jects. Hurt dignity cried out, rather than indignation about alleged exploitation.

Thirdly, this also explains the short-circuit which is very noticeable in the respective appreciation of foreign aid. Overestimating the economic factor, many Westerners still fail to understand why such aid does not make them more popular. Have they not finally turned into benefactors instead of exploiters? Are they not showing moral rehabilitation for past errors? The fundamental reply to this is, that past errors were not first of all economic, they were social and psychological. They continue to have their effect, and are still daily committed.

Finally, the capitalist explanation of imperialism was to weaken the political position of Europe itself, both internally and internationally. The easy belief that European wars were 'wars of steel and gold' weakened the solidarity between countries, as it did that between the various social groups of which European nations were composed. Hitler rose to power, partly because American isolationism and European appeasement were powerfully reinforced by the pacifist distaste for fighting another war for 'capitalist interests'. Collective security crumbled, and national interest and patriotism were weakened by such political *naïveté*. Thus Hitler was given his chance to upset the world, and by his wager for the control of Europe, to give the control over Europe itself to non-European powers. Munich was the last conference in which European powers thought it possible to settle the fate of the world without the presence of either the U.S.A. or the U.S.S.R. Within a score of years, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. were to meet alone, to contest or settle the fate of Europe.

### *The impact on the Communist bloc*

If Lenin's *Imperialism* was little but a vulgarized amalgam of the earlier doctrines of Hobson, Hilferding, Bauer and Rosa Luxemburg, its political effects have been great.

The adding together of capitalism and imperialism as causally linked phenomena, allowed Lenin and his followers to fashion the explosive formula that the struggle of the European proletariat (and its new Fatherland, the U.S.S.R.) and that of national liberation movements, even if led by bourgeois nationalist leaders, is essentially a common one. Are not both the victims of capitalist exploitation? If capitalism can only prolong its life by colonial exploitation, does not the alliance of communists and colonial peoples form the most effective way of ending the tyranny of capitalism and imperialism both, holding promise of an international society, with neither classes nor clashes? For the same reason, it became possible to coin the doctrine of two kinds of war: reactionary, anti-historical wars (waged by capitalist, imperialist nations, to be resisted by peace-loving forces anywhere), and progressive, historical wars (waged by socialist and (ex)-colonies, for the sake of peace itself).

The attribution of imperialism to capitalist causes has, at the same time, caused communist (as well as emerging) countries to misjudge developments in Western countries. It has caused them to underestimate the resilience of Western economies, to the extent that they have overestimated their reliance on colonial empires. The continuing prosperity of the Western economies as well as the constant improvement of the living standards of Western labour, even though supposed surplus gains from imperialist domination are no longer forthcoming, somehow remained inexplicable. It has taken the communists long to realize that the revolutionary inclinations of Western workers are few and far between, in imperialist as much as in anti-imperialist days.

### *The impact on the new nations*

But most important has been the continuing effect of the Marxist theories on the outlook of the elites of the emerging

countries. Its legacy has served to confuse the real issues of past, present and future development. In addition, it has affected the particular role which the new nations intend to play on the international political scene.

The allegation that capitalist development of the European nations was basically parasitical, has been taken up eagerly. It allowed the leaders in the new states to minimize psychologically the widening gap between rich and poor nations. Did not imperialism make the rich countries richer, and the poor countries poorer than they previously were? Would the developed nations have reached their present prosperity but for the *gratis* support which the world was forced to tender them on the point of bayonets? Would the underdeveloped nations be in the sorry state they are in, if it had not been for colonialism? Such reasoning has made it possible to put forward the paradoxical and anachronistic claim that the presumably exploitative colonial powers ought to have developed the economies of their colonies as welfare governments, *at a time when the ideal of the welfare state was not even held in the mother countries themselves.*

The exaggeration of the effect of political dependence on economic underdevelopment has, conversely, tended to heighten the expectation of what political independence could do for economic progress. Fundamental resistances in the social structure of the underdeveloped areas are inadequately taken into account. The gap between expectation and fulfilment in post-independence days increases the feeling of frustration in leaders and followers. A scapegoat is readily sought, and is often found in the continued 'machinations of foreign capitalists'. Had not Marxist theory taught that foreign investments are inherently exploitative? Were countries really emancipated to see former foreign masters still in control of the 'commanding heights' of national economies of independent states? Such anti-

capitalist attitudes tend to deprive the new nations of the assistance which continuing foreign investment might have given them in their development programmes. Ironically, the Marxist analysis seems on the way to being proved right *post factum*. If it could not be shown that in the imperial days trade (or capital) always followed the flag, nor that the flag inevitably followed trade (or capital), the diagnosis seems to come true now, albeit in a reverse direction. The withdrawal of imperial flags makes capital often fly and trade flounder. Foreign assets, felt to be the illegal fruits of past exploitation, are readily nationalized. Aid is demanded as of right. It is one of the strange consequences of the Marxist theories that it has made private capital (usually blamed for having no fatherland but that of profit) often more suspect in new nations than foreign assistance by one state to another (even with definite strings attached to it). Native capitalists may be implicated in such condemnatory attitudes. Their cosmopolitan ties may make them, by definition, potentially anti-national forces. This adds to the importance which many leaders in new states attach to economic development through the state, even though its administrative burden may already be excessive, and its determination of the priorities in development policies often far from effective (or efficient).

Finally, anti-imperialism is often at the root of the particular choices which new nations make in the present struggle of East and West. Most have deliberately chosen a policy of non-alignment, which is more actively anti-Western, the greater its anti-'imperialist' ingredient. Communist agitation feeds on the supposed identity of Western policies and imperialism. Military expenditures demand a share of the national income rarely commensurate with any actual threat. As tensions mount at home, foreign policy is often a way to compensate or deflect frustration. Rarely, then, is the choice of

particular foreign policies the choice of a careful assessment of actual needs or threats.

It has been the argument of this article that imperialist policies often hid behind

quasi-rational economic arguments. Perhaps it is fitting that anti-imperialism should now at times try to cloak irrational economic views in quasi-rational political formulas.

<sup>1</sup> Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, Everyman's Ed., I, p. 436.

<sup>2</sup> A. P. Thornton, *The Imperial Idea and its Enemies*, 1959, p. 33. Elsewhere Cobden had described the Empire as "but a gorgeous and ponderous appendage to swell out ostensible grandeur without improving our balance of trade".

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Thornton, Ch. I; Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians — the official mind of Imperialism*, 1961, Ch. I; E. M. Winslow, *The Pattern of Imperialism — a study in the theories of power*, 1948, Ch. II, IV; *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, II, pp. 689 ff.

<sup>4</sup> See especially Richard Koebner, "The Concept of Economic Imperialism", *The Economic History Review*, Second Series, II, No. 1 (1949), p. 1-29.

<sup>5</sup> *Die Akkumulation des Kapitals*, p. 361. (My translation)

<sup>6</sup> M. v. Tugan Baranowsky, *Studien zur Theorie und Geschichte der Handelskrisen in England*, 1900, Ch. I, VI, VII and VIII.

<sup>7</sup> *Die Akkumulation des Kapitals*, p. 259.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 246.

<sup>9</sup> J. M. Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, 1919, pp. 17-18. It is little realized that the overwhelming proportion of European foreign investment by 1914 was not in private enterprise, but in foreign government bonds, railway stocks, and investments in public utilities, hence in infrastructural provisions, cf. H. Feis, *Europe the World's Banker (1870-1914)*, 1930, p. 27.

<sup>10</sup> *Antikritik*, p. 81.

<sup>11</sup> *Die Akkumulation des Kapitals*, p. 238.

<sup>12</sup> The gross trade figures of Table I are, admittedly, only a rough measure. They do not reveal the particular type of goods traded, come of which were vital for further European and American industrialization. Nor do they give a clear indication of the relative effect which colonial ties had, after all, on the channels of trade. It can be shown that British trade with the Empire was much larger than it would have been on the basis of simple probability; in contrast, British trade with Germany was less than would have been probable taking the level of German development and population into account.

<sup>13</sup> *Imperialism*, p. 36.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 66.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Hobson's preface to the 1938 edition of *Imperialism*.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Feis, Ch. I. According to studies by R. A. Lehfeldt, returns on British colonial investments were on the average (defaults taken into account) 0.2% higher, those on foreign investments a little over 1% higher than prevailing domestic rates. Data for France are even more telling: the yield on domestic securities at the price of issue in 1899 was 4.20% on domestic securities against 3.8% on foreign securities. As A. K. Cairncross remarks in his *Home and Foreign Investment, 1870-1913*, p. 225: "The French rentier — the most cautious of capitalists and the most credulous — was content with a gilt edged return on securities in which no self-respecting gambler would have dabbled." In all, France lost two-thirds of the net total of her foreign investments over the imperialist period, *ibidem*, p. 224. See also Mark Blaug, "Economic Imperialism reconsidered", *The Yale Review*, L (1960-1961), pp. 340-341.

<sup>17</sup> W. Brand, *The Struggle for a Higher Standard of Living, the problem of the under-developed countries* (Glencoe, Ill., 1958), p. 260 ff.

<sup>18</sup> Staley, pp. 55-62.

<sup>19</sup> Staley, pp. 62-70.

<sup>20</sup> Cairncross, p. 188.

<sup>21</sup> L. J. Zimmerman and F. Grumbach, "Saving, Investment and Imperialism — a reconsideration of the theory of imperialism", *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv*, Band 71, Heft 1 (1953), pp. 1-19.

<sup>22</sup> Karl W. Deutsch and Alexander Eckstein, "National Industrialization and the Declining Share of the International Economic Sector, 1890-1959", *World Politics*, XIII (1961), pp. 267-299.

<sup>23</sup> Werner Schlote, *British Overseas Trade from 1700 to the 1930's* 1952, p. 162.

<sup>24</sup> Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, fourth ed., 1952, p. 117.

<sup>25</sup> Unlike the earlier theories, this theory can easily explain the fact of the increased volume of trade between fully industrialized states.

<sup>26</sup> It is true that certain raw materials were only found in particular parts of the world. The unceasing drive of industrialism has had much to do with the penetration of the economic enterprise and the political authority of the industrialized nations in these regions. But if one should wish to draw a historic-materialist conclusion from this, the "sinner" is more industrialism itself than any particular form of economic organization, like capitalism, socialism or fascism. Soon after 1917, Soviet Russia knew the value of authority over Baku oil. Political independence did and does little to soften the social impact of autochthonous industrialization.

<sup>27</sup> Sir Keith Hancock has moreover correctly pointed out in *The Wealth of Colonies*, 1950, that the trustification of the German economy postdated the original imperialist drive of the 1880's in Germany. Britain was imperialist without pressure of domestic monopolies. Domestic monopolies in the U.S.A., on the other hand, did little to make that country imperialist.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Feis, *passim*.

<sup>29</sup> In view of the importance which Hilferding and others attached to the relation of imperialism and protectionism, it is interesting to note that a recent study by H. Brunschwig, *Mythes et Réalités de l'Impérialisme Colonial Français*, 1960, revealed that French protectionist circles were generally opposed to colonialism, for fear of competition of colonial products on the French home market.

<sup>30</sup> Staley, p. 360, 362.

<sup>31</sup> J. A. Schumpeter, *Business Cycles*, II, p. 696, n.; cf. Winslow, p. 235.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Winslow, *passim*, and D. K. Fieldhouse's interesting "Imperialism: An Historiographical Revision", *Economic History Review*, Second Series, XIV, 1 (1961), pp. 187-209, which was brought to my notice when I was finalizing the manuscript of this article.

<sup>33</sup> Robinson-Gallagher, pp. 9-13; Thornton, p. 97.

<sup>34</sup> Robinson-Gallagher, p. 462-463.

<sup>35</sup> W. Brand, *loc. cit.*, pp. 175-176.

## The Marxian Image of Man

PRABHAKAR PADHYE

MAN has been variously defined as a rational animal, social animal, or symbol-using animal. Marx would have defined man as a working animal. Work, for Marx, is the secret of man's humanity. Like Hegel, Marx considers work as man's primary activity by virtue of which he 'negates' nature, that is to say struggles against it, masters it and harnesses it to his purposes. 'The whole of what is called world history', he says, in his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* of 1844, 'is nothing but the creation of man by human labour'.<sup>1</sup> The concept of work or labour is at the core of his labour theory of value. He thought that labour was the real creative source of human civilization. Of course, man was not the only productive creature; animals also produced. But there was a vital difference. The productive activity of animals was bound up with their immediate needs. It was blind and elemental.<sup>2</sup> Animals produced under the compulsion of drives, like sex and hunger. Man also suffered from such 'fixed' drives, admitted Marx; but he had other 'relative' drives which 'owe their origin to a certain type of social organization'.<sup>3</sup> In *Das Kapital*, Marx has stated the difference even more significantly: 'A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of the labour process we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement'.<sup>4</sup>

So, conscious life-activity is what distinguishes man. This is a very Hegelian

idea. For Hegel, Nature and Man are two different aspects of the Spirit or the world-self. Nature is externalized spirit that is unconscious of itself, while Man is the spirit in the act of becoming conscious of itself as spirit. Marx has a different conception of the man-nature relationship. Man is a part of nature; nature is his *inorganic body*; and man *lives* from nature.<sup>5</sup> But man is not merely a natural being; he is a human natural being'.<sup>6</sup> And as a human being he is endowed with distinctive human faculties, and consciousness is the highest of them all. But it is precisely in this capacity, this faculty of consciousness that he suffers his 'fall'. For, 'man (the worker) feels himself to be freely active only in his active functions — eating, drinking, procreating, or at most in his dwelling and personal adornment — while in his human functions he is reduced to an animal'.<sup>7</sup>

Wherein lies this fall? Precisely in this fact that man with all his human faculties has been reduced to the state of an animal, has been degraded, dehumanized. We, in the 20th century, know what this means. We know its meaning and significance. But when Marx was writing, the nature of this degradation was not well-known. It was Marx more than anyone else who has made us conscious of its nature and existence. His writings, from his *Manuscripts* of 1844 to his *Capital* of 1867 and after, are full of telling descriptions of what this degradation, this dehumanization means to the worker and to his existence. In the *Manuscripts*, Marx lays bare the source of this condition. It is alienation. What is alienation? 'The alienation of the worker in his product means not only that his labour becomes an

object, assumes an external existence, but that it exists independently, *outside himself*, and alien to him, and that it stands opposed to him as an alien and hostile force'.<sup>8</sup> The full nature of this alienation is best seen in what Marx calls the 'conditions of political economy', that is the conditions of private property in which the services of one human being are hired by another human being, more particularly in the conditions of capitalist society. Most of Marx's descriptions of alienation are appropriate to this situation; it is there that they make the most lucid sense. For instance, answering the question 'What constitutes alienation?' Marx says: 'His (the worker's) work is not voluntary but imposed, forced labour'.<sup>9</sup> Further, 'so much does the appropriation of the object appear as alienation that the more objects the worker produces the fewer he can possess and the more he falls under the domination of his product, of capital... The more the worker expends himself in work the more powerful becomes the world of objects which he creates in the face of himself, the poorer he becomes in his inner life, and the less he belongs to himself'.<sup>10</sup> And in *Capital*: 'Within the capitalist system all methods of raising the social productiveness of labour are brought about at the cost of the individual labourer all means of the development of production transform themselves into means of domination over, and exploitation of, the producers; they mutilate the labourer into a fragment of a man, degrade him to the level of an appendage of a machine, destroy every remnant of charm in his work and turn it into a hated toil; they estrange him from the intellectual potentialities of the labour process in the same proportion as science is incorporated in it as an independent power'.<sup>11</sup> Not only is the worker estranged from his work, estranged from himself, but also from his fellow-beings. ('When man confronts himself he also confronts other men'<sup>12</sup>). In short, he is alienated from the essence of humanity.

Thus, in general, alienated labour alienates man from his own body, from external nature, from his own mental life and from human life.

But it should be noted that private property or capitalist society are not the ultimate source of this alienation. Marx specifically states that 'alienation appears not only in the result, but also in the *process of production*, within *productive activity* itself. ... Consequently, if the product of labour is alienation, production itself must be active alienation – the alienation of activity and the activity of alienation'.<sup>13</sup> Marx clearly states that private property is not the cause but the consequence of alienation: 'Private property is the product, the necessary result, of alienated labour, of the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself'.<sup>14</sup> Marx explains: 'We have derived the concept of *alienated labour* (*alienated life*) from political economy, from an analysis of the *movement of private property*. But the analysis of this concept shows that although private property appears to be the basis and the cause of alienated labour, it is rather a consequence of the latter, just as the gods are *fundamentally* not the cause but the product of confusion of human reason. At a later stage, however, there is a reciprocal influence'.<sup>15</sup>

So, alienation is rooted not in private property but in 'the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself'. To understand the meaning of this one must remember that Marx was a neo-Hegelian, and he accepted from Hegel the conception of alienation as a 'dialectical negation'. In Hegel you have the concept or the spirit divided into two parts: Man who is endowed with consciousness and nature that is unconscious, and, in terms of the spirit's urge to realize itself through man, there is inevitably an alienated relationship between man and nature. The 'conscious' man must regard the 'unconscious' nature as an alien entity, to be negated, i.e., to be conquered, to be dissolved into consciousness. According to Hegel, this

was done by man's cognitive act of knowing nature. When man completely mastered nature in knowledge the spirit realized itself. Marx could not accept the Hegelian postulate of the Spirit. But as a neo-Hegelian, he accepted the concept of autogenetic process which developed by the negation of the negation. Only the first premise of his process was different. If, for Hegel, the first premise was the absolute concept or the eternal spirit, for Marx it was Nature which became self-conscious in Man. This Nature also could be called eternal, in the sense that it had no beginning, no middle, and no end. It was a case of a continuous process, a continuous unfolding, an infinite progression. Man appeared at some point in this process and with him appeared the relationship between man and nature that has been the source of his alienation, for man can live only by negating nature. This is a necessary relationship from which there is no escape, because 'nature is his (man's) *body* with which he must remain in continuous interchange in order not to die'.<sup>16</sup> This necessity, revealed concretely as man's needs and desires, is the motive force of the dialectical process. As Marx puts it, 'The first historical act is the production of the means to satisfy these needs'.<sup>17</sup> These needs and desires drive man to exercise his labour on nature, the sensuous external world. The product of this exercise is its externalization, that is expression in an external object. This inevitable externalization is the source of man's alienation,<sup>18</sup> because, 'not only does his labour become an object, assume an external existence, but it exists outside himself'.<sup>19</sup>

What this Hegelian exegesis means is more than I can say.<sup>20</sup> One can only guess. There are a few clues. 'Man feels himself to be freely active only in his animal functions — eating, drinking and procreating or at most also in his dwelling or personal adornment' is one such clue. 'The animal is one with its life activity. It does

not distinguish the activity from itself. It is its activity',<sup>21</sup> is another. Apparently the animal does not suffer from alienation, for in its case there is no externalization. As we saw, Marx distinguishes man from animal by his *consciousness*, and let me try to probe the meaning of Marx's alienation — primary or self-alienation as distinguished from alienation resulting from division of labour or from private property, i.e. from dehumanization or capitalist exploitation — by giving an illustration of one of the highest forms of man's consciousness — *creativity*. While an artist, say a poet, is absorbed in the act of aesthetic creation, while he is one with his creative activity, he experiences an ineffable feeling of fulfilment, a realization of the spirit, a kind of divine joy, which he loses as soon as his creation is over, his poem written. He is, of course, happy, immensely happy at his creation. It is, however, a feeling of ego-expansion, which is a different thing. The poem is no longer a part of his self. It is no longer the effervescent experience that it was. It is only congealed creativity, not the creativity, that coursed through his entire being. In fact, his product can now create an attitude in its creator that would have proved damaging to his creation had it occurred earlier. He may now be tempted to make use of his product, that would negate its nature. In that sense, the product becomes an alien, hostile object that could be the undoing of its creator. Of course, this is not the alienation with which Marx, in the main, was concerned. The alienation of the artist that would have interested him is the alienation that arises out of the various kinds of compulsions that beset him in an inequitable society — compulsions that would compel a poet to sell his poems against his will or adopt an attitude in creation that would damage the timbre of his genius. But the subtle change that overcomes the artist in his attitude towards the product of his creativity is no less real.

## II

This is no less true of the production of ordinary objects. Yet Marx did not dwell at length on this supremely individualistic phenomenon, for very good reasons. Man, for him, was not an isolated individual, acting only with himself and within himself. More significantly he was a social being. In his origin and development he was involved with others. 'Men, who daily remake their own life, begin to make other men, to propagate their kind ... (and then there is) the increase of population. With these there develops the division of labour, which was originally nothing but the division of labour in the sexual act, then that division of labour which develops spontaneously or 'naturally' by virtue of natural predisposition (e.g. physical strength), needs, accidents, etc., etc., ... With the division of labour ... is given simultaneously the distribution, and indeed the unequal distribution (both quantitative and qualitative) of labour and its products, hence private property.'<sup>22</sup> These changing forms of social relationship produce their relevant forms of alienation, so fully and poignantly described by Marx in his later works.

Whether the author of these later works is a continuator of the author of the *Manuscripts* or his liquidator has, in recent years, become a matter of some animated debate among Marxologists, and the interesting thing that has emerged out of this debate is that its dividing line runs across the traditional division between the critics and the upholders of present-day communism. For instance, a stern critic of Soviet communism like Prof. Daniel Bell of the Columbia University and apologists and propagandists of the Soviet regime like Prof. Adam Schaff of the Warsaw University and Pazhitnov of the Soviet Union, all agree that the earlier Marx of the *Manuscripts* does not properly represent the mature Marx. As against this, psycho-analyst Erich Fromm (*Marx's Concept of Man*), political philosopher Robert Tucker (*Philosophy and Myth in*

*Karl Marx*), and psychologist Silvan S. Tomkins<sup>23</sup> argue that there is a continuity in Marx and that the older Marx is only a mature edition of the younger Marx.

Soviet apologists like Schaff and Pazhitnov were naturally worried about revisionists like Kolakowski in their own camp who, in their disillusionment over the experiences of the communist regimes, turned with great hopes and inspiration to the humanist Marx of the *Manuscripts*.<sup>24</sup> They had to do something about this and the easy way was to play down the significance of the *Manuscripts*. Whereas the Soviet philosopher dismissed them as 'certain not yet mature thoughts' the Polish professor described them as only a milestone on Marx's evolution.<sup>25</sup> The embarrassment of orthodox communists over the *Manuscripts* and their anxiety to underrate them is perfectly understandable for another reason. Properly read, the *Manuscripts* amount to a devastating exposure of the present-day communist society and the pretensions of its protagonists. The picture that Marx paints there of 'crude' communism would reflect in a large measure the realities and more importantly the mind behind the communist world of today. 'The communism', says Marx, 'which neglects the personality of man in every sphere, is only the logical expression of private property ... Universal envy setting itself up as a power is only a camouflaged form of cupidity ... The community is only a community of work and of equality of wages paid out by the communal capital, by the community as universal capitalist'.<sup>26</sup> The apologists of present-day communism can only squirm when they look into this classic Marxist Mirror.

Equally disturbing to their conscience must have been the concept of the transcendence of human alienation that Marx formulated in the *Manuscripts*. The roots of human alienation are in the inevitable relationship between man and nature. There is no way of abolishing this relationship without jeopardizing the existence of man. Is there any possibility of transcend-

ing the alienation within the confines of this necessity? Marx gave an affirmative answer. It will be found in the distinction that he made between man-nature and animal-nature relation. Marx observed that whereas animals produced under the compulsion of direct physical need man produced truly, when he was free from such needs. Man would be liberated, he would be emancipated from the creeping disease of alienation when he is no more compelled to produce under compulsion, natural or man-made. This is Marx's vision of a 'communist society where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic.'<sup>27</sup> The Soviet apologists could not show any relevance of this vision to the ruthless dictatorship they had been eulogizing; nor could they show how Marx's vision of freedom could ever factualize out of the monstrosity that was created in his name. The only thing they could do was to forget the existence of these *Manuscripts*; but since this was made impossible for them by 'traitors' in their own camp they had to find ways and means of playing down their importance, and this has exactly been the technique of Messrs Adam Schaff, Pazhitnov and Co.

But when critics like Daniel Bell demur at the importance attached to the *Manuscripts* one has to pause and take serious notice. While Prof. Bell welcomes the fresh and fruitful approach in this search for humanist inspiration in Marx, he is worried that it might only encourage further myth-making<sup>28</sup> and he is more bothered by the fact that this is historically just not true; the historical Marx plainly repudiated the Marx of the *Manuscripts*. Bell quotes the remark of Engels that the *Manuscripts* along with the *Ideology* were

wilfully abandoned by their authors to the 'gnawing teeth of mice' since they had achieved their main purpose of 'clarifying' their minds. He points out that over the years, Marx had moved from philosophy to reality and from phenomenology to political economy; and that alienation that, in 1844, had meant both 'dehumanization' and 'exploitation' had increasingly come to mean only 'exploitation'. The categories of self that had figured so prominently in the *Manuscripts* had quickly begun to disappear. As a matter of fact within a year or two of the *Manuscripts*, Marx, in *German Ideology*, was making fun of the neo-Hegelians' conception of 'man in general' and was consigning this concept to 'the realm of philosophical fantasy'. Again, in the *Sixth Thesis of Feuerbach*, written in the spring of the next year, Marx was defining man as 'an ensemble of social relations'. In short, Marx, within a short while, had abandoned one abstraction (the human essence) for another (the class essence). Prof. Bell's point is well taken. And yet, it should be pointed out that after Marx had 'hastily scribbled down' his *Theses on Feuerbach*, he wrote in his *German Ideology*: 'The first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living human individuals. Thus the first fact to be established is the physical organization of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature ... The writing of history must always set out from these natural bases and their modification in the course of history through the action of man'.<sup>29</sup> This does not look like an abstraction. And yet Marx did talk, and continue to talk, of man as a complex of social relations. This does look like an abstraction. The explanation should be sought in the word 'modification' in the passage just quoted. Marx said that the history of man was the history of change in human nature; for him the change, however, was dialectical and must be dialectically understood.

Dialectical change does not destroy the earlier phases of a process but rather sub-

sumes them. That is why the synthesis is supposed to be higher than either the thesis or the antithesis, both of which resolve themselves into the synthesis. If Marx's progressive use of the concept of alienation is understood in this dialectical fashion it will easily be seen that when he talked of capitalist alienation (or exploitation) he did not set it apart from or in opposition to human self-alienation resulting from externalization of labour or to dehumanization resulting from the division of labour, but rather incorporated these forms of alienation into it. That is why he continued to talk of alienation and dehumanization in his later work where he was largely concerned with exploitation. Capitalist alienation did not set aside, but subsumed primary alienation. When Marx talked of alienation in capitalist society he should be presumed to have also talked of all the preceding forms of alienation. Marx himself had stated the basis for this supposition: 'every self-alienation of man, from himself and from nature, appears in the relation which he postulates between other men and himself and nature.'<sup>30</sup>

One should note here the active role that Marx assigns to man. It is man who postulates relations between others and himself and nature. Man is an active being. Praxis is the norm of his living. It is through praxis that he learns about nature and about himself. It was this essential wisdom that was lost on Engels who, it so happened, became the philosophical spokesman of Marxism. (He should have been its economist. When Marx was writing the *Manuscripts* he was working on 'The Conditions of the English Working Class'.) Marx's very accent on practice led him to concentrate on economics, and philosophy was relegated to the care of Engels, who turned dialectics into some kind of dialectical positivism. His *Anti-Dühring* and his review essay on *Ludwig Feuerbach* are nothing but consecration of the positivist spirit.

Dialectics which, for Marx, meant an opposition between the objective condi-

tions (thesis) and needs and desires of men (anti-thesis) synthesizing into revolutionary praxis<sup>31</sup> became in Engels' hands 'a science of the general laws of motion',<sup>32</sup> 'a science of the processes, of the origin and development of these (finished) things and of the inter-connections which bind all these natural processes into one great whole'.<sup>33</sup> Accordingly to Engels, the world was to be conceived as two sets of processes (which were essentially one), one of nature and the other of its reflections or images in the minds of men; and, dialectics was nothing but 'two sets of laws which are identical in substance, but differ only in their expression in so far as the human mind can apply them consciously, while in nature and also upto now for most part in human history, these laws assert themselves unconsciously in the form of external necessity'.<sup>34</sup> Thus history became merely 'the conscious reflex of the dialectical motion of the real world'.<sup>35</sup>

A comparison between the critical philosophy of early Marx and the materialist dialectics of later Engels would show that Marx's concept of both history and nature underwent a subtle change in the hands of Engels. For Marx, Nature and History were fused; nature was what man made of it; nature was what was appropriated and understood of it by man's senses and faculties.<sup>36</sup> This means that nature has no meaning apart from man and that history is not something governed by inexorable inner laws. In Marx there was always the vision—a romantic vision, no doubt—of revolutionary praxis, of the decisive historical act that would reveal and at the same time endow on it the meaning of history. The underlying principle was stated in the *Third Thesis on Feuerbach*: 'The coincidence of the changing circumstances and of human activity can only be conceived and rationally understood as revolutionising practice'. This was not what Engels stated in his *Ludwig Feuerbach*: 'in spite of all seeming accidents and of all temporary retrogression, a progressive development asserts itself in the end'.<sup>37</sup> The difference

between Marx's vision of history and Engels' is the difference between human operation in appropriate circumstances and a determinate situation expressing itself in human action.

### III

But it must be admitted that Marx was to some extent responsible for Engels' formulation. Not only had he listened to a reading of *Anti-Dühring* but he had also contributed a chapter to the opus. But it was a Marx caught up in a dilemma. He cherished the romantic revolutionary vision, but he was living in an age when natural sciences were triumphing, and in a country where the philosophy of scientism was invading the portals of the intellectual world. He was a child of Hegelian philosophy gravitating towards naturalism. All the spiritual struggle of this gravitation can be seen even in the *Manuscripts*, and this struggle had a remarkable expression in his 'classic' statement<sup>38</sup> on Historical Materialism, wherein he says: 'The mode of production of the material subsistence *conditions* the social, political and spiritual life-process in general. It is not the consciousness of man which *determines* their existence, but on the contrary it is their social existence which *determines* their consciousness'. (Italics mine). It will be seen that in this passage Marx uses the words 'condition' and 'determine' (The original German words are *bedingt* and *bestimmt*)<sup>39</sup> indiscriminately, as if they meant the same thing. But the difference between them is great and philosophically significant, since 'condition' shows possibility whereas 'determination' promises necessity. It was perhaps the contrary pulls of the Hegelian philosophy and the positivistic science that produced the dilemma that made Marx acquiesce in Engels' *Anti-Dühring* which was clearly a homage to the scientific temper of the age.

Lenin did what was the most natural thing to do in those days. He read Marx into Engels and Engels into Marx, and produced a theory of knowledge which

was an impressive blend of both. Knowledge was simply a copy or reflection of reality (à la Engels) in the mind of man in activity (à la Marx). Lenin was first of all, an activist, and he was perhaps too busy with the making and consolidation of revolution in Russia to watch closely the shape the sciences of man were taking under the guidance of men like Bukharin, who were greatly influenced by the positivist orientation of the thinking of Engels and Plekhanov. In the early years of the Russian revolution what is called 'vulgar' or 'mechanical' Marxism (but which in reality was Marxism that bore a heavy stamp of Engels and Plekhanov on it) had a great vogue and considerably influenced policies and practices in fields like education and law. The naivety of some of the experiments in these fields was indeed astounding. For instance, in the field of law and jurisprudence, it was argued that since law was an instrument of class domination the advent of a classless society would mean the 'withering away' of law and consequently the task of the socialist legal system was only to facilitate transition to a classless society. A legal luminary of the time, Eugene Pashukanis, went to the extent of saying that guilt and punishment were 'un-Marxist' concepts.<sup>40</sup> Whatever criminality was found in the Soviet state was, obviously, a remnant of the pre-revolution Czarist society and would disappear with the growth of the classless society! In the field of education there was the doctrine of 'the withering away of the school'.

Backed by a philosophical belief these theories were propounded with a surprising amount of sincerity. Their opponents also argued from a philosophical position. The fact was that both swore by Marxism, and brought forth appropriate quotations from their masters. Their quarrel was a quarrel between two types of Marxism — determinist Marxism and activist Marxism.<sup>41</sup> The advocates of the 'withering away' theories believed that man was a product of circumstances and that with the

socialisation of life a new man would automatically emerge. The duty of the Marxists, they said, was to facilitate the emergence of the new man by appropriate social transformation. They said that the social superstructure which came to self-consciousness in the minds of men was externally determined by the politico-economic foundation, and with the transformation of the base the superstructure and the consciousness of people would automatically change. And with the socialist transformation of society the thinking and behaviour of the people would also become socialist. They tended to take a behaviouristic view of man based on the stimulus-response formula and were inclined to underrate the independent powers of his psyche. They were highly encouraged by Pavlov's researches which bore the stamp of Lenin's approval. Some of them even accepted Freud whose theory of Id and Ego was appropriately materialistic and deterministic. Both Pavlov and Freud could be fitted nicely into the framework of Marxism. On the whole, they treated man as a passive organism which mechanically responded to environmental changes and whose consciousness more or less faithfully reflected whatever change the reality at the base underwent.

Their opponents accused them of vulgarizing Marxism. They charged them with ignoring the activist components of Marxism-Leninism. They reminded them of the cardinal doctrine of Lenin's epistemology that man perceives reality by purposefully acting on it. They argued that man was an active and not a reactive organism. They emphasized the importance of the consciousness of man, which directly flowed from the dialectical law of quantity changing into quality. They said that human psyche was a new synthesis of matter, which was governed by higher laws and not not by the mechanistic laws which governed inorganic matter. Man was not a helpless creature of circumstances. He did not supinely await changes at the base, but actively undertook the task of changing

the base. They refused to interpret human behaviour in mere social or biological terms. Man was no slave to instinct and heredity, nor a slave to environment. They reminded the 'mechanists' of the Marxist dictum that man made his own history and in the process changed himself. The process of history was an autogenetic process of the fusion of theory and practice, and man's consciousness not only reflected social urges and social ideals, but he actively cultivated them. They insisted that the psychic phenomenon had a dialectic of its own; it liberated man from the bondage of the immediate conditions and enabled him actively to pursue purposeful goals. In short, they said, the new Soviet man was a conscious, purposive, active, goal-oriented builder of socialism capable of changing the world and changing himself.

The emphasis on consciousness led to condemnation of the unconscious, particularly its manifestation in literature and the arts.<sup>42</sup> All varieties of depth psychology were declared taboo. But this created difficulties for psychological science. The Freudian unconscious was an important part of the mental life of man, and Freudian psychology fulfilled the materialistic and deterministic requirements of Marxism. Besides, the glorification of the unconscious as an independent factor threatened the deterministic basis of Marxian science. But Soviet psychologists, strengthened by dialectics, easily got round the difficulty. Rubinstein, one of the leading lights of Soviet psychology, wrote: 'The freedom of a voluntary act consists in its independence of the impulse of the immediate situation, and means that the behaviour of man is not determined directly by his immediately surroundings, and naturally, *not* that it is in general undetermined; it is just that the lawfulness and determination involved are of a different order. Immediate determination becomes mediated determination. Voluntary action is mediated through the consciousness of the person'.<sup>43</sup> The accent on consciousness

threatened another demigod of Soviet philosophy: Pavlovism. Pavlov's theories properly emphasized the materialistic and deterministic basis of consciousness. The cerebral cortex was the material substratum of mental phenomenon. But the new importance of consciousness based on the thesis that consciousness was a new synthesis of matter and therefore was governed by dialectically higher laws may not countenance the idea of reducing the concepts of consciousness to physiological concepts. But Pavlov was a great man, highly praised by Lenin. Therefore Pavlov could not be ignored. His authority had to be invoked. And that was not so difficult. Pavlov affirmed the great plasticity of the higher nervous system which sustains psychic life. And his second signal system offered a similar solution to Rubinstein's — mediated determinism. According to Pavlov, conditioned reflexes can be set in motion either by concrete signals (external stimuli) or by the specifically human 'signals of signals' (verbal symbols or words). Animals having merely the 'first signal system' respond only to immediate excitation, but humans can use verbal symbols and can liberate themselves from immediate stimuli. (This was of great significance in the context of Stalin's essay on Linguistics). This is another example of 'mediated determinism', of determinism of a dialectically higher order of lawfulness.<sup>44</sup>

There was nothing peculiarly Stalinist in this development. The specifically Stalinist twist given to the Soviet psychology was different. Therein lay Stalin's genius. By combining the activist view of man's psyche with the Bolshevik ethic of 'Partinost' he, at one stroke, turned the purposive individual into his opposite — slave of the party-machine and the Soviet state. 'Partinost' literally means partyness, which was translated by the Bolsheviks as party vigilance. The ethics of 'partinost' has its roots in the epistemological and political doctrines of Lenin. Basing as he did his philosophy on the objective reality of mat-

ter, Lenin admitted that there was such a thing as abstract objective truth; but man, being an 'ensemble of social relations, and his practice being social practice, he was, in our class society incapable of apprehending objective truth. All apprehension of truth was relative. However, the proletariat was dialectically on a higher level of history; its truth therefore was of a higher order. Now since the Communist Party was the repository of proletarian practice and proletarian aspirations, its truth was necessarily higher; and again since the proletariat was destined to bury the class basis of society and inaugurate an era of classless society (and, therefore, of objective truth), the truths of their opponents were not only of a lesser breed but were in fact a pack of lies! Partinost therefore meant the duty to root out all causes of such lies, i.e., all opposition to the Party. Stalin combined this party ethic with the conscious purposive nature of man — and suddenly man became responsible for his behaviour, for his purposes and his innermost thoughts. Now if the man is responsible for his behaviour, for his practice, he cannot blame his failures, his frustrations on the party or the State or the system. Since he is purposive and he pursues his interests and ideals purposefully, he must see that they rhyme with those of the party or the State or the system. Since he is responsible for his thoughts he must see that they are the correct thoughts. He must remember that his thoughts, his cognition, his consciousness is an autogenetic process, a self-process, which must go on; therefore he has no right to suppress his thoughts. Writers cannot remain silent; if they do they must explain their silence. Children cannot keep quiet when their parents defect; they must denounce them. And why only children? Since everybody's thoughts and actions must rhyme with those of the State and since every one must participate in 'party vigilance', spying becomes everybody's socialist duty. And since suppressed thoughts are evil thoughts, their expres-

sion in literature or art or in anything else is also evil; at best it is pathological. Everybody must see that these unconscious thoughts or motives or purposes are not expressed (—thus providing subterranean evidence against the regime). The consequences of such an ethic, for an individual, are quite clear. If mistakes are made, they are not innocent mistakes. He who commits them commits them consciously, deliberately, out of some evil design. He must, therefore, be denounced as a reactionary, a wrecker, an enemy of the people.<sup>45</sup> That is how an admirable doctrine of personality became its enslaver.

The story of the results of this paranoid logic are well-known and need not engage us here. But its consequences for character-formation should be briefly noted. It divided the large mass of people into two types: The faceless and those with protruding faces. The majority of people preferred to belong to the former class. Because if there is no safety in expressing your thoughts and in even concealing them the best way out is of course to cease to exist, and Marxism with its worship of the mass provided an easy way of doing this. Under Stalin 'massification' of society became a meaningful objective. It strengthened the dictatorship, and Stalin very conveniently sang the praise of the masses.<sup>46</sup> Equally, the individual who desired to be faceless found it convenient to submerge himself into the mass. In fact, deprived of the possibility of moving or acting on his own, stripped of his thoughts or sentiments he may even find compensation in the mass to which he belongs. The mass becomes a gigantic individual which represents his personality, as was expressed by a character in Chakovsky's novel *The Dawn Rises for Us*: 'What are we, comrades, isolated, wrapped up in ourselves, alone and abandoned to ourselves?... But together with our country, we are a power'.<sup>47</sup> And this suits the leader perfectly. Since the mass cannot act by itself, since the mass without a leader is a mere medley, it must have a leader. So

Stalin's worship of the mass turned into its dialectical opposite, the 'personality cult'. But the leader cannot rule with the mere mass. He must have an infra-structure for his dictatorship and this was made up of the other sections of the people, the opposite of the faceless section. This section consisted of individuals who were fanatically and aggressively activist. They had answered the specifications of Stalinist psychology: they had suppressed their inner thoughts, personal sentiments and had completely identified themselves with the leader. They had learnt to suppress even their silence — they became extroverts. They had suppressed all desire to withdraw within themselves — they became aggressive. They tried to suppress their frustrations and became fanatics — fanatical in their love of the leader, fanatical in their hatred of the enemy, fanatical in their effort to fulfil their leader's (Stakhanovite) expectation of them. They cultivated the typical characteristics of fanaticism: inverted egotism, capacity for unlimited action and unlimited sacrifice, capacity to think not with the brain but with the spinal cord, capacity for utmost discipline, capacity for make-believe, and capacity for hatred, for destructiveness. Stalin told them to hate: 'Hate the enemy, hate him from the bottom of your heart'.<sup>48</sup> Stalin's legacy was so strong that much of this attitude persists in spite of eight years of de-Stalinization. That is what worries their young intellectuals.

#### IV

What the young intellectuals are concerned with is the fate of man, the fate of his individuality, the meaning of his existence. They know that according to Marxist philosophy proletarian man was going to liberate society and through it liberate himself. But, on the contrary, under Stalin, he became totally enslaved and his existence, at the core, lost all meaning. The young intellectuals who are all Marxists and cherish all the humanistic

values of the official philosophy find that they are standing with the wreckage of all these values around them. The claims and the pronouncements of the official circles sound to them not only hollow but like a bitter joke. They are not only disenchanted but find themselves helpless. The intellectual iron curtain raised around them prevents them from participating in the intellectual stream of the outside world. Not that the outside world is exactly revelling in the philosophies of hope or liberation or even security. The analytical philosophy of the Anglo-Saxons appears to them like the negation of philosophy and the existentialist philosophy of Europe appears to them, as it must to intellectuals fed on the certitudes of Marxism, like glorified Nihilism. And yet they feel attracted towards it, because existentialism puts its finger unerringly on the problems that are bothering them. It raises the problem of alienation of man in modern society and particularly his self-alienation, rooted in the very fact of his existence. It pointedly draws attention to the collapse of certainties and accepted categories that had previously provided shelter and security; it points to the dehumanization, the deflowering and the emptiness of modern life; and it emphasizes the 'estrangement' of the individual who cannot even withdraw from the life that has become absurd. At this point these young intellectuals can turn to Marx's 1844 *Manuscripts* (first published fully in Russian in 1956) wherein they may find the Marx of their dreams, the humanistic Marx who was concerned not merely with man as a member of the complex class society or as a product of the division of labour, but also as a victim of externalization in his basic productive activity. They may notice in the *Manuscripts* Marx was concerned not only with man's relation with Nature or with Society but also with his relation with himself. One can see in this an invocation of the existentialist spirit. Of course, as Marxists, they cannot read the *Manuscripts* in exis-

tentialist terms, but they can hear in them the echoes of that philosophy — and something more. They can find Marx's own picture of communism, a picture which they were unable to come across anywhere else in his later writings, and, more particularly, a picture of liberated man, philosophical in concept and exalted in contours. It is not a picture woven with the miserable mundane threads of planning, distribution, public administration or collectivization; it is a picture fashioned on the model of Hegel's *Phenomenology*. It is a picture of man's 'post-history' on earth, during which he 'regains his self', 'reintegrates himself' and 'transcends human self-alienation'. They are enthralled by the fundamentally *aesthetic* character of Marx's picture of communism in which 'the wealth of subjective human sensibility (a musical ear, an eye which is sensitive to the beauty of form, in short, senses which are capable of human satisfaction and which confirm themselves as human faculties) is cultivated or created'.<sup>40</sup> They are not bothered overmuch by the fundamentally utopian character of this picture and by the fact that it may never be possible for man to get rid of what clearly are the compulsions of life, and to be a fisherman in the morning, a hunter in the afternoon and an artist in the evening. They are also not bothered by the fact that even in an ideal society alienation may not disappear altogether, but may assume newer and subtler forms; that, in other words, this ideal society may be vitiated by the basic existentialist dilemma that life is at once absurd and compulsive. They value the *Manuscripts* despite these doubts, because they feel the *Manuscripts* would help them restore some of the dignity of man that has been lost in the name of Marx.

It should be noted, however, that the vision of these young intellectuals does not belong to the fundamental rhythm of the Marxian conception of Man. Kolakowski does make the important distinction between the epistemology of Karl Marx and

those of Engels and Lenin. But his accent is on what he thinks is the essence of Marx's epistemology, namely, that 'man the cognitive creature is only a part of the whole man'.<sup>50</sup> But Marx's accent was clearly on *praxis*, on activity. For Marx, man was a part of nature, but not its helpless creature; his needs and desires expressed themselves in the conscious transformation of nature, in revolutionary action. In Engels, action as a meaningful antithesis to the thesis of the objective situation almost lost its meaning, and although Lenin tried to restore the role of purposive activity in the perception of reality the situation was caught up in a dilemma where the natural, biological, social determinism came into conflict with

the plasticity of the human mind and the activity of the human will. Stalin broke this dilemma by putting the consciousness of man on the pedestal (to such an extent that it left many wondering what remained of original Marxism!). But Stalin was a crass politician with little or no respect for the dignity or the sovereignty of ideas, and the rhythmic development of the Marxian conception of man lost itself in a morass which assumed the shape of a menacing question mark! This question mark is today whirling in the minds of the young intellectuals. It may be today no more than the staggering of a vertigo, but its potential fuel-value for the revisionist machine must not be underrated.

<sup>1</sup> p. 139: All page references to these *Manuscripts*, in this paper, are to Erich Fromm's edition (with his long introduction and some other writings of or about Marx) published under the title, *Marx's Concept of Man*, (Frederick Ungar Publishing Co. New York, 1961).

<sup>2</sup> "Of course, animals also produce. They construct nests, dwellings as in the case of bees, beavers, ants, etc. But they only produce what is strictly necessary for themselves or their young. They produce only in a single direction, while man produces universally. They produce only under the compulsion of direct physical need, while man produces when he is free from physical need and only truly produces in freedom from such need. Animals produce only themselves, while man reproduces the whole of nature". (*Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, Erich Fromm's edition, p. 102).

<sup>3</sup> Quoted from Fromm's introduction, p. 14 (His reference is to MEGA - Karl Marx - Friedrich Engels: Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe - V, p. 569).

<sup>4</sup> *Capital*, Vol. I, Chicago edition, 1906, (pp. 197-198).

<sup>5</sup> *E. P. MSS.*, (pp. 100-101).

<sup>6</sup> *E. P. MSS.*, (p. 183).

<sup>7</sup> *E. P. MSS.*, (p. 99).

<sup>8</sup> *E. P. MSS.*, (p. 76).

<sup>9</sup> *E. P. MSS.*, (p. 98).

<sup>10</sup> *E. P. MSS.*, (pp. 95-96).

<sup>11</sup> *Capital*, Vol. I (p. 708).

<sup>12</sup> *E. P. MSS.*, (p. 103).

<sup>13</sup> *E. P. MSS.*, (p. 98).

<sup>14</sup> *E. P. MSS.*, (pp. 105-6).

<sup>15</sup> *E. P. MSS.*, (p. 106).

<sup>16</sup> *E. P. MSS.*, (p. 101).

<sup>17</sup> *E. P. MSS.*, (p. 200).

<sup>18</sup> Prof. Robert Tucker who has made a perceptive study of 'the alienated world of Marx' does not agree with this explanation (*Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx*, pp. 137-8). He thinks that since, according to Marx, man is inherently creative, the compulsion to produce in order to live cannot be the source of man's alienation, because a being who spontaneously tends to be creative might well experience self-activity in work that he is compelled to do for living. Prof. Tucker argues that the source of man's alienation is rather in what Marx calls his "greed" (*Habsucht*): "The compulsion that transforms free creative self-activity into alienated labour is the compulsion to amass wealth. Marx portrays it in his *Manuscripts* as a maniacal obsession with the accumulation of capital, a veritable fanaticism of appropriation of the world of created things, a lust for money". (pp. 137-8). Prof. Tucker says that this is a motive force qualitatively different from the earthly calculating self-interest with which Smith and the other classical economists endowed their 'economic man'. But he himself points to Marx's view that the drive to amass wealth *ad infinitum* is the ethic implicit in political economy, and political economy, which is the economy of private property, as Prof. Tucker is well aware, is not the source of man's alienation. Therefore, Prof. Tucker's effort to make man's acquisitive mania, as expressed in his money-worship, the source of his alienation must be pronounced self-contradictory. One must seek the source in man's productive relationship with nature. It should be pointed out that this is not the same as the 'self-interest' of the 'economic man'.

- <sup>19</sup> E. P. MSS., (p. 96 — from the section on 'money' in his *Manuscripts*.)
- <sup>20</sup> Even Prof. Tucker, inspite of his Herculean effort to penetrate Marx's mind on this point had to remark: "On what foundations does he believe that all of man's productive activities in history have been alienated labour? How does he explain man's alleged universal alienation from himself? It must be said that Marx does not make his position on this cardinal question fully explicit". (*Op. Cit.*, p. 135).
- <sup>21</sup> E. P. MSS., (p. 101).
- <sup>22</sup> *German Ideology*, (Fromm, pp. 201-5).
- <sup>23</sup> In his unpublished chapter on Marx, in the forthcoming 4th volume of his massive *Affect, Imagery, Consciousness*.
- <sup>24</sup> *Revisionism* ed. Leo Labedz (George Allen and Unwin Ltd.) p. 187.
- <sup>25</sup> *Revisionism*, (pp. 192-3.)
- <sup>26</sup> E. P. MSS., (pp. 125-6).
- <sup>27</sup> *German Ideology* (p. 206).
- <sup>28</sup> *Revisionism*, ed. Leo Labedz and *The End of Ideology*, pp. 338-46.
- <sup>29</sup> *German Ideology*, quoted by Erich Fromm, in his introduction to *Marx's Concept of Man*. (p. 15).
- <sup>30</sup> E. P. MSS., (p. 105).
- <sup>31</sup> See Sidney Hook's *From Hegel to Marx*, p. 71.
- <sup>32</sup> Friedrich Engels: *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 54.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, (p. 55).
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, (p. 55).
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, (p. 54).
- <sup>36</sup> "Nature... taken abstractly, for itself, and rigidly separated from man, is *nothing* for man," E. P. MSS., (p. 19).
- <sup>37</sup> p. 54.
- <sup>38</sup> In the Preface to his *Critique of Political Economy*.
- <sup>39</sup> To my knowledge it was Max Eastman who first drew attention to this confusion of terms. (*Marxism: Is It Science?*, p. 76). However, Eastman is not responsible for the explanation of the confusion suggested here.
- <sup>40</sup> Raymond A. Bauer, *The New Man in Soviet Psychology*, p. 36. Harvard U. P. Cambridge.
- <sup>41</sup> In a doctrine which is at the same time a tool of analysis and a weapon of revolution, this kind of cleavage becomes almost inevitable.
- <sup>42</sup> Where the expression of the unconscious was condemned as irrationalism, mysticism, psychic abnormality, pathological vision, subjectivism, perverted caprice, delirious fantasy and subjective arbitrariness. (See *Art and the Unconscious*, by John Frizer, *Survey* No. 46).
- <sup>43</sup> Quoted in Raymond A. Bauer's *The New Man in Soviet Psychology*, p. 133.
- <sup>44</sup> Raymond A. Bauer, p. 171-5; and A. Kultschytskyj, *Psychological Trends in the Transformation of Soviet Man* (Studies on the Soviet Union, 3, 1959).
- <sup>45</sup> Even academicians could not escape the ire of this attack. For instance, Vyshinsky said, "They (Pashukanis and his followers) preached anti-Marxist subversive 'theories' of the withering away of the State and law. To disarm the working class in front of its enemies, to undermine the might of socialism — that was the aim of their attempts". (Quoted in Raymond A. Bauer's *The New Man in Soviet Psychology*, p. 37).
- <sup>46</sup> "Lenin had taught us not only to educate the masses but also to learn from the masses".
- <sup>47</sup> Quoted by A. Kultschytskyj (*Studies on the Soviet Union*, 3, 1959).
- <sup>48</sup> In a doctrine which believes that the truth is on your side, the hatred of the untruth becomes almost a religious duty. And in a doctrine which believes that history is on your side, religious fervour is automatically generated. In fairness to Stalin it should be said that his masters, Marx and Lenin, were, by their very nature, not exactly free from this fanatical hatred of the opponent. Marx once called his political opponent Ferdinand Lassale 'Jewish nigger'. Even an ideological opponent of the stature of Proudhon drew this contemptuous invective from Marx: "the unwieldy and repellent learnedness of the autodidact who, as a parvenu of science, imagines that he has to make a great showing with qualities he does

not possess. His loud-mouthed, boastful, grandiloquent tone, and particularly his annoying and insincere blather about 'science' continually dins in one's ears" (Preface to *The Poverty of Philosophy* written in reply to Proudhon's *The Philosophy of Poverty*.) In his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* Lenin approvingly quotes Joseph Dietzen's remark about idealist professors of philosophy, "graduated flunkys" of the "priesthood or fideism".

<sup>49</sup> *E.P.MSS.*, (p. 134).

<sup>50</sup> *Revisionism*, ed. by Leo Labedz (p. 187).

## ON KILLING A TREE

It takes much time to kill a tree,  
Not a simple jab of the knife  
Will do it. It has grown  
Slowly consuming the earth,  
Rising out of it, feeding  
Upon its crust, absorbing  
Years of sunlight, air, water,  
And out of its leperous hide  
Sprouting leaves.

So hack and chop  
But this alone wont do it.  
Not so much pain will do it.  
The bleeding bark will heal  
And from close to the ground  
Will rise curled green twigs,  
Miniature boughs  
Which if unchecked will expand again  
To former size.

No,  
The root has to be pulled out—  
Out of the anchoring earth;  
It has to be roped, tied,  
And pulled out—snapped out  
Or pulled out entirely,  
Out from the earth-cave,  
And the strength of the tree exposed,  
The source, white and wet,  
The most sensitive, hidden  
For years inside the earth.  
Then the matter  
Of scorching and choking  
In sun and air,  
Browning, hardening,  
Twisting, withering,  
And then it is done.

GIEVE PATEL

# HAMLET

## *The Culmination of a Tradition*

R. M. PAL

THE opinion that both *Hamlet* and *The Spanish Tragedy* derive from the original play partially preserved in the First Quarto, is now generally accepted. That Kyd was the author of the prototype is now considered almost a certainty. Whatever view we adopt in assigning credit for the first dramatic adaptation of the Belleforest plot, a recollection of the earlier history of the play is essential to an understanding and evaluation of Shakespeare's version of *Hamlet*. It had been upon the boards for ten years and had been translated into at least one other European language: its reputation and popularity were well established before Shakespeare undertook to transform it. These facts imposed limitations. Elizabethan audiences would not take kindly to any amendment which baulked the expectations they brought to the performance of so well known a piece. A compromise was inevitable and that compromise could be effected only at the cost of artistic integrity. The resulting incongruities evoked T. S. Eliot's censure: 'So far from being Shakespeare's masterpiece the play is most certainly an artistic failure'.<sup>1</sup> Our assent to or rejection of this view may be deferred till we have examined its premise in some detail. Such an examination must start with the text of the play as we now have it – and, logically, with its opening scene.

Upon a first scrutiny it appears that this scene contributes nothing to the action of the play. We are introduced to four minor characters (only one of whom has any part in the main plot) and a cryptic ghost. The little information it gives is mislead-

ing; yet in this scene, more clearly than in any other, the genius of Shakespeare and his purposes in this play may be discovered. Tradition had already settled the plot, the material elements of the drama were fixed and (to use Eliot's phrase) 'intractable'. A new and deeper significance could be given to these familiar and common-place symbols only by bringing the audience to view them from an altered and elevated stance. With the intuition of genius, Shakespeare puts to practical use formulae which were made explicit only centuries later by the science of psychology. He sets himself to create an atmosphere in which the perceptions of his audience are transposed from a lower to a higher plane and a trite story is thus invested with a set of values entirely novel and profound. An aura of influence from a praeter-natural world, immanent in and permeating the appearances which constitute the world of our senses is conjured up, and in this cohere the disparate elements of the play. Ghosts were common stage properties of the Elizabethans. It is not the nature of this visitant but the manner of his introduction that jolts our thinking out of traditional ruts and establishes communication upon a new plane. The wind-swept battlements of a castle in the bleak North, darkness which makes close comrades unrecognisable, men on guard against unknown evil, fears voiced amid scepticism and conjecture, such is the back-drop for the entrance of the Ghost. Horatio voices our disbelief; with him we are brought to belief. No longer do we doubt that 'there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in (our) philosophy' (I, v). Thus we are

<sup>1</sup> T. S. Eliot, 'Hamlet', in *Selected Essays* (1951). All further references to T. S. Eliot are from the same source.

put into an attitude of mind in which the succeeding action comes home to us with a conviction neither the laws of logic nor those of physical causality can explain. Much more is achieved than 'suspension of disbelief': not a negative acquiescence but an active intellectual acquisitiveness — a desire to delve deeper in this mine of new truth. Shakespeare is at pains, throughout the play, to sustain this mood. Interludes (like the soliloquies and the grave diggers' scene) seemingly unrelated to the action, cohere in its unity and 'shake our disposition with thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls' (I, iv). We are thus kept in that state of awareness of the supernatural which provides the vehicle of communication between our author and his audience. Shakespeare seldom expends his energies wantonly. The choice of a word or the construction of a scene claim his attention in exact proportion to the part they fulfil in a preconceived design. The care and skill lavished on this first scene show Shakespeare's perception of its importance in the accomplishment of his dramatic purpose. 'For what is involved?' asks Wilson Knight. 'No less than the attempt to lift the old revenge-theme, rooted in drama from Aeschylus to O'Neill, rooted too in our ways of life, in our courts of justice and international relationships, indeed, in the very structure of our thought, beyond its stark oppositions; to leave over human affairs from the backward time-consciousness of Nietzsche's 'avenging mind' into the creative inflow'.<sup>2</sup> Questing new values in an old theme, Shakespeare finds them on a plane to which we too must needs be lifted (and there sustained) if any communication to us of those new values is to be possible.

On the plot of this play Harrison comments: 'Hamlet was not first invented by Elizabethan dramatists. Behind the play, versions of the tale are known which go

back at least to the thirteenth century; but in all versions, the theme is the same — revenge'.<sup>3</sup> If Kyd was the author of the play which Shakespeare revised then *The Spanish Tragedy* is a pledge that the original *Hamlet* was true to the type of such plays. It is a measure of Shakespeare's enrichment of both theme and treatment that critical opinion remains divided on the classification of *Hamlet* as a 'Revenge Play'. Eliot, adopting the views of J. M. Robertson, states categorically: 'Hamlet, so far as it is Shakespeare's, is a play dealing with the effect of a mother's guilt upon her son'. Bradley offers similar comment: 'The truth is that, though Hamlet hates his uncle and acknowledges the duty of vengeance, his whole heart is never in this feeling or this task; but his whole heart is in his horror at his mother's fall and in his longing to raise her'.<sup>4</sup> Is this then, the theme of *Hamlet* — Redemption rather than Revenge? The logic of these contentions does not admit direct refutation. Each eminent critic has seized a thread and followed it faithfully through the maze of *Hamlet's* plot. But this is not the Minotaur's Labyrinth. There is no one thread that will lead us from darkness into light. Goethe, Coleridge, Schlegel, every great mind that has given thought to the character of Hamlet has found some facet so satisfying to his own concepts that he has based upon it a whole theory of the play's significance. But again the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. All that Robertson and Eliot found in Hamlet, all that Bradley saw, all that Coleridge and Goethe, Hamner and Mackenzie, Harrison, Bradbrook and Granville-Barker could discover, all this is there — and more. For Shakespeare conceived his hero, not as a compendium of these several characteristics, but as an entity, complex but integral, just as Nature is. In Hamlet co-exist reverence for his father, love for his mother, contempt for his uncle, the avenging anger, the consoling pity and the bitter hate which spring from these — and a philosophic doubt as to the moral validity of all

<sup>2</sup> Wilson Knight: *The Wheel of Fire*, (1956) p. 324.

<sup>3</sup> G. B. Harrison: *Shakespeare's Tragedies*, (1951) p. 89.

these passions and emotions. Eliot opens his essay with the warning that in *Hamlet* 'the play is the primary problem, and Hamlet the character only secondary'. Yet his subsequent analysis only illustrates the need of this injunction. An emphasis similarly misplaced is apparent in Bradley's characterisation of Hamlet as 'a man who at any other time and in any other circumstances ... would have been perfectly equal to his task.' It would seem tantamount to homicide to insist that 'at any other time and in any other circumstances' the Prince of Denmark simply would not exist. We have been so conditioned by the traditions of criticism that our attitude to the play is very like what it might be to a biography. The character is conceived of as possessing dimensions beyond those of its representation. We should object to a criticism of Van Gogh's 'Portrait of a Youth' which concerned itself with the identity of the sitter and passed on to conjecture as to his antecedents and intellectual ability, yet we habitually admit discussion as to the 'girlhood of Shakespeare's heroines' and the 'heredity of his heroes.' In regard to Hamlet there seems to be special need for restraint. This one character so overshadows the whole play that we must continuously remind ourselves that he remains merely one of the symbols by which Shakespeare expresses a dramatic concept. The play is not merely an illustrative background for the hero. It is the whole of his element and, at once, the origin and the end of his creation. Even so brilliant a portrayal as that of Hamlet may be considered artistically valid not by reason of any intrinsic excellence but solely to the extent to which it supports the dramatic purpose of the play. Overwhelmed by the character of the Prince, Eliot endorses the view (of Robertson) that the essential emotion of the play is the feeling of a son towards

a guilty mother'. Yet a moment's reflection shows that we cannot trace to this source the motive for a single one of the eight deaths which make the climax of this play the bloodiest in the Shakespearean canon. Whatever may be Hamlet's dominant passion, the story in which he is caught up derives its motivation from other origins and reaches a denouement beyond the limits of the hero's volition. 'It is very probable', says Bradley, 'that the main change made by Shakespeare in the story as already represented on the stage, lay in a new conception of Hamlet's character'. This indicates a possible explanation for the common tendency to subordinate the plot and purposes of the play to the aims and inclinations of its hero. That much of the play which owes its origin to Shakespeare's genius, so far outshines the rest that the popular imagination, fascinated, fails to correlate it to the general design. So dazzled are we by the silken patch, we perceive no more the home-spun garment.

This absence of coordination between the volition of the hero and the final issue of the drama has been cited as a defect fatal to all artistic merit in the play. Is consonance of the Hero's will and the plot's outcome an attribute of dramatic excellence? If the contentions of Eliot and Robertson are accepted, Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides must all be exiled from Parnassus. No tragic hero of classical antiquity willed the final retribution ordained for him. *Hamlet*, in Eliot's opinion, is a failure because 'Shakespeare was unable to impose this motive (Hamlet's sense of his mother's guilt) successfully upon the 'intractable' material of the old play'. But upon these very grounds Professor Lawlor argues that *Hamlet* is the only Revenge play of the period and the fact that the plot takes no cognisance of Hamlet's personal feelings and motives, makes him kin to the heroes of Greek drama for he is 'a man commanded to do what he has no assurance is right'.<sup>5</sup> In the same vein J. C. Maxwell argues that in *Hamlet*, just because the central moral question is not

<sup>4</sup> A. C. Bradley: *Shakespearean Tragedy* (1951) p. 138. All further references to Bradley are from the same source, pp. 89-174.

<sup>5</sup> J. J. Lawlor: 'The Tragic conflict in *Hamlet*', in *Review of English Studies*, N. S. I. (1950), pp. 97-113.

overtly raised, and is, indeed, kept from the full recognition of the hero, it can be built into the central fabric of the play.<sup>6</sup>

These diverse opinions are alike in this that they spring from preconceptions as to the form and content appropriate to a play written in England at the close of the sixteenth century. The fact that Shakespeare undertook to refashion one in the long succession of Revenge tragedies did not impose upon him the obligation of reproducing a hero in the simple Senecan mould. That he created a character which is distinctly individual does not diminish his achievement as an artist. In the opinions of Tolstoy and Eliot, Hamlet should not have been invested with any attribute not requisite to his part in the events constituting the plot. To satisfy these critics Shakespeare should have denied the Prince more intellect than was needed to understand the Ghost or moral sense beyond that which would bind him to immediate obedience. In that case, as Hanmer observed, we would have had very well integrated one-act play.

But it is not merely to offer play-goers full value for their money that the action meanders through five acts. Between the eighteenth century dicta of Hanmer and the psychiatric studies of our day, a wide gamut of critical conjecture has concerned itself with Hamlet's procrastination. Bradley analyses four hypotheses: of external difficulties ('where are my Switzers?' 4, v), of moral scruple ('The spirit that I have seen may be a devil' 2, ii), of excessive sentiment ('O heart, lose not thy nature' 3, ii), and of irresolution arising from habits of reflection and speculative thought ('Resolution is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought', 3, i). Finding each inadequate, he propounds a fifth, that of 'Melancholy'. This is described as a temporary weakening of the will under stress of recent emotion. His father's death and

his mother's indecent haste in re-marrying produce a traumatic effect, sapping the natural springs of resolution and casting Hamlet into a state of despondency in which he can find value in nothing and therefore no validity in any motive. Hamlet, says Bradley, was once a young man of vigorous habits — both physically and mentally. He implies that in his normal state Hamlet would have cut short the final admonitions of the Ghost by rushing from the battlements to the festive hall to despatch Claudius to Hades in the midst of the royal rouse.

Shakespeare's best known tragedy is then the case history of a temporary depressive mania arising from traumatic shock. Indeed Bradley counsels a reference to Medical treatises on the subject. But Harrison finds no abnormality in Hamlet's conduct. Transposing Hamlet's experiences from a seventeenth to a twentieth century context, he asks: 'What would be our immediate reaction after the first shock had subsided?... I must have eaten something that disagreed with me ... or maybe I should consult a psychiatrist. But our reaction, even in that moment certainly would not be to rush home, drag our step father out of his easy chair ... and cut his throat over the wash basin'. To Harrison the fact that Hamlet 'does nothing' 'follows' 'naturally' from the fact that he is 'normal'.<sup>7</sup>

These opposed views stem from an ancient orthodoxy — that of writing and thinking of a dramatic character as a being capable of free existence outside the limits of the plot in which he happens to be placed. The immediate context is assumed to be accidental rather than essential to the portrayal. We need not deny to the character depth, beauty, splendour, or any of the superlatives customarily employed in critical appraisals but we may suggest that these qualities be sought within the play we are to consider, not in some other hypothetical drama whose action might precede or follow that which is presented to us. By

<sup>6</sup> J. C. Maxwell: 'The Middle Plays', in *A Guide to English Literature* vol. 2, p. 210.

<sup>7</sup> G. B. Harrison: *Shakespeare's Tragedies*, (1951), p. 89.

restricting the reference to these terms we may hope to evolve a certain degree of coherence from the conflict of critical opinion. Harrison's pronouncement makes one basic assumption by which the whole is stultified. Hamlet's conduct is shown to be perfectly 'normal' in a twentieth century context. But this is not a twentieth century plot. A modern hero might be influenced by contemporary humanitarian concepts but these would scarcely appear appropriate in the psychology of a Prince of the Renaissance. What we might do, conditioned as we are by the sophistication of the present century, is no criterion of right conduct in an era when kings ruled 'by the grace of God' alone. Underlying this fallacy is an over simplified assumption of the universality of great art: 'What was true of human nature in the age of Hamlet is true today'. But this applies only to the basic emotions not to overt conduct. We may love and hate today with the same intensity and upon the same provocation as in Neanderthal times but the modern lover is not expected to accomplish his wooing with a club. The pattern of behaviour appropriate to a specific emotion is conditioned by the environment of the agent. Unaltered in its nature, an emotion changes the mode of its active expression as society evolves. There can be no doubt that in the social context created by Shakespeare for his hero, revenge in its most violent form — 'both eyes and a jaw full of teeth' — was a moral obligation. Hamlet himself accepts this. He never questions the rectitude of the course to which he is commanded. He is quite clear in his perception of what he ought to do. His only difficulty is in bringing himself to do it. In this light Hamlet's prevarication is itself an excursus on the revenge theme. In his reaction to the revelations made to him by the Ghost Hamlet displays a pattern of behaviour which differs from that which was conventional. But, more subtle and sensitive though it is, it remains a response to the motive of revenge. That there is discernible in his

thought another impulse parallel to this (and perhaps stronger) does not alter the case. Accustomed to the simple reflex actions of Hamlet's predecessors in the tradition, we miss the point which Shakespeare labours: the avenger's mantle does not always fall upon shoulders which support above them nothing more than a periwig. Here is a study of one steeped in the noblest culture of his time: 'The courtier's, soldier's scholar's, eye, tongue, sword, the expectancy and rose of the fair state' (3,1), who is called to the stern office of the Erinys. We see the poison of this passion work upon him till, 'that unmatched form and feature of blown youth, Blasted with ecstasy!' (3,1), yields at last to its corrosive power. The emphasis has already shifted from external effects to the inner struggle which was to become the centre of interest in later drama. Two aims are superimposed upon the conventional development of the tragic theme. Shakespeare wished to show first that the avenger is himself a victim of his passion—his own soul is destroyed as surely as is the life of his adversary. Again he sought to assert the integrity of the human spirit even in the face of Fate itself. Hamlet's wrestling with the destiny imposed upon him is a resurgence of the pristine vigour of Tragedy as Aeschylus knew it before it decayed to the futile declamation of the later Greeks and was fossilised by Seneca. The hero still struggles to maintain his idealism, even though Heaven itself is leagued with his dark destiny. A balanced judgement of *Hamlet* will hesitate to admit that Shakespeare's treatment of these overtones of the main theme introduces a dissonant note or detracts from the artistic validity of the composition.

Eliot, clinging to the idea he borrows from Robertson, insists that Hamlet's irresolution derives from his inability to establish an equivalence between his emotion (which Eliot considers to be disgust at his mother's conduct) and the object from which it springs. With an impressive parade of psychoanalytic terminology he

asserts that such equivalence is essential to expression. We have already examined his premise and found it false. Eliot would not consciously advance the opinion that no tragic hero can (or should) entertain simultaneously more than one idea or emotion but this is precisely what he implies. Having discovered in Hamlet a powerful aversion to his mother's marriage, he rigorously excludes the possibility that the Prince might also have resented the murder of a beloved father. Bradley who had made the same discovery some decades earlier, is more modest and more rational.

The psychological technique applied by Eliot to Hamlet's relationship with his mother may however be applied to his other motivating passion, that of hate for his father's murderer. This man, the plot (immutable after ten years of popular acclaim) required Hamlet to kill. The revenge tradition required that this killing be accomplished in the most horrifying manner possible. To perform such an act the hero must be brought to a commensurate state of passion. For any of Kyd's heroes this was no great problem: the murder of a father, the defiling of a mother were enough to rouse them to an insensate fury which would drench the stage with blood. But the Hamlet Shakespeare portrays is of an entirely different breed. In refining the character Shakespeare created for himself the problem of making a far nobler being react in a manner identical with that of its crude prototype, upon an identical emotional impulse. Hamlet is unable to nerve himself for the task assigned to him by the earlier playwright because for him the emotional impulse is inadequate. His overwrought speeches are mere efforts to bring himself to a pitch of emotion in which he might fall upon Claudius and be revenged. But he never succeeds in generating the required heat. Though he is convinced of his duty he never comes to actually will its performance. Claudius' eventual death at his hands cannot be re-

garded as an act intended by Hamlet. He does not even then assume initiative. Laertes' dying speech: 'The king, the king's to blame' (5, ii), puts him in the one position from which he can strike a mortal blow. The king has caused his fatal wound, now is he fully justified in retaliation. He has not struck first. He will use no greater violence than that practised upon himself. Thus the aesthete and philosopher conforms finally to the preordained pattern of an avenging hero. He does not betray his own nature in doing so for the final desperate act is thrust upon him by a series of accidents. Only chance puts the poisoned rapier in his hands. He acts in the heat of a moment, heat engendered not by recollection of his grievances but by physical contest with Laertes. Bradley suggests a textual amendment or at least a transposition of stage directions which would make 'Part them; they are incensed' merely the result of the king's observation of the exchange of rapiers. This is to suppose that the astute Claudius wished to preserve the sole witness to his guilt. Even if this is allowed there is no mitigation of the effect which the Queen's cry: 'No, no the drink, the drink, — O my dear Hamlet — The drink, the drink! I am poisoned!' (5, ii), followed immediately by Laertes' accusation 'The king, the king's to blame!' must have had upon Hamlet. He would needs be a Stoic whose blood slept despite such stimulation. This was provocation both grave and strident: we must acquit our hero, as would all courts of law, of any moral responsibility for his deed. Hamlet then retains the integrity of his own character: to the end he conforms to his own ideal of manhood 'whose blood and judgement are so well commingled/That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger/To sound what stop she please' (3, ii). Such a man could hardly step into a tragedy by Kyd without grave distortion of the context.

Overt and implied criticisms of current stage practice are scattered throughout *Hamlet*. How much of such comment in

Act 3 scene ii was levelled at this play's prototype we can only guess. It is more than likely that dissatisfaction with the material upon which Shakespeare was at work prompted these outbursts. Like most Elizabethan heroes the original Hamlet probably 'so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journey-men had made men, and not made them well' (3, ii). This strutting and bellowing—an exaggerated emotional response to the stimulus presented by the situation—was a common expedient. The plausibility of a plot depends on a just proportion between stimulus and emotion on the one hand and between emotion and resultant action on the other. The predilection of Elizabethan audiences was for massive catastrophe as the climax of a tragedy. To achieve this, a proportionate emotional intensity had to be created. Few dramatists had the ability to build up such stress convincingly. Hyperbole and frantic gesticulation covered an inadequacy of psychological insight. The authenticity of the feelings portrayed was established by macabre posturing rather than by illustration of a natural relationship between the exciting cause and the resultant mental state. This was a convention which disgusted Shakespeare. The antics intended to gain credence for an emotion were to him nothing but 'dumb shows and noise' (3, ii)—expedients too artificial to satisfy his art which aimed at showing 'the very age and body of the time his form and pressure' (3, ii). The truth is that the Revenge theme had outlasted the social context which gave it validity. Heightened social and moral consciousness made sympathy for the passion-clouded action of the simple Revenge play impossible. To Shakespeare this realisation came sooner than to the mass of his contemporaries. For a time the earlier, more potent distillates continued to enjoy a wider popularity than the subtle blend Shakespeare

proffered, but *Hamlet* is the last great work constructed upon this emotional pattern.

The enervation of the revenge motive in the altered climate of contemporary culture is well illustrated by its failure to bring *Hamlet's* plot to the traditional conclusion. The deaths of the Queen, of Laertes, even of Claudius result from accident rather than conscious volition or preconceived design. Only the killing of Hamlet by Laertes, in revenge for Polonius, follows the old pattern but here too there is a novel twist. The reconciliation between Laertes and the Prince has the appearance of an apology. Shakespeare expresses contrition for even this concession to the spirit of the old play. Never before had an avenger sought absolution from his adversary, never before had such a deed brought to its agent remorse or a scene of guilt requiring expiation. Conspicuously absent is the assumption that made Revenge an heroic theme: that the motive itself was adequate justification for every conceivable barbarity wrought in its name. Shakespeare rejects that early dogma and examines the ethical basis of revenge as a motive for human action. In contrast to the unqualified approbation accorded by tradition, his attitude is critical. In his hands drama outgrows its naive interest in the external conflict, 'the stark oppositions' of the Revenge theme. He probes the soul of the avenging hero and finds there embattled antagonism no less fierce (yet in their significance deeper, more worthy of his genius) than the clash of arms and the cries of anguish on which his predecessors exercised their talents. It seems appropriate that the final curtain should be rung down on the theme of revenge by Shakespeare himself. A tradition which spans the centuries to link the glory of Greek drama with the splendour of Elizabethan achievement deserves *Hamlet* for an epilogue.

# The 'Natural Philosophy' of Man

B. MUKERJI

THE eminent subject of philosophy tends to hold itself aloof from the rather messy field of medical investigation. However, an insight into and analysis of some of the scientifically proven facts of biology and medicine may be of help to the abstract philosophers in reorientating some of their century-old ideas, views, creeds, tenets and dogmas, which were developed years before the emergence of the new biology of the 20th century. A better understanding of the 'natural philosophy' of man, his nature, conduct and behaviour, and his place in the social order is bound to have an impact on modern philosophy and will perhaps make possible the emergence of a new system of thought and belief concerned with human destiny.

## *Biology and Medicine*

The basic aim of biology is the meaningful comprehension of life in all its aspects. The ultimate aim of the medical sciences is control over the functions of man's body and restoration of a state of balance where this has been lost due to extraneous 'stress' of some kind or other. Life in all its unbelievable complexity and fantastic variety is undoubtedly the highest stage in the development of matter on earth and is distinguished by features of a new kind, quite foreign to 'non-living' matter. Metabolism, heredity with its own specialized mechanism of transmission of biological patterns, the power of adaptation to internal environment (homeostatis) and to surrounding conditions, the purposeful reactivity to external stimuli, awareness, perception, intelligence and finally, memory, thought and creative activity—all these are the exclusive properties of life, determined by prolonged evo-

lution of matter under specific conditions.

Life Sciences have today taken tremendous strides and it has become almost impossible to present a comprehensive or unified picture of the progress achieved in the last decade or two. One feature, however, stands out, namely, the evolution of biology from the descriptive, codifying and cataloguing phase of a century ago to the present phase of analysis and measurement. While the biologist of yesterday fought shy of measurements, today he regards measurement as the very essence of his work; he is not content with merely recording changes of forms and functions; his studies go beyond to the very basic molecular patterns of dynamic life structures. This change is reflected in the ever-increasing multitude of instruments and appliances employed by the biologist; even abstruse mathematical concepts are pressed into use. And this adoption of the tools of physical science has led to phenomenal developments. Far more effective than this has been the active participation of the chemist and the physicist in investigations of biological problems. It may be said without exaggeration that Life Sciences have literally come of age with the purposeful collaboration of biologists and medical men with chemists, technologists, physicists and mathematicians.

## *Molecular Biology—Origin of Life*

The far reaching developments ushered in by this joint and co-ordinated effort may be illustrated by the remarkable work on deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) which functions as the carrier of heredity and has come to be known as the 'agent of destiny' residing in the nucleus. DNA has a molecular weight of about 10 million and it has

been shown that this helical molecule is composed of 10,000 purine-pyrimidine pairs. The sequence of arrangement of so many base pairs would naturally give rise to the possibility for the formation of almost an infinite number of permutations and combinations, which would account for so many species and varieties which occur in the living world. It has been said that biological and medical sciences today are offering almost 'endless frontiers' for investigators to probe into and unravel the secrets of life phenomena. Phenomenal development is already evident in our understanding of the structure and function of biological macromolecules and the central role of nucleic acids and the mechanism which relates the nucleic acids to the protein molecules. This work has led to significant insight into the molecular events which underlie cell division, as well as viral infection. These developments have significant bearing on the problem of cancer as well as the broader fields of molecular evolution and the origin of life.

### *The Cell—Primary Unit of Life*

Within the body, the cells behave like small organisms plunged in an aerated and nutritive medium. All living cells depend absolutely on the medium in which they are immersed; they modify this medium unceasingly and are modified by it. Despite its minuteness, each cell is a very complex organism, as it is now possible to see with the aid of newer techniques of electron-microscopy. It reveals a 'new world' of minute structures within its wall.

One of the marvels of cellular biology is the totipotent cell, the ovum. The nature of the forces bound within the membrane of this single cell, so small as to be invisible to the naked eye, that leads to specialised development of parts and their organization to make so complex a structure as man, is perhaps the greatest mystery of life. To think that within a simple, quite undifferentiated single cell there is contained the pattern and the means to build

along this pattern, not merely eyes, but blue and brown eyes—not merely hair, but hair that is red or black or yellow—straight or curly or kinky hair, that will begin to 'fall out' at a relatively early age or hair that will retain its lustre late in life or hair that will become 'prematurely' dry and grey. The same applies to colour of the human skin in different racial groups in the world including their sensitiveness to different types of light and heat radiations and the development of patchy areas of hyper- and de-pigmentation at different periods of life. These things are determinable at this one-cell stage as surely as is the four-chambered character of the heart, the number and distribution of acid-secreting cells in the stomach, the distribution of nerve cells and their interconnections so that precise sensory and motor functions can be carried out—so that we can think—so that we can have aspirations and hopes—and so that we may have a conscience as well as consciousness. And finally, so that we may produce cells which have all the potentialities of the cell from which we ourselves came.

Today, molecular biology is focussing our attention on the structure and organisation of the cell as the basic unit—not just in health but in disease too. We are looking at cytoplasmic constituents and at parts of nuclei, and are getting interested in mitochondria and chromosomes. Just as within the atoms in physical matter there lies a whole new world of structure, so it is with the components of the living cell. Not only structure but a force of infinite importance similar to atomic energy lies dormant inside the simple cellular components—a force which is not wild and uncontrolled but permits reproduction of the ovum again, and again and again. What mysterious forces control its growth? What is it that causes this reproduction to stop at the precise moment when the organism is complete? Why does not this growth continue to make giants of us all—microbes, mammoths, mice and men like?

*Cellular Organisation and Integration*

The mechanism by which a mass of cells organise themselves into the outer shapes so familiar to us in the form of our functional units of organs such as the liver lobule, the nephron, etc. is still obscure. 'Embryonic development' says Weiss, 'is an intricate assembly-line process in which the original material endowment of the egg is progressively transformed by chains of different and complicated interactions proceeding according to a definite inherited production schedule. This schedule has become so blue-printed by evolutionary experience that, given a standard range of environmental conditions (climate, nutrition, stress etc.) it will lead to viable and reproductive individuals capable of passing on that pattern and schedule to successive generations'. The deviations from this general phenomenon are due to either some major initial flaw in the genic equipment or some disruptive stress factor introduced from outside such as malnutrition or infection. What is the mechanism by which such deviations actually take place? Are there any specific attraction or repulsion centres on cell surfaces? Is the property of metastasis of cancer cells, by virtue of which they migrate from their site of origin and habitate inhospitable areas in host tissues, a result of a loss of their power of discrimination? What is it that happens in parasitism which renders the host cell subservient to the metabolic demands of the parasite? Questions such as these and many others are still awaiting the researchers in the domain of biology and medicine which need both analytical and philosophical approach from the modern scientist-philosopher.

*Body, Brain and Nerves*

The complexity of the problem posed above increases as we move from the unicellular and multi-cellular level of thinking towards the understanding of 'organ' physiology or the phenomena which enable groups of cells to work together as in a

society to perform a particular function, e.g., the heart, blood and blood vessels constituting the circulatory system, the lung, the kidney, the endocrine glands, the brain, spinal cord and peripheral nerves, constituting the nervous system, etc. Perhaps the acme of complexity is reached in the brain where nearly 10 billion nerve cells are packed together with their axons and dendrites in a 3-pound mass inside the small brain box.

Convincing evidence of the power of the brain over the rest of the body can be obtained even from our everyday experience. Most of our emotive response to the environment is the result of this type of imperceptible contact with experience. Thus symbols can be potent sources of stimuli. Hearing words which bring good news or bad, seeing a ghastly or pleasant sight, smelling a good or bad odour can provide appropriate input for a variety of complex effector activity. In fact the entire phenomena of our aesthetic response to beauty whether in words, sound, lines, colour, form, movement or shape represented by the fine arts of poetry, music, dancing, painting, sculpture and architecture is in the ultimate analysis the integration of the highest neural activity. We may also here refer in passing to the fact that some of the great works of art and great advances in thought have been made under the influence of 'stress' factors on the central nervous system of the creators. Reaction to stress may be measured in terms of the achievement or the development of fresh potentials and also in terms of the maintenance of the mental equilibrium. On the contrary it can also result in an upsetting of this equilibrium leading to physical and mental breakdown.

Man's brain, which has transformed the world and has discovered the power to destroy it, is perhaps the greatest enigma in modern science. It took at least a billion years of evolution to create this marvel organ, which only in the last century has begun to acquire a dim understanding of its own nature. During the last twenty

years, there have been significant new advances in our knowledge of the living brain, as a result of modern neurophysiological and neuropsychopharmacological research, accompanied by refinements in electronics, instrumentation techniques (electroencephalograph) and radioactive tracers. Brain surgery and modern electroablation, electrode implantation, and cauterization techniques are further enriching our knowledge of many hitherto obscure brain functions and its behaviour in certain types of mental aberrations. Indeed, there is a tantalizing prospect that research now under way will finally shed light on how the brain works and perhaps explain what is 'mind' and what are the elusive connecting links between man's brain and the 'thoughts' in his head.

It is yet too early to present a complete picture of the complicated processes involved. It seems clear now that the 'neurons' (nerve cells) that perform the 'highest level of integration' are to be found not in the brain's outer layer or cortex—as has hitherto been supposed—but deep within the brain, in the so-called reticular system, a region that is among the most ancient from the standpoint of evolution. Recognizing that the brain is being continuously bombarded, even during sleep, with sensory impulses, the problem for science has been to discover how the brain filters our meaningful stimuli, assigns priorities among stimuli competing for attention (ignoring them all, if sufficiently fatigued), and finally makes a decision to do *just one thing at a time*, out of the near-infinity of possible things to do.

According to the new hypothesis, all this is achieved by a complex interchange of nerve impulses—bearing 'coded' information—between cortical neurons and neurons in the reticular system. One task of the cortex, evidently, is to assign meanings to incoming stimuli—notably to things seen, heard, smelt, tasted, and touched and to store these meanings, in some fashion, for future reference. The cortex also, it seems, transmits some sort of condensed, edited

and annotated version of the flood of incoming sense stimuli into the reticular system, where the final integrating process takes place. This final integration may lead the reticular system to issue impulses that will 'arouse' appropriate sensorimotor regions of the cortex to initiate a type of muscular response that has proved successful under similar circumstances in the past or, alternatively, it may call upon some part of the brain (probably the cortex) to give more 'thought' to the problem. In this way, a remarkable unity and coordination in the central stream of consciousness is maintained. Even so, however, satisfactory explanations of many equally important and basic problems pertaining to brain functions are not yet forthcoming. What really takes place in learning? What is memory? What is intelligence? And what is 'learning to unlearn'? What happens when something goes wrong in this so-called control centre of our thoughts, emotions and actions?

Much light has recently been thrown by mental health workers and psychopharmacologists through the study of simple behaviour patterns in the individual and in selected groups, on the nature of intelligence, on how the brain learns, finds its satisfactions, and why, on occasion, it breaks down. It is now possible to indicate that epileptic seizures and schizophrenia—a form of madness—are primarily neuro-physiological and biochemical in origin—traceable, perhaps, to a disturbance in an enzyme system or to a harmful chemical compound substituting for a needed one—or whether the ailment is basically a malfunction in 'information processing' peculiar to computers containing billions of switching components. There is ample cogent evidence to show that breakdowns in mental health can be improved by psychopharmacological agents. 'Drugs for the mind' are now available which will calm manic excitement, will alleviate severe depression, will control convulsions and so on. The 'psychic energizers' or antidepressants act

in a manner reverse to that of 'tranquillizers'.

To understand the brain, it is not necessary now to resort to speculative flights of imagination and assign to it 'supernatural' powers, not possessed by any other organs of the body. Biologists of today realise that in spite of many complexities that still remain to be solved, more and more light on its working will be thrown as a result of further developments in our knowledge of neurobiochemistry, neuropharmacology, endocrine pharmacology, biophysics, the advanced mathematics of large random ensembles, and the new science of 'information theory'. An 'artificial brain' with 10 billion or more switching components has already been constructed and such a 'brain' can duplicate faithfully many brain functions including performance of intricate calculations and can also retain past experiences as 'memory'. Philosophers however feel that even with all the refinement in electronic computer techniques and newer ideas gathering every day from various bio-medical sciences, the human brain cannot be understood in its entirety, particularly with reference to the localisation of such distinctive attributes of man as 'compassion', 'love', 'feeling', 'social responsibility' and 'soul'. No automatic brain can ever hope to imitate that function of the human brain which permits him to say 'NO' to certain questions. This is not just a 'negative' response to certain stimuli in the biological sense but a 'positive' decision attitude which the human brain is capable of taking, apparently through some 'extra-corporeal' attribute. This attribute also perhaps vaguely explains the power of the human brain to have 'extra-sensory perception', mystical experiences and telepathy. Apparently there still remain to be discovered many new and emergent levels of biomedical relations between the brain and the 'mind', but all the available *findings in biology today support the view that all mental functions can be proven to exist in the brain itself*. Man owes whatever 'compas-

sion' he may possess, not to his 'soul' or his 'stars', but to a million human experiences of every quality and description taken from his environment.

#### *Early concepts and philosophical ideas about the Brain*

It will be interesting at this stage to look back on the centuries old concepts about the brain and its functions and the shifting philosophical thoughts that revolved round that core from time to time. Aristotle set the locus of human intelligence and thinking in the *heart*. In the second century A.D., Galen declared that he found the reservoir of the soul's 'animal spirits' in the brain's hollow chambers (ventricles) which are filled with clear watery fluid. Galen proposed that these spirits, presumably in solution, were pumped by the brain to all parts of the body. Galen's view went virtually unchallenged until the 17th Century, when Thomas Willis, an anatomist and physician, asserted that the brain's grey matter, as distinguished from the white matter, was the true lodging place of the 'animal spirits' of Galen. The soul's 'animal spirits' were first considered incorporeal and mysterious. Malpighi said that a juice-like fluid which can be seen oozing from the cut end of nerves is responsible for the transmission of sensations *hydraulically* from sense organs such as eye, nose, ear, etc. to the brain. Galvani first discovered in 1791 that the leg of a dead frog twitched under an electric current and postulated that 'sensations' are of an *electrical nature*. The belief in soul-like 'animal spirits' faded soon after 1800, and the stage was set for modern study of the brain and the nervous system.

Hughlings Jackson, an English neurologist, is credited with advancing our understanding of the brain between the years 1864 and 1900, largely from his studies on epilepsy and other disorders of the nervous system. In 1880, Ferrier, a Scottish physiologist, found that direct

electrical stimulation on certain specific regions of the cortex of the brain of a monkey would result in movement of his muscles. Goltz made the surprising discovery that a dog could lead a fairly active life even with its entire cerebrum removed. It was a 'mind-less' robot that failed to show any 'memory' or 'emotion', and none of a dog's 'purposeful' behaviour. This was followed years later by Pavlov's discovery of 'conditioned reflexes' in dogs. Pavlov's findings opened new possibilities in the study of the various intriguing behaviours of impulses passing through the Central Nervous System to the brain and vice versa.

Ignorance of the functions of the brain has until recently favoured the dualistic view of the brain-mind relationship. Descartes, the well-known French philosopher, arguing from the observation that many human movements and other activities were automatic, concluded that animals were pure automata, devoid of mind or consciousness. Man alone possessed a *mind* guiding the automatisms of his body. This view did not however explain how mind and brain could interact. Plato regarded 'soul' and body as independent entities, the soul surviving the body when physical death occurs in an individual. No relationship between the mind and the brain was known either to the ancient Chinese or ancient Indian philosophy. The Chinese did not believe in a mind or soul which survived the body. In India, both Hindu and Buddhist beliefs included the *dualistic* conception that the psychical faculties survived the body, the individual soul being a particle of a world soul. The doctrine of the transmigration of the soul envisages its re-embodiment in a succession of lives, its fate being determined by the individual's behaviour. The Christian thought on the body-mind relationship is fundamentally *monistic* and is supported by Hippocrates who postulated a definite relationship between the brain and the working of mind. From an analytical study of the early doctrines of philosophers and

theologians, it is not possible to define in unambiguous terms the trend of scientific concepts of today regarding 'mind', 'soul', 'reason', 'spirit', and such terms. Mind has sometimes been regarded as a name for various supposed physiological entities. Psychology has further added to the confusion by dividing 'mind' into *conscious* and *unconscious*. Freud created a variety of semi-autonomous mental entities, such as the *id*, *ego*, *superego* and *sensor*, conceived as often in conflict with one another.

### *Mind and Soul*

Russel Brain has used the term 'mind' to describe subjective experiences, such as thinking, knowing, feeling and willing. We infer the existence of mind in other people, and most animal physiologists infer mental activities in animals from their behaviour. The evidence for the unconscious mind is that mental activities can influence a man's actions without his knowledge. Until comparatively recently we lacked any detailed correlation between cerebral and mental functions. The answer given by one of the worlds' noted physiologists 50 years ago was 'Ignoramus' (we do not know).

A large amount of experimental work has since been carried out on animals and on humans undergoing surgical operations on the brain with the object of ascertaining how their behaviour can be correlated with the activity of their nervous system. Much light has been thrown on many obscure phenomena, leaving little room today for wild speculations and imaginative thinking. Modern bioscience, deeply rooted in experimental factual observations, now spends little time in arguing the 'mind-body' problem, dear to generations of philosophers, or in debating the existence of 'free will'. The tendency is to regard these two issues as semantic rather than real. Bailey expresses a widely held point of view when he says: 'Mind is simply a name which we give to the functioning of the brain'. Similarly, Sherrington has sum-

med up the modern view of scientists regarding 'free will'. If 'free will' means 'a series of events in which at some point the succeeding is not conditioned by reaction with the preceding, such an anomaly in the brain's series of events is scientifically unthinkable'. The *monistic* view implies that mind is present from the beginning, inherent in the stuff from which the world is made. One of the most striking developments in recent evolutionary thought, however, has been the increasing recognition of the part played by mind, or behaviour, in the evolutionary process, for behaviour may influence the survival value of genetic changes as well as sometimes modifying the environment itself.

We are now, for the first time, beginning to acquire a comprehensive view of the mind. We see it inherent in the evolutionary process, growing from elementary beginnings into a subordinate, and finally the dominant factor in evolutionary advance. We see the great transition from individual to psychosocial evolution, the latter the matrix for the development not only of conceptual thought and the techniques that it has produced, but also of 'spiritual' values, ethics, and artistic creativeness. We are beginning to achieve a scientific understanding of the factors which influence the development of the individual mind, and its relationship to society, and we may hope in time to attain to something better than the haphazard and empirical approach which before now determined so many questions of vital importance to both the individual and society. Moreover, man is not merely intelligent and self-conscious. He is essentially a social being who has to conform to a pattern of behaviour acceptable to his fellow beings. He has to derive artistic and spiritual nourishment from the various activities and experiences of his surroundings. He has, apart from his fundamental biological needs, to satisfy in some manner his emotional needs for love and creativity.

I have attempted in the course of this

address to pick out certain facets of current research in biosciences which to my mind are going to profoundly affect our philosophical outlook of the future. From our knowledge of the scientific facts already well established regarding the cell, the sub-cellular elements, the macromolecules, the fertilized germ plasm, the organs, organ-systems, the brain, and finally, the whole human individual, we can clearly see the fine picture of a tremendously complex but a well-knit and integrated system in perfect unison and balance with nature. The more we study man in his entirety, the more impressed we are with the ancient Biblical saying that 'man is wonderfully made'. It is also now clear that life has a firm material basis and evolutionary beginning, and that the process of cellular multiplication, differentiation and heredity can be explained generally in terms of the macromolecular structures of the nucleic acids and proteins. We are now in a position to look upon living creatures as beings who have evolved from simpler ancestors, who are related to their immediate progenitors and successors by inseverable bonds of heredity and who function, not through any unseen supernatural or 'cosmic force' but by biochemically definable mechanisms in the specific internal and external environments of different evolutionary cycles.

Today, in mid-20th century man, the evolutionary process is at last becoming conscious of itself and is beginning to study with a view to directing its future course. Human knowledge worked over by human imagination appears as the basis of human understanding and belief and ultimate guide to human progress. It remains for us, as our experience and wisdom and scientific information increase, to apply to ourselves and thus collectively to the societies in which we live, knowledge that may help us to adjust more satisfactorily to each other and to our environment. There is hardly any need to place ourselves at the mercy of unknown spiritual forces.

# Hindu Scholars, Germany and the Third Reich

AGEHANANDA BHARATI

HINDU scholars, particularly Sanskrit professionals, who have not been exposed to the liberal, analytical, or administration-oriented atmosphere of Britain or westernized India, have entertained an intensively appreciative attitude toward Germany and Germans, and particularly toward German orientalist scholarship, actual or putative. This laudatory pattern prevalent among Brahmin pandits and Hindu monks toward Germany, and specifically toward Nazi Germany, has hardly been seriously discussed by Indological scholars. In India, quite understandably, there is a great reluctance, among Anglicized, sophisticated leaders of the Civil Service tradition—but only among them—to admit the fact that large, influential, and learned circles of Hindu orthodoxy sympathize in a naively outspoken way, with Hitler's Germany; Gandhi, Nehru, and perhaps the majority of the first generation of consummated Indian nationalists share a profound dislike for the dictator, and so do Indian intellectuals who have been exposed to the critical post-war literature which dealt objectively with the Nazi era. Followers of the late M. N. Roy, readers of such publications as *QUEST* in Bombay, *THOUGHT* in Delhi, or the *RADICAL HUMANIST* in Calcutta will share that dislike with those established leaders—if they share little else. I shall try to trace the reasons for orthodox Indian admiration of the German complex, using a sort of diachronic and synchronic list of selected items as my method of adumbration.

The first point, well known to all of you, goes back in time: the romantic utopian attraction Goethe, Rueckert, Duperon, and the Humboldt brothers, and in a less dilettant fashion, Max Mueller and Deussen felt for India, somehow became known in that country well before the end of the last century. The notion that Hindu reformers, Vivekananda, Dayananda, Justice

Ranade, and Devendranath were responsible for it is not quite correct, for most of these teachers addressed a limited, albeit influential Indian audience—namely those whose interest had already turned to the West, and who courted Hinduism as a pattern of self-assurance rather than as one of orthodox involvement.

The orthodox pandit, and the orthodox, i.e. 'unreformed' monastic scholars, e.g. Orders like the *dasanamis*, *udasins*, had but a marginal idea of these reforms, which were not addressed to them; nor was there any communication between learned Hindu orthodoxy and westernized Hinduism of the Vivekananda-Brahmo Samaj types.

However, the publication of the Sacred Books of the East series, and particularly of the *Rgveda Samhita* and other canonical texts by Max Mueller at Oxford, did become known in India with amazing speed, at least as early as 1895, when Swami Saccidananda Narasimha Bharati, the newly installed young Samkaracarya of the Sardapitha at Sringeri, Mysore, announced at the Allahabad Kumbhamela in 1896, that a German scholar had published the *Rgveda* after having removed it from India.<sup>1</sup> Narasimha Bharati, like almost all Indian scholars up to this day, was not aware of the fact that Max Mueller never set foot in India during his long life. I do not know whether this was the first *ex cathedra* statement of this kind, or just a token statement, a repetition of current news at the time. But this belief pattern has come to stay, and I believe it is due to orthodox—learned, rather than modernistic-reformist diffusion, that orthodox India holds a set of ideas which I would paraphrase in this manner: Perhaps under the leadership of Max Mueller, punned into '*moksa Mula*' 'root of salvation' in the tradition of transphonemization of non-Indian names into Sanskrit, a process dear to the pandits, and often repeated as we shall presently see—the Germans had somehow gotten hold of the texts which had not even been completely published in India. How this could have been done, how the unwritten, or largely unwritten Veda could have been physically transported out of India, and all the cloak-and-dagger implications connected with such an assumed

<sup>1</sup> "*aryavartad-durikrtva siromani-desasya kenacit panditena rkchandasas tatratna prakasitah*" (copied from a report on the Samkaracarya's address at the Kumbhamela, in the Matha Library at Sringeri).

escapade, none of this seems to bother the pandits. The orthodox convention of claiming that the greater part of the sacred text has been lost, added fuel to the notion that these German savants took the Veda 'out of India'—they would say that the Germans were further agents in diminishing the bulk of Vedic secrets, and from this stems the fantastic notion which I was surprised to find prevalent among certain sections of the Hindus up to this very day, reiterated by quite a few Indian soldiers and even in some village folklore, that the Germans built their tremendous weapons on the recipes provided by these texts. In the wake of this event, orthodox opinion continues, the Germans became the first among the western nations, in the study of Indian sacred traditions. Strangely enough, there does not seem to be much reproach in this blanket charge, and the mitigating factor would probably be something to the effect that 'if anyone takes the trouble to study and collect the texts, unused by and inaccessible to Indians themselves, to understand and even to utilize them in a pragmatic fashion, that person is an Arya and has proved his *adhikara* (i.e. entitlement) to do such a feat'.

With this much fairly well ensconced in orthodox Hindu imagination of a certain shade, Hitler's Aryan doctrine with its phoney corollaries kindled afresh the eulogy of things German, in Hindu India. That this was the case in India, remained totally unknown in Nazi Germany itself, perhaps due to the fact that the Nazi hierarchy did not regard India's aspirations with much interest—Hitler had not said too many nice things about the racial and cultural status of India in *Mein Kampf*, where he had even condoned British rule in India; this was not known to Indian nationalists, nor was the fact that he had refused to shake hands with the gold-medal-earning Indian grass-hockey team at the Olympic Games in Berlin in 1935. When these things were brought to an orthodox, learned Hindu audience at the Allahabad Kumbhamela in 1954, the reaction of Swami Svatanttrananda, an excellent young monastic scholar, whose fame is on the ascendance in orthodox India at this moment, was typical, and did perhaps epitomize the Hindu attitude toward Hitler: whatever you may say against him, he was a mahatma, almost like an avatar, he did not eat meat, he did not have intercourse with women, he never even

married, he was the visual incarnation of Aryan polity.<sup>2</sup>

Orthodox Indian attitude toward Germany did not become known to the Nazis, however, and they seemed to take it with considerable astonishment, when Subhas Chandra Bose, under the assumed name of O. Mazzotta got into Berlin in 1941, later on to create the German part of the I.N.A. within the Wehrmacht. In a speech delivered to a large top-echelon Nazi military and political audience at the Haus der Flieger, Potsdamerplatz, Berlin in October 1941, which was attended by such other illustrious guests as Hussaini, Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and Gilani, the Iraqi leader, he declared in faultless German that the scholars of India had realized the greatness and the spiritual potential of the Reich, that they were profoundly affected by the fact that the *svastika* was the national symbol of Germany after its Vedic model, and that they felt great love and regard for the Fuehrer as one who stressed the eminence of the Aryans, of whom the Indians were the prototype; the latter was news to most of the people assembled, but these points were eagerly taken up by some outstanding German indologists.

In India, however, this admiration syndrome has come to stay. I took note of this through several years, especially at the various kumbhamelas and other nationwide religious functions involving Hindu scholastic assemblies; and these points seem to emerge as quasi-articles of belief among orthodox Hindu audiences: (a) of all occidental nations, the Germans have realized and studied the greatness of the Veda, and hence they deserve their epithet 'crest Jewel' *stromant*, for this is what 'Germany' means in Sanskrit; on this model, I was told, Arjuna's visit to Patala, on the other side of the world, gave the name Argentina to that region... (b) many German scholars speak fluent Sanskrit, and Sanskrit is a compulsory subject in German high schools; hence, (c) Germany leads the world in Indian studies outside India. Mild remonstrances to the effect that Indic studies have really moved out from Germany and are being more diffusely pursued in other regions, or that Sanskrit is not taught in German high schools, are not heeded; and statements about concentration camps, gassings, and the rest of it are met in either of two ways: some pandits use the *svadharma* and *adhikarabheda* dialectic, quoting the Gita and other scripture to the effect that a perfected soul does not really kill and torture, even though it looks like it, the Hindu version of *quod licet Iovi non licet bovi*; others more

<sup>2</sup> "jo kuch kaha jae unke viruddh, mahatma to the, avatar sa the, mans nahin khate the, sribhog nahin karte the, vivah tak nahin hua, Arya niti ke saksat avatar the"

familiar with contemporary Afro-Asian rejection patterns, simply refuse to believe any of it, brushing it aside as Anglo-American propaganda, with the implicit suggestion that the speaker giving such information has some sort of political vested interest. Both these attitudes were neatly summarized by Swami Hari Giri Maharaj, a mandaleshvara from Dalhousie, Pb, a senior dasanami monk and active member of the Congress Party, who retorted in a large assembly at the Akhil Bharatiya Vedant Sammelan at Amrt-sar, 1954, 'Sir, you have no right to abuse Sri Hitler and the pandits of Germany.'<sup>3</sup> Finally, (d) the suggestion that French, British, American, and even Japanese scholarship might have superseded German indologic studies is rejected unless German Sanskritic doyenship is tacitly admitted.

In this crass degree, Hindu Sanskritists who know English and who read secondary sources are not affected. It goes without saying that scholars of the calibre of, say, V. Raghavan, or T. V. R. Murti, P. V. Kane, etc, who have been exposed to occidental orientalist learning have no share in this sort of primitive panegyry. However, I have not heard or seen any of these modern Brahmin scholars contradict such opinions in learned orthodox assemblies where there was an opportunity to do so, and speculations as to why these modern scholars may indirectly condone the perpetuation of such beliefs are of course, outside the scope of the communication.

The Nazi use of the svastika and the Aryan myth were of course the most direct stimuli to enthuse Hindu traditionalists about the Reich—having known about the Sanskritistic prowess of the Germans, the Aryan-cum svastika myth was grist on the pandits mill, it was felt as a sort of consummation of previous efforts made by German Sanskrit scholarship; this, added to the political situation, the initial victories of the Nazi army over the British, helped to rigidify the pattern. I am often amazed at the naivete displayed by scholars, Indian and occidental, when they aver that the pandits could not really have identified the Vedic-Aryan lore and German Sanskritist learning, with the erratic and political use of the originally Indian symbols. For of course, the traditionalists did make, and do make this identification. Not only among Indian scholars proper, but among scholars from the traditions closely linked with the Indian *param-*

*para*, is there an almost incredible degree of symbol-cathexis and uncritical symbol-introjection. A short while ago, a learned *sprul sku* Lama of the Tibetan informant group at the University of Washington, Seattle, pointed with great admiration to the picture of several young men, with svastika ribbons on their arms, posing in front of the 'hate-bus' in Alabama—these were members of the Rockwell Nazi party, and the picture was published in the U.W. Daily. 'The greatness of the symbol', he commented, 'has spread to this American continent.' I do not think I really succeeded in convincing the young Lama that a symbol might have to be dissociated from its original intention; the idea that it may be used nefariously seemed to come as a shock to him.

The Nazi use of 'Aryan' thus does account directly for part of the Reich's popularity and its fantastic interpretation in orthodox Hindu India. Most pandits have heard about the Indo-European language affinity, but I do not think most of them quite got the idea behind it, because the suggestion that English and German were about equally close to Sanskrit, is frowned at; there is a feeling that German must be closer to Sanskrit, than any other western language; on many occasions, with Indian audiences far removed from one another, I heard this statement, 'Oh, for a German it is easier to learn Sanskrit, because German is a sort of Sanskrit'—or expostulations of this kind.

But even the suggestion that the Hitlerian use of the symbols was overtly directed to a purely propagandistic end is not immediately unpleasant to many pandits, and I heard at least two of them quote the famous passage from the fourth canto of the Gita, 'Whenever dharma is in danger, I create myself anew, for the protection of the good and the destruction of the wicked, for the sake of reinstating the dharma, I am born every *yuga*.'<sup>4</sup> Hitler, the avatar who punished Britain which enslaved India, joined by Netaji Subhas Bose, the svastika, and the Aryans, all this filled the bill too well to be rejected. Again, accounts of mass exterminations of Jews and Aryan gypsies, etc., are brushed aside as Anglo-American propaganda.

Guru Golvelkar, the preceptor of the Rastriya Svayam Seva Sangh, spent a few early years in Germany and according to one report, he did take some drill in the Hitler Youth around 1935, as one of the few guests allowed to participate. This would conflict with Hitler's treatment of the Indian hockey team at the Olympics in the same year, though. Some of the earliest R.S.S.

<sup>3</sup> "bhavan ka koi adhikar nahin Sri Hitler  
athava siromani des ke panditon ki ninda karna"

<sup>4</sup> "yada yada hi dharmasya . . ."

flags displayed looked like this R i.e. with the S.S. 'Siegrune' as a *kavaca* (an emblem). Promptness, punctuality, the matching of watches, all this has quite an ominous feel about it in an Indian context—these were part of the R. discipline, their cautions were in Sanskrit.

In 1942, Pandit Mahandas Dube, a popular though not too literate playwright in Varanasi, wrote a short play which was enacted by the students of the Kamacha section of Banaras Hindu University; this was not published in print, but was 'cyclostyled' (the Indian variant of mimeographing) and distributed both at the College and at B.H.U., then under the Vice-

chancellorship of Dr. Radhakrishnan, who, I am sure, did not even hear about the play, as it was in Hindi. The plot was quite directly the destruction of the British Raj by Hitler, and the drama was captioned 'Victory over the Evildoers' *Duskrtavijaya*. It began with the Hindi doha: 'in the city of merged vows (vara plus line, Berlin), on the throne of the ruler, lived the leader 'wave of Benevolence' (Hita plus lahare, Hitler); with folded hands, forth comes 'the one of golden limbs' (Gaura-plus anga, Goering; an epithet of the Vaisnava reformer of medieval Bengal), and says 'o Lord, vanquish thou the sins!'<sup>5</sup> The drama is modelled on the Ramlila as performed in the region, it ends with the conquest of Britain, the burning of London on the model of the Lankadahana caused by Hanuman, and the reinstatement of the *rishis* in India and Germany.

<sup>5</sup> *Varalīne nagar-ke sasana-mandap par, vasata neta hitalahari, sanjali carata agre Gauranga deva iti kahata, papon ka tu nas kar.*

## James Baldwin

LOKENATH BHATTACHARYA

UNDER the skin of his castle James Baldwin has a demon living, or so it seems. 'I'm always afraid,' he confesses, 'and I'm pregnant with some strange monster.' The fear and the monster, both are equally important, and one leads to the other, for this celebrated Negro writer, this angriest young man of American literature.

James Baldwin, novelist, essayist, playwright and Negro spokesman, almost overnight became a literary sensation when his powerful first novel, *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, was published in 1953. But now his name is not confined to literary circles alone, he is a public celebrity. A noted critic said recently: 'If you've got the impression that James Baldwin is more ubiquitous nowadays than the boy whose face popped up all over the old-fashioned school photograph, you are quite right.'

Baldwin was a leading, and much advertised, participant in last year's Civil Rights March in Washington. As a spokesman for the American Negro Revolution, he appears frequently on TV programmes, flies from city to city to talk to college and high school students. Last year he even had a conference with Robert Kennedy, American Attorney General.

In his latest, widely acclaimed book, *The Fire Next Time*, he speaks for all American Negroes to all American whites in these terms: 'I hoed a lot of cotton. I laid a lot of track. I dammed a lot of rivers. You wouldn't have had this country if it hadn't been for me... When I was going to school, I began to be bugged by the teaching of American history, because it seemed that history had been taught without cognizance of my presence. It is

my responsibility now to give you as true a version of your history as I can.'

Elsewhere, he has also some very interesting things to say about his being American: 'People say: 'Where are you from?' And it causes me a tiny and resentful effort to say: 'New York'—what did I ever do to deserve so ghastly a birthplace?—and their faces fall.' He suffers, says Baldwin, 'from a species of postnatal depression.'

Why? Well, it is a historical question which has now been turned furiously political. 'Color,' Baldwin remarks, 'is not a human or a personal reality; it is a political reality.' It is a burning issue of the day and, in short, a dreadful reality, which Baldwin has made his exclusive field of exploration. That field, to be sure, is a landscape evoking inescapable torture, insurmountable rage and inexhaustible passion. And the journey must start inevitably with an awareness of suffering which, for Baldwin, is a first stop to the end of suffering. He says, '... people who cannot suffer can never grow up, can never discover who they are.'

To discover who *he* is, then, is the first task to which Baldwin has set himself, body and soul. His name, James Baldwin, he feels, is only a false cover, a 'fragile handkerchief,' to hide his irrefutable anonymity. 'I am called Baldwin,' he writes, 'because I was either sold by my African tribe or kidnapped out of it into the hands of a white Christian named Baldwin, who forced me to kneel at the foot of the cross.'

The crux of the problem, Baldwin's problem, is that the skin of his 'castle' is black. And what it means to be black in a predominantly white world 'whose cul-

ture controls me, has even, in a sense, created me, people who have cost me more in anguish and rage than they will ever know, who yet do not even know my existence', is indeed what Baldwin has been trying to explain. His explanation is contained in a language which in its intense power, fiery eloquence and naked sincerity has few equals in the history of writing.

There have been other Negro writers before him — among them, notably, Richard Wright — who have faced, as writers, similar obligations. But Baldwin goes about it in a special way. Wright, for example, expatriated himself in Paris, and gradually lost first his country, America, then his sympathy for U.S. Negroes. Baldwin, too, escaped a similar fate by narrow margin. He also found Paris 'a city of refuge' and spent some nine years there. But he returned, since he felt whatever the atmosphere at home, it had to be faced bravely, not staying abroad, in a long and anguished exile, but being and fighting on the spot. 'What is demanded now,' he claims, 'and at once, is not that the Negroes continue to adjust themselves to the cruel racial pressures of life in the United States but that the United States readjust itself to the facts of life in the present world.' This is a task far too difficult for his fellow expatriates who 'were no more at home in Europe than I was.'

Baldwin is black, with a vengeance. He calls himself an 'abnormally intelligent, and hungry black cat.' 'There is often something beautiful,' he writes, 'there is always something awful, in the spectacle of a person who has lost one of his faculties, a faculty he never questioned until it was gone, and who struggles to recover it.'

What does the Negro want to recover? Nothing more, and nothing less, than his identity. The stigma attached to the term 'Negro' is appalling. American Negroes, says Baldwin, 'are taught really to despise themselves from the moment their eyes open on the world. This world is white and they are black. White people hold the power which means that they are superior

to blacks... and the world has innumerable ways of making this difference known and felt and feared.'

He provides, from personal experience, a glimpse into some of those 'innumerable ways' of the white world. When he was ten, he recalls, two white caps 'amused themselves with me by frisking me, making comic (and terrifying) speculations concerning my ancestry and probable sexual prowess, and, for good measure, leaving me flat on my back in one of Harlem's empty lots.'

A dreadful abyss such as this, between the white and the Negro, naturally generates a feeling of tension, and an inevitable rage. The mere rage is neither enough nor desirable: and 'The rage of the disesteemed is personally fruitless,' Baldwin admits. But in defense of his fellow 'disesteemed' he has also this to add: '...rage cannot be hidden, it can only be dissembled. This dissembling deludes the thoughtless, and strengthens rage, and adds to rage, contempt. There are, no doubt, as many ways of coping with the resulting complex of tensions as there are black men in the world, but no black man can hope ever to be entirely liberated from this internal warfare — rage, dissembling, and contempt having inevitably accompanied his first realization of the power of white men.'

What, in short, he strives to achieve for his men is a just solution of their problems which, according to Baldwin, can come only through an end to white supremacy and this overdue realization: that the Negro is not an exotic rarity and must be treated as a human being equal in all respects to the white man. Until this happens, there is bound to remain between America's black and white populations a human separation, a permanent frontier, with disastrous consequences for both remaining a perpetual possibility.

Baldwin's is certainly not an attempt to efface the landscape of reality, or deny a fact of history which started over three hundred years ago at Jamestown, when

his African forefathers were brought in chains to America. On the contrary, he is proud to accept that fact of history, in which he finds something not merely shameful but also 'something of an achievement. For even when the worst has been said, it must also be added that the perpetual challenge posed by this problem was always, somehow, perpetually met. It is precisely this black-white experience which may prove of indispensable value to us in the world we face today.' 'This world,' asserts Baldwin, 'is white no longer, and it will never be white again.'

The whole Negro problem in America, Baldwin argues, comes out of an extreme situation which Europe or any other country often fails to understand. Not being able to see the point behind all this violence and often ghastly nightmare, they wonder as to 'why the argument arose in the first place, why its effects are so frequently disastrous and always so unpredictable, why it refuses until today to be entirely settled.' This problem is not a creation of today but has remained a burning issue for several generations of Americans, 'so burning a question that it ultimately became one of those to divide the nation.' The Civil War, which came like a flaming sword of expiation, could only aggravate the issue further. Today the entire question seems to have acquired a sudden momentum and 'begins, in an unprecedented fashion, and with dreadful implications, to be resurrected...'

The American Negro is a phenomenon and has no counterpart anywhere. 'He is unique,' says Baldwin, 'among the black men of the world in that his past was taken from him, almost literally, at one blow.' Since the day Baldwin's ancestors, the first ones, were exhibited in a market place, the world's history and that of man have changed irrevocably. 'One wonders,' Baldwin adds, 'what on earth the first slave found to say to the first dark child he bore. I am told that there are Haitians able to trace their ancestry back to Afri-

can kings, but any American Negro wishing to go back so far will find his journey through time abruptly arrested by the signature on the bill of sale which served as the entrance paper for his ancestor.'

Every American Negro, Baldwin feels, bears in him a pathetic, untold tale of lost identity. He is 'the maid' in the American house, 'the outsider within, the agonized repository of the family's most intimate secrets.' Beyond the deceptive facade of paternalism, a means often employed by the white man to 'protect' him, lies the most agonizing fact that he is kept dispossessed of everything—his wife, his house, his child, even himself. This, however, is only partially true in the South, but is true all the same. In a poignant passage Baldwin describes the eyes of an old black man he happened to look into, while boarding a segregated bus in Atlanta: 'His eyes seemed to say that what I was feeling he had been feeling, at much higher pressure, all his life. But my eyes would never see the hell his eyes had seen. And this hell was, simply, that he had never in his life owned anything, not his wife, not his house, not his child, which could not, at any instant, be taken from him by the power of white people. This is what paternalism means. And for the rest of the time I was in the South I watched the eyes of old black men.' The South despises the Negro, and the North ignores him—this is how Baldwin sums up the situation.

But he cannot leave it at that, not James Baldwin, since 'at the bottom of my heart I do not believe this. I think that people can be better than that, and I know that people can be better than they are.' This will not come automatically, but only through a ceaseless struggle which will not be, and is not, a merely inner thing. Baldwin is not a pacifist like, among others, his great compatriot, the Negro leader Martin Luther King. He believes in struggle and finds in it an element of terrifying beauty, and says: 'This past, the Negro's

past, of rope, fire, torture, castration, infanticide, rape; death and humiliation; fear by day and night, fear as deep as the marrow of the bone; doubt that he was worthy of life, since everyone around him denied it; sorrow for his women, for his children, who needed his protection, and whom he could not protect; rage, hatred, and murder, hatred for white men so deep that it often turned against him and his own, and made all love, all trust, all joy impossible — this past, this endless struggle to achieve and reveal and confirm a human identity, human authority, yet contains, for all its horror, something very beautiful.'

The savage indignation, aroused by cruelty and injustice, and the bitter vigour which characterize the bulk of Baldwin's work should not make one overlook this final truth about the man: he has a genuine love affair with his country. To come to grips with himself and his country is for him, 'at this embattled hour of the world's history,' a matter of utmost urgency. That he should have no voice in the state of affairs of his own country is totally unacceptable to him, 'for I am not a ward of America; I am one of the first Americans to arrive on these shores.'

But that was a reference to his forefathers. He himself was born on August 2, 1924 in New York City, the eldest of nine children of David and Emma Baldwin. His father, a clergyman, whom Baldwin despised, was not much unlike the father of John Grimes, the hero of *Go Tell It on the Mountain*. And curiously, 'grim' is also his terse summary of the poverty and depravity he himself experienced as a child in Harlem. His student days were spent entirely in New York. In DeWitt Clinton High School, from where he graduated in 1942, he sometimes served as a student judge and magazine editor.

Little before that, when he was fourteen, he underwent 'a profound religious crisis.' Referring to that experience later, he says: 'I use the word 'religion' in the common, and arbitrary, sense, meaning

that I then discovered God, His saints and angels, and His blazing Hell.' Meanwhile, there were other matters requiring his attention and, after graduation, he had to go for a number of jobs trying to support his family. However, his real interest from the beginning was writing, and he can 'scarcely remember ever wanting to be anything but a writer.'

His writing career began in the school days, and at forty today, he is the author of six outstanding books, which are: *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, *Giovanni's Room*, *Another Country*, *Notes of a Native Son*, *Nobody Knows My Name*, and *The Fire Next Time*. The first three are novels, the rest personal essays. He has also written *Favorite Tales of Long Ago*, published in 1955, and *The Amen Corner*, a play produced at Howard University. In addition, he has been a frequent contributor to many prominent periodicals, publishing his articles and stories.

Against a somber and poignant background of religious experience in Harlem, *Go Tell It on the Mountain* tells a story about a Negro boy's lost innocence, his lonely effort to relate himself to an ambivalent, often hostile, world. A novel of violence, lust, tenderness and compassion, it portrays dramatically the trials and sufferings, the yearnings and aspirations of three generations of an American Negro family.

*Giovanni's Room*, Baldwin's second novel, has a theme of homo-sexuality, and is the story of an American student in Paris and his involvement with a young Italian barman. Despite the book's 'grotesque and repulsive' characters, the author's most serious intent in this novel is to approach, through this battered theme, as true a definition as possible of the American character. A similar attempt is visible also in his third and latest novel, *Another Country* — a story of a coloured jazz musician and his white Southern mistress — in which national, class, sexual and colour lines are crossed and re-crossed.

Baldwin considers himself a novelist

primarily, though any evaluation of his writing must take into account not only the novels but also his essays. His essays may one day come to be considered dated, as they deal with contemporary problems. But in them alone are most sharply brought home some of the fundamental resources on which he must constantly draw as a novelist. They reveal, in the words of an eminent critic, 'a bitter clarity and uncommon grace.'

The essays bring into focus a peculiarly American aspect of the Negro suffering. According to Baldwin, the white American's dilemma is that he is caught between two mutually irreconcilable forces: a West European legacy of white supremacy and the democratic ideal of equality and justice. The pursuit of equality is doomed to remain a misnomer as long as there is so much of hatred and fear between the white American and the Negro. 'The time has come to realize,' declares Baldwin, 'that the inter-racial drama acted out on the American continent has not only created a new black man, it has created a new white man.'

It would have been perhaps better, Baldwin argues, if the white American said to the Negro categorically: 'Yes, I'm an oppressor, and I've no hesitation to say it. I've only an intense hatred for you, and that hatred is the only possible link binding us together in this undesirable association.' But the white man does not say this. On the contrary, he claims his country to be 'one nation, indivisible, under God, with liberty and justice for all.' He offers the Negroes Cabinet posts and a chance for the Presidency in a generation's time. But taking this to be true when the Negro goes to assert and exercise his rights, even in such minor matters as sending his child to a decent school, he and his children are greeted with bricks and spittle, abuse and truncheons.

'And all this is happening,' says Baldwin, 'in the richest and freest country in the world, and in the middle of the twentieth century.' Referring to the white American's

patronizing attitude he remarks: 'I do not know many Negroes who are eager to be 'accepted' by white people, still less to be loved by them; they, the blacks, simply don't wish to be beaten over the head by the whites every instant of our brief passage on this planet.'

All said and done, on this 'fearful passage' of the Negro, there still remains another side of America which Baldwin never tries to ignore. Since, apart from the U.S. government's known determination to handle the Negro problem with firmness and sympathy, where else but in America could Baldwin have had a self-expression, such as his, so freely voiced? He is aware that he could never have reached the position he has today without much substantial help and encouragement he has always received as an American citizen. This includes the initial Eugene Saxton Fellowship which enabled him, in 1945, to devote himself to literary work. Often on the best-sellers list, his books are read, devoured, discussed, disputed or admired by an impassioned audience. Years back, when his first novel *Go Tell It on the Mountain* was published, it was one of 350 books chosen by the Carnegie Corporation to represent the United States in Britain.

Baldwin is only too painfully aware of the greatness of his country and its vision. All that he wants is to see that vision fully realized. His is not a negative approach, and he does not believe in protest for protest's sake. The so-called 'protest' novel, he thinks, is a signpost of false progress, and says: 'The failure of the protest novel lies in its rejection of life, the human being, the denial of his beauty, dread, power, in its insistence that it is his categorization alone which is real and which cannot be transcended.' Visiting the Negro Muslim leader Elijah Muhammad in Chicago, he had a glimpse of the Muslim fantasy of power, and of Elijah's fury and pain, which were not his. He had felt then that he and Elijah 'would always be strangers, and possibly, one day, enemies.'

In his struggle for unconditional freedom and equality, the American Negro, urges Baldwin, must not make the same mistake the white man has made. 'I am very much concerned,' he declares, 'that American Negroes achieve their freedom here in the United States. But I am also concerned for their dignity, for the health of their souls, and must oppose any attempt that Negroes may make to do to others what has been done to them... *Whoever debases others is debasing himself.*'

To quote, then, in his own words, the gist of Baldwin's thesis: 'In short, we, the black and white, deeply need each other here if we are really to become a nation — if we are really, that is, to achieve our identity, our maturity, as men and women.'

And again: 'If we — and now I mean the relatively conscious whites and the relatively conscious blacks, who must, like lovers, insist on, or create, the consciousness of the others — do not falter in our duty now, we may be able, handful that we are, to end the racial nightmare, and achieve our country, and change the history of the world. If we do not now dare everything, the fulfilment of that prophecy, re-created from the Bible in song by a slave, is upon us: *God gave Noah the rainbow sign, No more water, the fire next time!*'

But it may not come to that. At least the hope lingers that it will not. Meanwhile, preparations are on to cross the line, and move into a vast new world.

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# POETRY

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## TWO VAISNAVA SONGS

### Aptaduti

I decorate my once-full cheeks with beauty-spots,  
and paint my dying eyes with kohl.  
I put flowers in my burned-white hair;  
my vanity is so absurd.  
The years have slipped away. I see them now, and grieve.  
My empty breasts hang down; the fullness of my hips is gone.  
My youth is ended, and on my withered body  
Kama, drunken, wallows.

VIDYAPATI

(Translated by Edward Dimock)

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The poem is signed "Vidyapati", and is from a collection of his poems that has a standard signature line: "Thus Vidyapati says". The collection is also without section identification, so placing this poem under *aptaduti* is speculation (which is not without precedent in this field). It stands to reason, to me, that the poem is spoken by Radha's go-between, who is urging her not to waste new youth.

There are certain linguistic problems, which might have a bearing on the final form of the translation. The first line has the form *bhagala*, which, as I try to reconstruct it, yields something like "divided", thus, I assume, "lined" cheeks — perhaps a better alternative than "once full", which I have given. Also in this line appears the word *lela*, which Subhadra Jha, who has treated the poem previously, seems to feel means something like "hairs": he translates the line, a little incredibly, as "I have decorated my tottered cheeks with hairs" (sic throughout), which, even allowing for misprints, is a real gasser. The word however seems to mean something like "tiny spots", very likely a beauty device: Indian women today decorate their faces with tiny sandal dots, especially at weddings (significant, perhaps, to the poem). In the second line, the literal meaning is "rotting eyes", which may or may not be a little overpowering. "Burned-white" in the third line is almost literal: the word means "cooked", and a clear undertone of the image is that her body is burned out by the fire of passion. The last line is very tough; the basic notion of course is that the god of love possesses her body, despite the fact that she is too old to attract lovers.

## Aksepanuraga

O, why did I go to the Yamuna river? There  
 the moon-apple of Nanda's eye lay waiting  
 under the kadamba tree.  
 The honey of his look, the radiance  
 of his body — these  
 were the bait and the snare he laid:  
 and my eyes lit there like birds  
 and at once were trapped,  
 and my heart leapt like a doe into his nets  
 leaving the cage of my breast empty,  
 and goaded by his glance, that wild elephant,  
 my pride, which I had kept  
 chained night and day in my mind, broke loose  
 and escaped me.

At the first note of his flute  
 down came the lion-gate of reverence for elders,  
 down came the door of *dharma*,  
 my guarded treasure of modesty was lost,  
 I was thrust to the ground as if by a thunderbolt.  
 Ah, yes, his dark body  
 poised in the *tribhanga* pose  
 shot the arrow that pierced me;  
 no more honour, my family  
 lost to me,  
 my home at Vraja  
 lost to me.  
 Only my life is left — and my life too  
 is only a breath that is leaving me.  
 So says Jagandananda-dasa.

JAGADANANDA DAS

(Translated by Edward Dimock)

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# SHORT STORY

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## *The Electric Saw*

MURLI DAS MELWANI

SHORTLY after sunrise U Sibmon Roy emerged from his wood-and-plaster house and stood on the verandah inhaling the morning air. He was infinitely happy, brimming over with the sort of contentment that usually fills the successful. And this especially was a red-letter day for him: the electric saw that would make him still richer was to start operating that day.

U Sibmon Roy was a timber merchant, the biggest in the district, with an established reputation as a hard-headed businessman. Apart from his business acumen, the other qualities that had enabled him to rise from the bottom to the very top, socially and financially, were said to be his goodness, wisdom and thrift. And such was the respect these qualities earned for him that no one dared to speak jocularly in his presence. But behind his back people made jokes about his pumpkin-like face with its drooping lower lip, about his mouth, which they called a paper-mill because he was perpetually chewing paan, and about his habit of wearing out completely one set of clothes before buying another. They laughed too at his lack of a sense of humour. And women said it was a pity that such a rich man was not married.

After taking a few deep, bracing breaths, U Sibmon Roy carefully lowered his heavy frame across the wooden steps of his house and cautiously trod the slushy

ground to the outhouses where his employees lived. He knocked a couple of times on the tin walls and, knowing that they would follow him, took the path that led to the shed where the electric saw had been installed.

The shed had been constructed in the heart of the wood and the path to it climbed through dense clustering pine-trees and thick undergrowth. And the moment he entered it he was aware of a heavy throbbing silence, a silence laden with the strong odour of grass and damp earth, a silence broken occasionally by the chirp of some hidden bird.

The happiness inside him was so excessive that it almost caused him pain, and to ease himself he laughed gently once or twice. He looked over his shoulder and saw in the distance, bathed by the morning sun, what was the town—a cluster of rusty roofs, a few glittering panes and blindingly white plaster walls. He felt he had never seen the town appear so beautiful, and a romantic thought entered his mind: perhaps the town had put on this new look only for his sake.

When the novelty of this thought had tarnished somewhat, he reflected that he had every reason to be happy. For he was the architect of his own success, it was all of his own making, of his shrewdness and opportuneness.

He reminded himself that if he had allowed himself to be swept along by the

tide of circumstances he would perhaps still have remained an employee of U Rabin Singh, his condition hardly better than that of the men who were now following him. And this thought made U Sibmon Roy veer his head around and run a surveying eye over his employees. Yes, he would have been like them, clothed in patched trousers and mended shirts, wearing dirty, smelly, home-knitted berets, trudging through life with a saw on one shoulder and a tool-bag swinging from the other, cursing and spitting, satisfied with a little rice, a pinch of country tobacco and a bottle of home-brewed liquor. And contented with that petty existence.

He had come from a distant village as a day labourer to U Rabin Singh, a leading contractor then, and within a short time by dint of zeal, imagination and efficiency established himself as the contractor's right-hand man.

But after securing that coveted position, his zeal died down and he ceased to act on his own initiative. He no longer urged changes in the organization of the business nor insisted that accounts be maintained, which U Rabin Singh had never been in the habit of doing, nor pressed that contracts and agreements be written and not merely verbal. He did only what was routine or what he was ordered to do. But that he did well—because he did not want to lose his position.

But really there was no change in him. He was merely acting. His behaviour was part of a scheme he had devised to deceive everyone, to give everyone a false impression of his capability. For he was being driven by the desire to be one day owner of the business.

And he did succeed in deceiving everyone. Most of all, U Rabin Singh. He won U Rabin Singh's trust by a very convincing display of honesty and concern for his family. He proved his indispensability by his capacity for work, routine work. And people grew to like him because he had no intemperate habits.

U Sibmon Roy succeeded because he

studied U Rabin Singh thoroughly and because he did everything delicately, casually. One day for instance after U Rabin Singh had secured a very big contract, U Sibmon Roy said to him, 'I know a lot about the world, but when it comes to business I'm just not fit for it.' This flattered U Rabin Singh, who then began to explain what a difficult thing business was. It did not take U Rabin Singh long to form an opinion about U Sibmon Roy. 'A fine dray horse. Very good with his hands. But he lacks brains. Won't go very far.'

His reminiscence was interrupted as he became aware that he was breathless. So he leaned against a tree. And as he stood listening to the throbbing of his heart he saw in the distance, through the trees, the roofless shed and above it huge logs suspended by tethers from the upper branches of a few trees. The tethers were thick ropes saddled across the branches, their ends coiled round pegs driven into the ground. Everything was ready for the inauguration. All U Sibmon Roy had to do was to give the word and in the twinkling of an eye the ropes would be uncoiled, the logs lowered and steered into position before the saw, a button pressed... and the door to unlimited wealth opened. When his men caught up with him, he resumed the climb.

And once again the past began to flash before his mind and he remembered how the opportunity had presented itself, suddenly, when he had been least expecting it.

One evening, after collecting a few thousand rupees from a debtor in a neighbouring town, U Sibmon Roy with U Rabin Singh by his side had been driving back in a jeep along a lonely hill road when a thick mist rose from the valley below and gradually enveloped everything within a radius of five miles. It was an ideal setting for a little drama U Sibmon Roy had long had in mind. And he took full advantage of the circumstances.

Suddenly U Sibmon Roy shook himself from his reverie and looked back at his men. But a second later he turned his face around—lest it betray his thoughts. And the next moment he was again caught in the swirl of memories...

Everything had happened quickly and quietly. Within a few minutes the jeep with U Rabin Singh's body lay at the bottom of the valley, the money under a tree on the opposite slope, and U Sibmon Roy with self-inflicted bruises, on the road, pretending to be unconscious...

The huge shed, and in it the electric saw, with a few men busy in and around it, came into view, but U Sibmon Roy was so absorbed in his thoughts that he did not notice it.

A passing lorry picked him up and took him to a hospital, where, to allay suspicion, he spent three agonizing days. On his release he went to the valley, dug up the money, and hid it under the planks of his room...

And now U Sibmon Roy chuckled as he remembered how unsuspectingly everybody, including the police, had believed his highway robbery story. And his heart swelled with pride when he thought that it was because of his careful attention to detail that after perfunctory investigation the case had been closed.

On U Rabin Singh's death, his brother-in-law, a retired clerk, took over the management of the business. Under his inexperienced direction, the business incurred a heavy loss during the very first year. But what drove it to near bankruptcy was the fact that due to the absence of accounts, very little of the credit given by U Rabin Singh could be realised. When the brother-in-law did all he could to check the inevitable drift towards disaster, and failed, he decided to sell the business.

But when the business was put up for sale, no offers except for a few half-hearted ones were forthcoming. People were unwilling to buy the business because the superstition had spread among them that it was unlucky. It had killed one owner

and destroyed another and, they were sure, a similar fate awaited the third. The more sceptical ones—rather those who professed to be such—cleared themselves by saying that it was 'a one-man business. Only a man like U Rabin Singh could run it'—whatever they meant by 'a man like U Rabin Singh,' U Sibmon Roy now thought contemptuously.

When even the half-hearted offers stopped, U Sibmon Roy came forward and bought it with a down payment of three quarters of the amount agreed upon and an understanding to clear the remainder in a number of monthly instalments. U Sibmon Roy declared that the down payment consisted of savings and loans he had borrowed from a few relatives in the village.

Under him the business flourished. During the very first year he paid off the remaining quarter and six months later he was investing money in anything that promised a reasonable profit, with the result that now he owned three trucks, about seven acres of forest, five houses, four of which were rented out, and had more ready money than an average money lender. And now with this contrivance added to his business he would mint money.

When U Sibmon Roy reached within a few yards of the shed, the salesman who had supervised the installation saw him, and rushing towards him and saluting him, said: 'We've been working since dawn we...' but on seeing that U Sibmon Roy was not listening to him, he took up another refrain.

'Let me tell you about this machine. It's made of the finest steel and by the most experienced craftsman. It's long lasting. Guaranteed. I can guarantee anything you want me to guarantee. Another thing. Free servicing one year. No other company offers such a facility...' He went on and on, but U Sibmon Roy did not hear him. He was staring intently with a tender glint in his eyes at the machine.

He gave an absent wave of the hand

and his employees hurried to release the tethers while a mechanic pressed a button. The blade began to turn, then to whirr, finally it became a stationary blur. U Sibmon Roy's heart swelled in rhythm with its sound and he stared at it with fond eyes. His imagination was stirred and he saw before his eyes the machine disgorging plank after plank, and truck after truck driving away fully loaded, and figure after figure sprouting up in his account books.

The delicate inexplicable feelings which had been tingling along his veins all the time, filling his body with a soft tremulous tension, playing about him like a breeze-ruffled lake, began to grow and grow till they suddenly burst and flowed all over him and engulfed him. Then he lost sense of everything around him and his mind became empty of all thought and all he wanted was to sink into this ecstasy, deeper and deeper and still deeper.

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## *A Friend of the Family*

JAI NIMBKAR

THE day stretched taut between morning and evening. Usually, there is a lot of slack, which I have to take up with nursing an extra cup of coffee, telephoning someone I don't particularly want to talk to, or a shopping trip to the local bazaar. We live in the suburbs, and going downtown is out of the question, as it takes half a day just to travel back and forth. I could, of course, go to the university and work on my thesis, but I am innately lazy, and there is nothing in my life which goads me to intellectual activity. I did have a go at it once. For Shekhar's benefit I registered for a Ph.D. in Psychology. But then he went away, and I dropped the idea, whereupon Narendra gave his tolerant smile which he reserves for those occasions when someone does what he expects them to do.

Today is different. Shekhar is coming this evening. I was pleased at the way I came alive this morning at breakfast when Narendra read Shekhar's postcard. I had

to leave the table on some pretext so that Narendra might not see my sudden joy. Even afterwards I had to keep toning down my excitement while Narendra went on and on. He was really excited about the prospect of seeing Shekhar again. 'Old Shekhar,' he kept saying, shaking his head as though he couldn't believe it. 'Be jolly good to see him again.'

(Narendra retains his British accent and British phraseology to a large extent. Shekhar, though he was in England much longer, speaks with a strong—one could say aggressively strong—Marathi accent. He constantly rags Narendra about his lack of individuality and his inferiority complex which lead him to ape the white sahib, but Narendra just smiles. That's one of the things I find endearing about Narendra. He refuses to be baited, and when he wants to stick to a point, he refuses to argue it.)

I envied Narendra this easy acknowledgement of his affection for Shekhar,

though of course I'm glad we are both so fond of Shekhar, and the three of us get along so well together.

Narendra has gone to work as usual, and I have spent most of the day deciding what I should make for dinner, what I am going to wear. How will I seem to him? Will he still like my cooking? Actually, it has not been a very long time—about four months?—not long enough for anything to have changed radically. Still, I wonder.

I was introduced to Shekhar during the dreary wedding reception. 'Liloo, I'd like you to meet my oldest and best friend,' Narendra said. Aside from the fact that he had desisted from making the obvious wisecrack about the word oldest, he did not impress me in any way. He was one of the hundreds of people I had met that evening—the people who belonged to the clan into which, in an outdated and inadequate religious ceremony that morning, I had married.

Later when I came to know him better, as I did very soon, I found that his mind was not as undistinguished as his exterior. He called often in the evenings, did not take much persuading to stay for meals, and invariably praised my cooking. At first I did not quite know what to make of this frequent presence of a third person in our life, but as Narendra seemed to take it for granted, I learned to do the same. I found that Shekhar had that indescribable quality which some people have, of bringing out the best in others, of making them feel interesting. Narendra was always gay and voluble in Shekhar's presence, while otherwise he tended to be a reserved and silent companion. It never occurred to me to be resentful of Shekhar.

They talked a lot about London, Narendra with wistful reminiscence and Shekhar disparagingly and sarcastically, though I think they were both equally sentimental about it—not about the city but about their stay in it. They talked in English most of the time. I meant to ask Shekhar whether that didn't denote an

inferiority complex, the use of the language of the sahibs, but never got around to it.

Shekhar is quite a bit older than Narendra. They were next-door neighbours and Narendra had inevitably hero-worshipped Shekhar. Unlike most other boys, Shekhar had not spurned the little boy's doglike devotion, with the result that they grew up to be friends. Later they were in London together, when Narendra was going to the School of Economics and Shekhar, who had finished his studies years before, was postponing his return on one excuse after another, meanwhile occupying himself with doing odd jobs of teaching, writing an occasional article for some insignificant paper, and participating in the Marathi language programme of the B.B.C. even though he claimed it was the biggest bore.

They had roomed together and returned home together, much of the credit for Shekhar's return being attributed by his parents (who had given up their son as lost) to Narendra's good influence.

Looking back, I can't tell exactly when I went through the transition. There was an exact point of time, however, when I admitted to myself that such a transition had taken place, that Shekhar had come to mean slightly more than a friend, an occasional evening's companion, an enlivener of a life which sometimes threatened to lapse into monotony. How much that slightly more was, and where it took me, these were problems I never tackled. There was no need to. An honest self-probe could not force me to conclude that I was being unfaithful to my husband, in deed or implicitly. I still love him as much as I did when I first saw him as an answer to a maiden's prayer, a sort of prince charming in the flesh, tall, fair, straight-nosed and green-eyed, with a humorous twist to his mouth and a shock of fine, unruly hair which made women of all ages feel at once maternally and romantically inclined towards him. And if, on closer acquaintance I have thought him to be a

little too quiet, rather limited in his interests (which encompass mostly his desk-job with a big oil company), and his looks a shade too delicate, his basic attraction for me has not diminished. Moreover, I could never imagine Shekhar supplanting Narendra.

In fact, and this is not as puzzling an aspect of the whole set-up as it seemed in the beginning, the proximity of Shekhar always made me more aware of Narendra's attractiveness. I could not resist being demonstrative with him in Shekhar's presence. Though Narendra never showed special appreciation of my advances, he never seemed embarrassed by them. His acquiescence was enough for me. It was as though Shekhar had issued a challenge and I was telling him, look how much in love we are, how happily married.

In the earlier days of my marriage I sometimes teased Shekhar about this girl and that, and talked of finding someone clever who would do a neat job of hooking him. Once I seriously asked him why he didn't marry.

'A man loses his soul by marrying,' he said.

That stung me.

'Would you say Narendra has lost his soul then?'

Shekhar laughed at that, trying to make a light banter out of the conversation. 'Perhaps he had no soul to lose. Or, let's say, under certain conditions it might be pleasant to lose one's soul.'

He looked at me in a funny way then, sort of intensely and searchingly, and the thought flashed into my mind that he might be choosing to remain single because of me. It was a flattering thought and with it I consoled myself. Perhaps that was the first step in the transition.

Thereafter I was divided between wanting him to get married which would be a triumph for my sex, and wanting him to remain a bachelor as a tribute to me. Also, as long as I was married and he was not, I could flaunt my marriedness at him and get the better of him that way.

Every time I thought of Shekhar objectively (which I always did in his absence), I could tell myself with relief that there was nothing in him to recommend him to a woman. A head shorter than Narendra, with a squat build which would go to fat in a few years if he didn't look out, a square face with bushy eyebrows and thick lips black with constant smoking. And hair in his ears.

But I found that the relief of thinking about Shekhar's looks fled when he called to say that he would call round in the evening, if we were free. We were free, we always were. Narendra has no friends. He doesn't need any. He has always had Shekhar, but that, I suspect, has been more out of habit, for both of them, than out of conscious intention. As for me I left my old friends behind when I came to Bombay, and I have not made any new ones. The neighbours are not worth it, and our get-togethers with Narendra's colleagues and their wives are confined to formal mutual entertaining.

On receiving a call from Shekhar, I used to hurry to the kitchen to see what I could make to tempt his bachelor appetite. After watching him through a lot of meals I had come to know his likes and dislikes as well as I know Narendra's.

Then when dinner-time came, I artlessly asked Shekhar to share potluck with us. The potluck consisted of a carefully prepared feast which he always enjoyed.

I also found that I tried to dress extra carefully when Shekhar was expected. Nothing dressy or startling. Just a colour that especially suited me, or a touch of perfume, or a piece of unobtrusive jewellery. It was never anything noticeable, but it always made me feel specially attractive, though Shekhar rarely noticed anything I wore.

I can't tell whether Shekhar underwent a transition or not. He seemed to have become friendlier, more open with me before he went away. Acceptance is the word. He seemed to accept me. He drew me into a discussion deliberately which he

hadn't done in the beginning. His whole attitude seemed to say that I was not included in his generally low opinion of women (which he lost not a single opportunity of expressing), that something about me set me apart. It was a partial compliment, but I was satisfied with it.

Nothing of what I felt was expressed. There was no chance. We were never together, the two of us, except for a few seconds occasionally, and that, with Narendra's return imminent, didn't count. Once in a while I thought about Shekhar dropping in unexpectedly when Narendra was away. But at the point of such a meeting my imagination failed. Or rather, it kept me at the level of mundane exchange of words.

But Shekhar never came while Narendra was away. Narendra usually mentioned it when he was going out of town, and Shekhar made his next visit coincide with Narendra's return. I sometimes wondered why. Perhaps, in spite of his cynical attitude towards what he called conventional values, Shekhar was a loyal friend and didn't want to expose himself to my company. After all, he could not be entirely immune from me. Or perhaps, as I did, he also wanted our relationship to mean no more than it did.

Sometimes I wonder how Shekhar came to be such great friends with my husband. Narendra is no fool, but he has an essentially provincial mind which Shekhar cannot find stimulating. On the other hand, Shekhar does not seem to derive any pleasure out of making Narendra appear at a disadvantage in a contest of wits. Also, his affection for Narendra is nothing if not genuine. So I suppose it really is a matter of habit. Moreover, even a drifter wants something to anchor him firmly to so-called normal life, and in Shekhar's case Narendra has supplied this need.

Suddenly one day Shekhar announced that he was off to Calcutta. We were both dismayed, and I asked, 'Calcutta? What

would anyone want to go to that dirty old city for?'

'Because one has got a job there.'

Shekhar who has a modest income from the legacy his father left him, had been a free-lance journalist and author or sorts. Now all of a sudden he decided that it was not enough to work when he felt like it.

'Somehow,' he said, 'It's easier to work to your full capacity when someone makes you.'

'You won't like it, after being used to a life of freedom,' Narendra said.

'Perhaps not. At least I want to find out what it's like.'

'But why Calcutta? I should think there are enough newspapers and magazines here in Bombay who could offer you a job.'

'I daresay. However, I want a change of climate. This city is beginning to get on my nerves. It's too commercial, too cosmopolitan, too culture-conscious without having any real culture.'

'And Calcutta is different?' I asked.

'I've heard it is. I want to see for myself.'

He sounded as though he was for some reason annoyed with us, and his tirade against Bombay was really meant against us. I was impressed that evening by his irritable and snappish temper. He was restless, out-of-sorts, not his usual sure-footed, aggressive self at all. He did not stay very long and seemed genuinely sorry when he took our leave.

'Well, I hope I'll see you again soon. You youngsters have done a lot for me, but I don't want to become a fixture in your life.'

'We're going to miss you,' Narendra said.

'I'll miss you too, and Liloo's wonderful cooking. Keep in touch. He's a rotten correspondent, Liloo, but you'll write, won't you?'

'Of course,' I said.

I haven't missed him so much as I expected to, but I have wondered whether he went away because of me, whether at last he was getting seriously interested

in me and wanted to cure himself of it. Only that could account for his strange behaviour that night, his sad smile at parting.

Since Narendra left this morning, I have not stopped wondering. Has Shekhar come to mean more to me than I care to admit? Supposing the feeling is mutual, what then? What are we to each other? I don't like to answer the question. The answer promises to be disturbing. For the first time, Narendra comes as an intruder in my thoughts of Shekhar. Above all I wonder what Shekhar himself will be like. Has he changed? Will he still have his deadpan expression, or will I be able to read something from it? Will an impulse of any sort pass from him to me?

The moment of reckoning has finally arrived. Dinner (the weapon which I have always used to pry away his lid of self-containment and peek inside) is ready. Narendra has gone to bathe and change, and I am waiting, not really trying to read the paper I hold in my hands. A taxi stops in front of our house. Its door opens and closes, and the sounds of its driving away

mask the footsteps I know are advancing to our front door.

Before I can get up, Narendra has come bounding downstairs to open the front door.

'Well, at last the great man,' he says.

Shekhar looks leaner and browner, more attractive than I have ever thought possible. He shakes Narendra's hand. He has put the other hand on Narendra's shoulder and says, 'It's good to see you, my boy. Let's look at you, you have hardly changed at all.' Strangely, for the bright overhead light is on, Shekhar has not seen me. I stand unmoving, savouring the quick tightening in my chest, content to put off the moment of actual meeting.

It seems as though an eternity has gone by, while Shekhar and Narendra face each other. Shekhar's hand still squeezes Narendra's shoulder hard, his eyes are unnaturally bright as he gazes at Narendra unblinkingly. And the quality of the tableau changes. Something summersaults. There is no mistaking the look in Shekhar's eyes.

I've been a blind fool.

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## A SOUTHERN PAGEANT— THE CAR FESTIVAL .....

an event celebrated with traditional ceremony and splendour. A part of the scene, the temple, with festivals round the calendar, is very much a part of the life of the people.

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# BOOKS

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## INDIA AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA, 1947-1960

*A study of India's policy towards the South-East Asian countries in the period 1947-1960 by Ton That Thien (Librairie Droz, Geneva, 380 pp. 40 Sw. francs.)*

WHILE not denying the important influence of the United States and the Soviet Union on the course of events in South-East Asia, one should expect the long term destiny of this area (S.-E. Asia) to be determined by India and China more strongly than by any other power.

M. Ton That Thien's book is a study of India's policy in that region. Its importance is obvious. Like Britain *vis à vis* the U.S., we sought a special relationship with China, ignoring our immediate neighbours. They in turn ignored us. Today, India counts for precious little in the affairs of S.-E. Asia and China counts for a lot.

This book is divided into three parts. The first, entitled 'The Conceptual Background' discusses India's basic approach to the world in general and to the region in particular. The second part discusses Indian policy towards Indonesia, Vietnam, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Malaya, Thailand and the Philippines during the period 1947-1960. The last part is a summation on India's policy towards the role of the Great Powers in the region. The documentation is very thorough, the analysis original and incisive throughout. Beyond question, this is a major work in the field and perhaps the very best. Inevitably, it is by a foreigner. We have a long wait if we expect Indian writers to write courageously, competently, thoughtfully

and with originality on their country's foreign policy.

'Once S.-E. Asia had been freed, it could strengthen India's position and increase India's weight in the world councils... provided both India and S.-E. Asia moved in the same direction'. In the first few years things went well enough. The climax was the Asian Conference on Indonesia in January 1949. But later in the same year, there appeared a new power on the horizon: a China, Communist and militant. Elsewhere in the S.-E. Asia the battle was raging between armed Communist minorities and the nationalist rulers of the newly freed countries. India was, unquestionably, opposed to Communist domination. As the author writes: 'On account of her avowed policy of 'non-alignment', of the bitter memories of her colonial past, and also, of the anti-colonial mood prevailing in post-war Asia, India could not associate herself with the Western powers in the struggle against communism in South-East Asia. She would have to devise other ways of stopping communist expansion there. One of them is to ensure the victory of nationalism. But how would she bring this about?'

India's answer was Panch Sheel. Actually, this was but an elaboration of the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928. Its avowed object was to create an atmosphere of peace or an 'Area of peace'. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that Mr. Dulles and Mr. Nehru both had a tremendous faith in pacts, in the power of words.

The Asian Conference on Indonesia passed a resolution urging the members to

devise a permanent machinery for consultation. Oddly enough, the author takes no notice of it. The next year when Australia, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Pakistan and Thailand met at Baguio, India attended the conference 'to thwart any plan of military or political ganging up of South-East Asian countries against communism, and especially against Communist China'.

In the view of the Indian Government, once the fact had been recognised that a strong China was an expansionist China, as China and not as a Communist power—to Mr. Nehru this seemed secondary—two courses were open to it: either to adopt an attitude of open mistrust and challenge, and hold fast to India's rights, especially in Tibet and on the border, or to find a ground for entente and cooperation and, in the process, try to reduce misunderstanding and rivalry'.

India went a long way to appease Red China. Did Mr. Nehru give any assurance to Chou En-lai in 1954 that he would do his best to prevent Western intervention in South-East Asia? We do not know. But subsequent events show that India acted as if she tried hard to fulfil her part of a bargain. India's determined opposition to SEATO, the attitude of the Indian delegations in the three International Commissions in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in the first three years following the Geneva Conference, the efforts of the Indian Government to wean Laos and Cambodia away from the Western bloc and draw them towards neutralism, were indeed applauded by China and North Vietnam as proofs of India's firm adherence to Panch Sheel.

Mr. Thien however seems rather to contradict himself, for a few pages later, he writes 'The conflict of Indian and Western policies in South-East Asia, then, was a conflict not of substance, but of form. In fact, Indian and Western policies did not run at cross purposes... if they did so, they did so only in words... but they were complementary, and 'thus,

throughout South-East Asia, Western might and Indian diplomacy prevented communism from expanding into the area. The only loss in the period under consideration was North Vietnam. Yet, considering the overall situation one could reverse this statement and say that at least half of Vietnam was saved from communism. Nowhere else except perhaps in Laos, did communism make much headway. Indeed, looking coldly at the situation, one could say that, from 1947 to 1960, India's anti-colonialism and Panch Sheel and Western military strength and determination combined to ensure a free and non-communist South-East Asia.'

The author, of course, is only too right when he says: 'India made substantial gains and achieved her aims in South-East Asia—the strengthening of nationalism in a South-East Asia free from both colonialism and communism—, and acquired a great deal of goodwill and prestige in Asia without having to shed one single drop of blood, and without having to fire one single bullet. All she had expended profusely was eloquence. She further enjoyed the advantage of being in a position to assume an attitude of moral superiority, and to condemn both colonialist blindness and communist terrorism. In all that, India had furthered her national self-interests well.'

Mr. Nehru certainly did not favour the spread of communism in S.-E. Asia; but he took an unduly optimistic view of its expansionistic tendency. Knowing that the U.S. would prevent the worst from happening, he was prepared to take risks he really should not have. In doing so he completely disengaged India from the fate of the smaller S.-E. Asian states. The author's opinion, that 'When it became clear in 1957 that China no longer kept its part of the Panch Sheel bargain, India allowed the fog to lift and called in the U.S. to redress the balance', is highly questionable. India sought American help military or otherwise only in October 1962.

He writes, 'Shorn of its confusing vocabulary, its Indian terminology and its moralising admonitions, India's foreign policy in the period 1947-1960, and with special reference to South-East Asia, was perhaps nothing more, but certainly less than a policy of balance of power. And, since balance of power is but the policy best suited to a weak influence in a system of power politics, India's foreign politics, as all politics, was essentially power politics.'

This analysis is equally wrong. India did not seek to balance the power of Red China by forging an alliance of the S.-E. Asian countries. Instead, it sought to keep China pleased and wholly ignored the others. It was neither good morality nor sound politics. Mr. Nehru may have been 'a far more cold calculator than is generally believed'. Alas, his calculations were all based on assumptions with but the most tenuous links with reality.

These criticisms notwithstanding, this is a fine work. It is a pity that Pakistan is completely omitted from the survey. How far did Kashmir influence our policy in S.-E. Asia? But to raise the question is to enquire about the basis of our entire foreign policy in the latter days of Mr. Nehru when he succumbed to the charms of Mr. Krishna Menon.

A. G. NOORANI

### *Permanent Sore*

*THE KASHMIR QUESTION* by A. G. Noorani  
(Manaktalas, Bombay, 125 pp. Rs. 8.50)

MR. NOORANI is a man of courage. When Rajaji or Jayaprakash or Minoo Masani speak in favour of a reconsideration of the Kashmir question, they can be dismissed as politically biased. But if Mr. Noorani speaks out, he is liable to be called a pseudo-Pakistani, masquerading as an Indian publicist. This would be a fatal objection against him. Many a decent Muslim in India is gagged into

silence by such an argument. Others find it more profitable to swim with the tide and win laurels. Yet others, terrified at the thought of persecution or dire consequences, shut up their minds. But not Mr. Noorani. And he deserves a hearing.

This book is a demonstration of the thesis that 'while Kashmir's accession is legal and valid, it is provisional.' The book is neither a history nor an exhaustive discussion of the Kashmir problem. Within its short compass (66 pages, in all) it is an admirable analysis of the nature of accession from 1947 to 1963.

To me, the basic question in Kashmir seems to be this. Is the right of self-determination claimed by the people of Kashmir secondary to the rights of two pseudo-belligerents? To put it in another way—A and B quarrel over the property of X. A commits aggression; B defends X, at X's request. Can the rights *inter se* of A and B keep X out of his property forever or for an indefinite time? This is obviously not merely a legal question, but one of ethics, related to international conduct in the twentieth century. The main facts are well known. Pakistan committed what in ordinary parlance may be called 'an act of aggression'. In the precise juristic language of Sir Owen Dixon:

'I was prepared to adopt the view that when the frontier of the state of Jammu and Kashmir was crossed, on I believe 20 October 1947, by hostile elements, it was contrary to International Law, and that when in May, 1948, as I believe, units of regular Pakistan forces moved into the territory of the State, that too was inconsistent with International Law.' (pp. 48-49. Mr. Noorani does not give specific references; but this is from Para. 21, United Nations Doc. S/1791, Fifth Year, January-May 1950, p. 29).

Thereafter the Maharaja asked for help and accession followed. Together with accession, both Mountbatten and Nehru gave certain assurances. Unfortunately, in later times, various events occurred, and

the relations between India and Pakistan deteriorated. The result was that both Mr. Pant and Mr. Nehru said that a plebiscite was out of the question.

This deadlock has continued to this day and 127 meetings of the United Nations and its various organs have had to consider the question. Like Israel, it is a problem which has defied a solution over the years with unfortunate consequences for both, or rather, for three, countries.

Today however a new sense of urgency prevails. By non-alliance India has no enemies; but neither has she any friends. China is no longer a friend—the slogan *Chini Hindi Bhai Bhai* has become a mockery. The recent flirtation between Peking and Rawalpindi pales into insignificance before the dismissal of Khrushchev and the coming together of China and Russia. This makes it all the more necessary to consider the rift between us and Pakistan in a different context.

Our foreign policy during the last 15 years has not found favour with friendly but critical foreign columnists. Some of them suggest that the chief architect of our Kashmir policy was Menon. True to his essential creed, he desires that Pakistan and India should always remain at a distance. If Pakistan is enemy No. 1 of India, it follows that the 400 million Hindus and the 50 million Muslims of India are the sworn enemies of the 70 million Muslims and the 10 million Hindus of Pakistan. This is an interesting analysis. It ought to be taken into consideration to formulate, if desirable, a new foreign policy for the country.

Mr. Noorani has given all the facts and figures to show that the accession of Kashmir, although legal, is only temporary, and subject to further consideration.

His book is to be commended for its lucidity, cogency and sobriety. There is an excellent Introduction (11 pages) by V. B. Karnik, and several appendices. There

is an index; but the references to the U.N. documents and Appendices I to III should be more precise.

A. A. A. FYZEE

### *The Meaning of Secularity*

**THE CONCEPT OF THE SECULAR STATE AND INDIA** by Ved Prakash Luthera, (Oxford University Press, 155 pp. Rs. 12.50)

THIS slender but well-packed volume is a valuable contribution to the study of the Secular State and supplements, in an important way, Donald Eugene Smith's *India as a Secular State*, Oxford University Press, 1963. Both books need to be read together for they differ in the definition of the term 'Secular State', in the conclusions they draw, and in the nature of their documentation.

Smith's work was part of a three-year research project on Religion and State in South and South-East Asia and it was sponsored by the Council on Religion and International Affairs. This institutional backing was a tremendous advantage in carrying out the project. Luthera's work, on the other hand, was a doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Delhi in 1959 and published five years later. The fact that time has not done too much damage to Mr. Luthera's book, is an index to the genuine contribution he has made.

Ved Prakash Luthera arrives at a conclusion which would appear to many people as somewhat unusual, even if it does not really startle them. It is his contention that India cannot—and should not—be described as a Secular State. Further, the Secular State ideal is neither desirable nor possible in the context of Indian society. These conclusions rest on the author's interpretation of the Secular State as it evolved in the course of European history. The concept originated in the Roman Empire and its meaning was fixed in the sermon of Jesus: 'Render unto Caesar the things that are of Caesar and to God the things that are of God.' It is

from here that the term secular got its connotation as something opposed to spiritual.

Having traced the concept historically, Mr. Luther is compelled to seek its essence in the separation of Church and State. The first clear demarcation in modern constitutions is to be found in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The author admits that in practice such a rigid separation of the spheres of Church and State is not possible and concedes that there is an inherent weakness in the concept for it does not indicate what precisely is the jurisdiction of the secular and spiritual realms. Luther's definition leads him to assert that a Secular State is only possible in cultures which have an organised church and since Hinduism lacks such a central organisation, it cannot have a separation of the secular and spiritual realms. He indicates that there are other forms of Church-State relationships. Thus in England, the State controls and regulates the Church and therefore it cannot be described as a Secular State. There is a third variety in which the State treats all the Churches (religions) as equal; this is the *Jurisdictionalist State*.

The originality of Mr. Luther's thesis consists in the clarification of the term. There is strength in his definitional position. On the other hand, it might be asked whether it is after all, necessary to define the term in so restricted a manner, even if this was the meaning of the term as it evolved in the course of European history. There are many words in the literature of political science which have come to acquire a meaning very different from what they had in their origin. Smith, who had an opportunity of reading through Luther's thesis in its unpublished form disagreed with its conceptual framework on two grounds: 1. That the definition based on the notion of separation of Church and State was too narrow. 2. That Luther took a somewhat static view of Hinduism. He therefore sought to define

the term in a more comprehensive manner. It is, he said, 'a State which guarantees individual and corporate freedom of religion, is not constitutionally connected to a particular religion, nor does it seek to promote or interfere with religion.' For Smith, India was a clear example of a Secular State and he made the title of his book positive and unambiguous. Luther's definitional position is equally well indicated in the title of his work.

The difference between the two books arises not merely from the standpoint of definition but from the approaches of the authors as well. Luther's book may be considered to be a contribution to constitutional law; Smith's work is an effort to explain Indian politics and society. He is concerned with the problems of caste and communalism; the position of minorities; the goals of education; the problem of religious and social reform and the work of the missionaries. Luther also touches some of these problems but in a somewhat restricted manner. Luther tries to explain the term Secular State in the context of European history; Smith examines the secular ideal against the background of Indian history and evaluates the Indian Secular State in its Asian setting. For him the future of the Secular State is closely linked up with the future of Indian democracy and the growth of constitutionalism in the country. Luther does not anywhere touch this larger aspect of the problem.

Bibliographically, both books have their limitations. Smith's book contains no bibliography, although the relevant sources are indicated in footnotes; Luther provides a bibliography but it fails to mention many important sources and articles published during the last five years.

To the student of Indian politics, both books are valuable and supplement each other, but Smith's book is cast in a larger mould; is massive in its marshalled data and has many insights for the student of Indian affairs.

S. P. AIYAR

## *Politics versus Reform*

**INDIAN NATIONALISM AND HINDU SOCIAL REFORM** by Charles H. Heimsath (Princeton University Press, 356 pp. Rs. 27.50)

19TH Century Social Reform could and sometimes did draw inspiration from the earlier Bhakti Movement but the two are distinct, and unrelated. In spite of their faith in the goodness of God, and their sympathy for all men, the Bhaktas were truly Indian in that they encouraged silent suffering rather than revolt. The Social Reform movement on the contrary followed the pattern of agitation set by the Christian Missionaries in India. It was the outcome of Western education, which, as Chandavarkar once noted was 'accomplishing silently what no law could have accomplished—unsettling people's minds, raising controversies.' If Western ideas sharpened the intellectual awareness of educated Indians, the work of the missionaries made a constructive impact upon them, and even those who frowned upon proselytizing by the Church could not but appreciate and emulate its organization, social service and sacrifice. To the 'defunct and stationary' India of the times, the Social Reform movement was a call to think and to act. Response came in the form of agitation for the abolition of suttee and the prohibition of widow remarriage, in a re-examination and restatement of Hinduism, among others, by Vivekananda, Ramkrishna Paramhansa and Dayanand Saraswati, and also in the form of organized social welfare work by the Brahmo and Arya Samajees.

Prof. Heimsath begins his chronicle with the early nineteenth century, with Ram Mohun Roy, and those others after him who began to demand a rationally ordered society, and to insist on the principle that reason rather than tradition or authority should define ethical norms and social institutions. These pioneers of Social Reform in India unabashedly acknowledged their debt to the West in educating

their outlook and looked forward to a long and fruitful association between England and India. Since it was mainly an intellectual movement, Social Reform held meaning only for a tiny minority of educated Indians—it did not touch the masses.

But if Western ideas had stimulated dissatisfaction with outmoded tradition they had also sharpened India's political consciousness. What was earlier, vaguely discernible in the aggressive Hinduism of Dayanand Saraswati during the last decades of the 19th century, flared up in the militant nationalism of Tilak. Nationalism appealed not mainly to reason but to the hearts of the Indians as well, and it won spontaneous and universal response. The leaders of social thought however, could not quite decide whether to postpone reform till swaraj was won or to fight the two battles together. This led to the inevitable schism between Ranade and Tilak, or rather between Social and Political Reform, and not till Gandhiji did the two find meeting ground again.

Prof. Heimsath has done an excellent job. His documentation of the earlier phases of the movement is thorough, clear, scholarly and authoritative. The later and more difficult part of the chronicle has been handled with sympathy, balance and depth of understanding. For instance, Tilak's grievance that the Age of Consent Bill would write 'the character of the Indian Nation in blackest letters' has not always been presented so dispassionately. The author shows a remarkable sense of proportion in the attention given to 'provincial reform', 'religious revival' and to the 'many nationalisms' of the country. While most earlier authorities on the subject were themselves too much a part of the current, Prof. Heimsath's detached review of the 'brief successes' and periods of apathy of the movement, his apportioning of the credit between individual reformers and the movement itself, is refreshingly objective.

Though the author gives his own reasons, it is a pity he could not discuss the reform and at times the lack of reform amongst Muslims and Christians.

In the epilogue Prof. Heimsath mentions that the 'chief inducement that the Indian Government can bring to bear on the process of social change is its capacity to create economic changes' perhaps this is a gentle hint that in terms of the concept of the 'Dignity of Man' which we have accepted, our social and economic institutions are archaic—Isn't it time to spell out the new values and behaviour patterns that should remould them?

SUMA CHITNIS

### *Eternal Vigilance*

**RANDOM THOUGHTS OF A FASCIST HYENA**  
by Constantine Fitz Gibbon (Cassell, 193 pp. 21s.)

MR FITZ GIBBON is probably most widely known for a disturbing but pertinent book he published (some would say perpetrated) a few years ago called *When the Kissing Had to Stop*. This set out to demonstrate, among other things, the ease with which disaster could overtake a morally enfeebled Britain if she succumbed to the pressure for unilateral disarmament. For many it merely identified its author as a monstrous ghoul-like figure shrieking threats from the dread shadows of the political Far Right, and for them, this new book of essays selected from his recent contributions to a variety of English periodicals will confirm this reputation, despite the vigour with which he stresses the essentially liberal nature of his views. But Mr Fitz Gibbon writes sensibly enough, and gives his arguments such a rational and respectable air that the uncommitted reader must make some effort to realise how distasteful and dangerous he has frequently seemed to his antagonists. In contrast with the hysterical squawking of the more lunatic of these,

Fitz Gibbon's language is always articulate and efficient, his reasoning smoothly-jointed and sane; and although he obviously relishes controversy and has mastered the game of provoking his opponents' indignation and replying deftly to their counter-thrusts he is sufficiently experienced a guerilla to keep his sniping under careful control: aiming with collected deliberation, he is not one to waste much ammunition. Consequently, though the first part of its title defines the character of the book accurately, it is nonetheless satisfactory, even stimulating, reading. It is the work of a highly intelligent, thoughtful and honest student of contemporary politics; uncompromisingly Anglo-American in his outlook, but worth attention, even if one thinks his premises are suspect or perhaps positively vicious.

His hostility to Communism is profound, and it demands a militant faith in those policies and alignments of the Western powers which have helped to create and can maintain the Cold War. There is no Goldwater sabre-rattling in this, no urge for a show-down; far from it: Fitz Gibbon's bogies are waning vigilance, a sense of false security, relaxation, indiscipline, queasiness about bombs, and so forth—not because the West ought to be prancing about brandishing its weapons and itching for a scrap but because a catastrophe is more likely to occur if the West is weak than if it is strong. A show-down is emphatically to be avoided; but the way to avoid it is to be permanently ready for it. A Cold War is safer and more desirable than what can all too easily replace it. Fitz Gibbon's argument rests on the unhappy conviction that in their dealings with Soviet Russia, Britain and the rest of the 'free' world are faced with a tyranny which, on the evidence of its conduct so far, is not appreciably less disgusting or dangerous than was that of the Nazis in Germany. If Hitler's war was worth fighting because the alternative of submitting to the Nazis was unthinkable

nasty, Britain and her allies must be fully prepared now, and in the foreseeable future, to fight a war against the Soviet Union; to perpetuate, in other words, the condition of preparedness which though normally called the Cold War is in fact an armed peace—and, from some angles, a fairly successful one. Only if something radically alters inside Communist countries should any thoughts be entertained of relaxing the Western defence effort. In particular, any trend of thought or feeling which threatens to weaken the efficacy of the N.A.T.O. calls for denunciation.

Fitz Gibbon has a field day doing just this. His most formidable prey are the unilateral nuclear disarmers; especially dangerous because their appeal is largely to the emotions and hence is likely to carry more weight than a strictly rational one, and because they inevitably attract sympathy from the non-committed world outside Europe. But he also has fun reviling that 'decrepit, stupid, neurotic, zoo' of creatures in Britain dedicated to propagating hostility towards America; and lesser fry, too — surely far less dangerous — who still regard all Germans as responsible for Nazidom and are outraged by alliance today with an economically buoyant Western Germany.

While much that follows as a corollary from his basic mistrust of the Soviet bloc is *per se* unexceptionable, it is not to be expected that his Cold War thesis nor its origin will attract much support or sympathy among readers in steadfastly non-aligned countries. There is not much doubt that Indian readers will find more to appreciate in those essays reprinted here which are not in the polemic category at all. In those about resistance to tyranny, and the commandant of a Nazi concentration camp, for example, they will discover perceptive and humane commentaries on the abuse of power which cannot fail to impress.

STEWART MELLUISH

## A Good University

A NATIONAL UNIVERSITY by A. B. Shah (*The Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom—sole distributors, Popular Book Depot, Bombay, 89 pp. Rs. 4.50*)

THE papers and proceedings of the ICCF's Seminar in September 1962 show how necessary it is to arrange discussions of this nature and how they help to clarify thinking on problems of current interest. The theme of a 'national university' discussed over nearly two days helped to bring out the part played by regionalism in education, and promoted a bias for an 'International University.' Linguistic arrangements naturally claimed the main attention and it was left to some outsiders to call attention to other matters which equally related to higher education. The conclusions presented at the end of the book seem to indicate that these seminars would be more useful if they did not require a final statement to be made at the end.

Some of the speakers have felt constrained to apologize for the criticisms against politicians, others seemed to feel that enough could not be said in condemnation of the Education Ministers. One of the participants roundly denounced them as 'generally politicians and of a low breed altogether; they are not men of intellectual distinction, highest character and integrity. The general fear was that political interference would increase in the academic world if universities and professors began to interest themselves in politics. It is surprising to read how sharply Mr. G. C. Bannerjee was attacked for suggesting that 'if we feel compelled by force of circumstances to teach in the English language, we must take very great care to see that the young people are properly oriented.' It was a valid point and one that is not limited to Western India or the city of Bombay as some speakers tried to make out, though perhaps it is less prevalent in the South. But what is

remarkable is that there was no effort made by any of the speakers to face this problem, the general interest being limited to counteracting the evils of regionalism by pressing for English education. The book is thought-provoking and is well-timed, considering the renewed enthusiasm both for keeping the English language for higher education and for shedding it. What is of interest is that it is English and the regional languages, or English or the regional languages, but never English and Hindi.

S. NATARAJAN

### *The Unclear Vision*

**THE PRINCES** by Manohar Malgaonkar. (Hamish Hamilton, 361 pp. 21s.)

THIS book is about the ruling family of a Central Indian State at the approach of Independence. The Maharajah, a flamboyant despot, refuses to compromise with the inevitable, and eventually chooses death in the grand manner. His son is brought into contact with modern freedom at school and in the army, but cannot bring himself either to break with his father or to fight singlemindedly alongside him. Mr. Malgaonkar presents him as a Hamlet figure, but without the greatness of Hamlet.

The book has been well reviewed here. The other side's view of a significant historical event is sure to find eager acceptance, and creative writings from India we do look upon with a special half-grateful tenderness. Mr. Malgaonkar is certainly a vivid and skilful writer, in nostalgic place-impressions as well as straightforward action-pieces. I like his tiger shoots. There is something about shikar which concentrates a man's style wonderfully. He can pin down people like the English Resident and his wife with neatness and humour. I liked the breakfast scene where they are worrying about what the war will do to

supplies of weed-killer. The Maharajah is almost first-rate. I suspect he would find much in common with Uncle Mathew Alconleigh of the *Pursuit of Love* (indeed the crown prince Abhayraj is not unlike sensible Fanny.) The forelorn Maharani is remarkably poignant. Then the Bhils, those delightful, child-like savages faithful to their beloved Bedar Maharajah even, disastrously, when from his 'paternal care untimely ripp'd.' I do believe in them. Funnily enough there is a Kipling story I have just read called the *Tomb of his Ancestors*, in which these same Bhils of the Satpura hills acknowledge similar impassioned vassalage to a different divine father, in this case an Englishman called Chinn. It would be nice — it might be reassuring — to visit the Bhils on a fact-finding mission.

But there are a few more things to say. First this dismissive kindness of English reviewers of Indian products could not be more unhealthy when there exists in India now no literary critic of stature (I did not say status) and Indian writers who write in English have not even a coherent, discerning, just and outspoken body of readers to provide intelligent support or expose deficiency. There is also the too accepting shabash of the established.

Now Mr. Malgaonkar's book is a very good popular novel, but of course it is not literature and it is very important for all of us to understand, analyse, and loudly enunciate the difference. I am sure India will, and should, produce works of greatness in the English language. English as an international language is necessary for the attainment of Indian ambitions in many spheres; but it is not possible to use a language to further our capacities in science, commerce, diplomacy without simultaneously feeling its deeper, less distinct effects on a less strenuous part of ourselves. A language is not an electric drill, and we are not automatons. The more we acquire it as a skill, the greater our capacity to respond to its delight, to

let it reveal and persuade; then in turn to communicate our own truth through it to others. That creative task demands a constant honest struggle with words, as every writer knows; but a language belongs not only to writers, but to us all. English belongs to you, Mr. Malgaonkar and when you misuse it, we must all cry out. You are making the language; whenever you write, in the free certainty of your own vision, and when this vision is not clear and true it shows instantly in your language. However, 'flawless' your command of it, you are now its borrower merely, not its creator. Everything hangs on this, the honesty with which we use language. What else compels modern poetry to be modern? The compulsion to create comes to a few, but the struggle to distinguish we must all carry on, all the time. We shall then, I hope, prevent this kind of writing from ever getting into print.

*'I don't want to see you' he said, and his words hit me like a blast of hot wind in summer.*

*'Why not? what has happened?' His dark sullen face broke into a defiant snarl.*

*'I don't want to see you, thank you'.*

*'I felt a throb of anger'—or this.*

*'Her face was dead white, and her voice was dry as the rustle of straw. And I could feel the anguish of her mind like a hot flame.'*

Fortunately not all the book is as bad as dreadfully, vulgarly imitative — as this. And fortunately my tender post-colonial conscience is at work, saying that if one floods a country with one's own second-rate and vulgar culture one has precious little right to complain of the result, and one had better clean oneself up a bit before calling the kettle names. I think it is particularly striking that the worst features of the book are the Minnie and Punch episodes. It is in reproducing a kind of Englishman, a kind of dialogue, never plausible and debunked in England for good, that Mr. Malgaonkar does most

astray. Not the faintest attempt is made to present Punch and Minnie as anything but caricatures; yet what a weight of serious meaning, for one thing of a love-affair mature and perfect — Mr. Malgaonkar hitches on to them!

Then what about the Burma war chapters? If they are not introduced simply because Mr. Malgaonkar wanted to bring off a big battle-scene — almost a *sine qua non*, I admit of 'big' novels, especially in America, then their purpose is impenetrable. They have no relevance whatever to the novel, and they are often rather dull.

But one cannot get away from it. Mr. Malgaonkar's saddest failure is over Abhayraj himself. No amount of school and battle honours can convince us that he is anything but a feeble young man. One minute he is held up as quite detached and liberal; the next as wholeheartedly loyal to his father; what we do not see is Abhayraj suiting his actions to his words.

That faltering vision again! You cannot create a popular novel hero and make him at the same time convincingly complex, or you are in the danger of missing both targets. And how callously dishonest is Abhayraj's treatment of Kanakchand, who was publicly whipped by the Maharajah for a childish deception in which Abhayraj himself was collaborator-in-chief! The climax of the book shows Abhayraj treating Kanakchand to another public whipping in order to avenge his father for Kanakchand's recent political opposition. This is very far from pretty; yet nothing suggests that we should do otherwise than approve it. Our acceptance of the Bedars stands or falls by the author's firm sense of their value and lovability. Once we see through that, our pleasure in the book is cancelled. This is sad. Mr. Malgaonkar has a sound grasp of what makes a novel. I feel sure that if he will harness his dramatic gifts more strenuously to the truth, rather than unleashing them for effect, he will create something more enduring.

JILL HUGH-JONES

## Indian Englishman

**THE TRIBAL WORLD OF VERRIER ELWIN**  
by Verrier Elwin (Oxford University Press,  
349 pp. Rs. 20)

A surprising number of famous and interesting people manage to write very dull autobiographies. The secret of a successful autobiography is, perhaps, an absence of self-consciousness rather than having important things to tell. Verrier Elwin's autobiography suffers from two disadvantages. His was the kind of nature which could not reveal itself without some affectation; and he had already described, in this other books, all the really interesting things which he had seen and done.

The first two hundred and eighty pages of his book then, are of the kind on every one of which the reader is made aware of the pitfalls which have not been avoided. No woman is ever mentioned without the adjective lovely, beautiful or charming; and the identical words do duty to describe every piece of natural scenery. That same lack of balance which insists on thinking every woman equally lovely and every friend equally charming shows itself in some strangely misplaced emphases. A visit to French Africa, for instance, is described very largely in terms of the meals eaten and dreamt about there. One does not complain that the writer wastes several pages in talking about food, but that he does it with the self-consciousness of a man who has never had either the experience or the knowledge which could make him a real gourmet.

About three quarters of the way through, though, when he reaches that point in his life when he went to NEFA, the tone of the book changes in a magical way. It becomes suddenly vital, serious and immediate. The self that Elwin is writing about becomes real and close. The difference between the two parts of the book is so sharp that it is difficult to believe that this is still the same man writing about the same man. The fading, hard-to-recapture past becomes the live, important present.

## INDIAN COMMITTEE FOR CULTURAL FREEDOM

### Forthcoming Publications

#### 1. Jawaharlal Nehru:

##### *A Critical Tribute*

edited by A. B. SHAH

Articles by M. N. Roy, Philip Spratt, Aghanand Bharati, Nicolas Nabokov, Arnold Toynbee, Norman Palmer, Humayun Kabir, V. B. Karnik, Abu Sayed Ayyub, S. P. Aiyar and A. B. Shah. Two Appendices containing the famous *Chanakya* article by Nehru on himself and his important testament of political faith, the *Basic Approach* that provoked an attack by Yudin, the Russian Ambassador to Peking—About 120 pages approximately Rs. 8.00

To be published on Republic day 1965

#### 2. Tradition and Modernity in India

edited by A. B. SHAH and

C. R. M. RAO

Proceedings of the seminar convened by the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom and the Asian Office of the Congress for Cultural Freedom at Delhi in November 1961. Contents include papers by R. L. Nigam, Yogendra Singh and V. K. R. V. Rao, and extensive report of the discussions that took place in the seminar. Among the participants were C. D. Deshmukh, V. K. R. V. Rao, Raj Krishna, M. K. Haldar and Frank Thakurdas—About 220 pages, approximately Rs. 15.00

To be published in February 1965

#### 3. Goa: The Problems of Transition

edited by A. B. SHAH

Contains the papers and recommendations of the Seminar convened by the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom and the Chowgule Education Society at Margao, Goa on November 28-30, 1964. Contributors include G. M. Laud, Prabhakar Padhye, S. P. Aiyar, V. K. Sinha and G. V. Kamat-Helekar—About 90 pages approximately Rs. 5.00

To be published in February 1965

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His work for and relationship with the tribes in the NEFA had obviously become the most important thing for him towards the end of his life. And it is when he writes of himself against that background that he recalls the vigour of his earlier writings about the Central Indian tribes.

For many years Elwin had not only become an Indian National technically he had felt and thought as an Indian. His criticisms of post-Independence India might have been offensive if they had come from an alien. From him, they are an expression of what most educated Indians think but few have the courage to say in public. 'I am astonished', he says, 'that we have not made greater progress in prison reform in India, where so many of our leading men have themselves spent many years in jail...' and again 'the Indian countryside is, as a consequence of the Community Development movement, being defaced with the ugliest and most unsuitable architectural constructions that it has known in its long history. Many

official buildings in the village look like police lines and sometimes even like public lavatories.'

Verrier Elwin after an earnest obsession with Christianity during the earlier part of his life, found himself towards its end, easier and more comfortable with Buddhist beliefs. Hinduism fascinated him but could not make him comfortable '...many Hindus,' he says, 'make you feel uncomfortable because they are so much 'better' than you are. They make you feel worldly and luxurious — one does not smoke, another drinks only milk, a third has taken a vow never to read novels. Those of us who do these things and many others sometimes find a Hindu friend just a little difficult to live up to.' None of these criticisms are specially profound or penetrating, but they are worth attending to because they are made by an erudite and cultured man who not only did a very great deal for our country but who chose, finally, to become one of us.

L. F.

## OUR REVIEWERS

A. G. NOORANI writes on politics for the *Indian Express*.

A. A. A. FYZEE is an authority on Islam and was lately Vice-Chancellor of Kashmir University.

S. P. AIYAR is the Edwin-Montagu lecturer in Political Science at the University of Bombay.

SUMA CHITNIS teaches Sociology at Bombay University.

STEWART MELLUISH works for the Oxford University Press, Madras.

S. NATARAJAN is a well-known journalist who is now working for the Council of Economic Education.

JILL HUGH-JONES has lived in India and reviewed books for several papers in Bombay.

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# CORRESPONDENCE

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Dear Mr. Padhye:

Of course, I make no claim to being a "Marxologist", and I would not have written *Encounter* if experts on the subject had been a bit more outspoken. My impression is that in this case the Communists are right: "alienation" was for Marx a passing phase, antedating his formulation of "scientific socialism". When liberal-minded Communists in the East seize upon the early Marx in the hope of finding support for liberalism in the canon, then I may disagree with them on academic grounds, but I must sympathize on human ones. In the West, however, there is no justification. Those who, like Formm, present "alienation" as the "true" Marxist doctrine are simply falsifying facts—I cannot describe this otherwise. We know who devised "alienation" (it was not Marx) and we know that Marx rejected it in no uncertain terms after a brief flirtation with it. On what grounds then is anyone entitled to ascribe it to Marx?

In answer to your query, therefore, I would say that I feel critical about any effort to pin the concept of "alienation" on Marx, unless it be done in a biographic fashion, i.e. in the process of describing Marx's intellectual evolution. I think you might find it interesting to study the whole history of "true socialism", for there you would indeed find the germ of the ideas of "alienation", many of which are more applicable to the modern world than surplus value, pauperization, concentration of wealth, etc. But then I find, as a historian, that in general the so-called "utopian" socialists proved much more realistic than the so-called "scientific" ones. There is more of St. Simon in the modern, mid-twentieth century world, than there is of Marx and Engels, labels and slogans notwithstanding.

1737 Cambridge St.  
Cambridge 38, Mass.  
Sept. 25, 1964.

Sincerely Yours,  
RICHARD PIPES

Dear friend Padhye:

I have returned from Vermont for the school year and found your piece on *The Marxian Image of Man*. In return I am sending you one essay I wrote which discusses in part the Economic-

Philosophical Manuscripts of the young Marx. As you will see (and as you probably know if you have read the new Introduction to the second edition of my *From Hegel to Marx* (Univ. Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich. paperback) I am in profound disagreement with your interpretation of the significance of these juvenalia. The essay is still incomplete and I have been making additions. If you are planning to publish your article anywhere please let me know so that I can make a reference to it. It deserves publication as a contribution to the discussion.

Our chief difference—or one of them—is that whereas you see the "cause" of alienation as this is understood in these mss. in the dynamics of artistic creation, I see in it the influence of the mythology of Genesis and the cause or punishment of work. A more idealistic notion than the one Marx expresses here would be hard to find. On the other hand, for the mature Marx, the life of the creative artist is the paradigm case for the *unalienated* man. See my concluding chapter on "The Intellectual in America" in *Political Power and Personal Freedom*.

With best wishes  
New York University,  
New York 3,  
Sept. 30, 1964.

Yours sincerely,  
SIDNEY HOOK

Sir,

I have read with interest Mr. Shashi Kant's 'Approach to History' (*Quest*, Autumn, 1964). He rightly regrets that there are the Hindu view, the Muslim view, the European view, the Marxist view of Indian history but there is none which is truly and dispassionately Indian. He further regrets that Indian history produced by Indian scholars since 1947 too is Europocentric. This, I must say, is, in the main, the outcome of historical circumstances. Not only the present structure of Indian history but also that of world history in broadest connotation implying thereby the history of all cultures including the West-European is the handiwork of European scholars and this structure would have been basically different had it been independently attempted by the Semites, the Dravidians and the Aryans. But this is somewhat unavoidable since we have not

received a historical construction in modern sense from any of these earlier peoples. Besides, man is somewhat limited by the view of dominant contemporary society. Only a superman with elements of mysticism can overcome the bondage of time and space and take a dispassionate view of the entire course of development. It is, however, difficult to conceive of such a man in any country or in any age really undertaking the task of historical construction. In consequence, history is bound to remain the handiwork of the most dominant culture-group at the moment or at least be influenced by its methodology.

Mr. Shashi Kant has, however, taken an uncharitable view of my thesis as presented in 'A Model for Indian History' (*Quest*, Autumn, 1963). My thesis was that since the Indus Valley Civilisation, conceivably a handiwork of the Dravidians, was lost long before the dawn of Indian history which was about the time of the Buddha, and since by that date the traditional Aryans too had outlived their genesis and growth phases which must have synchronised with the pre-Vedic and the Vedic ages and which must have ended with the age of the Upanishads and the synthesis of the Gita all of which are strictly speaking undated, it naturally follows that the traditional Indic society signifying thereby the Dravidian-Aryan was already in the grip of stagnation at the dawn of Indian history. My thesis ends at this point. This, however, should not mean that there is nothing remarkable in the subsequent periods of Indian history. During these periods the most remarkable thing to me at least is the virtual stagnation of the traditional Indic society which continues in a state of almost suspended animation without undergoing, like other culture-groups, pre-historic as well as historical, the experience of total extinction. The Hindu civilisation including the Buddhist as it flourished during B. C. 600 and A. D. 800 was the handiwork either of the Nandas, the Mauryas or the Guptas (all of whom rose to power outside the traditional zone of the Dravidian-Aryan society and imposed their own political structure of an Empire-state on the innumerable Aryan republics) or of the Kushanas and the Huns (the Rajputs?) all of whom came from outside. After the decline of the Hindu polity, the governance of the country clearly passed in succession into the hands of the Turko-Afghans, the Mongols and the Europeans. It is true that in each one of these phases the traditional Indian culture at times got mixed up with the imported ones — without of course losing its separate existence in stagnation — resulting in impressive works of art, architectuer

and literature, but it never regained its lost stature. I am looking forward to a historian who can really give a historically balanced and politically unbiased view of Indian history which is basically different from the one conceived in my thesis.

K. C. LALWANI

Dear Sir,

I was rather shocked to see in your autumn number a short story, 'Story of a mother', by Shri G. C. S. Marar. .... I am the real author of this story and it was written originally in Hindi and included in my collection with the title 'Hasna Bibi'. .... It is surprising that such naked plagiarism should have found place in a responsible paper like yours.

Kindly contact Mr. Marar and ask his statement and please print in your next issue about the mistake committed in your autumn issue. .... 14A/20 W. E. A.

New Delhi 5

15-12-64

Yours faithfully,

Sd/- RAM KUMAR

We have ascertained that Mr. G. C. S. Marar's 'Story of a mother' follows Mr. Ram Kumar's Hindi story pretty closely. We can only offer our apologies to the real author of the story for this deplorable mistake on our part committed in all good faith.

A copy of the above letter was sent to Mr. Marar and his explanation sought. Mr. Marar in his belated reply says: 'The story which I sent to you was based on a story I read in a Malayalam magazine. .... It was not an actual translation but only based on it. That is why I did not think it necessary to inform you. If I have erred in this, it is only because of my ignorance of the ethics of journalism'. Mr. Marar, however, does not mention the name of the Malayalam magazine, the date of the issue in question, nor the name of the Malayali writer of the story. On present data we can only conclude that Mr. Marar's story published in the last issue of *Quest* was an unacknowledged translation of a translation, presumably a case of double plagiarism.

We would welcome practical suggestions for guarding against such acts of plagiarism. An editor is in duty bound to expose them when he comes to know of them. But normally he accepts and should accept the bona fides of his contributors. Perhaps our kind readers can best help us by drawing our attention to any plagiarist writing published in *Quest* at the earliest possible opportunity with full particulars.

5 Pearl Road, Calcutta 17.

—EDITORS

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## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

---

**M. P. REGE** is Vice-Principal and Professor of Philosophy at D. E. Society's Kirti College, Bombay. The paper printed here was prepared for the Seminar on The Indian Tradition and Its Significance for Cultural Freedom convened by the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom in August 1964. An expanded version is going to be published by the Indian Renaissance Institute, Dehradun.

**HANS DAALDER** is Professor of Political Science at the University of Leiden, Holland. Author of *A Study of the British Cabinet System* (Stanford).

**PRABHAKAR PADHYE**, Marathi writer and journalist, is the Secretary, of the office for Asian Affairs, Congress for Cultural Freedom. The article printed here is taken from a forthcoming publication of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom on Communism.

**R. M. PAL** lectures on English Literature in Government College, University of Delhi.

**B. MUKERJI** is Director of the Chittaranjan National Cancer Research Centre, Calcutta. This article is based on an address to the 3rd Congress of the International Academy of Philosophy in Delhi (Philosophy of Biological Science Section).

**AGEHANANDA BHARATI** is Assistant Professor of Sociology, Syracuse University, New York. Author of *The Ochre Robe*.

**LOKENATH BHATTACHARYA**, Bengali poet and essayist, has translated Rimbaud's works into Bengali from the French.

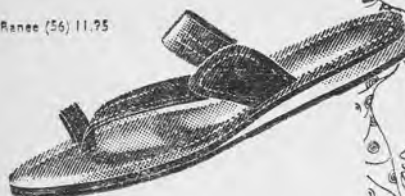
**MURLI DAS MELWANI** is a young businessman in Shillong, who has had more than a dozen short stories published in various Indian magazines. A previous story appeared in Quest 32.

**JAI NIMBKAR**, who describes herself as "a full-time housewife" took her M. A. in Sociology from the University of Arizona. A previous story appeared in Quest 26.

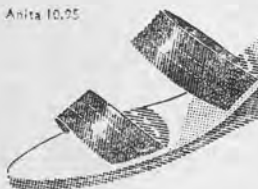
**EDWARD DIMMOCK** is Co-Chairman, Committee of South Asian Studies and Professor of Linguistics, University of Chicago. Has published a translation of *Vidya Sundar* and other 18th Century Bengali narrative poems, and has a collection of translation of Vaishnava lyrics in the Press.

**GIEVE PATEL** is a final year medical student of Bombay University.

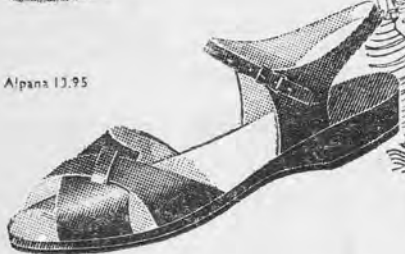
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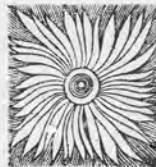
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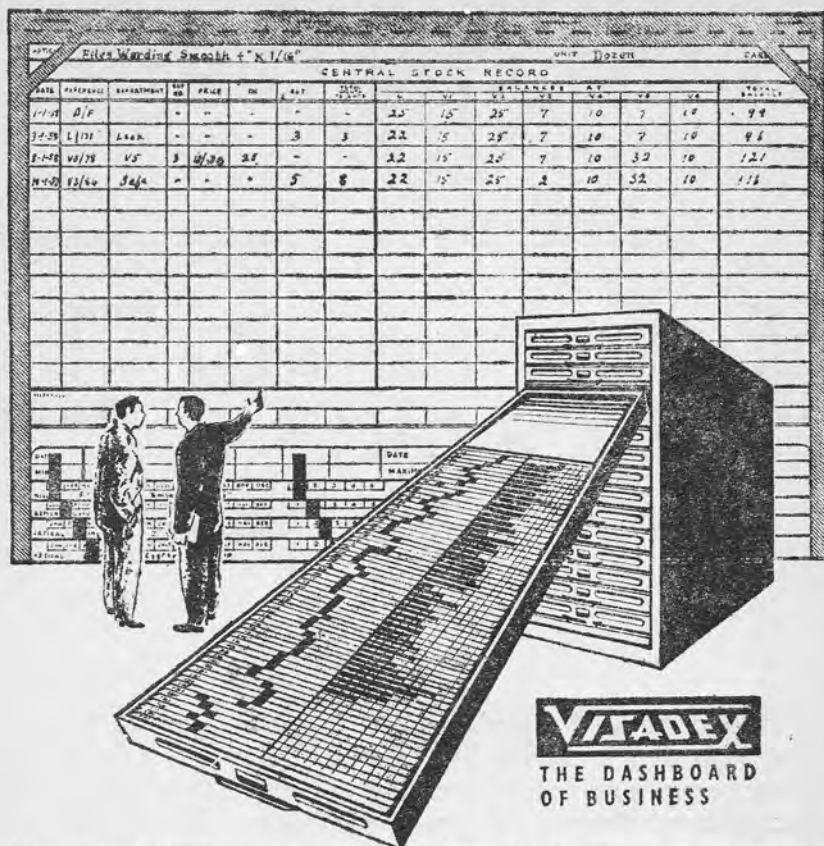


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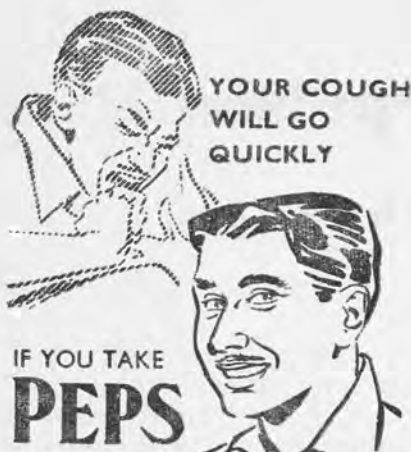
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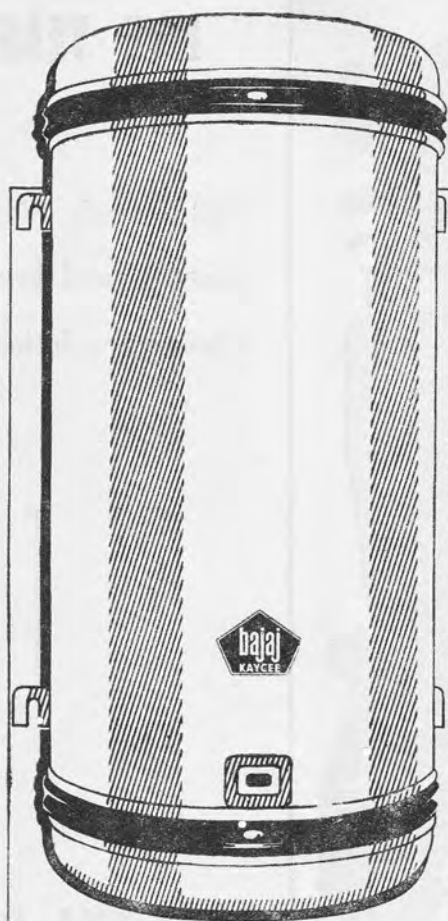
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## **TATA STEEL**



# how much energy from 750,000 tons of oil?

Enough to keep all the cars in India going for weeks—or to make one of them run non-stop for centuries! Seems a lot of energy? It is. 750,000 tons of oil is the annual capacity of the Noonmati refinery. But it is only a part of India's requirements! One reason why crores are spent to find new wells, set up new refineries, enlarge the distribution network. It is a gigantic enterprise—one in which L&T\*, with its drilling rigs and bits, valves, petrol pumps and geophysical process and telemetering instruments play an important role.

**When you next stop at a petrol pump, consider —**

**How long does it take to drill a hole—minutes? hours? days?**

Depends. If it's drilling for oil, it could be anything!

Minutes through soft soil, hours through hard rock. And the drill can go several thousand feet into the earth! Not any drill—only those special L&T drills and bits designed for the job!



**How much petrol to fill the tank?**

Say, 50 litres. And, imagine, all over the country thousands of such tanks are being filled. A round-the-clock job for petrol pumps—an important product backed by a famous name: Gilbarco!



**It's no child's play to stop the flow...**

Not when it is inflammable petrol! And that too, in an emergency—say, a fire at an oil refinery! When lives

are in danger, seconds count—and seconds are what it takes to close an Audco Valve. One reason why it is an important component at oil wells, refineries and pipe plants.



**Is there oil down below?**

Perhaps. But how does one find out! Experts drill a hole, fill it with charge and explode it. They record the shock-waves—but not with a stethoscope! Highly sensitive geophysical instruments are used to discover oil-bearing strata far, far below the earth surface—instruments like the ones made by the world-renowned Texas Instruments Incorporated.



**Larsen & Toubro Limited**



*Divisions: Drilling & Mining · Dairy & Refrigeration · Earthmoving & Agricultural Equipment · Heavy Plant · Industrial Appliances · Electrical Equipment & Switchgear · Instruments · Civil Engineering · Erection · Manufacture · Servicing.*

\*The complete mechanical construction and erection, including instrumentation of the Noonmati refinery was carried out by L&T