

quest 45

Dichotomy in Hindu Life

Nirad C. Chaudhuri

T. S. Eliot : A Personal Review

Nissim Ezekiel

A Conversation with T. S. Eliot

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The Changing Lushai Society

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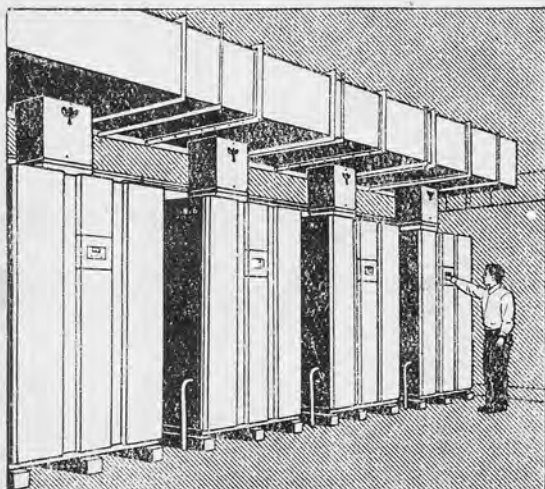
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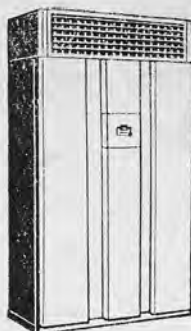
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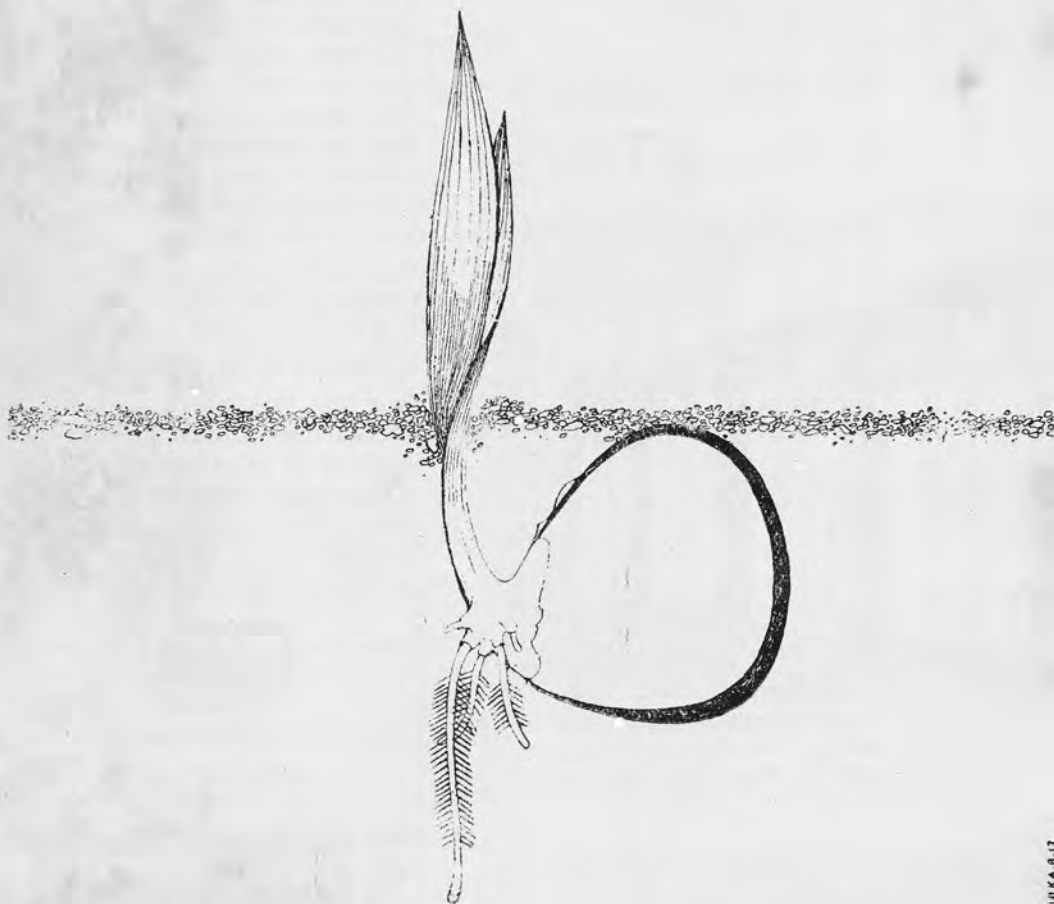
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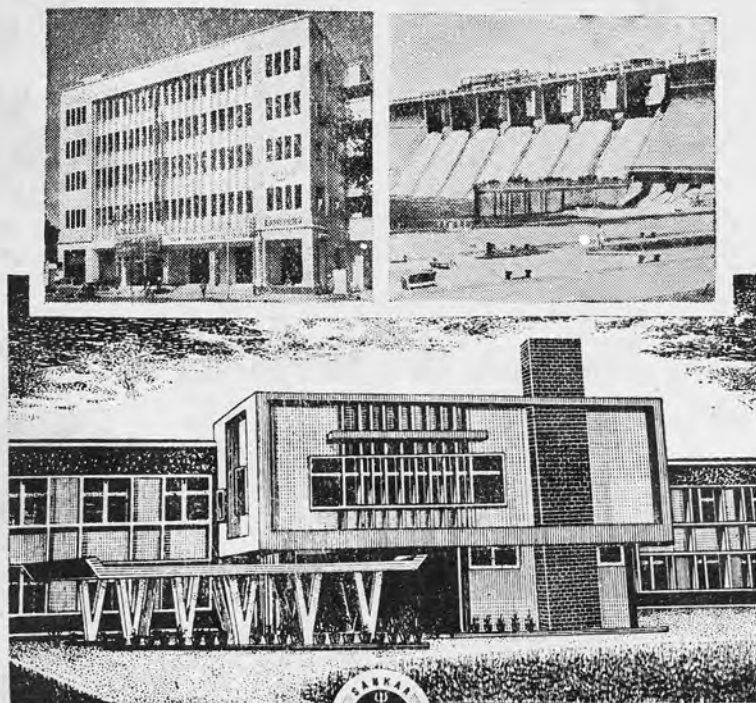
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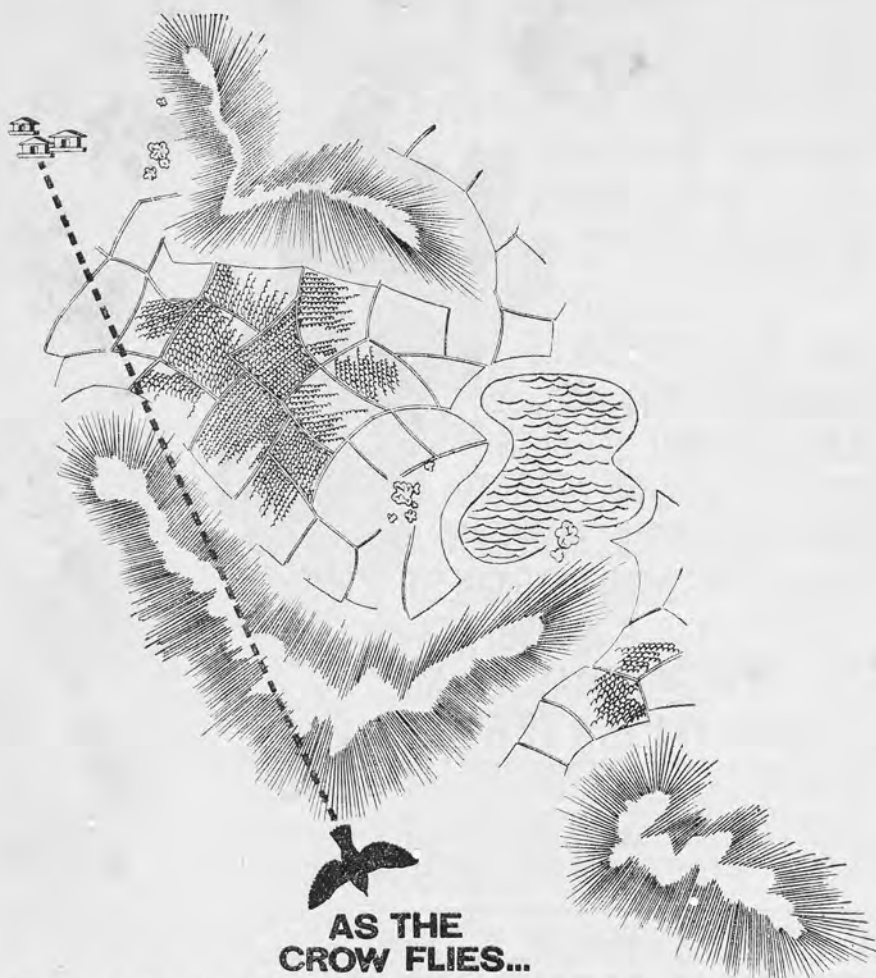


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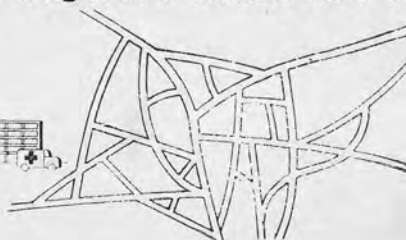


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Dichotomy in Hindu Life and Its Impact on India's External Relations

NIRAD C. CHAUDHURI

The writer does not apologize for using the word 'Hindu' in the heading instead of 'Indian.' The shyness of the Anglicized Hindus before this word is not even bashfulness of the bride, but a bizarre paradox of our intellectual behaviour, because it results in the obscuration, if not suppression, of the most massive, powerful, determinate, and active human phenomenon in India, the India of today as of the past – which is the Hindu way of life. The Anglicized Hindu does not know that the term 'Hindu' has no association of religion as distinct from secularity, and that its primary denotation is a simple definition of an ethnic group with all its outlooks and pattern of behaviour. In other words, it is just like the words 'British', 'French', or 'American'. In India there has never been an Indian pattern of life in which the different patterns of life presented by the diverse ethnic groups which constitute the Indian population, have been merged. So, to ignore the Hindu way of life is to reckon without the host, and to refuse to get introduced to the most powerful ethnic element in India. Or is it fear which keeps the Anglicized Hindus from employing the word? I think they are behaving in this matter like the common people who would not mention the dread names of 'tiger' or 'snake' at night. Neither tigers, nor snakes, nor the Hindus are going to be eliminated from our life by this subterfuge.—N.C.C.

IN one sense there is no point in speaking about dichotomy in any human being or group. All men, whether individuals or groups, are divided within themselves, pulled in opposite ways. Long before the appearance of modern psychology Shakespeare proclaimed the dichotomy through the mouth of Hamlet, and Pascal cried out, 'what a chimera is man, what a subject of contradictions!' But the dichotomy in Hindu life about which I am going to speak is of an altogether special kind. Its expression is a permanent civil war in Hindu life, in which nobody conquers, and both sides defeat each other. The tussle is so even that it induces a stalemate, and has the worst effect possible on the life of the Hindus. Through it, the expression of each of a pair of opposed inclinations or traits is reduced to its lowest denominator. In other words, the opposed traits cut off their own noses to spite the rivals.

This kind of dichotomy is so pervasive in the Hindu existence that it influences

every activity of theirs, and, today, after the attainment of political independence it is a powerful force in their political activities both in the domestic and the foreign sphere. In this article I shall describe a few of the opposites which are shaping the policies, but not all of them. The most important opposites which are operating in shaping more particularly the external relations of India today are the following: 1 – A sense of Hindu solidarity going with an uncontrollable tendency towards disunity within the Hindu order; 2 – Collective megalomania with self-abasement; 3 – Extreme xenophobia with equally extreme xenolatry; 4 – Authoritarianism with anarchic individualism; 5 – Violence with non-violence; 6 – Militarism with pacifism; 7 – Possessiveness with indifference to property owned; 8 – Courage with cowardice; 9 – Stupidity with cleverness. In this enumeration the positive trait is put first, and the correlative second, but they are on a par in the power to stultify each other. I am going to deal in this place only

with the first three pairs of traits. Let me set them out schematically:

SOLIDARITY → ← DISUNITY
 MEGALOMANIA → ← SELF-ABASEMENT
 XENOPHOBIA → ← XENOLATRY

SOLIDARTY AND DISUNITY

It is a perfectly valid thesis to hold that India is united and disunited at the same time. The unity is derived from the original colonization of the country by an incoming and conquering people, and the creation, through that process, of a massive and self-contained culture, whereas the disunities are the natural products of the evolution of the same people which created differentiations in every field—linguistic, social, cultural, and political. In other words, the unity is an expression of Hindu solidarity, and whatever organic unity exists in India today is a survival and residue of that old solidarity. It follows from this that the unity of India cannot be maintained except through the Hindu group consciousness, supplemented by a sort of Hindu imperialism. But it is precisely this stark proposition which the present rulers of India, in spite of being Hindu, will not recognize. This utterly theoretical non-recognition is depriving the present Government of India of whatever emotional strength their campaign for the integration of the people of India might have had.

But whatever the power behind the sense of Hindu solidarity, it was always separative, not unitive. By this I mean that it made all Hindus aware of their distinctiveness from the rest of mankind, and roused their sense of unity only when, as a group of Hindu nations, they were collectively threatened by non-Hindus. So it was in the past, and so it remains at present. The sense of Hindu solidarity is still a great force, and when it is fully brought into play its coercive power becomes irresistible. All Hindus stand in a

pack and bay together, *nemine contradicente et dissentiente*.

In this the Hindus present a diametrical contrast to the European peoples, and, more especially, the British people. If in India there ever were a Dreyfus case, to be Dreyfusard would have been to court suicide, metaphorically in any case. Let me also give some British examples. During the Boer War there were opponents of the war who were called 'Pro-Boers.' Among these was a future British Prime Minister. Again, from the first day of the British Empire in India to the last day, there were British politicians and publicists who voiced opposition to it publicly. Had Great Britain been India, Burke and Sheridan would have found themselves in the Tower soon enough, and later John Bright would have been hanged like John Brown.

Such an expression of opposition to a national ambition or interest, or even national folly, is inconceivable among the Hindus. A modern Hindu might be anything in his politics or social philosophy — Leftist, Socialist, Communist, Liberal, Centre, Right, Ultra, Anglicized, or orthodox, but when facing the non-Hindu world, he will be made to speak the same language and will also voluntarily speak it. Even when a man does not share a general attitude, any public dissent by him is not to be thought of. I know that many very high-placed Hindus disapproved of the occupation of Goa, but not one of them protested publicly. Such is the coercive power of the sense of Hindu solidarity that a Hindu's behaviour is controlled not only at the stage of action, but even at that of thought and feeling. This was seen all through the management of Hindu-Muslim relations before independence, as it is now being seen in the ordering of our foreign relations, particularly, the relations with China.

But the sense of Hindu solidarity, with all its emotionalism, projects itself in an outward direction, and does not bring them together for any national purpose within

the country. Thus the sense of solidarity contributes virtually nothing to internal nationalism. Naturally then its internal effect is seen for the most part only in the uniformity of psychological reactions and practical conduct which tend to be similar in similar circumstances all over India. Hindus from widely separated parts of India will give the same answers to a set of questions on moral and intellectual issues, not to speak of political ones.

The Hindu *apologia pro vita sua* is absolutely stereotyped all over India, and even those who brag about their emancipation from the Hindu traditions do not show themselves as un-Hindu in self-excusing. In comparable situations they also act alike. In short the unity is obedience to a pattern of behaviour which set in its mould long ago, and it is very close to the unity of the animals belonging to the same family or genus. Everybody knows how alike is the behaviour of all the cats from the domestic one to the tiger.

But all this unity is residual, whereas the disunity produced by the historical process is both living and continuous. Therefore that is the real evolutionary force in the development of the Indian population. It may be stated quite categorically that the natural development of the peoples of India is opposed to their social, linguistic, cultural, and political unity.

The diversities created by history have now become so hardened that the process cannot be reversed. In fact, no one recognizes this more unreservedly in practice than our present-day rulers. They have ever dismembered the two great bilingual provinces taken over from the British, namely, Bombay and Madras, and created linguistic succession states. The strength of the provincial sentiment is seen not only in the provinces, but in the Central Government of India itself. It has a very special cast, and everybody who knows anything about its inside working also known that it is a federation of ministries from the provinces. Almost all Central ministers try to make their departments

provincial by converting their personnel into provincial contingents.

The political unity of India, so far as it exists today, is a legacy of British imperialism, and till now the new Indian regime has made no contribution to it. On the other hand, the strong provincial sentiment is emerging as the true national passion in India, and its full emergence seems to be only a matter of time. Owing to the existence of this provincial sentiment as an incipient nationalism, all Hindus think of themselves primarily as Andhras, Assamese, Bengalis, Gujaratis, Hindustanis, Maharashtrians, Punjabis, Tamils, etc.

But the divisions of the Hindus do not end with the rival loyalties to the provinces on the one hand, and to India on the other. They disrupt even the allegiance to the province. Within each province there are social groupings which clash with one another in endless ways. There are classes and class interests, regions and regional interests, castes and caste interests. Below these there is not only stratification but even granulation — factions against factions, families against families, persons against persons, capable of harming all corporate effort. Extreme factionalism in Hindu life is both deep-seated and stable. There is hardly any sphere of public or private activity in which this evil is not present and assertive. It is seen as much in school or hospital management as in game clubs or amateur theatricals. The unceasing and unresting groupings and regroupings of the factions under the pressure of personal rivalries are kaleidoscopic in their changes, and if one can acquire the detachment of complete non-involvement, saying — 'plague on all of you!' he can even enjoy the colourful spectacle.

In the Hindu world all the narrower loyalties have a disastrous impact on all the larger. Modern Hindus have not heard the dictum — *Publicum bonum privato est praeferendum*, that is, the public good is to be given preference over the private. So, in every case when the two come into conflict, the private triumphs over the

public. To put it in explicit terms, a provincial interest will invariably prevail over one that is Indian, a caste interest over the provincial, the group's over the caste's, the individual's over the group's. The alertness and energy in pursuing an interest grow as the field of its operation narrows. The play of the Hindu loyalties may therefore be compared to the spiral expansion of a force radiating outwards from a centre. Their force weakens as they spread out towards the periphery, and the self is always the vortex.

MEGALOMANIA AND SELF-ABASEMENT

I come now to the second pair of contrasted characters: megalomania and self-abasement. The megalomania at its origin was natural. It sprang from Aryan pride and self-confidence — from the consciousness of racial and cultural superiority over a barbarous indigenous population, and also from the pride of power of a conquering and colonizing people. The Muslim and the British conquerors of India had exactly the same kind of feeling about themselves.

But the original megalomania took a negative and defensive form when the Hindus lost their vitality and strength and passed under the political domination of foreigners. They could not endure that without an illusion of greatness, which became the compensation for the humiliation. The Hindus could maintain their self-respect only by hypnotizing themselves into the belief that the barbarians had won solely through brute force and that they themselves were superior to the conquerors in every human attribute.

The Muslim attacks on the Hindus before their conquest of India proper, that is, from the eighth century onwards, went on reinforcing the emotional compensation until, by the time of the invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni, the Hindu megalomania had passed beyond anything in reason. Alberuni noted this and wrote:

'According to their belief, there is no other country on earth but theirs, no other race of man but theirs, and no created beings besides themselves have any knowledge or science whatever.'

Instead of being chastened by British rule, this self-conceit became even stronger. It was refurbished in a very paradoxical manner, and I give one example. After learning English we Bengali Hindus came really to believe that we knew the English language better than the English people, at least the English in India, whom we regarded as the butchers of grammar. This was the force behind the self-confidence of what was known as Babu English. A young nephew of mine told me after independence that he had been informed by the senior students of his school that the English people at home never used verbs, but only said 'I rice' when they really meant 'I eat rice.' Now, I cannot say that after having been taught English by my Bengali teachers in this atmosphere, I was not influenced by it, and the way I throw the weight of my English about was certainly fostered by that confident assumption.

But nothing Hindu can be anything Hindu unless set off by its opposite, and here, too, the contrast exists. The Hindu megalomania was always accompanied by the Hindu self-abasement, and even now it is. At the beginning the self-abasement was, however, a different feeling. It was a sense of the decline of worth, and it was a healthy feeling. It originated in the historical experience of the Aryans in India, and did not paralyse all effort at regeneration. For one thing, like all ancient peoples the Hindus placed their golden age in the past, and believed, without ever reading Hesiod, in a sequence of retrogression of the virtues. 'What a race the golden sires have left — worse than their fathers; and your offspring will be baser still,' said the Greek, and the Roman echoed,

*'Aetas parentum, peior avis, tulit
Nos nequiores, mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosiorum.'*

And that was only a paraphrase of the Greek saying.

The Hindus placed their degeneration in the fourth age of their collective existence, and the four stages of the retrogression were Satya, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali. The last age is the age of evil, and according to the Hindu reckoning it began on February 17, 3102 B.C., which shows how stupid it is to complain about our plight today. But apart from the general belief in retrogression the Hindus were certainly aware that something regrettable was happening to them in India; they were losing their original physical and moral stature. My mother used to tell me that after being thirteen cubits (or was it eleven?) in the Satya Yuga, we Hindus had come down to a mere three-and-a-half in the Kali Yuga. Alas! it is even less by the standard cubits for me!

On the whole, the old habit of self-abasement was a good moral influence, and inspired the Hindus to a sense and also emulation of the 'antique virtues.' In the nineteenth century, more especially, the Hindus had an interlude, absolutely exceptional in their history, of rational self-criticism. The sense of self-abasement was activated into something like the Judaic notion of repentance. Nothing is more striking in the emotional power behind the movement for Hindu regeneration and reformation of the nineteenth century than the burning eagerness to get rid of the dross accumulated through the ages, and to purify the Hindu existence in an idealistic fire. Not one great Hindu leader of that epoch denied the degradation, but they also believed in redemption, and were convinced that they could purge themselves and become new men.

But this phase of self-abasement is over. Hindu society has reverted to its passive form, which is the Hindu inertia or *Klaivya* at its worst. After independence the self-abasement is finding an expression which is incredible, and may even be called degraded. Certainly, it is opposed to every form of self-respect, and it is

difficult to understand how it can co-exist with the absurd national arrogance of the same epoch. One day I was waiting for a bus at one of the stops in Delhi, and though I knew what the bus service here was, I gave vent to some impatience at the delay. A Sikh, a very well-dressed man who spoke good English, heard me and observed, 'Why are you complaining? You are not in a foreign country.'

I give a few more instances of how our inferiority is taken for granted. Complain to any shopkeeper dealing in hardware that the nails he has supplied get bent at the first blow of the hammer, and he has his answer pat: '*Desi aisai hota.*' If you take back a box of pins to your stationer after discovering that every third pin is without a point, you will get the same reply, '*Desi aisai hota.*' The electrical mechanic has fitted a plug which needs the strength of the whole body to push into the socket and is torn from the flex at every effort to take out, but if you complain the man at once says, '*Desi aisai hota.*'

The most amusing instance of this plea that I heard was furnished by a difficulty with a water meter installed in my house. It was supplied by the municipality and showed a very high rate of consumption. The owner of the house complained to me because I have a small roof-garden. I myself went down and tested the meter, and found that it was registered 50% in excess. When I drew the attention of the plumber to it he at once replied, '*Desi aisai hota.*'

One or two additional illustrations. One day I was going in a car whose noiselessness and, more especially, absence of rattling in the body I noticed. The driver at once explained, 'Not assembled in India, Sir!' That accounts for the prices people are ready to give for a car sold by a diplomat, and also why people take such trouble to get a car from abroad paying any price. That also explains why housewives descend like locusts on anyone going abroad and request him to bring house-

hold appliances for them, especially knitting needles.

Now, I would not deny that the goods in question as made here are of bad quality. But what I object to is why our incapacity to make better things should be treated as axiomatic and no attempts should be made to remedy the shortcomings. But the answer to that is simple. The belief in our collective inferiority is so deep-seated that there is no real confidence that we can ever become efficient. Modesty, so lacking in the moral sphere, is certainly blatant in the practical and especially the industrial.

XENOPHOBIA AND XENOLOTRY

The last two paired traits I have to consider in this article, namely, xenophobia and xenolatry, are an extension and complement of the two I have just described. The self-regarding megalomania and abasement naturally change to xenophobia and xenolatry when the human group in question becomes other-regarding. The xenophobia is the outward projection of Hindu pride, and it developed under the impact of the foreign and, more especially, the barbarian invasions. On this Hindu attitude, too, I might cite Alberuni, to indicate the pitch to which the hatred had risen even before the Muslim conquest of the country. He wrote, '... they (the Hindus) will never stake their soul or body or their property on religious controversy. On the contrary, all their fanaticism is directed against those who do not belong to them, against all foreigners. They call them *Mlechchha*, i.e. impure.'

Alberuni went on to say that, so far as the people of the Middle East were concerned the Hindu hatred was at first directed against the fire-worshipping Persians, and then, he added, 'came Islam; the Persian empire perished, and the repugnance of the Hindus against foreigners increased more and more when the Muslims began to make their inroads into their country.' After the invasions of Sul-

tan Mahmud, Alberuni wrote, 'the Hindus became like atoms of dust scattered in all directions ... and their scattered remains cherish, of course, the most inveterate aversion towards all Muslims.'

The xenophobia continued through the period of Muslim rule and acquired a new lease of life with the establishment of British power. I shall quote an early testimony to the substitution of the object of hatred. It comes from Abé Dubois, who wrote about the customs and manners of the Hindus in the early part of the nineteenth century. He draws attention, like Alberuni, to 'the hate and contempt which they cherish against all strangers, and especially against Europeans.'

He adds the revealing comment: 'Under the supremacy of the Brahmins the people of India hated their government while they cherished and respected their rulers; under the supremacy of Europeans they hate and despise their rulers from the bottom of their hearts, while they cherish and respect their government.' One may say that with independence the Hindu mind has gone back to its pre-British norm. Nehru has been apotheosized, temples were erected to him even in his life-time, but it is hardly possible to sound the depths of the contempt and hatred for the present government in the hearts of ordinary and true Hindus.

The anti-British form of the xenophobia became part of the nationalism of modern Hindus as soon as they acquired the nationalistic sentiment. As the nationalist movement gained strength, the anti-British xenophobia also became assertive. After independence, the emergence of a low form of xenolatry has somewhat obscured the xenophobia. But it is very much alive beneath the surface, and comes out at a slight provocation. I unfortunately provided one such. I wrote a sincerely appreciative account of the English people and their culture after paying a short visit to England in 1955. The book, which was published in 1959, got uniform abuse in the Indian Press, and the malice of the

personal attacks had to be seen to be believed possible. In a respectable newspaper I was described as a dog wagging its tail, though slapped by its master. I had, of course, committed an unforgivable offence against the code of Hindu ethics in respect of foreigners — I had praised a foreign culture with sincerity, which no Hindu is allowed to do. Interested praise of foreign nations is a different matter.

But the xenolatry when voiced by the Hindus amongst themselves and privately, is perfectly sincere, and they prove their sincerity by acting on what they say. If a foreign customer, for instance, comes into a shop, say, the cottage industries emporium in Delhi, the salesmen, and more particularly the girls, will immediately desert the Indian customer even in the middle of a transaction and rush to the Mlechchha. In fact, the xenolatry is as natural as its twin brother, xenophobia. If the one was excited by a defiance of the foreigner, the other was the product of defeatism in the same situation. Even before the Muslims had conquered India the Hindus had come to feel that their new enemy was irresistible, and in the first century and a half of British rule its stability was founded on the unshaken Hindu belief in British invincibility, which did not clash with the moral contempt for the British because it operated in the amoral world of power.

I am not, however, going to deal with the xenolatry as it was during Muslim and British rule. With a set of foreigners obviously superior to their native subjects in many things, the feeling of inferiority was, partly at all events, natural. If it was created by defeatism, it also showed some moral sensibility. It gave expression to admiration for the foreigner's *virtus* as well to regret for the loss of the same *virtus* in themselves. So long as foreign rule lasted the xenolatry had a partially corrective effect. It stimulated emulation. We were piqued to do better than usual both by the foreigner's example and his contumely.

But after the coming of political in-

dependence the xenolatry is showing itself not only in a more pronounced form, but also with an inexplicably servile complexion. The new xenolatry is unashamed, blatant, rampagious. It is morally degrading and economically ruinous. That for the practical ends of government and economic reconstruction the Hindus would so completely brush aside their megalomania is a thing which no one would have found possible to believe before independence. Yet this worship of the foreigner in every field is as indisputable as it is strange. It is more assertive in the ruling class than in the ordinary Indian.

This adulation of the foreigner in the Hindu ruling order, whose self-complacency and even self-conceit hardly touch any sea-floor, is a paradox, almost a perversity. A distinguished Indian economist once told me after his return from a congress of economists in the Western World that man for man no Indian economist was inferior to any foreign economist. Yet is there any country in the world which makes use of a larger number of foreign economists? In the field of technological development our rulers will never entrust any project to an Indian if they can get a foreigner. They will not employ any Indian if they can give the job to a foreigner, and in any case they will not pay the Indian half the amount they are ready to give to any foreigner.

I give one other example of the degrading xenolatry. Soon after independence, at the instance largely of Nehru, a laboratory for research in physics was established in Delhi. In the orthodox imitative style it was called the N.P.L. Those of us who took interest in the institution came to know soon enough that not much was being done in it. But our Government obviously looked at the matter differently and went on bragging about India's eminence in physics, until suddenly they discovered that all was not well with the laboratory. So, to put it in proper shape, they at first invited Professor Blackett to become its Director and when he would

not accept the offer they brought him over to look into the working of the institution and report with a view to get it going.

When he was doing that I one day met him at a party. As a young man he was in the navy and was present at the battle of Jutland. He and I were talking about the course of the battle, and particularly about the squadron in which his ship, the *Barham*, was when an acquaintance of mine came along to say that he wished to introduce a high Indian official to the Professor. This official turned out to be the highest permanent civil servant in the Ministry which had brought over Professor Blackett. When the Professor learned that he said, 'Then it will be you who will read my report.' The dignitary beamed with pleasure. I could not detect any embarrassment in his manner, nor any sign of a realization that the Professor's commission was in itself a disgrace to the Ministry, to the Government, to Indian scientists, and to the country. If I, Nirad Chaudhuri, had found that I could not work the N.P.L. with Indians I would have blown it up with dynamite. But perhaps this bravado

is due to the fact that Indians of my generation were brought up on *Self-help* by Dr. Samuel Smiles, whom it has now become the fashion to deride.

Let me tell all timid Indians and all patronizing foreigners, whom I hear saying, 'But you cannot do without us,' that however uninstructed or inexperienced we might be at this stage, we really do not need the kind of help our Government is begging from every country. In my view the help is not even the spoon-feeding of babies, it is the forced feeding of geese by the dealers in foies gras. And the degraded begging has been made even more degraded by the importation of such English illiteracies as 'Know-how.' Have we forgotten our pride in Babu English, too?

This has been only a sampling of the dichotomy in Hindu life, offered as the canvassing of a working hypothesis. I do not think I have to expatiate on the relationship of these expressions of dichotomy in our foreign relations. That will have become obvious.

T. S. Eliot — A Personal Review

NISSIM EZEKIEL

ELIOT'S death may be followed by a restoration, at least partial, of his influence as a poet. During the past decade or more, it has declined considerably. English verse of the fifties and sixties owes little to it. Eliot wrote nothing in this period comparable to his best work. The *Quartets* were completed in 1943. Except for two or three poems, which are very slight, Eliot concentrated on drama but surely did not match the achievement of *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion*. The critical essays collected in 1957, *On Poetry and Poets*, for all their sound sense and persuasiveness, are not in the same class as *Selected Essays* which appeared in 1932 and was reprinted with some additions two years later.

The earlier critical writing is *seminal*, the earlier poetry is *revolutionary*, the earlier plays are *pioneering*. To recognise this is not to deny the enormous interest and worth of everything Eliot wrote, from which I exclude only his last play, *The Elder Statesman*. No other poet, playwright or critic can be imagined as the author of the acknowledged Eliot masterpieces. The later writing can be imagined as that of an intelligent disciple, though I do not intend this to be taken literally.

Eliot's poetry from 1917 to 1943 is like the Himalayan mountains, with the Everest of *The Waste Land*, several all but inaccessible peaks, a score or so of attractive but treacherous ranges (A *Song For Simeon*, *Marina*, *et al*) and a miscellany of small, steep hills obscured in mist. The *quartets* form a spacious, high plateau among the clouds. The air is rarefied but bracing, the winds are strong and chilly. The temptation to remain in this mountain-scape and to accept it as the only sover-

ign territory of poetry was irresistible to several generations of readers. Matthiessen's book on Eliot was sub-titled 'An Essay on the Nature of Poetry'. Eliot's criticism strengthened the temptation greatly, so that these readers saw the literary tradition as Eliot saw it. They saw the Metaphysicals and the Elizabethan playwrights and Milton and Dante and Baudelaire and Dryden the way Eliot saw them. As Blackmur puts it, Eliot became 'a literary dictator unexampled in our times.' When, after the second World War, the dictatorship of the poetry ceased to work, the critical assessments continued to be effective and were modified only to the extent that Eliot modified them as, for example, in the notable case of Milton.

To look back from the present, 'liberated' vantage point, on *Prufrock and Other Observations*, is still to wonder at the elements in it which created the original disturbances. Not that anyone today would arrive at 'drunken helot' as an appropriate characterisation of the poet. But despite the explanations and justifications of all that obviously required explanation and justification, the *Prufrock* poems appear curiously independent of their special techniques. There is no reason why poems should not be called 'observations' nor any convincing reason why they should be. The quotations from Italian, French and Greek, the fragmentary sequences, the prose poem, the rhapsody that does not rhapsodise, the preludes that end by telling you to 'Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh' because

'The worlds revolve like ancient women
Gathering fuel in vacant lots,'

the nine and thirteen-line poems with their

air of incompleteness as well as of speaking volumes, the pervasive irony of a bitter and battered romanticism which is barely bodied forth in discontinuous passages and broken phrases, all these are still as baffling as ever. And within that baffled area of consciousness, which resists rationalisation more than ever before, the poetic phrases penetrate through to the subconscious and there establish their power. The poems as wholes demand aids to understanding, and God knows they have been provided. But within each poem, independent of the whole, reinforced only by the tone of the whole, there is enough, as it were, to affect deeply. I must confess that all I have read on Eliot has not carried me much further, in response, to that initial and repeated experience. I don't care for the madman who shakes a dead geranium. I don't know how one would turn to nod good-bye to La Rochefoucauld (even after I had read him) if the street were time and he at the end of the street. I am not amused in the palace of Mrs Phlacus, at Professor Channing-Cheetah's (the names seem to me chosen with intolerable smugness).

So, also, in the poems of 1920 and in *The Waste Land* I've always found much that is tiresome, though I am an inexhaustible reader of all the commentaries that make the tiresome significant. It is significant to me—in the commentaries, not in the poems. Leavis wrote in 1932 about the 'rich disorganisation' of *The Waste Land*. The phrase, and the attribution of that which it describes to 'the present state of civilization' has never convinced me. Graham Hough's cogent argument against the poem's technique has a limited appeal for me only because it tends towards a total repudiation. I think it is possible to make out a strong case for appreciating the poem despite its disorganization, concentrating on its richness. Cutting out the connecting links, which was Pound's doing, did not help the poem except by encouraging speculation on what these links may be. Not only of those cryptic passages which even Leavis could not swallow but

of the poem as a whole is his comment true, that Eliot 'has not done as much as he supposes'. The passage to which Leavis objects reads:

la la
To Carthage then I came
Burning, burning, burning, burning
O Lord Thou pluckest me out
O Lord Thou pluckest
burning

The allusions to St. Augustine and the Buddha are pathetically inadequate here. And a similar comment may be made on several other parts of *The Waste Land*. Nevertheless, I consider it a great poem, not the oddity it is now widely considered to be. It is great because of the 'unity of a personality' expressed in it, which finally overcomes its disorganization, once the requisite erudition is acquired by the reader to grasp that unity. Both the themes and the meaning of their juxtaposition can be related to Eliot's central poetic and spiritual concern in writing the poem. This approach may prove more fruitful than the attempt to accept the technique as valid as a whole, which leads to desperate measures in explanation. Certainly all allusions need to be followed up, but Eliot's are not mere allusions, they are frequently the very stuff of the poetry. This unique mode of treating allusions is not justified by explaining the allusions.

Eliot said in his essay on Dante that 'genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood'. Perhaps one should qualify this by saying, if it is not impertinent to do so, that what is so communicated is less than what is understood, that understanding alone completes the communication in so far as it can be completed. Eliot's masterly rhythms and images, harnessed to a style often particular to a poem—*Ash Wednesday*, *The Hollow Men*, *Coriolan*—point to a complex order of attitudes and values, a thoroughly integrated order. We experience that order in responding to the poetry, and go on to explore the concepts which form a part of it.

Eliot's close-knit complex of attitudes is not justly summed up in his description of himself as 'a classicist in literature, royalist in politics, and Anglo-Catholic in religion.' Those positions, as elaborated in *The Idea of a Christian Society* and *Notes Towards The Definition of Culture* are valuable to me only to the extent that they make the most respectable case conceivable for a non-democratic, religious social organisation. There is no necessary connection between the idea of such an organisation and Eliot's view of literary tradition. It is in fact painful to compare Eliot's liberating conception of the literary heritage with his constricting dogmas of the human heritage as a whole. Further, the theory of how individual talent ought ideally to operate, and the vision of existing monuments modified by the introduction of a really new work of art among them, is so abstract and metaphysical that it adds little to our appreciation of specific masterpieces.

Yet, the vision exalts. It offers a programme for the poet which makes the maximum possible demand on his capacity to think and feel by defining his relation to the past and to the present. The poet is not to take the past as 'an indiscriminate bolus' nor submit to purely subjective leanings towards particular poets or periods. He is asked to consider the mind of his culture as more important than his own, and to grasp the content of its continuity. How he should do this is his business. But he must do it if he is to be a serious poet. In Eliot's poetry, one feels the weight of this programme as he uses it, which is not of course the only way in which the programme is usable. The particular religious, moral and social ideas that Eliot developed need not be insisted on while responding to his poetry, even if we acknowledge that they exert their pressure in it:

The heavy burden of the growing soul
Perplexes and offends more, day by day;
Week by week, offends and perplexes more
With the imperatives of 'is and seems'

And may and may not, desire and control.
The pain of living and the drug of dreams
Curl up the small soul in the window seat
Behind the Encyclopaedia Britannica.
Issues from the hand of time the simple soul
Irresolute and selfish, misshapen, lame,
Unable to fare forward or retreat,
Fearing the warm reality, the offered good,
Denying the importunity of the blood,
Shadow of its own shadows, spectre in its
own gloom,
Leaving disordered papers in a dusty room;
Living first in the silence after the viaticum.

This feeling can be found in all kinds of poetry, is not dependent on the poet's ideology. Eliot's poetry does not hesitate to express doctrine, but that is a different matter. It is true of all good poetry that it expresses allegiances transcending the poet's doctrine. In Eliot, the doctrine and the poetry have particular qualities of condensation and implication, which we enjoy or resist, deliberately created in response to the situation of poetry and of humanity in Eliot's time. Auden called it 'the right language for thirst and fear'. It is also, as even the severest critics of Eliot allow, the right language, though not the only language, for the years between the two world wars.

This language in its flexibility, and the 'philosophy' in its mature completion are fully effective in the later poetry. More than twenty years ago, Eliot published the last of a series of long poems which he collectively entitled *The Four Quartets*. The series began with *Burnt Norton* eight years earlier, and continued with *East Coker*, *The Dry Salvages* and *Little Gidding* in that sequence. These poems have an obvious unity in that they are each divided into five parts, are named after places which are of some historic and spiritual significance, and deal with the same theme or set of themes. The quartets also have subtler structural affinities besides the fact that each part of any one poem is related in form and substance to the corresponding parts of the other three poems. The relationship is not mechanical, and we must be prepared in looking for unity and

wholeness to be surprised by variations which partially or radically break the pattern.

The word quartet applies both to a four-person team of musicians performing a musical composition and to the composition itself. The latter comes under the heading of chamber music, that is music intended to be played to a private audience in an atmosphere of some intimacy. By using the word quartet Eliot suggests the musical structure and ethos of this poetry besides providing a clue to the techniques of language and symbolism.

Burnt Norton is the name of a Gloucestershire manor near which Eliot stayed, and it may be presumed that he chose it for the sound as well as because it may be for him associated with particularly significant spiritual experiences. It begins with a direct statement about time, which later proves to be a major preoccupation of the quartet and is followed by apparently puzzling references to a rose garden. Part two begins with a cosmic lyric, so to speak, and continues with a statement regarding mystic experience which we find is one of the central concerns of the *Four Quartets*. Part three contains recommendations for making the mystic experience, and the next part is a very short lyric whose rationale is difficult to understand but which certainly celebrates the nature of sensuous beauty. In conclusion, the poet crystallises a whole host of images with a wide range of references, from the problem of communication through language to the essential quality and function of love. *Burnt Norton* ends as it began, with an image of time and its meaninglessness outside a spiritual pattern of life which is quietly asserted throughout.

Of course not all the poetry in *Burnt Norton* or in the rest of the quartets is in the abstract terms I have used to describe it, but some of it is, in fact much of it is. Eliot moves swiftly from the abstract to the concrete and back again, often in a way that seems disconcerting to many

readers. The poem opens with the now well-known lines,

Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past.

And then without warning we are plunged into a series of concrete images, though in this case their purpose is quite clear:

Footfalls echo in the memory
Down the passage which we did not take
Towards the door we never opened
Into the rose garden.

Unless we can relate the abstract and the concrete in those passages it is not possible to note the progress of the argument, which is a poetic argument basically, though alive with religious and philosophical speculation. There are also allusions which need to be elucidated... Heraclitus, Bergson, Proust and the Christian point of view. I think the best approach to these intricacies is through the rhythm of the poetry and the clarity of the images towards the meaning, which cannot be grasped at once and may often seem intolerably elusive.

The rhythm is of at least two kinds, both of which are easily apprehended and appreciated. There is the rhythm of a thoughtful conversational voice, tentatively feeling its way towards the truth, and there is the incantation, the song-like rhythm. The latter occurs at least once in each quartet and is sometimes repeated with sufficient modifications to make it somewhat removed from the incantation but not from the lyrical in the conventional sense. The range within each kind of rhythm is of course very great.

Ultimately, we cannot avoid returning to the search for meaning. It is necessary to isolate some lines, to tease out their meaning by relating them to their context and to see whether by this process we do not succeed in illuminating the whole passage and much of the quartets as a unity. Take, for instance, the following two lines from *Burnt Norton*:

I can only say, there we have been: but
I cannot say where.
And I cannot say, how long, for that is to
place it in time.

Perhaps it is a safe interpretation to say that the *it* referred to is the mystic moment of experience, which is timeless in duration, whether or not it lasts very long, but which throws light on all human experience. The mystic moment cannot be described either, but the poet says that it is possible, nevertheless, to assert its reality. The whole of the preceding passage of verse and the one that follows can now be understood in the light of this interpretation. I have not the space to quote at anything like the length required but even a few phrases will do: 'neither from nor towards'; 'the still point'; 'the inner freedom from the practical desire'; 'a white light still and moving'. Later in the same poem we find the idea and the images elaborated in terms of a Chinese jar which 'still moves perpetually in its stillness' and we understand that the reference is to art. The five parts of *Burnt Norion* are held thus together through the underlying theme of human destiny, and they are further integrated by carefully organised techniques, which include a characteristic imagery.

I do not propose to give an account of each poem in this way but only to indicate the points at which the poet makes poetic and dramatic advances in his thought, each advance being more than merely an addition. For instance, the opening statement of *Burnt Norton* is matched in *East Coker* with a magnificent passage of verse which includes not only the earlier themes of time and the pattern of meaningful living, but also of material and spiritual regeneration, of marriage as a 'dignified and commodious sacrament', of the rhythms of living and of dancing and of the seasons. In *Little Gidding* there is a further extension of subject, in the comparable section as well as in the others, which includes the conviction that the purposes of individual

life are altered in the living and can be kept moving in the right direction through prayer, and freed from 'sense and notion'. We are back at the mystic centre of the four quartets but it has now become greatly strengthened. Despite the abstruse density of the poetry as a whole the major statements are very simple indeed, not only in conception but also in language:

'And what you thought you came for
Is only a shell, a husk of meaning
From which the purpose breaks only when
it is fulfilled
If at all. Either you had no purpose
Or the purpose is beyond the end you figured
And is altered in fulfilment.'

The conjunction of the beginning and the end, the sense of the rose garden, which is innocence, the awareness of the timeless moment which in terms of Christianity gives meaning to time, of the ways that lead to the mystic experience which has affinities with art and music, all these themes are drawn together and integrated in the last of the quartets, *Little Gidding*. The techniques too are integrated, the concluding phrase being, 'the fire and the rose are one', thus asserting the unity of being and of experience.

The quartets are a curious, a successful mixture of the personal and the universal. Eliot makes room in his observations and speculations not only for family history and the European-English-Christian tradition in which he feels involved but also for direct allusions to his own career. There is for instance the reference in *The Dry Salvages* to his feeling that the twenty years between the two world wars were largely wasted. Even if they were not, the statement is important for the sudden intrusion of a purely private awareness into larger issues, making them human and poignant.

Since it is not possible by interpretation to get close enough to the heart of great poetry, one has eventually to refer to our direct experience of it as our justification for discourse. Experience of the quartets

as poetry, in which is integrated the totality of Eliot's vision of life, awakens the reader to that part of the human heritage which is in danger of total eclipse in our time. In that sense, Eliot has relived the past and makes us relive it to. He had once said that in great poetry we are not persuaded to share the beliefs of the poet but to understand what it feels like to hold those beliefs. If the reader grasps that point, he will not be impatient with the allusiveness of the quartets but on the other hand will regard it as playing a necessary and fruitful role in the poetry. Eliot said that the poetry does not matter, and he is right if he means that through poetry we experience a reality that is surely greater than the poetry. But then only great poetry can point to a reality greater than itself. Which is good enough reason for our returning to it as often as possible.

Eliot's drama, for me, has always meant *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion*. These two plays are equally interesting as plays and as poetry. They fully support his theory of the relation between drama and poetry, they exemplify in a variety of forms the kind of language Eliot had always championed as appropriate to the twentieth century stage. Eliot's poetry prior to the *Four Quartets* was often dramatic, not only in spirit but formally, the verse was the speech of characters or described them. The vitality of the language in Eliot's first two plays is a sign of the vitality of the plays themselves.

The three later plays seem to me inferior as drama, and the language, correspondingly, is in decline. The only poetry that is exciting as poetry in *The Cocktail Party* is not by Eliot but is a quotation. The rest is, as a rule, like this:

Julia: Edward, How lucky that it's raining!
It made me remember my umbrella,
And there it is! Now what are you two
plotting?
How very lucky it was my umbrella
And not Alexander's—he's so inquisitive.

There is a trivialisation here which is not only of language but of the spiritual concern from which the play is shaped. In *The Family Reunion*, even the most ordinary statements have a tautness and rhythmic strength which distinguish them from the ordinary statements of everyday life. For instance:

Mary, my dear,
Did you arrange these flowers? Just let
me change them.
You don't mind, do you? I know so much
about flowers.
Flowers have always been my passion.

And the language of *The Family Reunion* is always trying to get beyond this, straining at the necessary leash of banality. In the later plays, banality becomes the rule against which there is deliberately no straining. So it becomes flabby, intolerably so in *The Confidential Clerk* and a parody of itself in *The Elder Statesman*.

With the decreasing complexity of the plays, the humour, the irony, the pathos become thin, the tragic note disappears altogether. I feel that if the three later plays had been a real extension of the preliminary achievement, Eliot as a dramatist would have proved a much greater influence in the theatre. As it is, he appeared to demonstrate the success of his attempt to make poetry unrecognisable as poetry on the stage. This success appealed neither to poets nor to dramatists. The aim, in fact, was a regression from Eliot's view of poetic drama as an organic whole, with language as its *natural* medium.

A Conversation with T. S. Eliot

LESLIE PAUL

*I have always been interested in the great and lively sweep of T. S. Eliot's ideas and interests, and usually take the opportunity to discuss them with him on the too-rare occasions when we meet. His political ideas, for instance—aristocratic and theocratic in a time barren of political ideas—I think fascinating and seminal and too little pursued. In 1958, I arranged with the European Service of the BBC a discussion with Eliot that would cover many of his ideas and activities. I hoped to draw out the whole politico-literary, and Christian, man. We talked in our shirt-sleeves in the board room of Faber and Faber on the hottest London day I can remember. The first part of our conversation, mostly about Dr. Erich Kahler's *The Tower and the Abyss*, is lost forever because the technicians were so interested that they omitted to switch on the tape, and we were wise enough not to attempt to repeat a spontaneous discussion. Fortunately, the omission was soon discovered, but it accounts for the seeming abruptness of my first question. For reasons that are now obscure to both Eliot and myself, the conversation was not published at the time.—L.P.*

Leslie Paul: The first question I want to ask you is really a political one. In *The Idea of a Christian Society*, which you wrote almost twenty years ago, you said, I think, that the choice before us was between the formation of a new Christian culture and the acceptance of a pagan one. Do you still feel that this is the choice before us?

T. S. Eliot: Well, I don't know whether or not I'd use those exact words. I think I should prefer now to say a new or renewed Christian society rather than 'culture,' but I never remember exactly quotations from my own works—neither can I identify them. However, in any case, I no longer feel that the most likely alternative is a pagan culture. I shouldn't use that phrase any longer. You see, we've had since I wrote—or it was going on then—the attempt in Hitler's reign to foster a Germanic culture, and that, if it wasn't altogether an attempt to suppress Christian culture, was at least an attempt to bypass it.

Paul: A deliberately pagan one.

Eliot: Yes. A conscious attempt to be pagan. Well, the doctrines of this non-

Christian pan-Germanism appear to us ridiculous, I think, if we read their pronouncements nowadays. They're merely ludicrous. There's still going on today, of course, the attempt of Communism to foster a kind of religion of humanity...

Paul: That's not pagan?

Eliot: I think the real paganism is something which arises naturally, like the culture among primitive peoples. And, of course, the religion of humanity turns out often to be a religion of inhumanity, but it is an attempt to replace the religious emotions by a kind of deification of an abstract humanity. We need a new word rather than 'pagan,' but even so what I'm attempting to get at is this: that what we notice about the emotions aroused by either Nazism or Communism, emotions which attempt to replace religious emotion, is that they can only be kept alive—kept hot—by presenting always the image of an enemy; an enemy and an earthly god, I think. Well, the earthly god is inseparable somehow from the enemy. He only remains in the position of a god so long as there is an enemy.

Paul: You're speaking of Stalin or Hitler?

Eliot: Yes. Now, I don't think that either of these religions should properly be called pagan, but if you do call them pagan then we must say that they're inferior as religions to genuine primitive pagan religion. And I don't think that they can survive. That is my point. The religious fervour can't last as time more and more shows the speciousness of the doctrines. Supposing Communism became so fully established that there was no longer any enemy of it remaining—though possibly the enemy would always have to be invented—if there was no enemy remaining, there would be no religion left. It would merely become another regime of some people controlling others, with no fervour about it at all. In short, I don't believe that any religion can survive which is not a religion of the supernatural and of life after death in some form.

Paul: That means goodbye to Auguste Comte?—and all the ideas of a sort of religion of humanity?

Eliot: Yes, It's very instructive to study Comte and to see how rather pathetic it looks nowadays—this ambitious attempt to do something which cannot be done by direct human willing.

Paul: I see that. It has the pathos of some sort of faded fashion now, doesn't it? Well, there's a question that's begun to perturb me very much. It is not so much this business of a new pagan culture but rather what I would like to call a 'cultureless culture'—on the lines of the 'foodless food' which I think Orwell spoke about.

Eliot: Yes, exactly.

Paul: What I really mean by that, I I suppose, is this mass entertainment culture which is absolutely, as far as I can see, without any values at all—and yet is getting hold of the world. I think that it seems to be part of a whole process of spiritual drying-up, as if man no longer possessed or even wanted to possess any kind of spiritual inwardness, as though the whole business of inwardness or spiritua-

lity just bored him stiff. . . . Well, you're the poet of *The Waste Land* and what you have to say on this ought to be important.

Eliot: I do think that what you are pointing to is exactly what seems to me to be happening. One sees so many signs in literature and in the theatre of absence of values. The only values expressed in many plays and novels are, I suppose, the values indicated by their absence. I think that a good deal of what's happening now was foreshadowed long ago. You know Ortega y Gasset's remarkable book, *The Revolt of the Masses*? It was published in the '20s, but it is certainly worth rereading now. There's a deterioration, it seems to me, in the quality of amusement as it becomes more mass entertainment and as the media for mass entertainment become more highly developed. The cinema first; now, television. It's profitable to appeal to the largest audience and therefore to the lowest common denominator. I think that the end of a purely materialistic civilization with all its technical achievements and its mass amusements is—if, of course, there's no actual destruction by explosives—simply boredom. A people without religion will in the end find that it has nothing to live for. I did touch on this problem a good many years ago in an essay I wrote on the death of a great music-hall artist, Marie Lloyd.

Paul: But what about nihilism?

Eliot: I don't think nihilism can be kept up indefinitely. What is the source of refreshment in nihilism? One generation can find satisfaction in expressing nihilism, but where does the next generation go on from there?

Paul: Nihilism against boredom hasn't much meaning, has it? You must have nihilism against some established order, some set of values, or there's nothing to destroy—you can't find anything to strike at.

Eliot: Quite so. Nihilism would have been impossible without the things that nihilism condemned. If the objects of nihilist attack disappear, there is nothing left. Nihilism itself disappears with them.

Paul: Nihilism itself becomes boredom. Well, the awareness of this spreading of a spiritual desert has been acute in all your plays and many of your poems. I would go back to *The Hollow Men* as well as *The Waste Land*, and to some of the choruses in *Murder in the Cathedral*. To me, you have been very much the poet who saw this desolation coming. Do you feel that, looking back?

Eliot: I think that you are perhaps exaggerating the conscious element in it when you say 'saw it coming.' I never venture to interpret my own poetry, and would hesitate to make myself a prophet. In any case, you see, the prophetic element in poetry very often is unconscious in the poet himself. He may be prophesying without knowing it. What he absorbs from the atmosphere is not altogether conscious in him.

Paul: Still, if the reader sees this prophecy, I think he is entitled to say it is there.

Eliot: Sometimes, as Godfrey Benn said once in a very interesting essay, the poet is aware only when he starts a poem of something inside him that needs to come out and be shaped. He doesn't know what it is, but his poem, the poem he eventually makes, is a release for him. It may at the same time be expressing the hopes or the fears, the anxiety or the faith, which he shares unconsciously with the rest of humanity or with the rest of his people.

Paul: All the same, although you are a poet you are also a prophet, you know, because *The Idea of a Christian Society* and *Notes towards the Definition of a Culture* have been efforts—at least, I see them as efforts—to put into ordinary, workaday language some of the ideas there in your poetry. There's a question I'd like to ask: in *The Idea of a Christian Society* you spoke about a Christian elite, a kind of clerisy, like Coleridge's clerisy, as a means of salvation. But in *Notes towards the Definition of a Culture* you seem to me to put more hope in the class structure of society. I won't say the class structure

because that sounds like the present one. But a society with a class structure. This is an age in which even to appear to approve of class is regarded as a bit outrageous. So I'd like to know whether you still stand by this position today?

Eliot: First of all, as far as the two essays are concerned, they are not dealing with quite the same problem—or, alternatively, if it's the same problem they are not approaching it from the same point of view. The Christian elite which I spoke about in *The Idea of a Christian Society* is an elite which may be drawn from all cultural strata. In that, I wasn't so concerned with the question of class or classless society.

Paul: But I thought you had moved from one position to the other?

Eliot: Well, in the second essay I was considering more the actual class structure. I think now that the problem of a class or classless society is one of the permanent problems of humanity, because all abstract statements are unsatisfactory.

Paul: Thinking of class as an abstraction?

Eliot: Perhaps I can express it as a kind of paradox: whenever one contemplates a stratified class society one is emotionally moved toward classlessness, and whenever one contemplates an actual, existing classless society—if there is anything of the sort—one sees the faults of that and is moved emotionally toward a class structure. In these matters one is contrasting something actual and observed with an idea or ideal preferable to the actuality one sees—because in practice every society is very imperfect, and every society commits injustices of one kind or another. But today it seems to me more important to argue the case for a class society because the general accepted idea is one of equalitarianism. And when one considers the classless society, even so far as it has adumbrated itself in the present situation of the world—its mediocrity, its reduction of human beings to the mass...

Paul: And this boredom, listlessness, too...

Eliot: That comes later. But the reduction which Plato foresaw, the reduction to a mass ready to be controlled, manipulated, by a dictator or an oligarchy—observing all those things one is emotionally disposed toward a class society.

Paul: Yes, as a protection against the Hitlers and the Stalins, and the Khrushchevs.

Eliot: But, on the other hand, one might say in general that any healthy—of course, the word 'healthy' may be begging the question—but shall we say any healthy classless society will tend to form itself into classes? On the other hand, any healthy class society will tend to facilitate the transition from one class to another. It will be flexible; it will somewhat blur the outlines of its classes. A very rigid class distinction is petrification. So when I defend a class society it is because its merits should be emphasized at the present time.

Paul: But what was in my mind, I see now, in linking the clerisy with the class was the idea that the clerisy was of people dedicated in some way to service to society, irrespective of reward. And the idea of a class structure is that it enables society to be held together in a way which is difficult to describe but which creates a nation because such a class is prepared to serve without reward. It is this idea, which is not really present in democracy, that privileges in society should go along with responsibilities, that interests me.

Eliot: The fault, the evil, in a class society is when privilege exists without responsibility and duty. The evil of the classless society is that it tends to equalize the responsibility to atomize it into responsibility of the whole population—and therefore everyone becomes equally irresponsible.

Paul: I'd like now to change the conversation and go on to the arts. I want to ask you about the position of the writer or the artist in contemporary society. One problem seems to me roughly this: there

don't appear to be any accepted norms any more, any standards and values, for the arts. Another problem is the divorce which has occurred between the poet and the people. The poet has become a poet writing for himself or just for a very few people. There's no longer anybody writing for the masses as Tennyson was, or Kipling was. And then there's the financial problem young writers must face if they are to try and get established. I don't know whether you feel prepared to speak about that? Do you see a way forward?

Eliot: There are so many questions involved here, and some of them go so deep, that it is awfully difficult to deal with them all in any brief form. For instance, the arts are sometimes accused of obscurity and preciosity—of being remote from the people. But is it altogether that the artist is leaving the people or that the people are leaving the artist? This is all bound up with the problem in our minds of cultureless culture. Then I think there's a special problem for the dramatist (I can't speak for the novelist): we have a rather unsettled state of society—and the dramatist ought to know exactly whom he is writing for...

Paul: Or what the society is he's writing about? You mean that society isn't moving in any direction that can even possibly be understood or conceived?

Eliot: Then there are the practical economic questions which I think are less, or should be less, severe for the poet than for other writers, or for the painter, sculptor, or musician, because the poet can get a part-time job; he can earn his living in other ways.

Paul: Not always.

Eliot: He ought to be able to get a job somewhere that will keep him alive. I know that doesn't invariably work, but then poets always have had difficulties at one time or another. I just say that I know some poets who manage to earn their living in one way and write poetry as well.

Paul: Such as schoolmastering or broadcasting?

Eliot: And there is this further difficulty, which is perhaps more acute in some countries than others: the problem of publication for poetry. The cost of producing books goes up all the time.

Paul: You're speaking now as a publisher?

Eliot: I'm speaking now as a publisher, and I know what I'm talking about there. It's interesting to find that the number of the elite of the public, the people who are interested enough to buy works by new, modern names, and little-known writers, to patronize rather superior magazines, remains more or less constant, however the population goes up.

Paul: Yes, that's very strange.

Eliot: The costs of publication go up, but our readers do not go up in proportion. Therefore, it is much more difficult to get poetry published, especially by unknown poets. It really depends on a small number of people in the publishing world discerning the best and seeing that it gets published.

Paul: What about your own poetry? We've had a series of brilliant plays from you, and I myself feel that they've done something quite unique for the English theatre. But in pure poetry we've had nothing since the very deeply moving, philosophical *Four Quartets*. What about that? Are they really your last words?

Eliot: I never make rash vows or acts of renunciation. I only know what to do next; I can't think ahead of that. But I can tell you this much, that in the past my poems and my plays were somewhat sandwiched together. For instance, the first of my *Quartets* is 'Burnt Norton': the inspiration for that was certain lines which were cut out of the beginning of *Murder in the Cathedral*. The lines are not identically reproduced, but essentially they are the same. This was my first actual play, of course, and the producer pointed out to me that the lines were strictly irrelevant to the action and didn't get things forward. Well, those lines led to 'Burnt Norton.' After that, my next production was *The*

Family Reunion. When I saw it produced I thought there were certain obvious faults of construction and I wanted to sit down and write immediately another play free from those faults. Well, then the war came and I had other duties and things to do, and I was here and there so I turned to writing the other three *Quartets*, and they occupied the war years very well. I was able in the conditions in which I was living to write poems of that type and length. When the war was over I wanted to turn again to write the play which I had planned to write in 1939, and since then—since 1948—I've written three plays.

Paul: Do you feel that you've written the play—or plays—that you wanted to write in 1939?

Eliot: I hope that, altogether, the plays are better than what I would have written then. I think that a certain suspension was good for me.

Paul: In that case, we may hope that a certain suspension will produce more poems.

Eliot: I hope so, too. But I can't look as far ahead as that. I just wait to see what I am impelled to do next.

Paul: Do you feel that in the *Quartets* and in the plays you succeeded in a personal prosody? You were always interested in forging a loose, flexible, and accentual line instead of a heroic line. I thought you feared the gigantic shadow of Shakespeare over poetic drama. Have you laid that ghost, do you think?

Eliot: Well, in a sense, it's the shadow of Shakespeare, but it's also the shadow of non-dramatic blank verse since Shakespeare. It's a shadow of *Paradise Lost*, of Wordsworth's *Excursion*; it's the shadow of Tennyson and Browning—of all the people who have written blank verse. It's very difficult to write blank verse which is both good poetry and sounds like people talking...

Paul: —Which is realistic?

Eliot: Therefore, I felt it was necessary to find a metric which was as far removed as possible from the iambic pentameter.

That's what I hammered out for myself in *The Family Reunion* and have used since. You asked if it was a personal prosody: it may be too personal a prosody. What I mean is that I should like—my ambition would have been—to start a prosody which would be an impersonal one, so to speak, useful to other dramatists—poetic dramatists—coming after me.

Paul: A public prosody.

Eliot: I don't know whether what I've done is a personal prosody or to any degree a public one. On the other hand, there's this: it may be that the norm of English versification is iambic pentameter, but that the only way to refresh it from one time to another will be to get away from it in a curve which will gradually return—having freed itself from the stiffness of previous generations. It may mean future verse dramatists will be able to go back to the iambic pentameter as a fresh instrument. And if I have helped in bringing that about I should be very happy, beyond the grave.

Paul: One last question. I think you once said in *The New English Weekly* that *The Waste Land* as published was as revised by the hand of Ezra Pound. Now, is there ever likely to be a chance that we may see the original? If you will publish the original, that will be most exciting.

Eliot: It was more a question of excisions, as I remember, than of revisions. He cut out a lot of dead matter. I think that the poem as originally written was about twice the length. It contained some stanzas in imitation of Pope, and Ezra said to me, 'Pope's done that so well that you'd better

not try to compete with him.'—Which was sound advice. And there was also a long passage about a shipwreck which I think was inspired by the Ulysses canto in Dante's 'Inferno.' At any rate, he reduced it in length. Well, the fate of that manuscript or typescript with his blue-pencilings on it is one of the permanent—so far as I know—minor mysteries of literature. It was bought by a man named John Quinn in New York who was a patron of art and letters. He bought the manuscript from me. I don't remember what he paid for it, but I'm sure he was generous. It went to him. I gave him out of gratitude for other things he'd done for me another manuscript—a manuscript book of early poems of mine, certain few of which have been printed but most of which remain unprinted. Years later, John Quinn died. There was a sale of his collection of manuscripts as well as of his works of art. Neither of these items appeared in the sale. We don't know, nobody knows, what became of them. Or who was responsible for their disappearance. Perhaps someday they will turn up. Perhaps not.

Paul: I think what we'd better suggest is that there should be a Rockefeller fellowship for the search for *The Waste Land*. And I think, having proposed this, I'd be entitled to apply for it.

Eliot: You know, I'm in two minds about that search. I should like it to be found as evidence of what Ezra himself called his maieutic abilities—evidence of what he did for me in criticizing my script. On the other hand, for my own reputation, and for that of *The Waste Land* itself, I'm rather glad that it has disappeared.

Industrial Labour and Management in India

NARSING BAHADUR SINHA

I. Colonisation of Industrial Labour

IT is not really correct to describe the labour at present operating in industrial units in towns as Industrial Labour. They may have been working in industrial units for a number of years, yet they have retained the characteristics of Agricultural Labour. They are only people who have not been absorbed in agriculture and have turned to towns for employment in factories. Most of them retain their roots in villages and periodically visit their homes. Their children continue to be brought up as agriculturists and they themselves revert to villages and agriculture on the least pretext. Even during their stay in towns they mostly move about in groups of labourers hailing from their own places, retain their habits, sing their own folk-songs and enjoy their own festivals. Bombay, for example, may be employing the largest number of workmen in the country in its industrial units; it is a cosmopolitan town. In these circumstances, a labourer coming to Bombay particularly from the villages, might be expected readily to adopt the culture, language and mode of living of this town. Yet we find that most of these men coming from U.P. and serving as domestic servants or in the industries of Bombay continue to retain their language, habits and culture. Any number of people could be found in the industrial areas and suburbs of Bombay who have stayed there for two generations or more yet have not acquired any permanent footing in the town.

These workmen have also not obtained any technical education or training to befit them for the jobs of skilled or semi-skilled workers. They come mostly as young boys, start as unskilled labour and gradually but mostly by chance acquire some skill in a particular work, and pro-

gress to the category of semi-skilled and finally to that of skilled in that work only in a number of years. It has been observed that a workman who progressed from helping-boy to the category of a skilled pipe-welder in the course of about 15 years could not do general welding or welding on any other metal. Similar instances could be multiplied. They depend on a particular type of job and in the event of closure of a unit or stoppage of that particular work they necessarily have to revert to villages and to agriculture. Such a labour force also has no industrial background, they had no incentives in their childhood to come to this profession. They have also no opportunities to save much, having all the time to send money to their relatives, to maintain their wives and children, purchase land, bullocks etc. in their village homes. Most of them always take advance money to meet these demands. They even incur debts to send money home. Whatever little is left with them is also not all spent on necessities. Away from near and dear ones for long spells of time, living in the midst of all sorts of temptations, they hardly care to see where they spend their money, frequently giving themselves up to gambling and other vices. The opportunities of bringing up their children in a proper atmosphere and for particular avocations are lost. Living in such precarious conditions, they also have to rely too much on self-interested and poorly equipped labour union leaders.

A really good class of industrial labour may not only be desirable but absolutely necessary for a proper growth of industries in the country. Absence of skilled labour is admittedly a great handicap in industrial growth at present. Both the Government and the industrialists are well aware of this. Expensive schemes for training work-

men through polytechnics, technological institutes and Directorates of Industries are undertaken. The cooperation of industrialists for training workers in their workshops is rarely forthcoming because while training new workmen they suffer loss of production although payment to their own workmen continues unabated. Nothing much has been possible so far. In the circumstances it may be desirable to chalk out some other scheme which may duly result in the creation of a real class of industrial labour in this country.

Regular colonies of industrial labour may be set up to solve this problem. Of late some half-hearted attempts have been made by way of Labour Estates in certain industrial towns. The real purpose has however not been served. For creating a real class of industrial labour in all industrial towns much thought has to be given to the matter and a concerted action on the part of the Government, the industrialists and labour may be called for. Industrial units may have to be classified according to the strength of labour employed in each of them. Units with ten thousand or more workmen may provide for their individual colonies; units with about five thousand workmen may be made to join with one or two similar units; and such units as may have workmen only in hundreds may be made to pool their resources to provide such labour colonies for their own workmen. The objection that this may cast too much burden on industrialists may not be factually correct, except in the case of very small units. In order, however, to eliminate all possibilities of casting too heavy a burden at least on existing units it may be well to provide for pooling of resources for such colonies between the Government, the industrialists and labour. The Government may acquire land for this purpose at cheap rates under compulsory acquisition and also make available to industrialists building materials at controlled rates. The Government should also bear the costs of providing amenities like schools, dispensaries,

playgrounds, museums etc. in these colonies as it does elsewhere. The industrialists should bear the entire expenses of erecting the buildings and meeting other charges initially. Thereafter the workmen should contribute as rental per month from their wages to the industrialists till such time as they have paid off half of the actual costs of the building occupied by them. Then the rental should cease and their children's occupancy rights be settled on such tenements.

Such colonies should provide for tenements of four or five standard types to be occupied by the workmen according to their pay range but the facilities and benefits provided in such colonies must be equally available to them all. They should be built on modern and sanitary lines. With each colony there should be a Welfare and a Liaison Officer to look after their needs and present them to employers. The workmen may be encouraged to form their own cooperatives for supply of food-grains, cloth and other necessities. There should be recreation halls, night schools, literacy centres for such workmen and their womenfolk as have passed the age of schooling. Suitable dispensaries, maternity wards should be provided. Schools in basic education with technical bias upto High School standard should be available. Museums with models of all useful small machines, particularly such ones as may be operating in the particular unit, should be available to children of workmen from initial stages. Even the present generation of workmen who may not have had the benefits of these things in their childhood may improve their standards, knowledge and efficiency in such an environment.

It is definite that for competitive existence in the present world India must strive more and more for industrialisation. India's villages have already more labour than is required for agriculture. The growing population has to fall back upon industries, and industrial labour is therefore going to form a very important section of the Indian people. Schemes for

putting these people on a correct and proper footing are of primary importance. The advantages of labour colonies as described above not only to the workmen and their future generations but to the industrialists, the Government, and the society can hardly be exaggerated. The workmen living in such colonies will have that element of security and continuance of service which is so essential for making a good workman. The future of their children also being assured, they will give concerted attention to their work. They may be able to suggest practical improvements in the tools and machines on which they may be working. They may get a genuine feeling of partnership resulting in increased and qualitatively better production. The difficulties of finding suitable technical and skilled workmen from time to time as a result of old hands leaving for their villages may be solved. The workmen will have a settled and dignified life in towns, will have family life, good company, education and recreation. They will not have to turn to places of vice for their pleasures. They may escape the evil habit of drinking. They will be able to save and improve their standards of living. The advantages of such a way of life to their children can be imagined. Born and bred up in a working class atmosphere, initiated into factories and machines from childhood, hearing their elders talk of these things, they will get an easy and immediate grip on their work when they begin it. They will not be scared of machines etc.

Workmen living in such conditions will naturally be in a better position to resist any arbitrary decisions of their employers. The industrialists may themselves avoid high-handedness. This may result in fewer industrial disputes, smaller loss of working hours and manpower. Production may be tremendously increased bringing more profits to all concerned and increasing national wealth. The country as a whole will have gained by the creation of such a class of industrial labour.

II. A Managerial Cadre for Industries

In the context of the welfare of industrial labour, a suggestion was made to the Government for setting up a managerial cadre for industries. After some discussion and much hesitation the Government agreed, but created a pool only for industrial corporations run by the Government. It appears however that selections even to this pool were made only once—probably to accommodate a few people. But the suggestion had been made more for the better working of industrial units in the private sector, particularly for the welfare of workmen and other employees working in such units. So far as the welfare of labour is concerned, the managerial class in the public sector has not done any better and only recently there was loud criticism of conditions of labour prevailing in Hindustan Steels Ltd., Rourkela. These conditions in the public sector may, however, exist at present because of the inexperience or carelessness of managers. In the private sector however these conditions are brought about by the excessive greed and dominance of the industrialists. The basic intention in the two sectors is different. A unit is set up in the public sector by the Government only with a view to developing the resources of the country, meeting certain requirements of the people, giving employment and increasing national wealth. In the private sector a unit is primarily set up in order to bring huge profits to its sponsors. No doubt the industrialists are very brilliant people and experts in their own lines. Their capabilities and experience far exceed those of the executives in the public sector. Besides, their self-interest goads them to give their entire attention to the successful working of their units—another element lacking in the executives of public limited concerns.

Yet more often than not this element of self-interest overshoots its mark to the detriment of the unit itself, its workmen and other employees. Starting mostly with

not very big units in the inception, the industrialists often depend on their personal skill alone or take only their close relations for managerial posts—on the principle of a known devil being better than an unknown one, for things not being what they should be, there is always apprehension of a leakage to the authorities. Obviously such intentions and preferences may not result in the selection of really qualified and suitable persons for managerial posts in the private sector. However qualified and suitable a man may be, he may not get a good administrative job in a unit unless he happens either to be related to or is confidentially recommended as reliable by some one closely known to the industrialist. At times a man may be selected if he alone is thought capable of performing a particular job pending in the unit or of pulling weight with the Government department concerned. The demand for retired Government servants even in big units in the private sector is thereby accounted for. But opportunities are not open, as in foreign countries, to each and every young man to join the lower ranks in units and rise by sheer merit to the highest positions. The consequences are obvious. Not only do intelligent and educated young men suffer by a limitation on their chances of employment, not only may there be overcrowding for Government jobs and wastage of talented young men on clerical jobs, but there is a positive set-back to industrial progress, deprived of the benefit of talent. And such brilliant young men as by any chance do get into these services are discriminated against and slighted by the industrialists in comparison with their favourites and relatives. In whatever little powers they have, they must toe the line of the managing directors; they must give legal and proper shape to acts of high-handedness.

Labour laws have also probably been drafted on the basis that all persons in the managerial cadre of industrial units in the private sector must be only relatives or

henchmen of industrialists needing no legal protection. A manager getting over Rs. 500/- per month is not covered by the Industrial Disputes Act, nor can he get the benefits of the Employees' Provident Fund or State Insurance. Not coming under the definition of "workman" he may not get the benefits of gratuity etc. nor will there be any pension for him. Young men employed under some influence or in the stress of the moment have sometimes been thrown overboard on the cessation of the influence or on completion of the particular work, but the industrial laws afforded him no protection. The industrialists are rich and influential people. They make big donations, help in elections, but all the money for these things does not come from their own pockets. It comes from the finances of the concerns run by them. They spend lavishly on themselves and their families. Sometimes when they go too far, the units fail. Sometimes units with good potential and bright prospects have failed because of a constant heavy drain on their finances for personal ends. Only rarely and in the cases of some big utility concerns has the Government intervened, otherwise they have gone their own way. Even in such cases the industrialists have kept enough for themselves or launched other units under slightly different names. The real sufferers in all cases have been the workmen and other employees including the independently employed managers.

It would be advisable for the Government to classify all the industrial units in the private sector into five or six categories according to their financial investments and their production capacity. It may provide minimum qualifications for the managers of each of these classes of industries and also fix the grades of their salaries etc. The facilities which they may enjoy must also be fixed. Their names may be kept on the rolls of the Union Ministry of Industry. The selections for this list must be made by the Ministry annually and the list should be made on a zonal basis dividing

the whole country into five or six zones. The industrialists must certainly be left with the choice of the particular man out of say a list of 50 candidates all with the necessary qualifications and experience for that category of industries. Something like this is prevalent in big towns for clerical and menial posts from Employment Exchanges, but there are loopholes and industrialists manage to evade this. Selection from the list must therefore be made compulsory. The basic selections having been made by the Government, and the undesirables, henchmen and unqualified men thus eliminated, a wide and final choice may still be left with the industrialists. Thereafter the service conditions as described above should be throughout available to them, and the possibilities of their moving into higher grades and bigger industrial units by acquisition of experience and/or additional qualifications while in service should be guaranteed. In the event of any of them not being able to pull on with the management and the industrial unit being likely to suffer as a result that particular manager may be transferred to some other unit. In the event of a charge of misconduct involving removal or dismissal of the manager the action should be deferred until the charges have been thoroughly investigated and proved in an Industrial Tribunal.

In a manufacturing or even in a commercial unit the law places certain responsibilities upon the managers. The Company Law and the Factories Act make them responsible exactly like the owner, occupier or managing director of the concern, for all acts done in the units under them and punishments are provided for a breach of any of those provisions. As things stand now the managers are indeed responsible to law and open to punishment, but not at the same time in a position to do things justly, conscientiously and independently. They are entirely dependent for their well-being and continuance of service on the industrialists. So far as the interests of labour are con-

cerned, such managers cannot be expected to take independent and just decisions, although they are the persons who issue orders and who serve as a liaison between the labour and management. Besides legal responsibilities, much of the working development and progress of a unit depends upon the quick and unerring decisions of the unit managers. Foreign experts have every time stressed the necessity of engaging in industries only well qualified men trained in business management etc. because much depends upon their decisions. Only if their selection is proper and their service conditions are stabilised may they be not only able to take quick and correct decisions but also bold enough to act fairly in relation to workmen. In the beginning the industrialists may take it as a slight curtailment of their present absolute jurisdiction in the selection of executives, but in the long run they will gain infinitely by these qualified and brilliant young officers. The lot of the workers will be definitely improved and the industries as a whole established on a surer footing.

III. *Scope and need for better industrial relations:*

It is evident that industrial relations at present are not very satisfactory. True, when the Chinese attacked India, the whole country, as never before, and the two wheels of industry—Capitalists and Labour—also seemed rightly to have composed their differences and perennial disputes to boost the production of industrial goods. There was little doubt, however, that this was a temporary phase and nothing like a real change of heart either on the part of industrialists or labour led by trade unions. Nor is such a change possible with the industrialists on the one hand always thinking in terms of their huge investments, their inherent or long acquired tendencies of exercising unlimited powers, their sense of disappointment at the so-called non-cooperative behaviour

of labour, their grouse against the Government's tendency to go on adding to labour laws encroaching on their profits (inciting them to reduce labour strength in order to avoid increased labour costs and industrial disputes), their resentment at the insolence of union leaders. And labour on the other hand believing they are the real producers and as such the real owners of industry. The trade union leaders, who are usually not well educated and whose interests are often confined to perpetuating feuds between management and labour, continually harp on this. In such circumstances the chances for industrialists voluntarily inviting labour to participate in management on any measurable scale seem remote. It may be possible in certain very well organised industrial units with able trade unions to guide labour. In such cases also the labour leaders often begin to toe the line of the management for obvious reasons giving rise to the formation of rival unions. Even in foreign countries where on the whole the capitalists are far more reasonable and agreeable to share the profits with labour more equitably and on the other hand labour is also far better organised and under abler union leadership, disputes between labour and capital have often flared up. There is a basic difference between the view points of each and it may be futile to attempt to forge a partnership between them. Steps as suggested above to better the lot of workmen and curb the powers of industrialists will probably help more.

In India in spite of all the efforts of the Government and the ever increasing labour legislation the chasm between industrialists and labour has widened. The Union Ministry of Labour may feel that by a spate of labour legislation it has protected industrial labour satisfactorily from the whims and overbearing attitude of industrialists but anybody with actual experience of industrial relations may recount almost daily instances of the victimization and helplessness of labour. Industrialists have wealth, they are better

equipped, better organised, more vociferous and more powerful. Even today complaining workmen may be straightway turned out and subsequent proceedings of misbehaviour and formal charge-sheeting cooked up by the legally equipped staff of industrialists. A little use of money brings any number of witnesses from amongst labour itself to support management's version of the matter while the Labour Inspectorate and Conciliation board is either too willing to lend support to industrialists or too incompetent to sift the evidence correctly. In regard to a demand for a small increase in wages, pleas of losses and consequent inability to pay have been accepted and neither the Union leaders nor the Conciliation officers have had the capacity to read the balance sheets correctly or to find out that tremendous increments have in the same period been given to certain favourites of the same management. The worst enemies of industrialists amongst labour are earmarked, and failing to be won over by money, are made victims of cooked-up quarrels in factory premises, and in enquiries held by managerial staff found guilty and punished with dismissal for gross misconduct without getting even earned benefits. At the same time the supporting workmen are declared not guilty and allowed to continue. Under the present law all that is required is that a proper enquiry was held. The decision of the manager cannot be altered. Factories are closed without allowing compensation on the ground of losses, though under the present law it may not be determinable or may not be possible for the labour unions constituted as they are at present to determine, why and how the losses accrued. It is common knowledge that industrialists, however big they may be, are reluctant to allow as much bonus as may be due to workmen and all sorts of ruses may be adopted by them in conjunction with their own auditors and industrial advisors to deny labour their legitimate dues. Here is a clear index of

the mentality of industrialists vis-a-vis labour in as much as bonus is one item which clearly makes an inroad on their profits. What is stated here may be proved from practical cases, or inferred from judicial decisions.

Labour, Conciliation and Industrial Courts have, by virtue of their charter, a certain bias in favour of labour but this does not help in the long run. On the one hand the labour and union leaders are incapable of putting the relevant facts on record. On the other, the Labour, Conciliation and Industrial Courts lack experience of industrial relations and are unsuspicious of the various manipulations of management, so that they too are unable to call for the necessary material to be put on record and sifted. All this leaves the case of labour weak. Thus although these initial courts may decide in favour of labour, when the case goes up to the Supreme Court where cases are considered and decided purely on legal grounds, the same evidence does not carry labour through. Very often judgements of industrial courts have been upset by the Supreme Court giving judgement for the industrialists. Any student of law can easily appreciate the necessity for the pleadings of a case being meticulously drafted and by most competent hands. One can say from experience that nintynine out of hundred Notices of Demand given by Labour Unions to Managements are just a narration of pet phrases from certain cheap books on Trade Unionism divorced from the actual facts of a particular case, or without proper emphasis on certain relevant facts. The initial courts attach more importance to the conciliation aspect and leave the lacunae as they are. The better-equipped industrialists cleverly allow this to pass adding more confusion by filing most irrelevant papers and suppressing the correct ones. Industrial Tribunals are at present by law confined to persons with purely legal knowledge and judicial experience. Mostly they are retired persons more prone to enjoy a

well-earned rest than plod for themselves in the files to find truth. This aspect of the matter was brought to the notice of Prof. Richardson, an I.L.O. expert deputed with the Union Ministry of Labour a few years back to advise suitable changes in the Industrial Disputes Act. He discussed the matter threadbare with the writer and being fully convinced was reported to have advised the Government that the industrial courts as presently constituted may comprise persons eminent in the sphere of law but grievously lacking in experience of industrial relations. He advised therefore that the rules of the Industrial Disputes Act be changed so that industrial tribunals may be manned by people who have legal qualifications and yet have actually served in industry for some time. It is not known why the Government has not acted upon this advice. Probably the Government believes that all people now employed as high executives in industries in the private sector must either be relatives or henchmen of industrialists or in any case open to influence by their wealth. It may be an uncharitable view of things, and in any case may add to the causes which at present discourage brilliant young men from seeking their career in industry.

In dealing with industrial relations the position of managers in relation to labour becomes very important. The necessity for managers who may have proper education, training and experience has already been emphasised. In order that they may be able to deal justly with labour, they must have some protection. Being employees themselves like others they should be treated on par with others as regards their own rights vis-a-vis the employers. Consequently the present definition of "workman" under S.2(S) iv of the Industrial Disputes Act which excludes the class of managers getting over Rs. 500/- per month should be amended and sub cl. iv should be deleted. Another provision in the said Act which is most widely abused by the industrialists is S.2(kkk)—Lay Off. The definition given therein is very wide

and the unlimited powers of the management for ascribing to "shortage of raw materials" or "accumulation of stocks" any harassing action which they may wish to take against workmen are always abused. Whenever the management is angry against the workmen and wants to punish them, it manipulates absence of raw materials, or if it is financially tight on account of its own misdeeds it makes a show of absence of raw material and punishes labour by cutting its wages to half for the days on which it is thus laid off. Similarly accumulation of stocks may be brought about by sheer inertia or failure of the distributing arrangements or from internal bickerings or from the incompetence of management, and yet the sufferers are labour. It may be said that the management also loses the profits of the day of lay-off but when there is bad blood it does not mean much to management to be able to harass the workmen. The managers and other employees being unaffected do not mind these pinpricks against labour. To the small earnings of labour the loss is much. S.25 (C) proviso 1 laying down that even half the wages will not be paid for lay-off in excess of 45 days in a year should be altogether deleted. Similarly S.25A(a) excluding the application of "lay off" (that is payment of half wages) to industries with less than 50 workmen should be eliminated.

For persons who may not be acquainted with the mentality of industrialists these provisions may appear to be made only to cope with envisaged industrial inconveniences but to such persons as have ever been independently employed in industrial services, these provisions have often served to promote very painful exhibitions of management's wrath against labour. In S.2 cl. kkk after the words 'any other reason', some such words as 'to be satisfactorily explained to the Works Committee of labour and/or Labour or Conciliation Officer before beginning the

lay-off' need to be introduced. Similarly in S.2 cl. (oo)—Retrenchment—the right of the management to pay compensation and turn out an employee at any time should not be so unrestricted. The employer must show some justification. The action should not be *malafide*. To management it may not mean much paying a little compensation and getting rid of an employee but to the employee finding another job all of a sudden may be gruesome indeed. Very often the employer seeks to evade even paying compensation by levelling some trumped-up charges of misconduct. That may also ruin the future career of the employee for ever. The present restriction by which there must be at least a hundred workmen in a unit for the provision of a Works Committee to apply should be done away with, and the existence of such committees should be made compulsory for every unit. In the clause relating to qualifications of persons eligible for appointments to industrial tribunals and national tribunals etc. another clause may be added to include a person who may have legal qualifications, may have practised in law courts for at least three years and may have at least ten years standing as an executive in some industrial unit without being in any way related to or connected with the management of that or those units. The provisions relating to voluntary reference of disputes to arbitration should be made more attractive and preferable. A panel of names of persons with legal experience preferably of labour cases and/or with actual service experience in industries, should be prepared by the Labour Commissioners for each zone and such lists should be circulated and made available to industrial units in each zone and both the employers and workmen of an unit in dispute must necessarily agree to the arbitration of one umpire or a commission of three commonly selected out of that list only. The decision of such an Umpire or Arbitration Board must be binding.

The Changing Lushai Society

KRISHAN KUMAR

IN the southern portion of Assam wedged between Burma and Pakistan lies the Mizo Hills District: 8000 square miles in area and sparsely populated with a total population of about two and a half lakhs only. Of this nearly two-thirds are Lushais while the rest consists of a number of other tribes like Chakmas, Pawis, Lakhers and Riangs. The Pawis, Lakhers, Riangs and Chakmas, who inhabit the southern parts of the district, are excluded from the scope of this article because of their differing beliefs and customs and also because they came under administration some thirty years after the Lushais, and these two factors would not only give different data for purposes of comparison but would also give different time spans in which to record the changes that have taken place.

For purposes of comparison Lushai society has been considered at three points of time, viz. the time before the British extended administration to these hills, the time when the British rule ended in India and the state of society as at present. These cameos of society crystallised at these three (arbitrary) points of time will provide both the standard against which to judge the changes which have taken, or are taking place, as well as the effects up to, and after, Independence.

Although the term 'Lushai' does not denote one single, homogeneous clan yet it may be noted that many though the clans are, and great though their divergences of custom, there still is a thread of unity running through them all. This unity has been partly hammered out by having had to live for over seventy years in one administrative unit and partly by the contacts that they have always had with each

other from time immemorial. So inspite of the diversity it is possible to pick out typical examples of social life as it was, and is being, lived to give us the three cameos that we want.

Before the British administration moved to the hills, the typical life of a Lushai was as follows. For all public purposes whether of a civil or a religious nature, his unit was the village rather than the clan. In all private matters, however, like marriages, deaths, births and certain sacrifices of a private nature, the clan assumed importance. For example if a man was captured in war, his clansmen had to ransom him. Similarly his clansmen helped in the payment of bride price. But for all day to day purposes his social unit was the village. And although confederacies of villages were often formed for purposes of waging war the Lushai's first loyalty was to his village and not the tribe and it was around this that his life mainly revolved. And in many ways the focal point of this was the Zawlbuk or Bachelors' Hall of which every village had one and where all the unmarried youngmen of the village slept. These Zawlbuks were the training grounds for the warriors and it was their members who did most of the social work in the village like cleaning of jhum paths (paths leading to cultivation), construction of houses of widows, cleaning of the village etc. The Zawlbuks not only provided good training grounds for the inculcation of discipline, the younger boys being under the guidance and control of elder ones, but were also responsible for inculcating in the youngmen a sense of social unity and a feeling of responsibility for the village as a whole.

The life of the Lushai also moved round

'*hawmngaihna*', an untranslatable term meaning the obligation on the part of everyone to be hospitable, kindly, unselfish and to help others. It was '*tlawmngaihna*', for example, to help a neighbour in building his houses or a pen for live-stock, or to cut some particularly big tree on his *jhum* land. It was also '*tlawmngaihna*' to vie with others in excelling in the daily chores, hospitality, and helping those who were in distress. This code of helping others made life more co-operative and ensured that the village moved forward to a large extent as one unit in which the weak were not left behind. It also ensured that there were no destitutes, for the village as a whole looked after the poor and the aged.

Economically agriculture was the sole means of livelihood of the people and a Lushai counted his wealth in terms of grain, cattle and mithun (*bos frontalis*). And his was a more or less self sufficient economy as he grew whatever he ate while the women of his family wove his clothing. In his society prostitution was unknown and all girls married as a matter of course. Crime was practically non-existent and since the family and clan was responsible for payment of fines, they exerted a beneficial influence on him. Also an incorrigible criminal would be thrown out of the village and would more often than not find it difficult to find another village to accept him. All these were great social and economic deterrents which helped practically to eliminate crime.

There was, however, a sharp division between the upper and lower classes. The chief of the village and his Upas or counsellors and some other selected men formed the upper classes. The chief was the head of the village, the leader in war, the owner of the village lands, the protector and father of his people, while the Upas and other favoured classes were given better *jhum* lands by the chiefs and otherwise also were entitled to fees when settling disputes. It was round the chief that village life revolved while the com-

mon classes were kept under control and had few rights. But though in theory the chief was a despot, in actual fact a great deal of mutual trust existed between the chief and the people due to the fact that the people could, and often did, migrate from one village to another. This meant that an unpopular and despotic chief lost most of his followers through migrations thereby becoming less powerful in war and also losing his share of the tribute levied from the villagers. This threat of migration thus served as an effective counter against despotic and tyrannical rule. But the economic difference between the classes remained. The bride price of girls from higher clans was more and it was the ambition of every Lushai to move up the social scale by allying himself with the more powerful clans. The difference between the two classes was, however, mitigated by the fact that it was the duty of the chiefs to look after the destitute and the aged. Also the fact that a man had to give three feasts to the whole village to enable him to put windows in his house, and seven to add a back verandah, helped in seeing that no man became too rich for he had to expend his wealth in acquiring these status symbols. In fact poverty as we know it was practically unknown in the old Lushai society.

The economic life of the people mainly centred round *jhumming*, a process whereby all the trees were cut and burnt, the ashes being allowed to go back to the land to fertilise it. This system of shifting cultivation meant that any particular land was used only once in five or six years, jungle being allowed to grow the rest of the time. Other economic activities were practically unknown though in some villages weapons, utensils etc. were manufactured and bartered with the other villages. Trade was practically non-existent though some villagers on the border did go to Cachar to trade chillies and rubber for salt. There were also blacksmiths in most of the villages for repairing the tools and weapons.

This then was the life of the Lushais before the area came under administration. And the British had initially no idea of bringing the area under administration being only concerned with keeping the area sufficiently quiet and preventing the Lushais from raiding the cultivated lands and tea gardens of Cachar District. A number of punitive expeditions into the Mizo Hills having failed to bring about the desired result, however, they decided to move into the area and bring it under regular administration. The low revenue return from the district coupled with the theory of the 'noble savage' led the British to postulate a low cost and light administration. To keep the costs low it was decided that the administration of the chiefs should be left absolutely as it was and that there should be no interference with the village administration in criminal, civil and social matters, only the maintenance of public order being the direct responsibility of the administration. All disputes between chief and chief, village and village, tribe and tribe, were to be decided by the administration but there was to be no interference in the internal matters of a village unless a chief or the people asked for it and then only for the most exceptional reasons. To keep the area free from outside influences and to allow the clans to retain their own customs it was also decided to prohibit entry of outsiders into the district except for very valid reasons.

But inspite of the desire of the British to keep the area free from outside influences, and in a state of stable and static equilibrium, changes were inevitable. For one thing there was the direct effect of the contact with the European officials and missionaries, the Gurkha sepoy of the battalion stationed to maintain law and order, shopkeepers in the bazaar, clerks in the offices and a host of other people who were attracted to the hills for different reasons. Then there were various subtler and more indirect influences at work — the security provided by the

British from constant threats of raids and war, the solidifying of an out of date feudal system, the spread of education, the increased use of coin, the building of roads; for these and a myriad other influences were at work in Mizo Hills and were producing tremendous changes in the lives of the people.

It would perhaps be better to deal first with the changes that can definitely be assigned to some agencies or combination of agencies before going on to the changes ascribable to more indirect causes. The presence of a body of officials and of a battalion of Assam Rifles inevitably caused small towns to grow up at Aijal and Lungleh. In an area where the basic loyalty had always been to a village as a cohesive unit, these towns were naturally completely foreign and alien elements. But they had a glamour and glitter all their own as the centres of prestige and power and, later on, as the only places where education above the primary level was available. The result was a steady flow of young men and women to these towns; the women to what they considered an easy life of semi-permanent alliances with the men gathered there, and the men to pick up whatever odd jobs they could find. The life in towns was generally regarded as being an idle one. The women did not have to carry countless loads of water from the valleys and springs to the village, while the men experienced a sense of being free from all social and other obligations. Tawdry and finery were available in plenty and for the women money to get this was easy to come by, while the men gradually became bazaar wasters and drifters having no village or clan ties. There was, however, another side of the picture. Some of the Lushais taking advantage of the opportunities offered opened shops and otherwise entered into trade. The influence of this new way of life also spread into the interior villages where shops were opened. The result of this was a beneficial one, for whereas previously to get, say salt, a

Lushai had to have his needs satisfied fifth or sixth-hand (the article having been successively bartered from person to person before reaching him) he now got it in a more economic and direct way.

Then we come to the effects attributable to the Assam Rifles who were stationed in the district to maintain law and order. The Assam Rifles, composed largely of Gurkhas as they were, had nothing significant in the social sphere that the Lushais could imitate, but their indirect effects have been tremendous. For one thing they marked the end of war and turbulence in the hills. The cumulative effect of this in all directions has indeed been very great but it will suffice if we consider its effect on one institution only viz. that of the chiefs on whom depended the administration of the area and the stability of society.

The *raison d'être* of the chiefs in the old days had been the unified command that they had symbolised and which had been most essential for the survival of a society almost continually in a state of turbulence. The pacification of the hills thus tended to make the chiefs obsolete but the British, committed to a light and low cost administration as they were, had to maintain this feudal structure at all costs. So they started taking various measures the cumulative effect of which was to make the system of the chiefs an instrument of repression rather than of good and impartial government. To uphold their prestige, for example, they gave the chiefs almost absolute control over the villagers by seeing to it that villagers could not easily migrate from one village to another, and, by thus removing the only effective instrument the villagers had ever had in controlling the despotic power of the chiefs, the British unwittingly turned the chiefs into despots. Also by giving them more powers and backing them with all the resources of the Government the British unwittingly undermined the trust that the people had in the chiefs by making the latter unduly dependent on the Government. The result was to completely

divorce the chiefs from the hopes and aspirations of the people so that by the time Independence came the people were simmering underneath and ready to do away with the feudal structure.

Another result of the pacification of the hills was a loss in the alertness and vigour of the people and a consequent increase in diseases, most of the latter being carried to the hills by outsiders and then spreading rapidly in the disease-free atmosphere. Throughout the British period we thus get a steady increase in disease, though to be fair we must set against this the skilled medical attention provided free at dispensaries. But the number of such dispensaries was woefully small and the only result of setting them up was to whet the appetite of the people and generate a great demand for more medical facilities, a demand that the British never met in part even.

Pacification also led to the opening up of the area through roads though, due to the heavy costs involved, no motorable roads were constructed and, almost right up to Independence, the only communication facilities available were those provided by a network of bridle paths. Since entry to the hills was strictly prohibited, however, these bridle paths were only used by the officials stationed in the hills, occasional missionaries and the Assam Rifles. Their effect on the social life of the people, cut off as they were from the outside world, was thus negligible. But they did have a considerable impact on the economic life of the people and led to a real expansion in the trade of local goods, for the roads, which were always open, free from ambushes and provided bridges across swollen streams, helped enormously in the interchange of local manufactures and so tended to stimulate their production. A real trade in utensils, cooking pots and agricultural implements, the manufacture and sale of which had previously been confined to individual villages but which now found a wider market, thus grew up.

And then we come to the thing which has had one of the greatest effects on

Lushai society viz. the spread of education. The then administration, probably feeling that the spread of education was likely to generate undesirable forces, made it a deliberate facet of its policy to go slow in the business of opening schools. But in order to facilitate the spread, and understanding, of Christianity the various missions in the hills opened a large number of schools at the lower primary and middle stages. And although the administration discouraged education on the ground that the education was too literary and entirely divorced from the natural environment of the Lushais, the fact that the economic life of the hills offered no chances of advancement except through the securing of government jobs made more and more Lushai youths go to school.

The result of this intense desire for education was to produce a very large percentage of literates who are, after Kerala and Delhi, today the third highest in the country. This rapid spread of education had also some very undesirable effects however. For it substituted a new system of inculcating discipline in the young and thus led to the gradual cessation of the Zawlbuk system, this ultimately having very far reaching effects on discipline and the corporate life of the villagers. Also since they regarded it as the means for obtaining a 'sitting and eating' job, it had very undesirable effects on the psychology of the educated youths and tended to divorce them from the hard-working life of the people. And as the total number of posts was limited, this naturally led to the growth of a class of discontented youths who, unable to find work they considered suitable for persons of their attainments, could not fit happily into village life.

And as the number of people passing out of the middle schools increased there was a great demand for the opening of high schools. Afraid that the opening of high schools would only create more problems the administration tried to meet the situation by outright refusals. But this only meant a steady exodus of students to the

plains, for the administration tried to follow mutually contradictory policies in trying both to prevent the spread of education as well as deny the youths new avenues by undertaking programmes of economic development.

This exodus of the youngmen to the plains had many far reaching consequences, for it gave them a glimpse of the outside world, a glimpse that had been so far denied to the people by the isolationist policy of the administration. And at the same time it made the youngmen the eyes and ears of the hills so far as the outside world was concerned because it was only through them that the people came to know of what was happening outside. And the youngmen got thoroughly impregnated by the revolutionary, anti-feudal fervour of the times with the result that when they came back they brought a new element and thought pattern into society which threatened the existing feudal system. Suffering as they were from the undiluted autocracy of the administration the views of the youngmen fired the imagination of the people and gradually the ideas of social equality, economic advancement and liberty from tyrannical rule gained a firm foothold in their minds.

And now we come to one of the more indirect causes, but one whose effects have been diversified in all aspects of Lushai society and which even today creates problems in their social, economic and political life. I refer to the shifting over from a barter system to a money economy in which increased use was made of coin. Prior to the advent of the British the use of coin was largely unknown in the hills. But the coming of the British along with the consequent pacification immeasurably increased its circulation. Wages, payments for work done on roads, trade, and a thousand other causes took coin into the hills.

In the olden days there had been very little trade amongst the Lushais because most of them had a self-sufficient economy in which every family grew what it ate

and wove its own cloth. The only need for money, or its equivalent, was to enable one to buy salt, or pay bride price, or fines, and all these payments were invariably done in terms of mithuns, pigs and rice. Loans and other transactions were also similarly conducted. This was all changed, however, when coin came into more frequent use. One of the effects of this was to bring the Lushais to a limited, but definite, extent under the influence of outside markets and to link the prices of commodities to an outside agency. Before this happened prices had been more or less stabilised by custom and a man knew, for example, how many maunds of rice a mithun would fetch or how many mithuns he would have to pay his prospective father-in-law as bride price. But now all this was changed and the money that a man would get for a mithun, say, would bring him different quantities of rice at different times. This naturally had a very disturbing effect both on the psychology of the people and on their social and customary laws, and therefore in order to stabilise the situation the administration fixed a 'mithun value' of forty rupees, a 'pig value' of five rupees and so on. This expedient while it temporarily saved the situation had, however, implicit in itself the seeds of a terribly disruptive force which came fully to the fore in times of slumps and inflations. The full impacts of this will, however, be discussed later.

The increased use of coin also had some other effects more easy to foresee. It led, for example, to an increase in indebtedness as men who made money set up as money lenders and started giving loans at exorbitant rates of interest to ever-ready borrowers. It is not that loans had not been given in the old days but then the loans had been invariably in rice and since it takes time to grow rice there had been no pressure on the loanees to repay the loans quickly, especially as in the absence of sufficient storage capacity it was in the interests of the lender himself to take back the rice in small instalments. Such a feel-

ing was completely absent, however, in the case of monetary loans.

The increased use of coin also had a very bad effect on the traditional spirit of generosity or 'flawmmgaihna'. For rice being a perishable commodity and in the absence of regular markets, not easily disposable, it had never imposed much of strain on a villager having a surplus to give away some of it to his less fortunate neighbour. This both earned him Social Prestige and ensured that in times of difficulty he too would be similarly helped. But all this changed with the coming of a money economy because money was not only not perishable, but extremely easy to accumulate. Another effect of the increased circulation of coin was the growth of a consumer demand for novelties. The result was a large number of shops in the towns which did a roaring trade in foreign clothes and other articles from the plains. This growth did incalculable harm to the self-sufficient economy of the Lushais by almost giving the coup de grace to their traditional craft of weaving. It also had a great effect on the clothes the Lushais wore because the cheap mill-made cloth lent itself more easily to the making of shirts, skirts and blouses than to the traditional Lushai dress. And this tendency was given a fillip by the desire of the Lushais to imitate the European sahibs who were the only outsiders they had ever seen and whose culture they considered to be immeasurably superior to their own. The overall result has been an almost complete westernization of Lushai dress.

So far we have been dealing with the more or less indirect effects of the policy followed by the British administration. Now we shall deal with some of the policies deliberately followed by them to keep the people repressed. Of these some did not have much effect on society and may be classified as minor irritants only like, for example, the order restraining children from shouting or otherwise making any noise when going past the district

officer's house. Some like the obdurate refusal to allow schools to be opened and the making of chiefs into despotic rulers have already been dealt with. But of all the repressive policies followed by the administration none was more humiliating or more resented by the Lushais than the system of impressed labour whereby every Lushai was bound to act as a porter and carry the loads of government officials when called upon to do so. This deliberate humiliation of a whole people when taken together with the cumulative effect of other repressive factors helps to explain to a large extent the hyper-sensitivity of Lushais today and the morbidly emotional way in which they tend to look at matters. It also helps to explain the psychological upsurge which is creating such a ferment in society today.

No survey of the changes taking place in Lushai society during the British period can be complete, however, without evaluating the effects of the Christian missions. In many ways the missions were following policies which were incompatible with the repressive policy of the administration and thus afforded some relief to the people. Their educational policy and the way it happened to be in direct opposition to that of the administration has already been commented upon. Another was the fact that whereas the administration denied the Lushais equality of opportunity and status, the mission preached to them the loftiness of individuality and how all were equal in the eyes of God. By this and the message of love the missions offered an escape from the repressive and torrid atmosphere created by the administration; an opportunity that the Lushais grasped with such avidity that today they are nearly cent per cent Christians.

The spread of Christianity produced, as was only to be expected, immense changes in society. The most far-reaching of these has been the impetus it gave to the disintegration of the body politic of the village. To the Lushai of old the village had always come first, and the individual

second; man was definitely subordinate to the society in which he lived. This was incompatible with the Christian emphasis on the supreme importance of the development of individual character and the salvation of the individual soul, with the result that as Christianity spread the tribal and village bonds were loosened. Another incidental problem created by the mission was the problem of the surplus women. Prior to the advent of the British, divorce had been so frequent and easy among the Lushais that though at any given time there had been a number of women without husbands, they had only been temporarily so. Christianity, however, frowned upon both polygamy and divorce with the result that a very definite number of surplus women was created; a surplus that is today threatening to destroy the system of bride price and the structure of society that it connotes.

The effect of the mission's prohibition on the drinking of spirit has also been bad. For beer, as it was made in the hills, was a source of nourishment and its removal has created a dietary deficiency which has not to date been substituted for in the Lushai diet. Also the life of the people was hard and after strenuous work a stimulant was rather a good and necessary thing. The result of the prohibition has in consequence been the preservation of an outer and moral public image accompanied by a lot of drinking in private, a practice that has led not only to psychological repression but also to the wholesale practice of deceit.

Thus at the end of the British period we get a socially over-wound and repressed society whose dormant energies were only awaiting the chance to break through the thin feudal crust artificially imposed on it. The picture will not be really complete, however, unless we look at the other side of the picture also, viz. the benefits brought about by British rule. To take only the most important: firstly, there was the security afforded by the administration to a society which till then had been almost continually in a state of war; secondly,

there was the cheap and efficient justice dispensed by the courts set up by the British. In the old days disputes between people of different villages could rarely be settled, and dragged on interminably while even between people of the same village decrees were not always readily enforceable and if a man was obdurate, or influential, he could defy the authorities almost indefinitely. In this situation courts which could come to a quick decision, and enforce it, were a great blessing to society; thirdly, the fact that the administration brought all the clans under one rule gave to the people a sense of oneness and unity though paradoxically unity at the village level was shattered.

But the overall picture is one of a society struggling to throw off its shackles and re-form itself so as to meet the pressing demands of a new age. And as the movement towards Independence gained ground in the rest of the country, political forces hitherto unknown began to awake and compete for mastery in the hills. The administration was aware of the problem but managed to maintain peace and harmony by playing off one force against another. This policy, while successful as a temporary expedient, in the long run only succeeded in giving greater strength and directness to the revolutionary forces. The result has been that after Independence we have witnessed a series of explosions in Lushai society as the dams set up by the British to suppress the roused hopes and aspirations of the people have been demolished one by one.

The first to go were the chiefs. Divorced from the aspirations of the people and extremely unpopular as they were it was inevitable that the departure of the British would mean their end too. But their retention and gradual replacement could, perhaps, have spared society many of its present day tribulations, and moderate opinion did in fact try to retain them and their administrative experience by putting them under an elected district council. The long

years of repression, however, had made Lushai society extremist in behaviour and nothing short of their removal could satisfy it. The result was the abrupt removal of the chiefs although their sudden departure has left an administrative and leadership vacuum that has not as yet been filled. For the elected village councils that replaced them have as yet neither achieved stability nor grown enough in stature to adequately fill the gap left by the chiefs. The result is that today society is in a state of flux with various parties—educated youngmen, teachers, politicians, government servants, traders—striving for leadership with the traditional leaders of society, the village elders. The conclusion of this struggle for leadership will mark not only the return of social stability but also, depending on who gains victory, the shape that the society of the future will take.

With Independence burst another dam set up by the British—the refusal to allow schools to be opened. Here again, as in the case of the chiefs, the pendulum has swung much too far to the other side but again it was, in the circumstances, inevitable. The result has been that whereas the first high school was opened only in 1945, today only 18 years afterwards there are over 40 high schools. The results of this rapid expansion of education have not been happy. For one thing there has been a fall in educational standards and for another it has increased the division between the educated and the traditional society with the educated feeling it below their dignity to work in the jhums.

The rapid spread of education has also generated a great demand for white-collar jobs, a demand that cannot be met even in part until the area is fully developed, and that takes time. But the results of education have been to give the people wider horizons of outlook and make them impatiently restless for a quick rise in the standard of living. The consequent lack of suitable employment opportunities, therefore, is producing frustrations in society and is also accelerating the growth of

a disgruntled and disillusioned intelligentsia that is rapidly becoming anti-social in character. This is attested to both by a three-fold increase in crime in the last ten years as well as by the growth of drunkenness in Aijal town.

The brighter side of the picture, of course, is the creation of a vast reservoir of trained manpower which, given the opportunity, is both willing and able to generate accelerated economic development, which in turn would solve the unemployment problem. A difficulty in this regard, however, is the vast gulf between the educated young and the old, the one belonging to the industrialised twentieth century while the other, in their habits and thought, are not far removed from the neolithic age. The resolution of this conflict between the generations will be one of the most important steps towards the stabilization and reformation of Lushai society and its moulding into a structure which can adequately respond to the demands of a new age.

The intense demand for economic development burst another dam set up by the British—the idea of keeping the area isolated and economically stagnant. The result has been an almost fourfold increase in the number of jeepable roads in the last ten years, to take one economic indicator only. The resulting increase in trade because of the faster means of transport thus created can be attested to by the fact that places from where it used formerly to take seven days march to reach the district headquarters can now be reached in a single day.

This rapid growth in communications has had many effects on society. The facility in movement led to the mixture of people of different backgrounds and areas and, as the contacts started covering ever widening circles, the old spirit of neighbourliness was destroyed. And as this spirit was destroyed and dealings were more and more with unknown people, tendencies of trying to take advantage of others developed. Closer and more frequent contact

with people from outside also brought in practices and customs which were foreign to the culture of the Lushais and had no place in the total setting of the community. This interaction with the different practices thus brought in, and the breaking down of the spirit of neighbourliness and 'tlawmngaihna', is also partly responsible for the present ferment in society.

Another effect of the spread of motorable roads has been that as the villagers realised that these constituted both a life line and a source of income for them, they shifted their villages to the side of the roads. In former days, for health and defensive reasons, villages had invariably been built on tops of ridges or spurs and had also been clustered together. The present downward movement, however, has resulted in a sort of ribbon development along the roads which has posed both an impediment to the free flow of traffic and a traffic hazard with increased risks of accidents. Although the downward movement, by bringing them nearer the roads, has made their future development easier, the length-wise spread-out has, further tended to weaken the spirit of neighbourliness and the social unity of the villages.

The economic opening up of the area has also produced rivalries and jealousies between different areas and villages. Villages which are on the main roads or near consuming centres (the two towns, places where detachments of Assam Rifles are stationed, Block headquarters etc) are so much better off, relatively speaking, than the other villages that the location of one of the consuming centres in the nearby area has become the subject of acrimonious debates. The intense rivalries generated has, naturally, had a deleterious effect on the over-all unity of Lushai society so that whereas previously neighbouring villages had tended to help each other out, the same is not the case today.

Another undesirable effect of quick economic growth has been to intensify the effects of the money economy, for the ex-

pansion of the economy has led to a much greater use of coin than had been the case hitherto, by increasing the avenues for earning money through contracts and labour on development works. The increased circulation of coin and the consequent inflation has had a very bad impact on traditional payments and crime. This impact can be seen by studying the effect of inflation on one traditional payment only viz. bride price. In the old days bride price had been paid in mithuns, brass utensils and rice, its value during the British period being computed at about Rs. 300. With inflation the real value of this has decreased so rapidly that today it is not playing the role that it used to in the olden days when it had been meant as compensation to the father for the loss of the working and earning capacity of his daughter. This had also, incidentally, helped in maintaining a relatively high status for women in society. But inflation, by decreasing its value to an almost insignificant amount, has cut at its very roots and the effects of this on both society and the future status of women are bound to be bad.

The effect of inflation on crime has been even more marked. Previously the infliction of fines, properly graded for different crimes, had been a great deterrent on crimes like, say, rape and the begetting of bastards. The traditional payment for this had been a mithun in the old days, and forty rupees during the British period. With inflation the deterrent is just not there and today people are inclined more and more to invoke the Penal Code in cases of rape as a bargaining power for squeezing more money out of the offenders. Obviously the Penal Code with its punishment of seven years imprisonment for rape is much too severe for Lushai society while a fine of forty rupees is as obviously too mild. The same is the case in the begetting of bastards where the fine is not acting as a deterrent at all. The increase in the number of such illegitimate children is posing a great psychological

problem for Lushai society as it is basically in conflict with their (adopted) Christian ethic. A proper balance between the conflicting ideals (Christianity and the traditional ethic) and laws (the Penal Code and the traditional) is yet to be achieved and till this is done Lushai society, and its system of deterrents through fines, will, of necessity, have to remain in a state of flux.

Another cause which is having a very great effect on Lushai society is what may be termed the population explosion. This arises out of the ameliorative measures taken in the medical field which has reduced the death and infant mortality rates, and also, surprisingly, increased the birth rate. The cumulative effect of all this has been a 36% increase of population during the 1951-1961 decade. With this great increase in population the requirements of land for housing and other village purposes has increased, thus taking land out of cultivation. The increased need for more rice to feed the population has also led to an increase in the area under cultivation and, naturally, a decrease in the jhumming cycle, which in some villages has fallen to as low as three years. This decrease in the jhumming cycle, and the consequent denudation of the land and fall in its fertility, has had alarming consequences on the production of rice, a fact which fast threatens to turn the area into a chronically deficit one. This is further accentuated by the loss of agricultural manpower as the educated do not like to go and work in the jhums.

This process of increasing population coupled with lower soil fertility, shorter jhumming cycles and decreasing agricultural manpower is posing a tremendous pressure on Lushai society for starvation is staring it in the face. And though society as a whole wants to give up jhumming which it considers too hard and uneconomical it is not prepared for the logical solutions. For it seems that the ultimate solution would lie either in a movement into the valleys where the people could

have permanent terraced wet-rice cultivation, or into the industrial areas of the country in search of suitable employment. Tradition and considerations of health prevent them from moving down while the long years of isolation make them afraid of going out. It seems that only time can solve what seems at the moment to be an intractable psychological problem fast threatening to turn society into a morbidly delinquent and inward-looking one with all its attendant social, economic, political and psychological consequences.

Another effect of the above factors has been the gradual emergence of poverty. For the cumulative effects of the growth of a money economy, the loosening of social bonds, the giving of loans at high rates of interest and the decay of 'flawmngaihna' has been the concentration of wealth at the top and poverty at the bottom of the social hierarchy. In a society where poverty had previously been almost completely absent this poses a very real danger to its stability, a danger which is accentuated by the absence of a middle class. For the new classes being thrown up by education and economic expansion (drivers, teachers, traders) who are a middle class in the making, have as yet neither forged strong links with society nor got themselves firmly integrated in it so that at present their stabilizing effect is doubtful.

The overall picture that we thus get of Lushai society is of a society in transition from a feudal society based on shifting cultivation to a society better equipped to grapple with twentieth century ideas, technologies and ways of life. Such a transition was inevitable in a world where faster means of communication are not allowing any area to remain isolated, but it is regrettable that, due no doubt to the

long years of repression, it is taking place in a series of explosions rather than in a more gradual way. The effect of these explosions has been to put Lushai society in a state of ferment and turmoil and it will be quite some time before society settles down and grapples with the problems facing it—the reconciling of the traditional with the new, of the outwardly western with the inwardly tribal, of Christian ethics with tribal culture, of education with hard work, of adequately filling the leadership vacuum left by the removal of the chiefs and, perhaps most important of all, of learning the mechanics of the use of money and of reconciling the individualism brought in by it with their traditional collective ethic. For it is indeed regrettable that in making the transition to the new age Lushai society is fast giving up its co-operative ways of life in favour of an individualistic pattern and that today people have so little attachment or regard for co-operative ways of working that in their desire for economic advancement they consider the consequent effects on society immaterial. This may be condemned as showing a lack of appreciation of the culture and values of the past. But such value judgements have no effect on the Lushais economically starved as they have been for centuries, and today development is the new religion, material advancement all that a Lushai desires. And one cannot really blame him for this just as one cannot blame a man who has been starving for a long time for over-eating, but one does marvel at the queer quirk of fate that while the rest of the country is trying in vain to re-discover the spirit of co-operative endeavour through Sarovodaya and co-operatives, Lushai society is cheerfully sacrificing that very spirit at the altar of economic advancement.

Non-Attachment in Buddhist Texts and the Gita

G. S. P. MISRA

IT is interesting to note that whereas philosophers and thinkers present a babel of conflicting ideas regarding the concept of ultimate goal, there is, in a very general manner, an agreement about the intermediate goals. These rational thinkers are apt to have a clear-cut image of the society they want to live in and the sort of men and women they want each and everyone to become. Aldous Huxley in his book *Ends and Means* correctly observes that 'Non-attached' is the best word which can adequately describe the ideal men of the dreams of 'the free philosophers, the mystics, the founders of religion'.¹ Despite its negative phrasing, it entails numerous positive virtues which account for its significant place in the prominent religions of the world. The main purpose of the present paper is to point to a few parallels of phraseology between Buddhist texts and the Gita, which a vigilant reader is not likely to fail to notice, and at the same time to give the meaning of non-attachment in early Buddhism and to show in what respects it is different from or akin to the doctrine as enunciated in the Gita, admittedly the finest exposition of the doctrine of non-attachment.

India of the sixth century B.C. is conspicuous for the emergence of various ascetic religions. Buddhism is one of them. Staunch believers in the universality of pain (*duhkavāda*) and predominance of the past karmas (*karmavāda*) as they were, they preached renunciation of the world and could hardly find any pleasure in the abject and contemptible worldly objects. This was obviously an anti-Vedic stand in sharp opposition to the Brahminical ideal of *pravṛtti* wherein activity was pursued for its fruit and the outlook to-

ward the world was quite optimistic. This trend of mind, which had thriven long before the Aryan settlement on the soil of India,² showed its complete evolution only later when it inundated not only those living beyond the pale of the Aryan community but also the orthodox followers of the Vedas. The Gītā, by putting into abeyance both the extremist ideal of *pravṛtti* (active life) and *nivṛtti* (complete renunciation), pioneers a Brahminical device to assimilate the *nivṛtti* ideal so as to grant stability and predominance to the Brahminical religion over others. In this process of assimilation it could not help borrowing from the ascetic religions ideas and principles which thereby procured enunciation sometimes in almost the same phraseology. The impact of the ascetic religions on the Gītā in this respect cannot be gainsaid.

Egoism constitutes the fulcrum of all attachment, for it is ego coming in conflict with non-ego that causes a notion of 'I' and 'You', 'mine' and 'yours' etc. Consequently, one begins to cling to wordly objects as exclusively one's own, denying them entirely to others. For the destruction of egoism the Gītā lays stress on subjective purification as well as God-realization. The latter is a theistic means to make one see a Supreme Power in each and every being and feel that one is oneself an inseparable part of it. It is clearly stated that God resides in all beings and he who comprehends this has no discrimination at all. He looks on all as one and on the analogy of his own self looks upon the pleasure and pain of all with a similar eye.³ One is commanded to restrain the restless and fidgety mind from all the allurements of the world and shift it to

God⁴ with the assurance that his devotee will not perish.⁵ This tendency of mind apparently admits the merging of the individual's will in the divine will. Devotion to God increases in the same proportion as attachment to the objects of the senses decreases.

This theistic method for the inculcation of non-attachment has affinities with the Christian concept which attaches a significant place to devotion to God. Jesus' will to make all feel that 'they have sinned and come short of the glory of God' is essentially a gospel of attachment to God and, conversely, of non-attachment to worldly things. The doctrines of common sinfulness and firm belief in the 'imminent kingdom of God' which forms one of the main themes of the preachings of Jesus, suggests detachment from worldly objects and shift of the mind to God, for it is the good and the godly only that may be admitted to it.⁶ The supreme object of desire and craving becomes the will to live in nearness to God. It is, paradoxical though it may seem, preaching *niskāma karma* by the way of *sakāma karma*.

The notion of a supreme God had no place in the doctrine of Buddha. Buddhist theory of non-attachment is, therefore, entirely free from any influence of theism. It is a product of rational thinking based upon the conviction of universal suffering. Changeability is inherent in the nature of everything, which places even pleasure in the category of pain.

Generally speaking, we can divide actions into three classes, namely: *nitya-karma* (actions of daily routine), *sakāma karma* (actions with desire) and *niskāma karma* (actions pursued without any clinging to the result). The peculiarity of the first category is this that when observed it brings about no merit to the doer but negligence would accumulate sins for him (*akarane pratyavāya*). *Sakāma karmas*, to use Buddhist terminology, shoot forth into two branches of *kusala* and *akusala karmas* (i.e. actions propelled by desire for good and actions propelled by desire for evil),

which result in pleasure and pain respectively. And lastly, there is *niskāma karma*, actions without a clinging to the result of the deed.

According to Buddhism all *sakāma karmas* (i.e. pleasure and pain alike) are *dukkha* and therefore undesirable. *Parināmadukkhātā* (i.e. suffering caused by the changeable nature of things) represents one of the three aspects of universal suffering (the other two are *dukkhadukkhātā* and *samskāradukkhātā* i.e. suffering caused by pain and caused by commotion respectively) and it equates even pleasure with pain. One conversant with the Buddhist doctrine of Impermanence and Becoming cannot fail to comprehend that pleasures are short and for that reason entail pain after their exhaustion. Pleasures, says F. H. Bradley, are a perishing series and they ever leave us eager and confident.⁷ Some sects of Buddhism (e.g. Gokulikas according to the Kāthāvatthu) even go to the extent of denying the very existence of any feeling of pleasure (*sukha-samvedana*). They believe that it is merely an idea, a mere name, a deceptive apprehension of the thing. Wherever there is feeling (*vedanā*) there is pain *dukkha*.

It goes without saying that a religion with such a pessimistic outlook towards the world would naturally plead detachment to the best of its scope, and it is here that Buddhism could leave an impact on the idea and mode of expression to be used in the Gītā.

Balance of mind is a necessary concomitant of non-attachment. The yogī of the Gītā is one whose mind remains unperturbed in sorrows, whose thirst for pleasures has altogether disappeared and who is free from passion, fear and anger:

*duhkhesvanudvignamanāh sukhesu
vigatasprah,
vītarāgabhayakrodhah sthītheadhīramuni-
ruchyate.*⁸

Arjuna is advised to perform his duties dwelling in yoga, relinquishing attachment and being indifferent to success and fai-

lure. Yoga is nothing but the equanimity of mind:

...*siddhyasiddhyoh samobhūtvā samatvam yoga uchyate*.⁹ Examples conveying this idea of balance of mind can be indefinitely multiplied from the Gītā, and they have numerous parallels in Buddhist texts. Two of them with astonishing similarity of language are given below:

*labhakāmā na sikkhati alabhe na cha kuppati,
aviruddho cha tanhāya rase cha nānugijhati*.¹⁰

i.e., he does not aim at gifts nor resents their lack; he has abated all the cravings, and allurements lose all power upon him.' In the same spirit the Samyutta Nikāya¹¹ says: 'Whoso hath left the world... neither feels pleasure nor is sad at heart'.

'Uncontaminated' (*anūpalitto*) is one of the many epithets used for the Buddha. At one place it has been said that a *śramana* (monk) becomes like a lotus-plant in a pool. The analogy is very common and hints at the lotus not being wetted by the water it floats upon. Similarly, the perfect man is not stained by the affairs of the world. He is living in the world yet not living in it, uncontaminated not only by evil or vice but also by good or virtue. Perfection knows no dualism. It is a disposition of mind in which good and evil are equally useless and undesirable. The Sutta-nipāta defines a true monk as one 'who has left both good and evil' etc:

*samitāvīpahāya punnapāpam,
virajoñatvā imam paramam cha lokam,
jātimarane upāti vatto,
samano'tāhi pavuchchate tathattā*.

The Samyutta iv pp. 112-113 (Pali Text Society), reiterates the same.

Exactly the same phraseology has been applied by the Gītā for its yogī. Read, for example, verse 28 of the ninth chapter where Krishna admonishes Arjuna:

*shubhāshukhaphalairavam moksyase
karma bandhanaih,
sannyāsajogayuktātmā vimukto nānu-
pashyasi*.

i.e., 'With your mind thus established in the yoga of renunciation, you will be freed from bonds of karma in the shape of good and evil consequences...' Yogī means 'shubhāshubha parityāgi, or 'one who has relinquished good and evil alike'.

Such a person is apparently not chained by his actions for he is not at all attached to their fruit. The Suttanipata 790 declares —'for such there is no more action needed there'. According to the Gītā such a person though ever engaged in action, does nothing at all:

karmanyabhipravṛttopi naiva kimchit karoti sah.¹²

Both Buddhism and the Gītā are wary of the fact that the requisite control of mind for the attainment of such a balance is not easy to cultivate. As a wind carries away the barge upon the waters, in the same way mind, when it joins any one of the senses, takes away all the discrimination of man:

*indriyānām hi charatām yanmanonuvī-
dhiyate
tadasya harat prajñām Vāyurnāvami-
vāmbhasi*.¹³

Mind is unsteady yet powerful and as difficult to control as the wind (VI. 34). It is this consideration of the unsteadiness of mind that makes Buddha advise one not to contemplate on any object of pleasure to the senses for 'the sense-organ immediately begins to dwell on it, is engrossed by it and a desire for its attainment arises... it supplies a fuel to the lamp'.¹⁴ The point is beautifully explained by the analogy of an ape. Just as the ape is ever restless and leaves one branch only to seize another, even so mind leaves one object only to rest on another and hence the absence of peace.¹⁵

The solution of the problem is given in a similar spirit and the same phraseology. The Samyutta-Nikāya¹⁶ gives a story of a jackal and a tortoise. The jackal wanted to eat the tortoise. Seeing the jackal coming to him, the tortoise drew its neck and four limbs into its shell and the jackal had to

go away disgusted. In the same way, it is stated, Māra (evil personified) cannot overpower a man who has withdrawn his senses from worldly objects. The story concludes with this verse:

Even as the tortoise into its own shell's
shelter

Withdraws its limbs, so may the brother
holding,

Composed, intent, thoughts in his mind
arisen,

Living on naught...

Even a casual reader cannot fail to notice the reiteration of the same analogy in the following verse of the Gītā:

*Yadāsamharate chāyam kūrmongānīva
sarvashah,*

*indriyānūdrīyārthebhyastasya prajñā
pratisthitā.*¹⁷

i.e. just as a tortoise draws in its limbs from all directions, in the same way one who seeks to make his mind stable, should withdraw his senses from the sense-objects.

To conclude, though a practical and a dynamic doctrinizing of non-attachment was for the first time furnished in the Gītā, the contribution of the ascetic religion to this theory cannot be denied. Cultivation of detachment by the way of self-purification forms one of the main preachings of the Buddha which the Gītā is pleased to borrow with slight modifications.

¹ Aldous Huxley: *Ends and Means* (London 1947), p. 3.

² See Dr. G. C. Pande: *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*. (University of Allahabad, 1957), pp. 321-29.

³ The Gita, VI, 31, 32.

⁴ *Ibid.*, VI, 26.

⁵ *Ibid.*, IX, 31.

⁶ On christianity — Ernst Troeltsch: *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (4th Impr., London 1956), Vol. I. George Foot Moore: *History of Religions* V I. II (Edinburgh 2nd Imp. 1948); Sherman E. Johnson: *Jesus in His Own Times*. (London, 1958).

⁷ F. H. Bradley: *Ethical Studies* (Reprint, 2nd ed., Oxford, 1952).

⁸ The Gita, II, 56.

⁹ *Ibid.*, II, 48.

¹⁰ Sutta-nipata, 854.

¹¹ Samyutta-Nikaya, Vol. I, p. 78.

¹² The Gita, VI, 20.

¹³ *Ibid.*, II, 67.

¹⁴ Dialogues of the Buddha II, p. 154; Samyutta. II. p. 60.

¹⁵ Theragatha (Psalms of the Brethren), p. 374. Samyutta, II. p. 56.

¹⁶ Samyutta, IV. pp. 12-13.

¹⁷ The Gita, II, 58.

Note : The original texts referred to have been quoted from their translations by the Pali Text Society.

A Brief Note on the Decline of the Prophet

OM PRAKASH SHARMA

LAST month the great historian celebrated his eighty-fifth birthday. Arnold Toynbee ought to be genuinely congratulated, for it is matter of wonder that his critics have allowed him to live that long. There is a saying in Sanskrit that respect is owing to an individual, if at all, on any of the three counts: learning, power, and failing these, old age. Arnold Toynbee, one thought, met all these requirements, if we include the lasting, if somewhat tenuous, power that a prophet wields over the minds of men.

But time and his critics seem intent upon conferring on him merely distinction and all the handicaps that go with it. Ironically enough history has let the great historian down, so much so, that his claim to the title is being seriously disputed. His is a voice in the historical wilderness, so to speak, into which he has sought in vain to breathe some deterministic order. Such desperate attempts have been made before from Hegel downwards, and recalcitrant history, as ever, has failed to oblige.

Toynbee's theory of 'aging cultures and civilisations', with which no one can afford to be unfamiliar, has a respectably neurotic German pedigree. Hegel, Nietzsche, Marx, and lately Spengler, all of whom believed in predetermined phases of history 'marked by catastrophic convulsions'. Hence Spengler's 'Decline of the West'. But when the promised decline did not materialise after the first World War as predicted (nor does it appear to be doing so after the second for that matter,) Toynbee was forced to the wall, and he hastily retreated from his linear view of history to a cyclical one concerning the decline of society as a whole.

Michael Polanyi, speaking of the 'Foolishness of History' dwells, as the title indicates, upon the foolishness of any such inspired attempt to read a pattern into history's waywardness and coax a methodology out of events. No wonder that Toynbee's Bible *A Study of History*, (about 'the most comprehensive field of work that I was capable of handling') is considered so much love's labour lost and is rifled by experts for its 'logical incoherence and empirical invalidity'. Like any apocalyptic book, it seeks to 'imagine the past and remember the future'. Even the style of the modern gospel, no less than its pronouncements, is the subject of severe censure and in comparison Hitler's or Rosenberg's is hailed as a masterpiece of Gibbonian lucidity. And though, as a dollar-earning commodity the *Study* may be ranked as second alone to Scotch whisky, it has been labelled by no less an authority than H. R. Trevor-Roper as 'untrue, illogical, and dogmatic'.

But this general disesteem into which his work has fallen in specialised circles, dragging Toynbee down from academic grace, is only an isolated and relative occurrence. It has been followed by an unprecedented rise in his popularity the world over. Perhaps the two events are somehow related and eminent specialists are busy worrying whether the connection is causal: That is, is it necessary to renounce the academic Eden in order to gain the whole world?

However, their quarrel with Toynbee appears to be over fundamentals. What is the meaning of history and what is the role of the historian? On one's answer to the first question depends the answer to the second.

What is history? A twentieth century Pilate may well ask and hardly wait for an answer. Is it an art or a science, is it the 'biography of great men' or is it ultimately the 'will of the masses'? Is it a dialectical process or no rational process at all, no method in the madness?

Others abide these questions, Toynbee is free. He has already given his verdict through his works, viz., that history is not a science, but a prescience. Nor is it, Polanyi and Berenson notwithstanding, a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury signifying nothing. The scientific view of history is a device to save us the tiresome obligation of using our imagination creatively. Whatever else it may be, history is certainly not to be equated with the crude corpus of ascertained facts that Ranke would have us believe. And what use are facts without interpretation, without the integrating faculty of inner vision brought to bear on them? They are merely a blind datum of experience, and the least attempt to interpret them in order to understand them or pierce their meaning, makes for someone's eye-view which is subject to the limitations attendant upon it. As Edward Carr, in his memorable Trevelyan lectures has it: 'The facts are available to the historian in documents, inscriptions and so on, like fish on the fishmonger's slab. The historian collects them, takes them home and cooks and serves them in whatever style appeals to him. Acton, whose culinary tastes were austere, wanted them served plain.'

Toynbee's taste is otherwise. More flamboyant, more omnivorous, more reckless, he wishes to roam at the edge of the universe, 'range over time and space into infinity' but always finding his bearings, not by the living present, but by the Graeco-Roman world of 2000 years ago. He has built himself a bridge over the deep past and the deep future, incidentally also covering the twilight zone between fact and fiction, and from this somewhat arbitrary construction is prone to taking frequent leaps in the dark. 'I hope' he says

somewhere, 'I have jumped clear out of the 18th-century into the 21st without having got my feet engangled in the 19th-century or in the 20th.' This is typical of the man, except that the periods usually covered in his great leaps forward are immeasurably larger.

He has no use for mere facts unless it be to use them to serve the greater (to some, quixotic) purpose of justifying the ways of philosophy by history, of stealing an unauthorised glimpse into the distant future as through a glass darkly, of nothing less than casting a horoscope of civilisation. To borrow his own words, he is not content with illuminating facts by 'piecemeal researches of the 17th-century scholars' but is desirous of conjuring 'a unity out of them' professedly after the manner of the '15th-century Italians'. Now this is evidently to walk on thin ice—a feat which has proved fatal to many a historian-philosopher. In Toynbee's own case, judging from the shape of things that have come and his past predictions about them, one is only convinced of the appositeness of Carlyle's dictum concerning the futility of vaticination.

In 1909, J. B. Bury wrote a thought-provoking article on 'Darwinism in History' calculated to emphasize the role played by chance in determining 'events in social evolution'. Apart from Toynbee's disagreement with Bury over his concept of history as a science, the author of *A Study of History* could not possibly have any truck with such a view. A deeply religious man, he refuses to take refuge in scepticism or cynicism born of a belief that 'history has no meaning, or a multiplicity of equally valid or invalid meanings, or the meaning which we arbitrarily choose to give it.' On the contrary, Toynbee's mysticism, as it is sometimes called, makes for a certain type of historical inevitability by positing the meaning and end of history to lie outside history itself, and therefore beyond the manipulation of mere humanity. It is difficult to see how this interpretation of his-

tory is fundamentally different from the ancient Greek's with his theory of 'Vast Impersonal Forces controlling human destiny.'

These *deus ex machina* schools of history have been a constant source of irritation to many a thinking man and one exasperated historian seems to clinch the argument against them in comparing history to a game of cards which has to be played without a God or a joker in the pack. These preternatural, arbitrary intrusions may

take the shape of Adam Smith's 'hidden hand', Berdyaev's 'super-historical force', Hegel's omnipotent 'Zeitgeist', or Toynbee's 'meta-history' of the decline and fall of civilizations.

Meanwhile, one would do better to keep the counsel of A. J. P. Taylor who observes in his characteristic vein, 'All this talk about the decline of civilization means only that university professors used to have domestic servants and now do their own washing-up.'

We regret that Prof. Richard Pipes' letter to Shri Prabhakar Padhye commenting on the latter's article "The Marxian Image of Man" (*Quest* 44) was inadvertently published in our previous issue without Prof. Pipes' formal permission having been obtained due to a misunderstanding between Shri Padhye and ourselves.

—EDITORS

CURRENT AFFAIRS

A Solution for Vietnam

HOANG VAN CHI

IT is not my wish to be disrespectful towards anybody, particularly towards the generous people of the USA who are spending their wealth and sacrificing the lives of their children in an effort to save my country from Communist, or even Chinese, domination; but to be frank—and frankness alone is required at this crucial moment—there is a need to look again at the basic elements of American policy in Vietnam.

Western politicians and strategists are only, in my opinion, familiar with that kind of war usually waged in the West—war in which only military strategy and war potential decide the outcome of the struggle. The guerilla war now raging in South Vietnam is, it must be recognised; of a completely different character.

In 1958, at the beginning of their guerilla war against the South Vietnamese regime of Ngo Dinh Diem, the Viet Cong were militarily very weak, but thanks to their political ability, their army became gradually stronger. Thus, military strength is a function of political capability. At the beginning, the Viet Cong were not even politically very strong, but as they had a very attractive ideology, and as they pretended to defend the broad masses against Diem's oppression, they attracted more and more people to their side. Thus, political strength is in its turn a function of Marxism (for party cadres) and just cause (for non-Communist supporters).

The Saigon government and the so-called 'nationalist' camp in South Vietnam could produce no adequate alternative to the Viet Cong. The Can Lao (Personalist Workers' Party) administration in South Vietnam continued to oppress the people, and their control steadily dwindled and their military strength collapsed.

Vietnam's successful resistance against repeated Chinese and Mongol attacks throughout its history was due to the fact that its national institutions and social organisation always stood on a broad and solid base. Traditional Vietnamese society resembled a pyramid with a king on the top and ordinary peasants at the base. The whole nation was effectively divided into ten levels cemented together by a common religion, Buddhism and a common rule of behaviour, Confucianism. Kings and mandarins were at times despotic; but in general, bound by the Confucian concept of 'father and mother of the people,' they administered with justice and regarded their position as a duty and an honour, never as a right. Nobility was not hereditary and all administrative posts were open to brilliant scholars, many of whom were sons of modest peasants.

After the French conquest of Vietnam in the late nineteenth century, the Vietnamese pyramid was overturned. Patriotic mandarins were dismissed or sent to jail, while unpatriotic (and often uneducated) elements were called in to take their place. A sharp conflict between the resisters and

the collaborators arose, reaching such an extent that, for example, intermarriage between their respective families and descendants was inconceivable.

The situation continued until the war between the French and the Viet Minh broke out in 1946, with the effect that patriotic and worthy people joined Ho Chi Minh, while the less patriotic elements joined the French. After the Geneva Agreements of 1954 which bisected Vietnam at the 17th parallel, these same people who had worked with the French became high officials in the Ngo Dinh Diem administration, and high-ranking officers in the South Vietnamese army. These people were obviously anti-Communist, but their anti-Communism arose mainly from their fear of losing their privileges in the event of a Communist take-over. The same motives, it should be noted, also caused them to fear non-Communist opposition, which might topple them at any moment.

When the Americans came to South Vietnam in 1955, they found in Saigon an administration and an army which swore that they were anti-Communist to the core, and put forward as a 'proof' the argument that they had been on the French side in the war against the Viet Minh. They were also clever enough to persuade their new masters, and to inform CIA agents, that all those who had been on the other side of the barricade in the Viet Minh war were hardened Communists.

The Americans, involved in a fight against the Viet Cong, and forgetting that they themselves had supported the Viet Minh during the Second World War, were readily convinced by these over-simple arguments, and began to support politically, financially, and militarily an unpatriotic administration whose main concern consisted in suppressing democratic opposition from within, instead of fighting against Communist aggression from without. The result was soon apparent: those who had opposed French rule once again joined the Communists, to combat a re-

gime more patently despotic than the previous one.

In the light of the analysis above, the most effective way to reduce the military strength of the Viet Cong would seem to be to strive to attract patriotic elements to the non-Communist side; but such a task cannot be done by people who have been the servants of foreign conquerors.

As the mistakes which have been made in Vietnam, both by the French and by the Americans, are mainly the result of insufficient understanding between West and East, they are perhaps unavoidable for the Western observer, to a greater or lesser extent. There has been too little understanding of the complexity of the Vietnamese problem, and there has been a dangerous lack of information concerning the culture, social organisation, and national aspirations of the Vietnamese people.¹ Added to this, there has been the inherent habit of judging Vietnamese events by Western standards and through certain preconceived Western ideas.

In the framework, of this article there is no space to discuss further the sources of Western mistakes in Vietnam, and I shall proceed to list briefly some of the mistakes which have been made.

1. After bloody religious wars and political revolutions, Western nations succeeded in building up democratic regimes which allowed them to develop science and industry without any hindrance, while Asian nations, with the exception of Japan, failed to do the same and remained where they had been 2,000 years earlier.

Now, realising that they are at the same time free and technically advanced, Western political scientists have developed the theory that democratic freedom cannot go without industrial development. By mistaking the effect (industrial development) for the cause (democracy) they arrive at the conclusion that only nations which have reached a certain level of industrial development are suited for democracy, while less technically advanced people, regardless of their cultural heritage, should

be under some form of strong centralised authority, not to say dictatorship. Otherwise, it is argued, there will be complete anarchy, such as actually happened in the Congo.

From this theory about democracy and industrial development sprang the idea of the 'strong man,' and as no distinctions are made in regard to cultural development, the same idea is thought to be applicable to such countries as China, Korea and Vietnam. As a result, the USA has unwisely given support to such Asian strong men as Chiang Kai-shek, Syngman Rhee, Ngo Dinh Diem and others.

In my view, there has been no theory so damaging to the prestige of liberal USA since the end of the Second World War as the theory of the 'strong man.' It seems likely that, had the British adopted the same theory, India and Malaya would have long ago disappeared behind the bamboo curtain.

2. Limiting their knowledge of the Vietnamese to personal contact with members of the upper class, who live in cities and can speak foreign languages, western observers have frequently failed to recognise the gravity of the injustices being committed far and wide in the Vietnamese countryside, and have tended to think that a few reforms from the top might suffice to remedy the situation. They also failed to realise that when reforms are prejudicial to the interest of the ruling class, there is no possibility that this class will really promote and apply such reforms. Having had their own revolutions too long ago, western observers now fail to recognise the necessity for others to have revolutions. They ignore the fact that, for almost a century, jails in Vietnam have been permanently full of revolutionaries because of this need.

3. Injustices do exist, and to eliminate them, the Communists present to the justice-thirsty population a solution of their own. If one rejects, and wants the population to reject the Communist proposal, then one should put forward another

proposal. As Mr Nguyen Van Trung, a Catholic professor at Saigon university, has said: 'To kill the ones who offer a solution, either right or wrong, does not constitute in itself a solution to the existing problems.'²

4. There has been an over-estimation of the 'anti-Communist resistance efficiency' of the Catholic group in Vietnam. Catholicism is a solid faith and might offer some kind of resistance to Communist power in Eastern Europe, and might resist Communist aggression in such countries as Spain or the Philippines, but it can hardly do so in Vietnam, where the Catholics represent a minority, recently planted in primarily Buddhist soil.

5. Being on the one hand unfamiliar with revolutionary developments, and on the other hand accustomed to normal progress under lasting political stability, western observers are convinced that without a stable government (which in the Vietnamese context means a counter-revolutionary one) no improvement can be won in the war against the Viet Cong. They seem to forget the fact that there were nine years of perfect stability under Diem and that it was during this period of stagnant stability that the Viet Cong acquired their present power. People who suffer from injustice simply do not want stability.³

6. As stability is considered so vital by Westerners, Buddhist and student demonstrations are taken as dangerous factors creating instability. Consequently, enthusiastic support is given to any strong man who will suppress the Buddhist and student movements, even if these movements have brought the strong man to power.

In connection with Buddhism, it should be recalled that Vietnam was strong when Buddhism was flourishing (from the 11th to the 14th centuries) and became weak when Buddhism declined in favour of Confucianism. It was a Buddhist monk, Ly Cong Uan, who founded the first great dynasty which established Vietnam as a

nation strong enough to actually attack China.

To understand the present political involvement of the Buddhists, one has to realise that it was because the Bao Dai and Ngo Dinh Diem regimes completely corrupted the whole of the Vietnamese intelligentsia (now ranging in age from 30 to 50 years or so) that the task of reacting against an alarming situation fell on the shoulders of ageing monks and adolescent schoolchildren. Vietnamese society has, over a period of twenty years, been corrupted to such an extent that the Vietnamese masses cannot put their confidence in anybody, except the monks who take only one meal a day, and the teenagers whose hands are believed to be still clean. This also explains the complete bankruptcy of political parties of all shades in South Vietnam.

All of these are mistakes commonly made by observers. However, although they weigh heavily in the balance, they are not as serious as the mistakes committed by the authorities in Washington.

In theory, United States policy in South Vietnam—as most recently outlined by President Johnson—consists in ‘providing all possible and useful assistance to the South Vietnamese *people* and government in their struggle to defeat the externally supported insurgency and aggression being conducted against them.’ (*My italics*) If such a policy were being effectively carried out in South Vietnam, then future Vietnamese historians would record something like this:

‘From 1955 to... the US administration generously assisted the South Vietnamese people in their fight against the attacks from local Communists supported from outside.’

But there is more chance that, falling on such documents as the deep and impartial analysis of the Vietnamese situation produced by the Catholic professor Nguyen Van Trung, as well as numerous other Vietnamese documents, future Vietnamese historians will actually write as follows:

‘From 1958 to... South Vietnam was attacked by local Communists. To defend South Vietnam as an outpost of South Asia and of the Free World the US administration engaged as contractors (the term is from Nguyen Van Trung) such strong men as Ngo Dinh Diem, Nguyen Khanh, Tran Van Huong and..., to undertake the resistance against the Viet Cong, and provided them with roughly one billion dollars a year.’

Under the present US policy in Vietnam, three alternative courses of action are generally considered possible. These are:

1. Escalate the war into North Vietnam or China;
2. Maintain the present war effort;
3. Negotiate a peace and abandon the country.

Western observers who discuss these three alternatives freely admit that none of them is satisfactory. In my view, the three alternatives are not merely unsatisfactory, but are based upon mistaken assumptions. The Viet Cong cannot simply be regarded as a group of ordinary rebels, and an analysis of the complex causes of their support and success would show that one cannot oppose the Viet Cong revolution in South Vietnam by hiring a contractor and recruiting mercenary officers.

This lesson could have been learned from events in Kuomintang China, and in this connection I refer the reader to a voluminous and well-documented book, *America's Failure in China: 1941-50*, by Tang Tsu, a professor at Chicago University.⁵

If the policy of the United States was correctly carried out in Vietnam, then in facing the Viet Cong, the US administration should favour—or at least not hinder—the non-Communist camp in developing its own source of support similar to, and possibly stronger than, the Viet Cong's, by generating a strong popular movement based on tolerance, love of peace, and democracy.

What is interesting and significant in the present situation is that, forced by circumstances the Vietnamese people have on their own initiative moved in the right direction. In fact, tolerance and love of peace is contained in the Buddhist creed and can be considered as an antidote to the Communist theory of class struggle, while the fight for democracy waged by the Vietnamese students is the right antidote to the doubtful Communist claims to be fighting in a good cause. But by sheer stupidity, this beautiful and genuinely Vietnamese response to a critical situation is being frustrated by American-paid contractors and mercenaries.

I do not neglect the danger of a possible Communist infiltration among the Buddhists and the students, but wish to draw attention to three points relevant to the infiltration question:

1. Infiltration is always possible, but it is much more difficult for the Communists to infiltrate genuine popular movements, and to attract to their side people who are animated by an ideal or a faith of some sort, than to 'buy' a few ambitious politicians or high-ranking army officers.

2. The huge number of Kuomintang officers who joined Mao's camp—and most recently, the case of Cheng I-ming—are convincing proofs of the unreliability of such people. I am convinced that without some kind of intelligence inside the South Vietnamese military headquarters, the Viet Cong would hardly be able to escape in time, as they generally do, when massive 'surprise' attacks are launched against them.

3. During the colonial period, the French used to label all Vietnamese liberals as 'anti-French' so as to repress them; these accusations stemmed from the attitude epitomised in the phrase, 'Those who are not with us are against us.' People who accuse the Vietnamese Buddhists and students as 'tools of the Communists' without offering any proof appear to have the same misguided attitude.

Instead of supplanting and then elimina-

ting the Communist revolution by a democratic one, the US policy in South Vietnam is such that the latter is being suppressed in favour of the former. Mr. Sidney Lens, an American journalist who recently visited Saigon, arrived at the same conclusion. He said: 'It is a race between (democratic) revolution and war, in which present odds favour the Viet Cong warriors.'⁶

My last hope is that President Johnson will revise his whole Vietnamese policy in the direction indicated. I also hope that Secretary of State Dean Rusk, who agrees with my conviction that a good gardener should not cut the roots and the branches off his tree, will take measures to stop people from cutting the main root and buds of the Vietnamese tree.⁷ He cannot ignore the fact that for the Vietnamese tree, Buddhism is the main root, and students are the young buds.

But my hope is very faint, not only because it would be difficult for Washington to reverse a long-standing policy, but also because the South Vietnamese army has undergone a complete process of 'kuomintang-isation,' the most obvious result of which is the recent coup of December 20, 1964.

To face the Viet Cong's attack and to prevent any 'contractor's volte-face' in Saigon, there is no other alternative for Washington—apart from pure and simple abandonment—to transferring its confidence from some 'strong men' to democratic movements.

In the present situation, the question to ask is why Washington persistently refuses to transfer its confidence from one individual Vietnamese to a large group of Vietnamese who enjoy popular support. Had the British any fear when they handed power over to the Indian Congress Party, which had opposed British rule? A solution along the lines I have suggested requires a supreme effort of reappraisal, patience and determination, but it is the only one which is logical and in conformity with American ideals.

Notes

¹ The lack of knowledge of Asian culture and the need for humanistic studies of Asia has been emphasised by a group of Columbia University professors in their letter to the *New York Times*, September 24, 1964.

² "Researches and views on the present situation of Vietnam," by Nguyen Van Trung, *Tim Hieu*, organ of Saigon University, No. 5, issued in Saigon on November 11, 1964.

³ "That kind of stability was illusory and fraudulent. What Saigon desperately needs now is something it has never had : a popular government," stated Richard J. Coughlin, professor in sociology at the University of Virginia, in the *New York Times* (International Edition) December 16, 1964.

⁴ *New York Times* (International Edition), December 2, 1964.

⁵ University of Chicago Press, 1963.

⁶ "Vietnam: the Race between Revolution and War," by Sidney Lens, *Peace News*, October 16, 1964.

⁷ "The Winds of Freedom," by Dean Rusk, *Saturday Evening Post*, June 30-July 7, 1962.

THE DREAM I FATHERED

The dream I fathered has disowned me now
 And vanished out of bounds of Memory Town;
 I called the secret squad and told them how
 The dream had stayed awhile with me and flown
 Into a hidden pocket of the sky.
 They asked me for a picture, I had none.
 They asked me to describe him, how could I
 Who fathered him in blindness like the sun?
 At dusk they brought a rag to me and said,
 'We found this by the draw-bridge.' 'It is his,'
 I cried, 'He wore this shirt. O is he dead?'
 'You killed him,' screamed the Chief of the Police.

A. MADHAVAN

Red Herrings in the Indian Ocean

ASHIN DAS GUPTA

SOMETHING appears to be rotting in the world of the Indian Ocean and you can smell it in the news but it is not at all easy to say what precisely is in a state of decomposition. For one thing the confrontation politics of President Soekarno has produced a crisis which I think is a fake in the sense that the real danger to Malaysia does not come from Indonesia at all but from China and, on the other hand, Indonesia has no earthly reason to get so desperate about Malaysia, which can do her no conceivable harm. This does not mean that the simulated emergency cannot lead to real disaster both for Malaysia and her belligerent neighbour but the possibilities for it have to be disentangled from present posturings and understood in themselves.

They lie deep in the history and society of this oceanic world. Let us begin with a simple question: Who is a Malaysian? You can answer it only by saying that a Malaysian is a citizen of the Federation of Malaysia established in 1963 and would concede, if pressed, that Malaysia is a country where Malaysians live. I doubt whether this can be called satisfactory because you are not putting your finger on Malaysians as an identifiable people quite distinct from their political state. The simple query then leads us to an awareness of artificiality. Is it true then, as President Soekarno claims, that Malaysia is an altogether artificial creation, conjured up by the British? This precisely is the hurried surmise we should watch. Let us consider two other questions. Who is an Indonesian and who, for that matter, is a Malay? The anthropologists tell us that racially speaking they are more or less the same people: we can call them proto-Malay or Mongoloid-Indonesian, it would

not matter much either way. The Malay language and *Bhasa* Indonesia are closely related members of the same family. And, what is more interesting, this human group comprising about sixty million souls inhabit the Malayan Peninsula, all of Indonesia, Formosa, the Philippines and then fade away into Polynesia. If you are still thinking in terms of one folk, one state, you have a tall order on your hand. Moreover, while on this topic of demography, let us note that apart from the Proto-Malays (or Mongoloid-Indonesians) there are a large number of other peoples inhabiting the archipelago and its continental fringe. There are the Melanesian tribes and a very large number of Chinese and Indians. Indonesia as at present constituted has a population of about one hundred million and Malaysia can muster another ten millions which together far exceed the sixty odd million of Proto-Malays recognized by anthropologists. It would not be true to say that the non-Malay groups are really strangers and visitors in this society. The Melanesian tribes have been there from a very early period, in fact much earlier than the Malays. The Chinese and Indians have converged on these islands throughout historic times and, to an extent, modified the racial composition. The essential thing to grasp about this constellation of islands and their continental adjuncts is that it is an open world. A junk, a prow, or a sturdy dhow, and you are there. It is even more than usually foolish to look here for precise definitions.

Are we then not to look for national definitions at all? It is fortunately not necessary to pursue this chain of thought to that extremity. Nations are emerging

among these islands now not so much because of demography as their historical experience. There are three successor states to the past empires now shaping their respective nations. Indonesia has brought together what the Dutch reluctantly left; Malaysia is busy forging a common structure among British outposts and the Philippines have inherited from the Spaniards and the Americans. You may not like it but it is as simple as that. The greatest legacy of imperialism is nationalism, not only in the sense that imperial arrogance provoked nationalist enthusiasm but imperial boundaries proved to be national frontiers. Otherwise most modern African nations would not make any sense.

Now let us note two other considerations before we leave these general thoughts. While it is true that the racial composition of this island-world would not allow precise definitions, it is equally true that there is enough similarity here to think of a common future. Macapagal, the President of the Philippines was wise enough to put forward the idea of a *Maphilindo* which is I think where the future lies. Similarly there is in Africa an awareness of a common heritage transcending the successor states. The Arabs have been attempting a unity which would take them beyond the ex-imperial frontiers. In this development there will come the final defeat of imperialism but not before nationalism has substantially modified itself. The modification will ultimately wear down national exclusiveness. This leads to our second consideration. The development of nation states in the Indian Ocean has to go together with the growth of plural societies. Otherwise the diversities cannot be accommodated. And if plural societies develop, the concomitant nationalism cannot take on an exclusive character. This would smooth the way to the coming transition to multi-national formations. The present state of Malaysia is, to my mind, a unique experiment in this development.

Many societies are plural in the world to-day but Malaysia is easily more plural

than the rest. Let us begin to look at this problem from the heartland of Malaysia, that is the Malaya Peninsula and Singapore. If you take these two together then on a head-count you will find 45% of the population Chinese and only 43% Malay, the rest being in the main Indians. This is a unique situation as there is no other country in the world where the 'locals' are in a minority. Almost all the problems of Malaysia can be traced back to this one single fact; it is a complete mistake to try to understand the position of Malaysia from any other major fact e.g. what is called British Imperialism, which is a wholly external factor. Now, why should this Chinese preponderance provide such a headache? Mainly because of two reasons. First there is the general fact of Chinese nationalism which makes the Chinese anywhere in the world look to China as their home. Second there is the specific difficulty of Communism. While all the Chinese in Malaya are not Communist, a distressingly large number are. So if these things are put together, it is not difficult to see that Malaya may conceivably be transformed into an Overseas Territory of Communist China. Malaysia fundamentally is an attempt by the local Malays, assisted by the British, to prevent this from happening. This is also the reason why Communists everywhere—and, alas, of all shades—are so angry with Malaysia.

It is not usually realized how important the fact of Chinese nationalism is or what a remarkable position the Chinese have built up for themselves in South East Asia. In Malaya itself significant Chinese presence can be traced back at least to the fourteenth century and from this time onwards it is possible to see three distinct phases in which the Chinese came. Till the nineteenth century opulent Chinese merchants settled mostly in Malacca and along the coast; in course of the nineteenth century Chinese entrepreneurs accompanied the spread of British administration inland and began to develop tin mining on a large scale and finally in the

twentieth century as capitalism began to show its paces, there was a remarkable rise in the size of the Chinese working class with its largest concentration in Singapore. It is possible and necessary to sort out these three different kinds of people who came. The merchant princes of historical memory identified themselves strongly with Malaya and the British Administration. They and their collaterals are even to this day known as the Queen's Chinese. Entrepreneurs of the nineteenth century, in general the most influential group among the Chinese till the Second World War, tended to be less drawn towards Malaya and, as nationalism developed in China, more closely identified with their ancestral home. The working class was rabidly nationalist and easily inclined towards radical ideologies, specially after the depression of the thirties. This class found its leaders among Chinese white-collar groups which had also developed to an extent in the meantime and among would-be entrepreneurs who had arrived too late to share in the prosperity of an expanding economy. This is a useful division to keep in mind because otherwise we tend to think of the Chinese in Malaya as an undifferentiated whole which, of course, they have never been. But it is only a rough classification specially because I am not stressing the differences among them based on their ancestral localities or which grew round their innumerable secret societies. These also could be helpful in understanding what happened e.g. the fact that there was (and, is) a social group among the Chinese called the Hainanese or the Hailam who were looked down upon by the social elite say, the Cantonese and the Hokkien, and the Hailam took to Communism in the thirties and the forties because they found it gave them a new social recognition. That is the kind of stray but significant fact which cannot be accommodated in a brief resumé. But I shall draw your attention to two major facts which stand out as you study the process of Chinese colonisation of

Malaya. For one thing they have a complete control over the retail trade of the country and their investment in tin and rubber is second only to that of the Europeans. Immediately before the war the total Chinese investment in Malaya was about U.S. \$200 million as compared with other foreign investments which totalled about \$454.5 million. Chinese family remittances from Singapore and the Federation in 1948 came upto approximately SS \$15,500,000. So now if we are talking about imperial exploitation of Malay's resources, these figures should come in somewhere. For myself, I must make clear I cannot work up much indignation about this business of exploitation and I believe along with almost everyone who has written on it that the Chinese did a wonderful job in the opening up of Malaya. The thing to remember really is their economic power. The other major fact I am referring to is that although the Chinese began to settle in Malaya centuries ago, the Malaya census of 1931 showed only one-third of them as locally born, the rest had come out from China. The census in 1947 showed a striking improvement in this respect and now about two-thirds of their number are born in Malaya but even with this we can judge the strong attachment they have for China, Malaya being the place where, with luck, they make their pile.

The feeling for their ancestral home and deep family ties provide the basis for the Chinese way of living. The first principle which Sun Yat Sen preached was nationalism and Victor Purcell in his excellent study *The Chinese in South East Asia*, summarizes some of it like this: 'The Chinese belong to the yellow race. China is the country where 'race' and 'nation' are the same. To save China we must certainly promote nationalism. The Chinese people are of the Han or Chinese race with common blood, common language, common religion and common customs a single race.' Now, this single race have always looked upon the area of the Indian Ocean as a

special sphere which they have called the Nanyang (literally, the Southern Ocean). Ties between China and the Nanyang have always been close and the Chinese in Nanyang helped Sun Yat Sen substantially in making his revolution. Dr. Sun is believed to have visited Singapore first of all in 1900. The *Tung Meng Hui* which he founded in China in 1905 opened its Singapore branch in 1906. Dr. Sun himself worked in Malaya off and on from this time to 1911 while branches of his party appeared in all important Malay towns. One very important result of this was seen in the field of education in Malaya. Chinese children never attended English and Malay schools in significant numbers because of their natural preference for their own language and culture and also because they found English education in particular somewhat expensive. There was now a phenomenal growth of Chinese education and it brought the bulk of the Malayan Chinese within the sphere of influence of the educational movement which started with the revolution in China. Neither the British Administration nor the various state governments in Malaya could do anything about it. 'The Chinese community', writes Victor Purcell 'was surrendered to Chinese nationalism and, in effect, to Communism, for this was more and more disseminated through the influence of poorly paid (and therefore leftist) teachers, so many of whom were employed in the Chinese vernacular schools'. These vernacular schools switched over to *Kuo Yü* when the National Language Movement started in China. Dr. Sun Yat Sen established an Overseas Department to look after the welfare of the Chinese in Nanyang and it brought the Malay Chinese schools under its own system of inspection. Children in these schools learned about China through Chinese. They memorized the Three Principles of Sun Yat Sen and their text books made no mention of Malaya which their parents had made their home. It is a sobering thought that these are the

children that Tunku Abdul Rahman has now to work with, only they are children no more.

Who else is the Tunku working with? This brings us, somewhat belatedly, to the phenomenon of Malay Nationalism. In a sense it was right not to bring the Malays in earlier because their nationalism is itself a recent phenomenon, not reaching farther back than the days of the Second World War. But before we go into that let us get the administrative set-up clear. Immediately before the War, what we have called the heartland of Malaysia was divided into three. There were the Straits Settlements of Singapore, Malacca, and Penang directly administered by a British Governor at Singapore; there were the Federated Malay States and the Unfederated Malay States. British control was more effective in the Federated States. But all these states were ruled by Malay Sultans who worked through the local aristocracy. There was no middle class among the Malays. Either you were an aristocrat, a prince or a peasant, occasionally a fisherman. Few people worked in trade and industry as somehow, these did not seem to fit the Malay way of living. The British Administration showed high solicitude for the Malays and prevented the Chinese from intruding too much into the Malay world. As the Malays liked working on land the best, they passed a Land Reservation Act which virtually excluded everybody else from land-owning. What was even wiser, they themselves kept out of the way and everybody was at least reasonably happy and there was no talk of nationalism. Then came the War.

The Japanese occupation of Malaya which lasted from about the beginning of 1942 to August 1945 achieved two very remarkable things. It managed to drive most of the Chinese into some sort of Communism and it stirred up the first real antagonism between the Malay and the Chinese. Now, Communism was by no means a new phenomenon in Malaya. Communist activities began at Singapore

when a special representative of the Chinese Communist Party visited that city early in 1925. This activity was sustained by the enthusiasm of outstanding Indonesian Communists of this period like Tan Malaka and Alimin. This curious connection between Communism in Malaya and that in Indonesia and China has persisted till the present. The emphasis of the Communist leaders, as far as Malaya was concerned, was upon the Chinese community. Tan Malaka in fact is reported to have condemned the laziness and self-satisfaction of the Malays, and concluded that progress could be made only among the Chinese community. Anyway, a Malayan Communist Party was formed in 1930 and although it could not impress the Chinese business community and certainly not the Queen's Chinese, it gained some reflected glory from the growing achievements of the Communist Party in China. When War came, the Malayan Communist Party taking its cue from its Chinese mentor resolutely supported the British against the Japanese from the beginning. This was in refreshing contrast to the confusion in which other Communist Parties of the region fell because of the initial friendliness between Russia and Germany. While the Japanese occupation lasted the Communist Party organized the only effective resistance in Malaya. A very large number of Chinese of all persuasions were driven into the jungles partly by their own nationalism and partly by Japanese brutalities of which they were the special target. It was in the jungle that Communism made its converts, and leadership among the Chinese passed from the successful businessman to the doctrinaire revolutionary.

The Japanese did not quite know that this was happening. But on their part they tried fairly deliberately to use the Malays against the Chinese. The administrative structure they found after the expulsion of the British was predominantly Malay. They used this as also Malay Policemen against the Chinese. The Chinese considered that the Malays as a whole were

collaborationists. 'This' writes Dr J. H. Brimmell in his admirable survey *Communism in South East Asia* 'was a travesty of the real case: the Malays were naturally not as bitterly anti-Japanese as the Chinese, not being interested in the fate of the Chinese mainland. They could not have been expected to react with hostility to the Japanese persecution of the Chinese in Malaya anymore than the Burmese could be expected to regret the removal of their Indian money-lenders after the Japanese invasion of Burma.' In any event the Chinese Resistance Movement struck back at the Malays and immediately after the liberation of Malaya there were ugly clashes between the two communities. Malayan Nationalism had arrived.

There is one curious feature about this Malayan Nationalism which has to be noted at the outset. Beyond doubt it was anti-Chinese but there were elements within it which seemed to fall under the spell of an Indonesian Nationalism. Ibrahim bin Haji Yaakob and Ishak bin Haji Mohamed, two Malays who had connection with Indonesian politics founded the Malay Youth Movement under Japanese patronage. Immediately before they left the Japanese arranged a meeting between this group and Soekarno and Hatta with a view to promoting a Greater Indonesia Movement. This ultimately led to the formation of the Malay Nationalist Party which adopted the Indonesian Republican Flag and other peculiarities of the Indonesian Revolution. An offshoot of this was the Youth Justice Force, an extreme wing of the Malay Nationalist Party founded by Ahmed Boestamam. Boestamam later went on to establish the Socialist Front which is still in existence. The extraordinary predilection of this group of men for things Indonesian alienated Malay opinion and they never have had any significant following. But they remain to worry Tunku Abdul Rahaman.

Two other major developments intervened before the Tunku appeared on the scene. For one thing the British attempted

to centralize the Malayan administration and they evolved plans for a Malayan Union which would take away the local autonomy of the Sultans and would also grant liberal political rights to the Chinese. Malay reaction to these proposals was extremely adverse and Dato onn bin Jaafar, the Prime Minister of Johore, formed the United Malay National Organization (UMNO) in March 1946 to fight the projected Malayan Union. This organization has since become the mainstay of Malay nationalism but at the time the Communists in their amiable way referred to its members as the running dogs of imperialism and there was an element of truth in the allegation. Politically the Organization stood far to the right and one of its major objectives was the preservation of princely privilege. However, the establishment of Dato Onn's Party was soon overshadowed by the outbreak of the Communist Rebellion known in Malaya as the Emergency. It was the aim of the Malayan Communist Party to unite the workers and peasants of Malaya under its banner but the plan miscarried completely. Malays viewed it as an attempt by the Chinese to take over the Federation, while the Chinese themselves remained divided. The Conservatives formed the Malay Chinese Association and decided to cooperate with the Government against the Communists. A large section of the Chinese remained undecided blaming the Communists for useless disturbance which was no longer welcome. The attempt of the Communist Party to terrorize the non-cooperating Chinese further hardened Conservative attitudes. On the other hand the situation began to look like a civil war between the Malay and the Chinese with the government assisting the Malays. This Communist Rebellion, in a fundamental sense, proved to be the turning point for Malaya because it broke the power of the Chinese community at least for sometime to come and thus paved the way for Malayan independence. Without this kind of a showdown it would have been difficult

for the British to pull out of Malaya leaving the country a certain prey to civil war.

Tunku Abdul Rahaman who took over from Dato Onn in 1953 proved to be of remarkable assistance in the process. To a large extent he transformed the nature of the United Malay National Organization. For one thing he put forward the ideal of complete independence within a very short period of time. Merdeka (complete independence) became an effective and forceful slogan. Neither the Princes nor the Aristocrats felt at all happy about this and it served to proclaim a breach with U.M.N.O.'s ultra-conservative past. At the same time the Tunku recognized that if Malaya was to survive, then some sort of agreement had to be reached between the Malays on the one hand and the Chinese and the Indians on the other. Within a short time this produced the Alliance Party which is a combination of the U.M.N.O., the Malay Chinese Association and the Malay Indian Congress. With this weapon forged, Abdul Rahaman pressed for and guided Malaya into complete independence in 1957. The Constitution which was now established did away with all the autonomous powers of the Princes and also provided for cautious but quite liberal political representation for the Chinese. The Alliance Party is even now, I think, a Party of the Right in that it is unlikely to promote radical social legislation. But it can no longer be called a feudal group because that part of its past is dead.

The Communist Rebellion was defeated by 1960 and in July 1963 Tunku Abdul Rahaman put forward a proposal for what he called a Greater Malaysia. The idea was to federate the Malay States with Singapore, Sarawak, North Borneo and Brunei. Obviously what the Tunku wanted was to obtain for his State the resources of Singapore and, if possible, the oil royalties of Brunei. There was the danger that the Chinese would become the majority if Singapore alone was brought in. The

other territories would just about keep the population figures respectable. This attempt to build up a Greater Malaysia has brought upon the Tunku the wrath of President Soekarno. The facts of this conflict are of recent memory and I shall only briefly indicate the important developments.

In Brunei there was a revolt against the proposal for merger in December 1962. This revolt was led by Mr. A. M. Azahari who was at the head of the Brunei Peoples Party. Azahari had long and established connections with Indonesia and the Brunei Peoples Party was a pro-Indonesian political force, something like the Malay Nationalist Party or the Socialist Front. The Tunku claimed later that preparations for this revolt had been completed in Indonesian Borneo. In any case the revolt did not affect North Borneo and Sarawak appreciably and in Brunei it was put down by the British in about ten days. But Indonesian leaders openly pledged their support for Azahari and their denunciations of Malaysia began. The major point the Indonesians made was that the peoples of the Borneo territories did not want Malaysia. A U.N. Commission visited Borneo in August 1963 in order to ascertain the feelings of the local people about it. Previous to this the Sultan of Brunei had opted out of the Federation because he was unwilling to share his oil royalties with Kuala Lumpur, and elections both in Sarawak and in North Borneo had shown overwhelming support for Malaysia. U Thant's Commission fully endorsed the results of these elections and although the Chinese in Sarawak attempted to create trouble while the Commission was at work, the Malays and the Dyaks co-operated fully. The Federation of Malaysia came into existence in September 1963. President Soekarno denounced the findings of the Commission without specifying his grounds for doing so and expressed his desire to crush Malaysia. He has since followed this up with commando raids in

Malaysian territory but so far with little success.

It is not at all likely that the military threat from Indonesia will become a serious danger, now that virtually the whole of the British Royal Navy has been concentrated at Singapore. There is however the danger of a British counter-attack provoking a wider conflict. Again, it is unlikely that China would wish to be involved in this kind of fighting at present. The real danger to the Tunku is of a different kind altogether. Malayan nationalism has from its inception had an Indonesian wing. Both Ahmed Boestamam and Haji Mohamad are now in jail but the Malaysian Government has come out with a White Paper detailing plans of sabotage by pro-Indonesian groups and it makes disturbing reading. If Malayan nationalism can be split then Malaysia will split. Fortunately, there has as yet been no indication of significant support for Indonesia within the Malay ranks. The Alliance Party fought a general election in May 1964 on its domestic record and its opposition to Indonesian threats to national security. It secured 89 seats out of a possible 104 and thus registered a significant advance over its 73 seats in the previous House. The reaction of the local populace to Indonesian infiltration must also have been very reassuring for the Tunku's government.

But I repeat, President Soekarno's threat to Malaysia is a fake as it can neither lead to a military victory for him nor split the nationalists in Malaya. The really encouraging thing for the Tunku in recent years has been the emergence of the Peoples Action Party under the vigorous leadership of Lee Kuan Yew in Singapore. Lee leads a left wing radical party which has captured this Chinese city while the Communist controlled *Barisan Socialis* appears to be ineffective. The Chinese in Malaya are now therefore split into three: the Malay Chinese Association represents the wealthy conservative sections and at the other end are the *Barisan Socialis*,

while in between the Peoples Action Party cuts across older divisions. It supports Malaysia and promises fair to push the Tunku's Party far more towards the Left. Communism is now clearly at a disadvantage but Chinese nationalism is by no means dead. The Alliance Party is yet very far from a harmonious plural society. Can Communist China, if it decides to intervene, still call out the Chinese against the Malays? Again, if Soekarno overreaches himself and power passes to Aidit, will there be a joint concentration on Malaysia? Is Singapore really that important for the Communists?

This brings us at last to the British Imperialists, unrivalled for their wickedness, and who frequently come first in discussions on Malaysia. Frankly I do not think they deserve this priority. The real point at issue here is the problem whether the Tunku is a puppet of the British or not. Communist writers, admiring as always the occult powers of Imperialism, contend that this in fact is the case and Malaysia is the creation of the British Government. To my mind there is only one way of judging the strength of Tunku Abdul Rahaman and that is to look at the process of the rise of a Malay nationalism from within. It is difficult to see how you can make up your mind on this from the external facts of association with the British. British investors now dominate the rubber and tin industries of Malaya and that is the main reason why the British Government are so anxious to

support Malaysia. This is quite true and, obviously, the Tunku should make the best use of this situation while it lasts to bolster up his frail Federation. If left to themselves the Malaysians will inevitably take over from the foreign investors but clearly this process will take some time. President Soekarno actually is the man who is now holding up the process. It is also 'argued' that the existence of British military bases in Malaysia proves the hollowness of Abdul Rahaman's position. Now, if foreign bases can in fact prove this then a very large number of Governments all over the world become puppets and it would be difficult to know where one should stop. Again, it is pointed out that Malaysia cannot defend herself without the assistance of the British. Perfectly true, but then no weak state can be expected to do so when attacked by a stronger neighbour. In fact this particular line of thought again suggests that Indonesia, if she really wants the British to go, should leave the Tunku alone. What Malaysia needs most today is time to attain stability. This alone can lessen her dependence on the British, both military and economic. But people who accuse her of being a British creation would, be most unhappy, to see Malaysia gain in internal strength and stand on her own. This would mean that the Malays would never go Communist which after all is where all the trouble lies. All other arguments about Indonesia and about the British are in fact so many red herrings.

India, Pakistan and the Indian Muslims

PUNYA SLOKA RAY

EVERY co-operation between governments or between masses of people implies the acceptance of an inequality. This is recognized in a traditional aphorism of European diplomacy, namely that 'every alliance involves a horse and a rider.' For all the real influence the UK has on the USA, there is not the slightest doubt that one of the two is a horse and the other a rider. Between true equals in power, there is either war, cold if not hot, or absence of contact. It is not true, however, that the inequality of power between allies cannot be made tolerable by the practice of wisdom and trust. The alliance between the UK and the USA, one a culturally homogeneous monarchy and the other a heterogeneous republic, has certainly been a model of civilized and humane behaviour on the part of both.

Muslims and Hindus have been in contact in the Indian subcontinent for many centuries now, and yet without accomplishing anything like an alliance of the above kind. If there had been no partition, and the counsels of Gandhi and Azad had prevailed, the Muslims could have had a role in the politics of an unpartitioned India similar to that of the South in the Indian politics of today. The partition cannot be undone now, and so there are two different relationships to discuss, that between Pakistan and India, and that between the Indian Muslims and the Indian Hindus. We will discuss the first very briefly in this article.

The Pakistanis have a clearer grip over the realities of the situation, in the sense that they are more keenly aware that the subcontinent is a single geopolitical space. For all serious considerations of military and economic planning, the subcontinent

cries out to be treated as one, partly because of the absence of natural boundaries, partly because of the division of Pakistan into two wings separated by a thousand miles of India, and partly because of a real threat from across the Himalayas. Thus the Pakistanis will hate India as long as they cannot love her, but indifferent they will not be. It is characteristic that upon learning of the decision for partition, General Iskandar Mirza threw his glass of liquor against the wall and cried 'Dilli chalo!', although it was supposed to be Karachi that he was to go to.

Yet the Pakistanis are unable to contemplate being junior partner to the Indians. Now a *pax pakistanica*, which is really nothing but a reformulation of the older idea of a *pax islamica*, can only be a very desperate gamble. Be it as it may, they have had three pieces of extraordinary providence. It is no secret that they had enormous help from the diehard Tories. Almost as soon as it became clear that the Tories were not going to reoccupy India, they found a buyer in the USA for what they could sell in order to work towards a military superiority over India. As soon as it became clear that USA would not let India drop dead, Communist China has become an active friend. Even if the USA does not want India to collapse, once India has in fact collapsed she will accept the accomplished fact and come around to support a *pax pakistanica*. Even the USSR may be induced to prefer a *pax pakistanica* to a *pax sinica*. The Pakistani strategy is then to engineer, with Communist Chinese assistance, a moral collapse of the present Indian state.

The flaw in the Pakistani strategy is

that it continues *de facto*, even if not *de jure*, the old assumption of a disinterested Communist China. But Communist China is not likely to prefer a *pax pakistanica* on the subcontinent to a *pax sinica*, or even to war and disorder. Her interests will be best served by a chaos from which only a *pax sinica* could rescue everybody.

In absence of a genuine enlightenment, of which there is not the least sign, the only way Pakistan could possibly be made to accept a junior partnership in relation to India would be a decisive military defeat. India was not strong enough to inflict such a defeat upon Pakistan in 1948. There is no prospect that India will ever be strong enough to do that alone, without tacit or explicit support from the USA as well as the USSR. If the USA does ever have such a change of mind, it will not be just because India has decided to stand against Communist China.

Since neither *pax pakistanica* nor *pax indica* is on the horizon, the only other solution is that of mutual isolation. The single geopolitical space need not remain single, so that India and Pakistan may be made to become as much strangers to one another as Ecuador and Denmark. There are many ways in which such a drift may come into being. Giving Pakistan an access to Kashmir is one, since that will settle a critical territorial dissatisfaction. Independence for East Pakistan is another, since that will remove both the grievance about a corridor and the need for a common enemy outside. Complete exchange of populations is still another, since it will provide a clear even if brutal decision between two claims on a single mass of people. A package made up of the first two steps was proposed to Pakistan some time ago, but was rejected. But by far the most important method of effecting mutual isolation is to establish an external power

as the paramount one in the subcontinent. For then all and every contact would be through the mediation of the paramount power.

The unmistakable drift is towards making the USA such a paramount power in the subcontinent, modified by a certain measure of co-operation from the USSR. It is still open how much a role the USSR will have in the ensuing arrangement, though her role can only be that of a junior partner to the USA in the common endeavour of denying Communist China any access to the Indian subcontinent. If they succeed, India and Pakistan will co-operate to the negative extent of not directly trying to destroy each other, somewhat as Greece and Turkey are co-operating in the northeastern mediterranean area.

The logic of the situation is thus towards a drift to mutual isolation. India and Pakistan have become such mortal enemies that they will have to become total strangers to one another before they can start being friends.

The main cost of a drift to mutual isolation will be borne by the Muslims of India. Ties of family, religion and language exist across the political boundaries. But these will weaken as politics and time work upon them, so that Indian and Pakistani Muslims will sooner or later find themselves not more akin to one another than Turks and Arabs. Since this is quite inevitable, it becomes a question if the inevitable could not be accepted consciously and planfully so as to rationalize, moralize and humanize it.

It is in this perspective that we should discuss the problem of a cultural unity of India, which appears to me as in the main nothing but the problem of finding a cultural identity for the nationalist Indian Muslim.

DISCUSSION

Non-Violence and Cold War

Dear Professor Ayyub:

I am very grateful for your comments on my paper *Non-Violence, War and Peace* (*Quest*, monsoon 1964). Let me try to clarify my thoughts further on the issues you have raised.

I wish the conception of non-violence as the one prime value (as distinguished from non-violence as one of many conflicting values) were really 'a dead horse' in India. But I find that it is still very much alive and kicking. It has kept our policy-makers in a state of guilt, confusion and indecision in the teeth of great danger. There can be no doubt that the criminal neglect of India's defences so far was partly a product of intellectual muddle as to the operational implications of the theory of non-violence.

I know that some of the elements of our foreign policy can, in logic, stand independently of the doctrine of non-violence. But there is evidence to show that the muddled logic of our policy-makers did connect them with non-violence. Hence the necessity of clarifying the theory of non-violence and the role of adequate military power as a necessary condition for the peaceful settlement of disputes with otherwise inconvertible rulers.

I certainly do not 'entertain the notion that pluralism and conflict of values is a new discovery ... made possible by the complexity of modern times.' Otherwise how could I write the following? 'The Indian tradition has *always* (sic) been permeated with a wise moral pluralism. It

...recognised the multiplicity and the intrinsic disharmony of values...Moral monism is unIndian.' The notion that I do entertain is that forgetting this pluralist tradition many monist panacea-mongers have appeared on the Indian stage, preaching and acting as if non-violence is all, or celibacy is all, or nature cure is all, or masochistic self-restraint is all, or freedom is all, or cooperation is all, or art is all, or Rāmanāma is all, or mystical contemplation is all. These are the persons whom I call moral monists. I need not name them; perhaps I could name only a few even if I tried to; for not all of them are illustrious persons. And historical documentation on single-valued movements is not easily accessible. But anyone who has imbibed the Indian atmosphere cannot help running into characters who seem to speak and behave as if they are monists. I should, of course, add that no one succeeds in being an absolute monist. For some inescapable biological and psychological needs do complicate the pursuit of any single value by anybody; and much hypocritical drama ensues.

The other notion that I do entertain is that though value-conflict is not a modern discovery, it has become more complex than ever before, thanks to the unprecedented possibilities created by modern science.

The classification of values is, of course, a problem. It is clear that any concept that is exalted to the status of a value should have a certain authentic universality. Second, the concept should be general

enough and thus distinguishable from its particular embodiments. Every custom ordained by society should not be definable as a *value*. I think that, with our present knowledge, a set of authentic, universal and general value-concepts can be identified. But evidently I should not attempt to present such a set in this comment.

The ends-means distinction is necessary but I am confused by some popular statements that have been attached to it. When somebody says that 'means should be good as well as the ends' I do not understand the meaning of this statement. Let me try to understand. According to my way of thinking the good in the objectives realised by any set of actions can be evaluated with the help of a set of properly weighted value-concepts and with adequate knowledge of the consequences of alternative sets of actions. The actions that are instrumental to the realisation of these objectives can also be evaluated by the very values, weights and sequential knowledge, with which the objectives are evaluated. In willing an objective-set as good, one must will the most efficient means of realising it as well. The same values and weights which enable one to choose a particular set of goals rather than others must enable one to choose a particular plan of action rather than others. How then can I say that a man was pursuing a good end with 'bad' means, unless the word 'bad' simply means 'inefficient'?

In much of the popular neo-Gandhian discussion I find the goodness of ends and the goodness of means being evaluated separately. Let me illustrate. Suppose a wound is bleeding, and the patient is in extreme pain. The end of the bleeding and the pain is evaluated as 'good'. A doctor is called, and there being no effective non-surgical remedy, he performs an operation which causes even more bleeding and more pain for some time. But then the foreign matter is removed; the bleeding stops; the pain diminishes; and the wound begins to heal. Am I to say that the end

of ending the bleeding and the pain was 'good' but the *means* causing more bleeding and pain were bad? I cannot. The same weighted value-set, the same sequential knowledge of alternative means which makes me will the ending of pain as good, makes me will painful surgery as good. I cannot engage in valuational double-think.

To give an example from the realm of public policy, suppose there is a bloody riot and peaceful persuasion of rioters has been tried and failed. If I will the restoration of peace as good, I must also will efficient police firing — which may temporarily increase casualties — as good. I cannot say that the restoration of non-violence is good but violence on the part of the police is a bad means of securing it.

Analogously, if defence against a clear aggression is evaluated as good, I must evaluate the goodness of the means of defence in the same way.

In summary, the distinction between ends and means is necessary. But the goodness of ends and means must be assessed with identical criteria.

In saying that 'you cannot add and subtract values in the way you have done without reducing them to a common denominator' you have raised an important issue of value theory. Since I am an economist by training I must suggest to the moral philosopher that any ordering of alternatives requires or implies — whenever there are many goods — the use of a *numéraire*. If, to recall the example in my paper, alternative C_1 realises values V_1 and V_2 in some degree at the expense of value V_3 and alternative C_2 realises value V_3 but sacrifices values V_1 and V_2 , there is simply no way of choosing one of these alternatives without reducing the doses of V_1 , V_2 and V_3 into doses of *some undifferentiated good* with a *numéraire* which *prices* every individual good into some units of the undifferentiated good. And if a person has chosen one of these alternatives, say C_1 , I can say that even if he is not aware of it, the logical construction of the process of his choice is that he

has evaluated this alternative to be better *on the whole* than C_2 , that he has implicitly reduced particular values into general value, that he has weighted particular values in a certain way, and that the weighting has been such that C_1 turned out to be better than C_2 . The use of a *numéraire* is a necessity of the logic of choice. The *numéraire* itself is not a value; it is not *a* value; it is the *value-ness* of all particular values. Therefore, I cannot be accused of being a monist simply for pointing out the logical necessity of a *numéraire* in the process of making difficult valuational choices. A valuational monist would not require a valuational *numéraire*; only a valuational pluralist would find it indispensable for making choices. The logical construction of the process of choice cannot be regarded as defilement of the sacred, mysterious world of moral choice merely because it involves quantitative terms. For if the very use of quantitative terms is defilement of the sacred, then we may have to bid good bye to all logic. The experience of making choices can always retain the poignancy of a soul-plunge; and yet the formal representation of the process may involve additive categories. The qualitative poignancy of choice, and the quantitative representation of its formal character can and must co-exist. The felt quality of fever must not make us break the thermometer.

You state that 'non-violence is not injuring a value, and that the most basic of all *moral* values, viz., the value of other human persons.' But I do not see how non-violence is any more *basic* as a value than any other value. It is easy to describe any value to which one attaches great importance as *basic*. But the labelling of different values as *basic* does not help resolve the dilemma of value-conflict. If the dilemma involves the value of non-violence, its core is that under certain 'abnormal' conditions even the killing of persons may have to be undertaken. For instance, when millions of persons are reduced to mere soldiers — absolutely obedient, almost will-

less instruments of a leader — and the leader identifies himself completely with aggressive violence (like Hitler or Stalin or Mao) the killing of these soldiers by the soldiers of the victim peoples may have to be organised. We get nowhere by designating some of our favourite values as *basic* when, in a concrete situation, some favourite values *have* to be sacrificed to some extent in order to preserve our other favourite values.

You argue that 'violence should only be justified by the demonstrable balance of evil...that it prevents, not by the balance of good...that it may promote.' But I do not see any difference between the two kinds of justification, for, to me the realisation of a value and the avoidance of the corresponding disvalue are inseparable correlates. Every value has its corresponding disvalue, and to realise a value in any degree is to avoid or reduce its opposite in the same degree. The difference between the realisation of a good and the diminution of the correlate evil is only verbal. A negative quantity is the negative of a positive quantity but a positive quantity can always be expressed as the negative of a negative quantity.

The case against preventive war can be deduced straightforwardly from a certain weightage of conflicting values. I have shown how it has been derived by both Russia and the West — on the last page of my article. From a verbal, hair-splitting distinction between evil-avoidance and good-promotion no case can be derived.

The relative weightage given to the values of survival and freedom in Western thought would rule out preventive war even if it is or becomes militarily advantageous at any time. The value weightage of Mao, however, may yield a different result.

One would misunderstand my representation of value-conflict if one did not appreciate the critical importance of the relative weights attached to different values by different actors in leading them to the judgments which they do reach. I

have said explicitly that 'differences in the knowledge of alternatives and their consequences can be narrowed. But differences due to the divergent valuation of different values are fundamental.' If confronting the same alternatives the Western and Russian leaders rule out preventive war, while Chinese rulers may not, the difference is due to the divergent weights attached by them to the values of peace, and the freedom and survival of their own peoples and the peoples of other nations.

What you mean by 'a spirit of cold war' or the 'cold war psychology' is not clear to me. For my argument I converted the term cold war into 'a generalised concept representing a recurrent human situation'. If the term has unpleasant overtones, then let there be another term to denote the recurrent situation that I have tried to discuss. It is a situation of real multi-dimensional conflict between nations or groups of nations. Since I refuse to put two sides in a war or a cold war on an equal footing *a priori*, there must usually be one side which is, on balance, more evil and aggressive than the other side — at least in the specific sense that it does not genuinely believe in coexistence but tries aggressively to convert, subvert, conquer or dominate the other side. The other side is then forced, against its will, to engage in a defensive cold war. It is this kind of defensive cold war forced upon a nation by the aggressive cold war of another nation that I was concerned to legitimise. It is obvious that if no party in a conflict is aggressive — which is to say that both parties believe genuinely and sincerely in coexistence ruling out conversion, subversion, aggression and domination — then, of course, a conflict does not exist, a cold war in my sense does not exist, and no moral dilemma exists.

The central point of my argument is that just as unilateral disarmament is not a feasible choice in certain situations, a unilateral belief in coexistence, in confrontation with another power whose ver-

bal advocacy of coexistence is merely a cover for universal proselytisation or domination, makes no sense whatever. If there is true reciprocity in coexistence, coexistence simply means a peaceful traffic of men, ideas and commodities; there is no conflict and hence no difficult moral problem. But if there is conflict created by an aggressive cold war conducted by one group of nations, a defensive cold war on the part of the threatened nations may be an inescapable dharma.

The framework of valuation analysis that I have presented can no more justify all cold war than it justifies all war. But just as it does justify war in certain situations, so it does justify cold war in certain situations.

You repeatedly mention the undesirability of the psychology of the masses of people in war and cold war situations. Needless to say, war and cold war produce bad states of mind. But the states of mind are bad as well as the states themselves. One can easily wish that one confronted neither in life — just as one can wish that one confronted no evil in life and hence no moral dilemma. But one does confront them as existential facts. Mere wishing is useless. In any case, my whole argument is concerned not with the mass mind but with the minds of statesmen who take the great decisions about foreign and defence policy. I assume that the statesmen of democratic nations do not take their war and peace decisions out of any petty sentimentality but out of cold, calculated value judgments made in full view of all the feasible alternatives and with a full commitment to the fundamental democratic values and the relative weights to be attached to them. On the basis of such judgments they are forced sometimes to fight and make their people fight wars and cold wars. We can all wish that the world was otherwise than it is; but that is neither here nor there so far as the tasks of statesmanship are concerned.

I assume that the kind of statesmanship I am talking about is also discriminating

enough not to fail to see and appreciate the value systems of others; not to yield to mere anger and hatred; not to be blind to the vices and weaknesses of the defendants of democratic values themselves. In other words I assume all that you propose for fighting an unavoidable cold war without a cold war psychology. The more statesmen we have capable of walking and making people walk on such razor-edges, the better.

Yours sincerely,
Raj Krishna

Institute of Economic Growth
Delhi - 7
26 November 1964

Dear Dr. Raj Krishna,

Has non-violence really been a major consideration with our policy-makers since the death of Gandhiji? Even under his charismatic leadership the Congress high command could be persuaded to accept non-violence only as a matter of policy, not as an article of faith, in its struggle for independence. In independent India under Nehru's stewardship, the magic word was non-alignment; it was more than a policy, it became a fixed frame of reference for all our value judgments in politics. That, you may say, was a pretty kettle of fish; but it was a very different kettle of fish from the theory and practice of non-violence. Nobody was inhibited by his faith in that pious doctrine or seemed to be 'in a state of guilt, confusion and indecision' when orders were issued to our army commanders to plan and execute fairly large-scale military actions against the Nizam's intransigence in Hyderabad or against Portuguese defiance in Goa. Why should we suppose that Nehru and his cabinet colleagues became suddenly paralysed by their devotion to non-violence in the face of the Chinese threat? And the minister who was most responsible for our state of military unpreparedness when the Chinese did invade is the last man to whom one would attribute any weakness for ahimsa. You can charge our policy-makers with some intellectual muddle no

doubt — as to their understanding of the Communist mind in general and of the Chinese intentions in particular, as to the relative amounts of threats to our security posed by Pakistan and China, etc., but hardly 'as to the operational implications of the theory of non-violence'. Panacea-mongering cranks have appeared at all times and in all countries; the question is whether they played a terribly important role in the shaping of our defence and foreign policies. Gandhiji, the real prophet of ahimsa, undoubtedly exercised a vast influence, I might say an irresistible charm, on almost every sphere of our political life, but you describe him as a moral pluralist and quote him repeatedly in your support. So my confusion as to who are the 'moral monists' you are tilting against still remains.

Your next point raises a large question, and about this our differences are serious. I *donot* think that 'with our present knowledge a set of authentic, universal and general value-concepts can be identified'. You have quoted yourself to the effect that 'differences due to the divergent valuation of different values are fundamental'. How can any value be 'authentic and universal' if its valuation can diverge fundamentally? Are you suggesting that of an authentic and universal value there can be only one appreciation which is *right*, and that all other degrees of appreciation or depreciation, though unfortunately existing in fact, must be *erroneous*; just as, for instance, there is only one authentic truth about, say, the planetary orbits round our sun, though all kinds of erroneous conceptions about their geometry may exist in the minds of laymen or even of scientists? If this is your position, then I find it difficult to reconcile it with your commendation (in your concluding paragraph) of statesmanship which not only does not fail to see but actually *appreciates* the value systems of others? Should we appreciate (except as anthropologists) value systems which are clearly erroneous in our eyes? Or is there no such thing as right or wrong

in respect of valuation but only differences more or less fundamental — in which case what happens to your universal and authentic value-concepts?

And what could these authentic and universal values be? The well-known triumvirate — truth (or knowledge) beauty (or artistic excellence) and moral goodness — have often been presented as such. Truth as opposed to falsity, speaking the truth (i.e., what one believes to be the truth) as opposed to telling lies, belong to the 3rd category of values; to the 1st category belongs truth as opposed to error or knowledge as opposed to ignorance. This truth or knowledge (for the present purpose we can lump them together) is a value; but is it a universal value? Can we say that it is obligatory on every one to strive for the realisation of this value, and that anybody would render himself morally blame-worthy if he neglected such an obligation? Dante, da Vinci, Goethe and Tagore had spent much time and effort in the cultivation of knowledge; Keats, Yeats and D. H. Lawrence hated science; Beethoven, Mirabai, Gauguin and Faiyaz Khan were comparative ignoramuses. Does it matter? Similarly, I question the universality of aesthetic values. I do not mean here that considerable differences of opinion must legitimately be allowed to exist in regard to particular works of art. I mean much more than that. I mean that a great many persons highly respected for their excellence and achievement were also noted for their deficiency in aesthetic sensibility. Baudelaire was insensitive to Nature (I wish he had not gone so far as to call it abominable, but that is another matter), and Gandhi to the fine arts in general. He was of course greatly attached to the bhajans of Kabir and Mirabai and to a small number of Tagore songs. But I doubt if the appreciation was aesthetic in any proper sense of the term; he valued them as aids to religion. One might of course say that Gandhi would have been a greater man if he had cultivated painting like Roger Fry, Poetry like T. S. Eliot,

and knowledge like Bertrand Russell. But I doubt if one could mean such a thing seriously. After all Gandhi needed all his time and energy for his great moral pursuits.

The height of a value has nothing to do with its universality. The great values present themselves not as objects of universal obligation but as objects of individual preference. I may choose to be a devotee of only one of these and to neglect the others without incurring any blame.

Do I mean that moral values too are optative and not universally obligatory? Yes and no. Moral heroism, saintliness, complete self-immolation, are great moral values no doubt, but they are optative, they do not impose any absolute obligation. Every one of us is not in duty bound to act as moral heroes. If I see a helpless man drowned in a strong current, then I, a poor swimmer, am not morally obliged to plunge into the stream and sacrifice my life in the probably futile attempt to save him. But if I choose to do so, I shall rightly be honoured as an extra-ordinary man, as a moral hero. Is there then nothing universal, i.e., universally obligatory, in the moral field? There is; but it is not so easy to formulate the principle of duty or universal moral obligation.

The best formulation of this principle that I know of is Kant's second moral maxim: Act so as to treat every one as an end, and never as a means only (to whatever end you may happen to be pursuing). In other words, every one has the right to develop himself according to his own conception of ends, a right which I must respect. This value, the value of the person, is not a matter of choice for me; it is a value which I must recognise in thought and deed, or else incur moral blame. But the recognition of this value does not mean that it is my positive duty to devote my life to the development of other men's personalities. That is hardly possible; I would not know how to go about it. Different men choose different ends. There are forest-dwelling ascetics, civilisation-hating

artists, as all manner of *bon-viveurs*. My duty is negative; I must not thwart, that is use force to obstruct, any one in the pursuit of his ends — unless they happen to be criminal. Is not the principle of non-violence but another way of promulgating this same principle of universal obligation?

You have taken exception to my statement that 'non-violence is *not* injuring a value, and that the most basic of all moral values, viz., the value of other human persons'. But evidently you have misunderstood my language. I would not describe non-violence itself as a value, far less as a basic value. It is only a negative obligation, a must-not which is imposed by a value. The value in question, the basic value, is the value of the human person. I call it basic because, firstly, in my opinion it is the only value which is truly authentic and universal, and secondly because practically all particular moral obligations can be derived from the general principle of obligation connected with this value. And I want to state the condition restricting the practice of non-violence (that is, permitting violence) negatively because however highly I may value things like truth or beauty, I cannot regard their pursuit or promotion as permitting the killing or maiming of people. Violence is injuring the only authentic or universal value, the value of the human person, and a course of action involving this is not permissible for the realisation of an optative value. Violence is permissible only for the prevention or redress of violence.

You might perhaps say that the wherewithals of life (I expect you would exclude luxuries) are universal and authentic values, since everyone in fact desires them and strives after them. I would not accept these as *values*, for I do not call anything a value (or to quote you, 'exalt anything to the status of value') which we merely desire or strive for, but only those which we also believe we *ought* to desire or strive for, that is, those which we regard as worthy of our effort or appreciation. Moreover, the wherewithals of life are only

the means which enable us to live. Life itself is the value whose preservation or promotion we seek when we strive for the necessities of life. But I ask: Is it life as such, any kind of life — piggish, bovine or rapine — which can be regarded as a value worth pursuing? Isn't life rather only a precondition of value — a condition which must be maintained if any of the higher or truly human values are to be realised? This brings us back to the higher values, the three 'eternal verities' (to which I might add romantic love as well as friendship), which are, however, not universally binding but only optative. This or that high value becomes authentic *for me* after I have chosen it, but nothing obliges me to choose this rather than that.

The difference between an economist and a moral philosopher is perhaps that when the latter thinks of values, he is inclined to think of these higher or 'superlative values' (as Perry, himself a distinguished philosopher, rather disdainfully termed them), whereas the former's attention is liable to be directed to the economic values, the material goods and services of life. These might possibly be quantised in a generally acceptable manner, and therefore have a *numéraire* attached to them. But I find it hard to conceive how, we call the value of philosophy V_1 and of music V_2 , we can possibly decide whether V_1 is greater than, equal to, or less than V_2 . We may agree (though not all would) that both are great values, and I might prefer V_1 and you V_2 ; that is all that there is to it. No universal scale of values is discoverable according to which one of these can be authentically adjudicated as, greater than, equals, or less than the other. The valuational pluralist has of course to exercise his choice, and the choice, as you beautifully express it, has 'the poignancy of soul-plunge'. But how on earth is the bewildered pluralist going to fix quantitative terms to all the value-claimants? He may of course fix them according to a purely personal scale, but I suppose that is not what you meant when you spoke of

'a set of authentic, universal and general value-concepts'? Or did you?

When you speak of 'doses of some undifferentiated good' or of 'the valueness of all particular values' to which a *numéraire* could be attached, you are again evidently trying to speak in terms of a universal or at least general (i.e., widely shared) concept. But one has to think a little more concretely if one is going to fix numerical labels. And if you try to figure out what the valueness of a particular value could mean in concrete terms, I believe you will have to come to some such thing as its pleurability, satisfactoriness, desiredness or desirability (using 'desire' as a blanket term to cover all pro-attitudes). We can dismiss the first three, for we know as a matter of common experience that no two persons get the same pleasure or satisfaction from, or desire to the same extent, any particular value. Can we say that they *ought to* (this brings us to its desirability)? I have been trying to argue that we cannot lay down with any degree of authenticity that everybody *should* desire poetry more than philosophy or philosophy more than the simple experience of human fellowship. And if everybody has to carry his own individual *numéraire*, is it worth carrying about? Couldn't we just stick to our preferences or soul-plunges?

Can we regard democracy as a universal and authentic value? In certain small areas of the world, like Abyssinia, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Nepal and Bhutan, monarchy is still preferred to democracy. A very large part of the world chooses to remain under dictatorship. It may be questioned if that is a free choice, but seeing that millions of people in France, Italy and India (counting the fellow-travellers also) have without any physical coercion voiced their passionate preference for dictatorship, it would be rash to predict that the Russians, the Chinese, the Czechs or the Yugoslavs would not vote the Communist parties back to dictatorial power were they once allowed to express

their choice in a free plebiscite. We must therefore painfully conclude that democracy is in fact a value for only a section of mankind. To be sure, we may believe that the other section is downright mistaken in its value judgment, just as I believe that those who prefer pushpins to poetry are woefully wrong in their valuation. But we have no more right to force poetry on adult cricket fans than we have to force democracy on monarchists or communists. Of course we have every right to defend ourselves by any available means if the monarchists or communists use force to make us adopt their preferences. This, I presume, is common ground between us. Does it help either of us to say that the value of democracy is V_1 and of Non-violence V_2 , and that V_1 is greater than V_2 or vice versa?

A particular course of action adopted for the realisation of a definite goal might be the most efficient for that limited purpose but may well produce a number of other effects. These could be so bad that the sum total of evil produced outweighs the good realised. Shouldn't we in such a case prefer a less efficient means (that is, consider it to be the better means) which, however, may be expected to produce a bigger amount of total good by avoiding some of the evil side-effects of the more efficient means? It is open to you to say that what I am calling the less efficient means is in fact the more efficient means. But then aren't we only quarrelling about words? If we take into account all the relevant effects likely to be produced and make the total good our objective, the most efficient means available is certainly also the best. To insist on the goodness of the means is, in my opinion, merely to call attention to the larger perspective besides the goal immediately aimed at. Let me illustrate. A great controversy is presently going on as to whether communist methods are not more efficient for quickly and appreciably raising the living standards of a backward society. If the point could be established to your satisfaction as an

economist, would you opt for communism, or would you not prefer democracy even if it were a less efficient method (that is, slower in this context) of economic growth because of the other benefits which democracy confers and communism denies, as also because of the many malefactions which democracy avoids and communism perpetrates? Evidently our ends in politics and ethics are often complex, and therefore it is not just a question of adopting the most efficient means for realising a simple clear-cut end — as in surgery.

I agree with you that the democracies cannot trust Communist professions of peaceful co-existence so completely as to relax their military preparations for defence. But if we mistrusted the other side so completely as to firmly believe that they would attack and subjugate the democratic countries at the first opportunity, then obviously it would be the duty of the democratic block to attack first, as soon as it had reasons to believe that it was for the moment placed in a militarily advantageous situation as a result of gaining an unexpected lead in nuclear weaponry. Since survival is assured by this lead, I don't see how the high value which democracies place on survival can be taken as a guarantee against their launching an offensive war in such a situation. Nor do I see how such valuation in conjunction with their high valuation of freedom can be taken to rule out the possibility of their starting a war of liberation at a suitable moment, if their conception of duty is based on a calculus of values. That calculus could well induce them to think that since the value of freedom is greater than 'the value of non-violence', they would be producing a substantial amount of net positive value in the world by freeing the peoples of Russia and China at the cost of a calculable though large amount of violence.

As regards cold war, the most important issue discussed in your original article,

your rejoinder reveals that our differences are superficial. I had described cold war psychology (I had been thinking of the psychology of the intelligentsia, not of the masses) as the psychology of anger, hatred and prejudice, the narrowing of mental horizons which makes us see the other side as pitch black and our own side as pure white. In a recent excellent article by Raymond Aron (*Encounter* pamphlet 11) I find the following: 'But for coexistence to be genuinely peaceful, it must also be ideological. In other words the believers must accept the principle of mutual tolerance. War, it is said, begins in men's souls'. Yes, I would add, the democracies must, consistent with the theories and ideals they profess, practice tolerance, even if the dictatorships have as yet only partially overcome their original state of fullscale intolerance. If this is unilateral, so be it. And if you prefer to describe the democratic powers' belief in peaceful coexistence as also unilateral, I would not make an issue of it but only specify that this should not in any way be allowed to enervate their will to or preparations for a defensive war. This belief properly characterises only the determination not to start, or work one's side up to the starting point of, an offensive war in the foreseeable future.

But it appears that you believe there is no inconsistency between being in a state of cold war and being 'discriminating enough not to fail to see and appreciate the value systems of others; not to yield to mere anger and hatred, etc.' If cold war does not mean a war in the soul, what objection can I have to it, except perhaps a purely semantic one? But even there you are generous enough to concede: 'if the term cold war has unpleasant overtones, let there be another term.'

Your sincerely,
ABU SAYEED AYYUB

POETRY

A SICK FAUN'S AFTERNOON

An afternoon
Rain
Debussy hidden somewhere behind the wall
It is hardly heard
As though heard by no one
And we holding each other by the hand
In an imaginary sweetshop of margarine nothingness
In a sweetshop with otorhynolaryngological wet panes
In some sweetshop with a broken mast pushed into a dirty cheap refrigerator

Are you sure you know
Say that you know
Say you remember
At a tall table by the door prefect and pastor over some huge yellowish watery
cream-pies

Cutting their nails
Cutting their nails
And the door near them deadened
And no one opens it

And the three palms of the lucky island the wind carrying to far Guzzler Bay
The three silly rosy palms under black umbrellas over quick-sand over
quick-ashes of lost and future civilisations
And they holding each other by the hand
Are like you and I
One should open the door of margarine nothingness
Sweet imaginary umbrellas
Sweet imaginary parasols
Sweet imaginary forget-me-not of wax o nails o nails o nails

One should
Holding by the hand
Say good-bye to the huge yellowish watery cream-pies
They are looking askance

Let them look askance
 Good-bye
 The broken mast in the cheap dirty refrigerator has burst into bloom
 Good-bye
 One should walk out into the street
 In the rain-soaked pavement
 In the sweet rosy neon-light already glimmering in the rain though it still is
 the day
 Simply to pass awry that tall table
 Good-bye
 And open the door
 Good-bye

One should reach that enigmatic rusty hairy good-bye-knob
 That knob with vulgar locks out of which glitter the starry dust of hope
 And then vanish into the rosy neon-light
 And stop the small total palms under the black umbrellas
 From having their leaves blackened
 From having their leaves fallen

Debussy is removed still farther
 By those nails
 Somewhere behind some seventh wall
 Somewhere behind some seventh hairy knob
 And only the dumpy black fountain
 Sputtering
 Above our swooned hands
 Above our pale lips
 Above the swollen blooming mast and a sail which has never been
 The naive
 Childish
 Sail of departure

The black fountain sputtering more and more
 Debussy can not be heard at all
 The black fountain is growing more and more
 Above us
 Above your lips
 Above your petals
 Above the cheap dirty refrigerator of the imaginary sweetshop
 Above the endlessly distinct hairy knob in which the starry dust of hope has
 turned into hot ashes

Burning
 Lips
 Hands

Mast
Sail

The lips that never more will be
The hands that never more will be
The afternoon that never more will be
The huge yellowish watery cream-pies have vanished in hot vapour of the
fountain

Only nails nails nails
How to return blood into your lips
How to return blood into my lips
How to return blood into our hands
The only hands
Hands roses
The hands that defiantly waved to the rusty winches
To the padlocks of dead windlasses at Guzzler Bay

And yet they came after us
The yellow nails
The yellow eyes
The yellow skulls

Oh,
Dead distant windlasses
Grinning skulls in the gilded orgasm upon the pathetic gun-carriage of history

Tell that you know
Tell you remember
The afternoon not in calendar
Oh,
Winches-padlocks of Guzzler Bay
Yet my glimmering evening is coming
Yet our glimmering evening is coming
To have the broken mast soar up into a miraculous red monsoon sky
With the naive
Childish
Sail of depature
So that dumpy
Black
Peony of that fountain
May wither
And disappear
That Debussy may return
Has it been Debussy at all
Oh,
Our evening

Our rain-sprinkled pavements
 Our sun-lit alleys without return
 The door opened
 Who did open it
 Who
 Oh,
 Mournful orgasms come-to-me-here-and-go-to-me-there
 Upon the gilded gun-carriage of history amid the sweetshop of margarine
 nothingness
 Above the quick-sand above the quick-ashes of lost and future civilisations

Far far behind us
 Has it been at all
 That door
 That sweetshop
 That afternoon
 Those nails
 Those rose palms holding each other by the hand carried by the wind
 One silly palm — love
 The second silly palm — love
 The third silly palm — love
 The door opened
 Who did open it
 Who

All the same
 All we started through the neon through the noise of the rain-soaked pavements

Farther
 Farther
 Farther
 And all at once everything disappeared
 And only our miraculous monsoon sky is left
 And only eternal hypnotizing sound of waves is left
 And our evening is left
 And the glittering dust of hope in endless heights
 And gaudy parasols
 Upon the sandy beach of Indian Ocean whatever ocean

And we
 Upon that warm beach
 In the twilight of day
 Tired alone
 Without words
 Without words

CEDOMIR MINDEROVIC
 (Translated by T. Ladan)

FRAGMENT: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

I

Only children do not fear.

Children are life itself in
its fullest, its most elemental
meaning. They are movement.
And laughter. And tears that
dry quickly.

They are sunlight running
through trees. And the sparkle
on water. They are like strong,
red plants growing in a dark
place. Full of vigour and
appetite she thought.

The child lives in a house
of pale, gold glass. A cornerless
house. Round as a ball. A simple,
beautiful, round glass ball
house. Through which everything
is observed and reflected perfectly
Not like mine she thought again.
My house of so complicated a design.
Of so many corners. And corridors.
And cupboards. And shelves to put
things on.

She was turning away. And the
window framing the child outside,
disappeared.

My house of so complicated a
design. Rambling and twisted

and dim. In which I live. And
 grow afraid in.
 For I am thirty now. And adults
 have not the power to be un-
 afraid, as children. Adults
 to whom everything has happened.
 And yet nothing.

She was writing. A letter
 in her imagination to someone
 she had never known. And known
 always.

II

Just to do this she began. Though I may not.
 To curve my hand against your cheek.
 To kiss your mouth with my fingers. To tell
 with touch how I have loved you always.
 My darling. I cannot lose you. I would.
 But so are the stars eternal.
 Though I have never seen you, you have
 been with me always.
 In every experience. In marriage.
 In these sad and afraid years.
 O, be. Be hands. And voice. And ideas.

And laughter. Be more than I have had you.
For you have lit the strange, blue house
 of myself with delicate candles. And planted
 trees in the narrow ground around me,
 knowing that they will flower at the time
 when you will come to me. For you will come.
 I am certain. As certain as I am
 that night will come. As always, filled

with mysterious premonition for me.

You will come into the house of myself.

And you will speak of what has never been between us.

III

She stopped writing. And listened.

Somewhere the child was calling,
mummy.

Now, over the round rim of the
child's head, like a moon, she
was aching with sadness.

Though sometimes, the restless leaves
against the windows of my house
gabble and gabble . . . And are like
fools, mocking . . . she continued.

POSTSCRIPT

With what tender feeling
the warm, dark earth has
opened its arms to me and
drawn me close against
itself. And into itself.

I can sleep now
through time; as a woman
sleeps, who after being
loved, relaxed, at peace,
still feels her body joined
to her lover's like a
flower to a bough.

JOAN MAS

SONG

"Come again, Sweet Love that once was mine..."

Your
 huMANity
 (generally speaking)
 is a deGENERATION
 of shameless broken images,
 UNmending
 unMINDful
 MANliness;

And MISSopportunity
 waits
 and waits,
 an aging virgin gazing at the
 world's children
 who signify the thousandth coming
 of loneliness.

FIRST ANNIVERSARY

God is Love
 and love is scarce

Sure I see my god in you
 (after long
 and painful scrutiny),

But I don't like the looks of him.

MARY ANN DASGUPTA

THE WAITING

He has been waiting still
 For the laughter of the sun.
 Because the dreams are webs of longing
 Trellised against the muted sky,
 He has desired the fire of spring,
 And the image of the soaring bird.
 He had wished to swoon or die
 Like the careless wind of March
 In the sailing arms of love,
 And to make stars of songs
 For his familiar domestic sky.
 He gave his soul with body's borrowed charm
 To the glamour of the earth,
 But he could not save the vesture of flesh
 From the hands of time.

Long days of languid calm
 Idle and honied with sedative hopes
 Have formed the wheel of his fate.
 He waits now for the storm
 To swing his nest, for the violent assurance
 Of the loud noise of light
 To look beyond the bounds
 And the tautologic tale of life.

 Tamed and tubbed and pruned
 To the fashionable elegance of taste,
 He yet sighs for an unknown anguish of the soul
 That turns earth into foliage,
 And makes verdure with sapphires of the eye.
 His wonder touches the edge of despair
 And in the cool valley of silence,
 He waits still
 For the rhododendron laughter of the sun.

AMARESH DATTA

SHORT STORY

"To be sure, I am a forest, and a night of the dark trees: but he who is not afraid of my darkness, will find banks full of roses under my cypresses."

(F. Nietzsche: *Thus Spake Zarathustra*.)

Night of the Dark Trees

ABRAHAM ERALY

IT is when I am most happy that I always feel the imminence of unhappiness. Often in the evenings when I sit out in the garden with my little daughter Urmila playing at my feet and my wife softly humming beside me, a great fear descends on me with wide black wings, and I feel the oppression of its weight upon my heart. On such occasions I stretch out my hand and touch the cheek of my daughter, and the child smiles to me brightly giving me the assurance that happiness is almost a physical thing. But I know only too well that happiness is a tenuous thing, too, a bubble which bursts even with a whisper, and I am afraid. It was not so long ago that my life was wretched and stunted like that of a perverse tree which turns its roots into itself for sustenance.

Maybe it is only the hallucination of a sick mind—but these days I quite often see lying between me and my wife, on the green turf, the dark shadow of Itty, barring our parallel lives from converging. It is all very absurd because really there is no reason at all for me to suspect that Sitha is still in love or was ever very much in love with Itty—except of course Itty's claim to that. Yet I live in constant fear of suddenly waking and finding my cherished life to be but a cloying day-

dream. You see, I am not yet familiar with the landscape of happiness. But Sitha knows nothing of my anxiety, and sits there humming beside me, her chiselled profile tilted to the blue sky and the waning moon.

* * * *

Three years ago it was another moon-lit night, a Saturday, and I was sitting alone on the crowded beach, reluctant to go back to my depressing room strewn with books and index cards where bats flew in by night to leave their droppings on my table. It was cool on the beach. In the dark the sea had sounded strangely menacing, but as the moon rose above the low curtain of opaque clouds the sea shimmered like white silk and grew calm. And the dimpled beach-face lit up, as at the touch of a lover. It was then that Itty saw me and came over.

"Wake up Varma," he said.

That was how it began, casually. In the moon-light Itty's features seemed to fade into each other, as in old photographs. There was a lack of definition, of sharpness, about him. But he was tall, and the mop of coarse hair cascading over his forehead gave him a certain air of distinction. And his voice, a deep bass which came reverberating from the pit of his stomach, infected every word he spoke, however

banal its thought content, with a grave-ness which it is impossible to convey in writing. Presently he said:

'I say, Varma, will you please join me for a cup of coffee? I have something to discuss with you.'

'Certainly,' I said.

We walked towards the restaurant in the shadows of the whistling casuarinas, and Itty spoke of getting married.

'It all depends on me,' he said. 'If I say Yes, it will be; if I say No, it will not be.'

'How is the girl?' I asked.

'She is no beauty,' he said. 'But everybody has such good things to say about her. And her brothers are all in very high positions. What do you think?'

'What can I say?' I said. 'I am a sensualist, interested only in the body.' (Later, explaining this lie, I told Sitha: 'To make life endurable we have to invent these convenient myths'.)

'But surely,' Itty said, 'contentment is death to the artist.'

'Of course,' I said. 'To prod one to achievement there is nothing like a malformed woman or shrew at home'.

'She is not malformed or anything,' said Itty, always quick to take offence. 'But there are other considerations. You know Sarah?'

'Sarah John?'

'Yes. Well... it was all her fault... it was she who broke off our engagement. But the other day I got a letter from her saying that...'

'You know, she is rather like my mother,' I said. 'Very imperious.'

'Well, if she is waiting for me it will be a terrible thing to marry this girl. And also there is this complication with Sitha. I am in a hell of a muddle.'

'Sitha!'

'Yes. Mr Arunda Murthy's daughter. You should know her—she is taking philosophy.'

* * * *

Of course I knew Sitha: daughter of the distinguished writer and art critic! At first by her reputation as a rather gaga bird—'With her nose up in the air all the time,

talking about Kafka and Collective Sub-conscious!' as one of my colleagues put it. Later she started attending my European Philosophy lectures, and one innocent day, looking up from reading a passage from *The Symposium*, I met her eyes—and was overwhelmed. The effect on me was strange: I felt drained out, empty. (Pratap on love: 'There are never any heroes of love but only martyrs of love. And if there is one thing that is truly lacking in this world it is tenderness.') I tried to control myself—I had had enough of love and all that! But then, one day I discovered something very intimate about Sitha—that she was as much afraid of love as I was, and I saw hiding behind her mask of arrogance a little child who was afraid of people. She was a strange girl in many ways, always carelessly dressed and scurrying about in a gait which was like the slither of a crippled snake. And behind those steel-rimmed glasses of hers, her eyes appeared colubrine, loveless. But when people caught her off her guard without those glasses, they were struck by her fragile beauty. ('But I always thought of myself as an ugly duckling, so poorly formed,' my wife told me later.) Once, I remember, I came across her standing against the orange wall of the library, wearing an orange sari, and she seemed to flatten out into the wall, as if she was made of paper, and one noticed only those great hypnotic eyes of hers, their whites like molten silver and the irises like big black moons in silver skies. It was impossible not to love her, and yet it was painful to love at all.

But it was over all too soon. It was early winter, I remember. We had been to a music recital. Afterwards we went to a restaurant, and she sat reclining beside me on the low sofa, munching a sandwich dreamily. Cunningly placed potted plants hid us from other tables, but there was no escape from the blare of the juke-box. Her hand resting lightly on my arm twitched a little and, as I watched, her fingers seemed to bud forth and curl at the edges

and become tendrils. And seeing this tenderness in her, which I alone knew, I gently detached her hand from my arm and lifted it to my lips.

'Sitha,' I said, 'there is something I must tell you.'

She tensed instantly. Perhaps there was something in my voice, some urgency which warned her.

'I must tell you that being in love is a very serious thing for me,' I said. 'Please don't say anything now. But I must tell you that I have been seriously hurt in love before. I had then vowed that I would never let myself be hurt like that again. So...'

'Please let my hand go,' she said, harshly.

'Certainly,' I said.

The next day she avoided my eyes, and at noon I found on my table some books I had loaned her with a curt note of thanks. And I thought: well, that's that. I dared to fall in love again, and I am punished. (Later, after our marriage, Sitha was to say of this incident: 'But you were so crude that day. After listening to all that wonderful music how could you be so vulgar as to talk about your love affairs.' But she never mentioned Itty.)

* * *

'Of course I know Sitha,' I told Itty. 'I have seen you two together sometimes, but I never thought...'

There was no tremor in my voice as I spoke. We skirted the fountain and went up the stairs to the roof garden which was alive with the excitement of a family trying to quieten a screaming child. We pulled our chairs to the wooden railing facing the sea, and Itty ordered coffee. No, there was no tremor in my voice. There was never any tremor in my voice. Only when alone in the privacy of my room I spoke to myself, only then my voice sometimes cracked and tears welled in my eyes. (When my grandmother died and the big house was filled with wailing women and children I alone could not cry—though I knew I had to cry and tried to—, and I overheard Aunt Vilasani tell Mother: 'His

heart is of granite.' I was eight years old then!) No, I was no hero: I only had a forked tongue. Monsieur Sardonicus!—that's what boys call me behind my back. ('You are offensive, aren't you?' Mrs Pratap once asked me sweetly.) But this affectation of toughness was just an exercise in futility, like the struggles of a man caught in quicksands.

It was only natural to struggle. To stand still and to sink quietly—that was impossible. It was not that I was ambitious of anything much in life: I only desired a reasonable chance to be happy. It was not a question of sex either. At first I mistook it to be that and haunted the brothels. (A little tart once snorted at me when I haggled for rates: 'What you think we are? Fish?') Of course sex was there, but what I really despaired for was tenderness to make my life fragrant—to hold hands with the loved one and to have her tenderness flow into me so that I may grow again and find my place among men. But it was all denied me. Yet I had had it all once. Once! How many years ago was it surely not more than five or six when I had been young, so gay! But now! Waking up every morning only to confront a bitter and haggard face in the mirror! The detailed contemplation of a balding temple! The careful trimming of the moustache to fill the vacancy of my hours! Horrible! Aloneness is such a terrible condition. But apparently there is no escape.

* * *

The first time, I suffered because I loved beneath my station. Karthu was her name. It was not like my love for Sitha, with whom love was rarefied, refined. With Karthu it was more like the mating of thunder clouds, elemental. She was not a particularly intelligent girl, and according to Mother her whole family were a bunch of idiots, 'have been so for generations. Otherwise how could they have lost all their money?' When Karthu's father had sought Mother's help to secure her a government job (He said: 'She is a very bright girl... knows typing... we

are in debt...no money to marry her off... You can help us if you set your mind to it...'), Mother had said: 'Let me see... Meanwhile she can come and stay with us and help with the house work.' And so Karthu came to stay with us, bringing with her a small rusty steel trunk which held her red skirt (which Mother would never let her wear: 'What are girls coming to these days?') and a frayed copy of Changapuzha's 'Ramanan'. She was a cheerful girl and went about her work humming verses from the book:

Malarani kadukal thingi vingi
Marathaka kandiyl mungi mungi
Malarum.....

I used to call her Rain Cloud because she had such heavy black tresses reaching far down to her knees. But the first time I called her Rain Cloud, she pouted and would not even let me touch her because she thought I was teasing her for her complexion. But she was easily consoled. She was young and innocent, with a ready smile, so full of mischief, and an animal sensuality which was as natural to her as fragrance is to jasmine. We were like children playing. And then, though she never told me anything about it, she was obviously pregnant, and I wanted to marry her. This was not just because it was the right thing to do—I was not bothered about right and wrong—but because I loved her and could not bear the thought of losing her. But Mother, practical as ever, asked: 'How can you be sure it is your child? She is a heedless girl.' Karthu was rather playful about it all, and she called me a fool and told me not to speak but only to love her. Then all of a sudden she changed. All her gaiety vanished, like light from a snuffed out candle. It was a most painful thing to see. You see, Mother with her usual efficiency had arranged to get rid of her, and there was nothing at all I could do about it.

That was how I first slid into the pit. Of course, it may be that I am nostalgically attaching to my first love an intensity that was not quite there. But I suffered

much—even if what I felt was not so much the loss as the sense of loss. (But how difficult it is to contain a thought precisely in a sentence like water in a pitcher!) The numerous unsatisfactory affairs which I afterwards had one after the other in fits of nervous anxiety—the bitterness of it all leading to a deeper gloom—only shed a sunset glow on my first love. That was why I cherished Sitha's love so much. It was the miracle of true love happening to me again. But...

* * * *

Yes, I had learned to live with my misfortunes. That was why there was no tremor in my voice when I talked with Itty about Sitha.

'Of course, I know Sitha,' I said. 'I have seen you two together sometimes, but I never thought...'

'She provoked me,' Itty said. 'One day I told her that I wanted to meet her father, and she sort of distended her neck trying to look down upon me and said: "You write to him and fix an appointment." Just like that! And I thought: My God what a bitch! And right there I decided: I must break this girl and make her whimper at my feet.'

'But it is all a mistake,' I said. 'She is only a child, just a child.'

'That I understood later,' Itty said. 'Yes, she is rather child-like. That is inherited from her father. But in the beginning she was inclined to be very patronising. If I said I liked the paintings of Sutherland, she liked only Dufy. Then one day her father invited me for tea with him. You won't believe it, Varma, but he is such a shy man.'

'I have never met him,' I said. I had not the ambition of Itty.

'One secret which people don't know—except of course his very close friends—he paints! A very individual style. Colours converging and moving away, like people in a crowded street. I don't know why he hides them away; they are really of top quality. I told him so. In fact I dashed off my impressions on his paintings and sent

it to him. And he wrote back: "Your sensitivity to visual imagery is astonishing. Reading what you have written I am able to understand my paintings better." That I would say is a terrific compliment, coming as it does from...'

'Of course,' I said.

'I still have the letter,' Itty said. 'I keep it proudly.' (I remember Pratap speaking of Itty: 'He is spiritually impotent. A parasite. And what does he want? Just titbits of compliments! Ugh! Yet they were great friends once: they worshipped Beethoven together!') 'That changed everything,' Itty continued. 'She now recognized me as a prodigy. I gave her some of my poems, and she thought they were terrific. "I can't write like this," she said; "I don't know my people. I can't write. I can't paint. I don't know my people well enough." It was almost a whimper. I consoled her: "You can, Sitha, you can." But she said: "No, no. I can't. But you can..." Then I said: "Well then... we can." And she blushed. Then I knew that I had her in my power. That was what touched me most—that this proud woman has been broken. I could have done anything with her. Of course we never mentioned the word *love*. But it was there. Talking about Dufy and Sutherland and all that we communicated something more personal.'

'Why! It is almost an aesthetic achievement,' I said.

'Yes, a most rich and rewarding experience,' he said. 'But then again she changed, and began to resist me, oppose my views. I took her to see the picture Alayamani which I thought was a great picture. But she said it was just inverted snobbery to admire pictures like that. I was astounded. Where did she find the strength? I don't know. It was then that she began to move with you and Pratap.'

'With me it was nothing,' I said.

'I know,' Itty said. 'But she was often with Pratap. Remember? once we were all together at an art exhibition and she attached herself to Pratap like a leech.

Hardly paid any attention to me. That made me think... well, perhaps...'

'But surely there couldn't have been anything in it,' I said. 'Pratap being happily married and all that...'

'The snivelling blighter!' Itty said. 'No, I don't think there was anything much in it. But this happened at a time when my own feelings towards her were most intense. So it was a shock. I thought it was all over. But then, again she changed, and invited me for dinner at her house. Once again our conversation began to click. And now this pressure from home to get married... My mother says that we will be the losers if this marriage proposal doesn't come through. But how can I make up my mind!'

'But you have to marry Sitha. You must,' I said. 'To love her and to marry the other girl is to be cruel to both.'

I was vehement. You see, I could not wait to damn myself. I am told that lovers have this strange tendency to repel each other at the slighted pretext. And anyway there has always been a perverse streak in me. I remember that as a child I used to infuriate my grandmother by refusing to cry when she caned me. 'Cry, will you? Cry!' she used to rasp at me, and redouble her efforts. But I would never cry. But don't think that by encouraging Itty I was just seeking pleasurable pain. Actually when I said those words I was thinking: Well, there are other women in this world. And time is a great healer. Who knows, the miracle of love may happen to me again...

'I know,' Itty said. 'To abandon Sitha now would be to destroy her. But damn it! I am only a College lecturer. Do I have the right to claim her?'

'Why not?'

'Oh I don't know. Anyway I am again going to see the girl proposed to me.'

'But that is an unheard of thing,' I said. 'A second bride-seeing!'

'I know. Her people are reluctant. And she is reluctant. But I have told them that the whole thing is off unless I am allowed

to talk to her again. And now they have agreed.'

'When are you going?'

'Wednesday.'

I did not see Itty for some days after this. Then one late evening he came to my room, furrow-browed and care-worn, bringing in the dark pollen of dusk on his shoulders. He said he had okayed the girl (Good! Good!) but was now fearful that she would reject him.

'When I came away her uncle came up to me and said: "The next move is yours." And I said it was okay with me to go ahead. But we haven't got any reply from them so far.'

'These things take time, you know,' I said.

'If this doesn't come through I will feel a bloody dope.'

'Oh I am sure it will come through,' I said. 'But where do Dufy and Sutherland stand now?'

'Dufy and Sutherland? Oh! That's all so remote now. It was just a fancy. This is the real thing.'

I was later on to learn—Sitha told me—that Itty had called on her that week. She thought his behaviour was strange. 'He was so restless,' she said. Of course, she didn't know of Itty's marriage plans. My own belief is that Itty went to propose to her that day but just couldn't get himself to do it for fear of being turned down. He was a very idealistic young man, and like most idealistic people he was both selfish and fumbling in his ways, and his mind enveloped a subject like mist, obscuring rather than clarifying it.

'This is love at second sight!' I said laughing. I was glad to laugh.

'Yes.' He laughed.

'What is her name?'

'Ramani.'

'That is a fine name!' I said.

'Yes,' he said. 'And she has such bright eyes.' (I remember him telling me on

another occasion about Sitha: 'Her eyes are listening eyes. Wonderful!')

* * * *

On his marriage Itty resigned from College and took up a job in the firm where his brother-in-law was a manager. On the day of his marriage (which took place in Kerala. We all sent congratulatory telegrams.) Sitha came to College decked in flowers. Her exuberance appeared to me a little forced. (Later the thought was to ferment much in my mind: why should she have gone out of her way to affect unconcern if she was not really concerned?) That day she smiled at me again! And in a few days she wrote to me a long letter. Most of it was about some book she had just then read—by Shopenhauer I think (Is this significant?)—I was not interested in what she had written—it was the meaning between the lines, the implications of this act of taking up correspondence with me again—that was what overwhelmed me. Of course I was also painfully aware that perhaps she had come to me only on the rebound from Itty, that perhaps when the wound of disillusion healed she would want to fly away again. I should have known better than get much excited about Sitha again, but I have always found that reason is an insufficient guide at moments of decision. I felt so exhilarated those days that I thought I could even straddle the earth and go for a jolly ride or something. My health improved. Soon I even managed to forget Itty. I can say without any reservation that we were most ecstatically happy during those weeks of courting and the early months of our marriage. Then Urmila was born, and it was exactly as the romantic poets say—the flowering of our love. And then one day it happened! We were strolling down the beach hand in hand, and I felt her hand tremor slightly in mine, like a bird in hand striving to fly away. And suddenly there was a blinding roar and I was lifted on the crest of a wave and slammed on the rocks of my dark fears. For a moment I panicked. And when

I looked up again, there it was, the shadow of Itty between me and my wife. Of course, the fear must have been gathering strength in my subconscious all the time. May be it was all irrational, just the hallucinations of a sick mind. But the incubus was in me all right, and I had to lay it before I could have peace, life. That is why I have invited Itty and family to stay with us for a week-end as they pass through the city to Bombay.

* * * *

Once again we are sitting out in the garden. The Deepavali crackers are going off everywhere, puncturing the silence of the nightfall. I help Urmila to light a cracker—a small one, because she is only a wee child, and is easily startled. Sitha admonishes me for spoiling the child. Now a days we quarrel sometimes; but what fun we have quarreling! You see, I have at last laid the incubus. Itty has come and gone. He came with his fat wife and his two sons, so noisy. His children immediately took to scaring Urmila and chasing our spaniel (which finally took refuge under my chair), and before the day was out they had dashed to bits our treasured china vase. (One of my earliest memories: Mother showing me the vase and saying: 'This is the vase which the Maharaja pre-

sented to your great-great-grandfather when he was the Diwan. It comes from China.' China!) The change in Itty was striking. Gone was that pale intellectual look of his; he has grown corpulent, and was in high spirits, and he kept jabbering all the time about his job: 'The other day I was playing GOLF with the DIRECTOR, and he said...' I caught Sitha looking at me, her eyes brimming with laughter. (How we laughed afterwards!) Then, at that instant, the incubus fell off me like a dead leaf from the tree, and I knew that I was a fool to have been ever anxious about her love. Itty appeared to have forgotten everything. Perhaps he did not have anything much to forget! But I felt no bitterness towards him for causing me much misery. It really was not his fault at all. Sitting there in the growing dusk, listening to all his chatter, I was surprised at my own generosity and warmth of feeling towards Itty, and indeed towards everything, even towards his horrid progeny. I felt benign. Then I recalled once telling Sitha: 'Bitterness is a hollow in the soul of man, a crater left by the play of Gods on the sands of human soul; it can be filled only with charity, love.' The crater in me is smoothed. I have peace.

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B O O K S

GREAT SANSKRIT PLAYS in Modern Translation by P. Lal (*New Directions*, 396 pp. \$7.25, ND Paperback \$2.75).

SIX SANSKRIT PLAYS in English Translation, edited by H. W. Wells (*Asia Publishing House*, 487 pp. Rs. 40.00).

HERE for instructive comparison is a re-issue from Asia Publishing House of six 'traditional' translations (from various hands) along with six brand new 'transcreations' (as he calls them) by P. Lal into modern idiom. Four plays recur in each volume (*Shakuntala*, *The Little Clay Cart*, *The Dream of Vasavadatta*, *The Later Story of Rama*), while in addition P. Lal gives us *The Signet Ring of Rakshasha* and *Ratnavali*, and H. W. Wells *Vikramorvacie* translated by Sri Aurobindo, and *Nagananda*. These volumes should ideally be reviewed by a scholar combining intimate knowledge of Sanskrit language and literature with a sure sense of English idiom—a combination as rare in a reviewer as in a translator. I shall confine myself to commenting on the language of translation.

The failings of 'traditional' translations from Sanskrit (as from Greek, Latin, Persian, etc.) are abundantly illustrated by the Asia collection. Even though for the most part translated into prose (Aurobindo's *Vikramorvacie*, and parts of *Shakuntala* are in verse), the language is far removed from normal expression. Essentially we are given the language of exalted sentiment, which the Augustans introduced for their Heroic Drama—the language of Addison's *Cato* or Rowe's *Jane Shore*. This developed into the conventional 'poetic' idiom of the 19th century,

instinctively drawn upon for all 'high' occasions. Combined with this style and vocabulary, the complicated epithetic structure of Sanskrit verse gives the following typical result (I quote from the first scene of the first play in the Asia collection): 'Who is this insolent fellow, this lack-courtesy, made arrogant by fickle fortune, who by his rough commands is turning a peaceful penance grove into a village street?' Thus on the one hand we have a 'poetic' vocabulary of archaisms, latinisms, and rhetorical posture ('Stay! Vasavadatta, stay! Alas!' or: 'Do you, then, love some young Brahmana whose mind is embellished with rare erudition?'), and on the other hand an awkward syntax distorted by the complexities of Sanskrit compression: '... thou wast made to dance by my fair wife to the beatings of her tendril-like hands, who was adorning thee by the quick and charming play of her eye-brows and by her eyes that rolled in their sockets as you moved round.' Even when in imitation of the Prakrit, the English tries to be colloquial, it only achieves the conventional stage colloquialism of 'Son of a whore!', 'Mercy, kind Sirs!' and so forth. Aurobindo of course has a style all his own, as remote, possibly, from the Sanskrit as from English—a completely unenergised language:

*Most dulcet words of lovers, sweetest flatteries,
When passion is not there, can find no entrance
To woman's heart; for she knows well the voice
Of real love, but these are stones false-coloured
Rejected by the jeweller's practised eye.*

He coins the oddest expressions ('sole-sitting', 'grove avoidable of women') and

then drops into cliché ('heavenly eyes', 'wound of love'), but his too is basically a 19th century idiom ('my sad, unsatisfied, and pale desire').

Now P. Lal has set out to do for Sanskrit drama what Dudley Fitts has done for Aristophanes—to break with the traditional idiom and put the plays into lively modern English. Here for instance is Mathura addressing Madanika in *The Toy Cart*: 'It won't do. No pouting lips at me, no sweet words. Don't give me the come-hither, my girl. I have no money.' And here is the Asia version by Revilo Pendleton Oliver: 'To whom, O slender-waisted girl whose lips bear the marks of the bites that are given in amorous ecstasy, do you, with alluring glances, speak such charming speech? I am not rich. Solicit someone else.' Lal speeds up the pace like this throughout, slashing the circumlocution, smoothing the clumsiness. As far as possible he prefers the natural to the pompous expression: 'I'll go in and finish my prayers,' says his Charudatta, where Oliver has 'I am going to devote myself to pious meditations.' He invariably cuts down the poetic elaboration of the Sanskrit, sometimes quite brilliantly: 'The birds are now in their nests, the hermits have gone to the pool. How brilliantly the sacred fire gleams! The wayworn sun turns his chariot into the mountain cave.' (the Asia version has nearly twice as many words).

But in spite of his many successes, and the greatly increased accessibility of these versions, one may question the appropriateness of this procedure for Sanskrit drama. According to P. Lal's own very erudite Introduction, the purpose of this drama was the production of *rasa* which came from the balancing of sentiments—not the Aristotelian imitation of an *action*, but as Bharata has it 'the imitation or representation of *conditions* and *situations*'. Thus whereas Western drama is properly *dramatic*, moving swiftly from event to event, Sanskrit drama *dwells* on situations, indulging their sentiments, not purging them. The situations are contrived to pro-

voke and sustain the sentiments, not to contribute to the action, which is of secondary importance and may be quite implausible. By speeding up the action and cutting down—often extensively—the poetic elaboration, Lal goes against the whole spirit of Sanskrit drama.

For instance, the mood of triumphant love at the end of Act V of *The Little Clay Cart* is prepared by an abundance of poetic effusion on storm clouds and love, deliberately sustaining the emotion, nearly all of which is omitted by Lal, thereby concentrating our attention on the return of the golden box, which is a merely dramatic device of secondary importance. Of course there are longer and shorter recensions, but Lal cuts out so much poetry in comparison with other English versions, that he evidently prefers the shorter recensions, and even cuts these down too. Thus much of Rama's nostalgia in the Dandaka forest is denied us, or a huge amount of recapitulation at the end of *Shakuntala*. In the introduction to *Shakuntala* Lal criticizes Laurence Binyon's attempt to retain the lyricism when at the end of Act III the King tries to kiss the lips of Shakuntala, but his own solution is to cut it out altogether, so that we have nothing but a dramatic incident (the King pleads, she turns away, Mother Gautami enters), with the image stripped to its bare minimum ('as a bee kisses a flower')—all the tasting and sipping and freshness and tenderness left to our deduction, while the action rushes on before we have time to savour it.

Faced with this problem of making the literary and social conventions of a remote culture 'perfectly orderly and comprehensible' to a modern reader, P. Lal opts for simplification and omission rather than footnotes or background reading. Sambuka the Shudra who has offended the Brahmins by his penances becomes a 'demon' who has slain the son of a Brahmin, so that Rama's vengeance will not shock Western ideas of justice. Lal leaves out unfamiliar mythological names of gods or weapons

(the *Pushpaka* becomes an 'aerial chariot'), resulting in a loss of atmosphere, or changes the form of dramatic presentation (e.g. characters describing events as they happen to them—Charudatta or Maitreya on the way to the courthouse).

But the greatest problem of all is to find an appropriate language. P. Lal claims to have established a 'neutral' tone acceptable to the American, English, and Indian readers he 'kept in mind when on the job.' But is a neutral tone possible? When Sansthanaka is made to say 'Easy, easy, man. Let's go have a bathe in the pool,' this is not acceptable to English readers unless Sansthanaka is made to speak Americanese throughout (he doesn't). In fact the idiom frequently jars: the modernisms are anachronisms ('culture vulture', 'damned sex-fiend', 'gay blades', 'no one briefed me'): you can't say 'off-limits' without evoking the American army. Even expressions like 'burnt to a cinder', 'a splitting headache' have to be used with great caution, they are so associated with modern living and not with 485 B.C. Of course this is no worse than Oliver turning a Buddhist monk into a Friar! Expressions like 'We're only young once' have a vulgarity out of keeping in the company of a personage like Vasavadatta. Or the King in *Shakuntala* saying: 'This is the chance of a lifetime.' All too frequently the tone fails in this way—becoming bold or flip-pant, too matter-of-fact, or even facetious, above all too purely dramatic. But of course these plays being inescapably poetic, will not allow even Lal to remain colloquial for long, and keep on imposing so to speak a sort of nobility: 'Here is Charudatta: A tree of bounty to the poor when he was heavy with fruit, A patron of good men, a mirror of learning...' so that the tone shifts disconcertingly, with sudden effects of bathos (Vasavadatta realizing the King still loves her: 'I am a lucky woman').

By giving the characters a familiar everyday speech, P. Lal brings them near to us as ordinary people, but did these

plays belong to the everyday world in the way that the drama of European realism does? Should there not be a certain dignity, a greater distance? Must 'golden casket' become 'golden box'? Consider the case where Charudatta finds Vasantasena in his house, when she has taken refuge from Sansthanaka. Lal makes her as homely as the girl next door: 'Oh, Sir, it is I who should be sorry, walking in like this, an uninvited guest.' This lack of distance is especially evident in the case of Rama and Sita, who are made completely bourgeois in the opening scene: 'Smile a little, Sita,' says Rama, the tender husband of some domestic comedy, and his wife reacts like a typical housewife when he goes off without explanation: 'Wait till he gets back—he'll get a piece of my mind he's not had before!' It is not surprising that the most successful of these versions is the most down to earth—*The Signet Ring*.

It cannot be claimed that either of these volumes is entirely satisfactory. P. Lal's is a courageous venture, but in setting out to produce versions actable on the Western stage to Western audiences, he has sacrificed a good deal of the specifically Sanskrit quality. His book is not for scholars with their pedantic concern for accuracy, nor for those who like to know that in the original eyeballs roll and hands are like tendrils. Lal even omits all the Preludes except one (even the famous Prelude to *Shakuntala* that inspired the Prelude to Goethe's *Faust*). The Asia versions on the other hand, though far less readable, are more complete in their pedestrian, poeticising way. But my reservations, far from condemning these two volumes, should rather be taken as indicating the impossibility of the task towards which they represent the alternative approaches. P. Lal's paperback, with its scholarly apparatus of introductions, glossary, and bibliography, is splendid value for the general reader.

DAVID MCCUTCHION

A Penetrating Interpretation

DOCTRINE AND ARGUMENT IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY by Ninian Smart. (George Allen and Unwin, 248 pp. 37s. 6d.)

ALL Philosophy that is worth our attention requires, from time to time, a re-statement and a re-evaluation. This for two reasons. Thought is ever moving forward and giving rise to new problems and perspectives and new ways of asking and answering old questions. Traditional philosophy requires to be brought into living contact with contemporary thought. To meet the new challenge it has to be restated, and, if we are sympathetic to it, also rejuvenated in the process. Secondly, no philosophical system is ever complete. It comes into being through a process—an endless one—of the maturation of a point of view, or, as Smart says of Indian philosophy, 'the coherent elaboration of a single main thesis' or 'a cluster of insights'.

This, however, is true not only of Indian Philosophy. All philosophical reasoning is the maturation of a point of view, but this maturation is not merely the explicit and coherent formulation of certain key-concepts and basic motives, but, more fruitfully, a penetration and deepening of insight, a process of soul-seeking and soul-finding, where what emerges is not analytically contained in what we start with, but is new, without being alien to the spirit of the old, new in the way in which what comes into being as a process of growth is new compared with that out of which it has grown.

These facts concerning philosophical reasoning open up the possibility of a critical evaluation of a system of philosophy. Criticism can be at many levels. At the first level it merely keeps pace with the texts that are expounded. At a higher level it goes beyond and transforms the doctrines contained in the texts, without necessarily propounding anything inconsistent with them. The interpretation is new and yet not new. It penetrates the 'cluster of insights' with a deeper insight and

translates the system to a higher level, very much as the writings of Plato, according to Plato himself, 'beautified and rejuvenated' Socrates.

A critical account of Indian Philosophy in the latter sense has, alas, yet to be written. And if one hopes for any deeper-level penetration into the doctrines and arguments in Indian philosophy in Smart's book one will be disappointed. Yet even a cursory perusal of the book shows that there is in Smart's work a penetrativeness, though without marked profundity. He has a very sympathetic and living approach to spiritual philosophy, but the inner sense seems not so active. His book has undoubted merits which make it a very valuable contribution to the subject. The exposition and interpretation of the various systems are thorough and accurate. His work compares favourably with Hiriyanna's excellent 'Outlines of Indian Philosophy'. The author has also done for Indian philosophy what has not been done before. In the second part of the book he has brought together arguments from different schools on a few major topics. This brings out a wide variety of views and provides a basis for comparative studies in Indian philosophy.

In his chapter on 'Analysis of the Religious Factors in Indian Metaphysics' Smart makes a number of statements in which he claims to give his own views. Some of these statements are highly controversial. He first raises the question why the various Indian systems assumed the shape that they did and his general thesis is that in Indian philosophy we have to look for religious motives as providing the clue. This suggestion is true, but by no means novel. It is, I think, almost a commonplace that in Indian philosophy, by and large, logic follows spiritual experience. But by experience one should understand *anubhava* or *sākṣātkar*, which is the same as *mokṣa*, and not religious experience and practice which merely form part of the soul's as yet unrealized aspiration to freedom; e.g. the rejection of

pantheism in some systems follows *originally* from the direct experience of the Lord and not, as Smart suggests, merely because it is inconsistent with the practice of worship.

Smart's second thesis that the typical experience of contemplative religion in India is pluralistic, not monistic, and that it is only the injection of devotionism that turns contemplative pluralism into a doctrine of the Absolute, seems as much lacking in truth as it is full of originality. The thesis is sought to be established more on analytic than historical grounds, the main argument being that the inner quest for a luminous state of pure consciousness is an experience in the depths of the soul and not directed to outer reality. This is the basis for presuming that the experience is pluralistic. To this it may be pointed out (1) that the very first condition of the spiritual life, whether predominantly devotional or meditative, is the replacement of the *bāhir-mukha* by the *antar-mukha* attitude—the Kingdom of Heaven is *within* us; (2) the Self that is realized by the *jñānin* is not the individual self, separate from other selves. The going within is simultaneously a going out of the limits of one's personal identity: self-finding is self-losing. The self-realization as is well-known, has a triple formulation: (i) the Self in All, (ii) All in the Self and (iii) the Self as All; and (3) Smart himself points out that the undifferentiated experience in Nirvāna opens the way to the abandonment of the notion of individual souls. (It does not merely open the way, but in itself cancels the notion of plurality).

In answering the objection that Śāṅkara derives his monism from the Upanisads Smart repeats the myth that 'the Upanisads unmistakably manifest the importation into Āryan religion of yogic elements, including belief in rebirth, which were not at all characteristic of the early parts of revelation'. This myth arises because the esoteric meaning of the Rg Veda has been missed.

This is too large a subject for a review,

but no one writing on Indian philosophy with such penetration and sympathy as Smart does could be excused for ignoring totally Sri Aurobindo's *adhyātmic* interpretation of the Vedas, an interpretation which is finding increasing acceptance in the world of Vedic scholarship. If, following Sri Aurobindo's clue, we proceed into the heart of the Vedas we not only get the background and the base for the Upanisads in Āryan religion, but also the correct centre of experience from which Indian spirituality and spiritual philosophy fan out in various directions and in diverse forms. This chapter, in which originality is claimed, does not have the merit which the other parts of the book undoubtedly do have.

Again, I wonder if the term 'polarity' with reference to the types of spiritual experience would not be a little misleading. Would it not be really a question of difference in stress between the meditative *Ātman-Nirvāna* monistic experience on the one hand and the devotional experience of the Lord on the other? These two experiences act on each other, though not in the way Smart suggests. When the former is modified by the latter it takes on, or rather unveils, the Immanent Divine or the *Antaryāmin*. And the experience of the Lord under the pressure of the inner yogic contemplation looking luminously outward, assumes, or rather discloses the reality of the Absolute. The double spirituality—personal-impersonal, devotional-contemplative—is the essential original Indian experience. When the two experiences interact we reach the fullness of the Indian spiritual realization. The spiritual life was not always expressed or conceived in its fullness; one or another side of it was emphasised as the need arose, though the fullness always remained subtly vibrant somewhere at the back. But at certain moments the fullness reached its conceptual and expressive form in the very foreground. Two such moments can be clearly marked in the past: the *Īśa* Upanisad in ancient times and the Bhaga-

vad Gītā in times more near our own. They bring out the fundamental synthesis that is the core of the Indian spiritual experience.

Finally, I cannot resist pointing out that the description of the Buddha's and the Buddhist thought as Agnosticism is a fairly common, but none the less, a gross error. Agnosticism is that attitude which seeks to fill a gap in our mental construction of Reality. The Buddhist attitude consists in the total breaking up of all mental constructions. It is not that the Buddha did not know whether God exists or not, but rather that he discouraged the attempt to trap in an intellectual formula that which can only be known in the total Silence of the whole being.

J. N. CHUBB

Seeing the Obvious

AN AREA OF DARKNESS by V. S. Naipaul
(Andre Deutsch 281 pp. 25s.)

IT is more than a year now since I returned from India. I should like to use this excuse for saying something about a new book on India by a writer I greatly admire, Mr. Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness*. As a book, this has all the distinction one would expect from him; it has been greatly praised here for its depth and beauty. I found it curiously disappointing, even rather dreadful. In England Mr. Naipaul, one might say, is an alien, but not a foreigner; in India, he was a foreigner but not an alien. Perhaps to expect from this promising combination of backgrounds a special marvellousness of perception such as we find in his handling of the West Indian background was unfair. But in *An Area of Darkness* I found, throughout, a holier-than-thou attitude which I had imagined long since discredited. He adopts that favourite practice of 19th century evangelists: that of telling the Indians what. One just fails to hear the murmur: benighted heathen.

What went wrong? Why should Mr.

Naipaul have felt, as he tells us he did, that India threatened him, endangered his individuality in some obscure way, causing him to fight stubbornly — theatrically, even, — against any kind of surrender to the country. This is more than the simple repulsion of heat and dirt. Mr. Naipaul refuses with unbalanced consistency to see the rose for the dungheap. It should be funny; but Mr. Naipaul is not being funny. The comedy leaves a bitter taste: one had hoped for better things from a writer of his stature. If, as he complains, Indians ignore the obvious, we must turn round on him and complain that he has ignored everything but.

His last chapter is headed 'Flight' and he mentions 'the total Indian negation'. Is this what he feared? It is difficult to believe. If we look at the chapter about his visit to the U.P. village where his grandfather was born, we feel something willed about his sparseness of response; he falls over backwards to be disagreeably 'English' in case one should suspect him of something shameful, like feeling love for these people. Even when he acknowledges the 'sweetness' of India: the clipped reference to a friend's gift, the garland on his bed, one senses a tired withdrawal. This, and not his superficial findings on Hinduism, is what I should call 'negation'. It has been praised as honesty, of course. Oh honesty, *que de crimes*, etc. If honesty is a virtue, it looks here a pretty meagre one.

What a pity he could not have stayed longer. Few fail with time to unshutter their hearts. He might have done this without falling into complacency, or growing a blind spot towards the dungheaps: and have found his talent as a writer enriched rather than threatened. He suffers from pre-conviction of the fiercest kind about Western superiority; disguise it as we may, we all suffer from this. It takes time to realize that it is a view based on great initial discomfort as much as on reason. It wears off, though. I give it about a year, unless one is super-rich. And writers who come for a short visit to India

are rarely in the super-rich class: hence such flagellants as the author of *Mother India*, and Beverley Nichols, and now V. S. Naipaul.

One would like to put it down to early bowel-training but that would hardly do! I would not dare to object to a concern for sanitary habits. I have not a word to say for the excrement-droppers. They do indeed abound. It is disgraceful, after so many tourists have pointed it out to them, that they go on doing it. I like very much Mr. Naipaul's idea of a little spade; it has, like all great ideas, a fine simplicity. I only wonder where are these feckless lavatoryless fellows to get their little spades from. And I wonder if Mr. Naipaul has ever tried to dig in the (Indian) earth with a little (Indian) spade. One cannot answer the call of nature only during the monsoon.

Poor Mr. Naipaul. One can only pity his nightmarish year. Apart, perhaps, from his visit to Kashmir, where being settled more or less in a home of his own he gained a period of relative peace. The light, fantastic ambience of Kashmir suits his talent; and no one who has not first stayed in India can understand what an overpowering relief it is to feel cool air round one again. The Kashmir chapter is a delightful one. For the rest of the time, his one overpowering emotion—and one which accounts for nearly all his ferocity—is pity. He can find, though, not one outlet for this, and he reacts to this in a typically Western way, with aggressive practicality and furious irony. Ah, how we laugh at the pull of the East. Those English spinsters running round after Gandhiji; the American Laraine, littering her speech with inaccurate Hindi. But how strong it is, its strength lying in the very nausea of our reaction. The frightful pity, the powerlessness, the guilt. We cry in our hearts: This cannot be borne. What right have I to survive, in clean comfort and speculative freedom and parliamentary democracy. Mr. Naipaul's pepperiness springs from his suffering. It is indeed outrageous that we

should survive. We despise ourselves for doing so; then we look round to see who else is outrageously surviving alongside. And there are plenty. The elegant rich, the boxwallahs with their empty gentlemanliness; the sadhus; the scoundrelly shopkeepers.

Now this, again, is true enough. Hardly a dozen among the well-off, well-educated Bombay people I knew cared enough about the community to do anything serious about it. Many Indians are of course as gross and grabbing as many non-Indians. But Mr. Naipaul despises the manner of their acceptance as much as their acceptance itself, without noting the essential fact that imperturbability is laid on them as a virtue as much as a duty. 'Please tackle this problem with efficient serenity' I was once enjoined. But no. Indians are dirty and they don't *do* anything. I cannot help comparing Mr. Naipaul with Lady Catherine de Bourgh, who would sally forth into her village and scold the inhabitants into harmony and plenty. No doubt he would commend her activity as being forceful, if not useful; whereas the poor Indians positively deserve subjection for accepting their poverty, and the rich for accepting the poor. They will not connect, he complains. To them the two sides of the coin merge in the coin's endless spinning. The dance of Shiva Nataraj ceaselessly bringing creation out of destruction. But to him, the destruction has ceased to be fruitful and is mere decay. 'Shiva has ceased to dance'. I am glad I cannot be so sure. I too cannot connect; or rather cannot, as he does, cancel things in this desirable way, cancelling the beauty of brassware and silk because of the thin wrists that hold them up. The rich absurd creative muddle that E. M. Forster saw in India he can only see through. He can connect: one and one make No. Because others do not reach the same answer, he condemns them as blindly deceitful. 'It is well that Indians are unable to look at their country directly, for the distress they would see would drive

them mad.' Indians and British alike fled from the unendurable: Indians behind the defences of caste; British into an imperial narcissism. The British played at being themselves, he asserts, to escape from the terrifying responsibility and helplessness of their position here. He scans the fiction of the imperial epoch and finds the creation of the English mask, which, when it was unkindly snatched away, left the Calcutta boxwallahs gesticulating away behind it. This attack on Victorian nationalism again sounds a trifle dated. After all, the English gentleman doesn't seem, alas, to have altered too radically yet; and it is unfair to condemn a community simply for not changing its fashion of speech as glibly as we can here. And if it is true that the Indians and the British tried in what now appears anti-social ways to escape the comfortless fading of individuality before India's surpluses of space and time, why, that is exactly what Mr. Naipaul himself does. He withdraws, he escapes. The West claims him. The spirituality of India is a sham, and he takes flight back to where progress really works, and people really care.

I hope he is as clear about that too. Again, I couldn't be. When Mr. Naipaul rebukes Indians for lacking the bourgeois business virtues, he might, I feel, also have pointed out the rewards of those virtues now being reaped over in the West. The energetic progressive bourgeoisie in their tight little get-rich-fastnesses. But it was after all unnecessary. No picture of the Indian scene could be as wholly forbidding as English society as seen by Mr. Naipaul in *Mr Stone & The Knights Companion*. If that is where our detachment and critical realism get us we had better stop teaching the underdeveloped how to start getting developed, and finance research instead in teaching ourselves how to stop. I don't want to say that the Indians are happy as they are, malnourished or not; the hatchets would be, quite rightly, brought out to put me right. But until we solve the dilemma, that highly-developed

society produces nervous tension and grudging personal relationship, we shouldn't talk as if Nanny knew best. Mr. Naipaul knows this, but won't say so. The most touching of his vignettes concerns Ramnath, happy and secure in his ill-paid job until forced into rational work-methods by the foreign-retained Malhotra, who overflows with the reforming zeal Mr. Naipaul admires. (Whatever the trials of rich and poor, there is certainly a special hell reserved for the middle classes, from whom reform will come.) Malhotra destroys Ramnath's self-respect, and this against his chief's views who Mr. Naipaul plainly sympathises with, as he notes that in India it is necessary to take into consideration the feelings of others. This is one of the few anecdotes where the moral is not put down in black. Many show a journalistic finger-and-thumb technique rather than the novelist's complex vision. The matrimonial advertisements again; but no word on marriage. Poor Sri Aurobindo, of course; but no mention of the significance in Hinduism of the mother goddess. Then, South Indians in the dining-car. Listen to this:

'The South Indians were beginning to unwind; they were lapping up their liquidised foods. Food was a pleasure to their hands. Chewing, sighing with pleasure, they squelched curds and rice between their fingers. They squelched and squelched; then, in one swift circular action, as though they wished to take their food by surprise, they gathered some of the mixture into a ball, brought their dripping palms close to their mouths and—flick!—rice and curds were shot inside; and the squelching, chattering and sighing began again.

This is delicious. That I must honour as truly witty and more than witty: charming, full of insight. But, one instantly recognises, it is not written from sympathy but from a distaste so instinctive as to be almost comic; the satire, as it were, rebounding on to the writer as some of

Lawrence's descriptions of Mexican habits did on him.

The Indians in *An Area of Darkness* are shredded, and not many of the shreds are used. They are delightful, touching, exasperating grotesques. There is a deliberate withholding of love here — I cannot otherwise describe it — which has nothing to do with Mr. Naipaul's caressing touch. One feels the same thing in his novels. One touch of nature makes the whole world kin but that is not what Mr. Naipaul wants. He stands out against surrender; and so his penetration and pity never kindle to life and warmth. And without it, this is repetitious. Others have written on India like this, perhaps less pleasingly. Oddly enough, when he complains that travel writing deteriorated during the nineteenth century because of writers 'reporting' not on themselves, but on their 'Englishness' he might be commenting on himself. For all the Forsteresqueness of passages like that on Indian railways, Mr. Naipaul contrives to write as though Forster had never existed: rather a remarkable feat; certainly honest — but creditable?

Mr. Naipaul knows himself for a rootless urban intellectual. Urban seems to me the key-word there. He writes of the Raj as though it consisted solely of I.C.S. officers working at provincial level. He writes of India as though it consisted of city, temple, mosque, railway station, hotel. Naturally enough, as for the tourist it largely does, but, though he precisely captures Indian habits and speech and says discerning things about Indian architecture, there is a dimension missing which — certainly for me, and I think for many of the English — is all-important, making the whole difference between finding the country hateful or not. Englishmen did not only build and live in clubs and absurd Victorian monuments. They also knew the country — walked in it, rode in it, explored it and hunted in it. They smelt it, and tracked its birds and flowers and folksongs. Mr. Naipaul speaks of Simla as though a group of self-adoring Kiplings put it up in a

day as a sort of Himalayan Eastbourne. Does he not realise that, before you can build on any range of hills, you have to know and love them? Who discovered the Ajanta caves, and how? Was it out of Imperial pride that the sahibs took to living on the *doongas* of Kashmir?

Or was this perhaps balanced by an instinctive and enduring fondness, not only for the willows and kingfishers of Kashmir, but perhaps more for the dripping green of the monsoon hills, or the bare plain, where in the evening there are peaceful long shadows, a smell of hay and cows, a quiet *Ram Ram* from a passing farmer to remind one of the indestructable dignity and beauty of the country.

JILL HUGH-JONES

New Fashions in Vice

PRIVATE CONSCIENCE, PUBLIC MORALITY
by Brian Inglis (*Andre Deutsch*, 208 pp. 25s.)

NO country's life moves in fixed stages with sharp dividing lines, but certain events do provide convenient landmarks for change. Thus for Britain, 1963 is a convenient year of marked change. It was the year of Christine Keeler and Profumo, Ward and Rachman, and perhaps most shattering though least publicised of all — the Sheffield police, for it had never been thought possible that the police could be corrupt. These were 'symptoms of something wrong with the constitution of society, if not the Constitution itself.' It was after that eventful year that the British felt they could no longer say, 'Such things don't happen here, only in foreign places.'

Brian Inglis surveys the British social scene and finds it not very good. Vice and crime — and a multitude of ills are covered by these terms — have increased. But most important of all has been the marked change in the attitudes of the people towards these 'crimes.' No longer is it possible to sum up the attitude of the ordinary person by saying that he is 'against sin.' What, he would ask, is sin? And perhaps

not wait for an answer. Inglis points to the transformation in standards of moral behaviour and asks to what extent the conventional values are valid or relevant to the modern age. Since most individual consciences are untouched by the 'fiddling,' petty infringements and sexual licence, the conventional values must be inappropriate to the institutions and climate of life as they are nowadays.

Every generation is different from the previous one, and in the eyes of the previous one, a good deal worse. Change is inherent in society, but it is true that the rate of change has become so rapid that it is difficult for any social framework to remain suitable for long. It has become a commonplace to say that neither the human mind nor society can keep up with the rapid changes in the environment in which man lives.

Though Inglis writes of England and documents his survey from that country, what he says has widespread application. The winds of social change have blown all round the world, and the preoccupations of the sociologist in England have much in common with those of sociologists in, for instance, Japan and the Soviet Union. Though Inglis writes of problems particular to the affluent societies of the West, one has to admit that in some respects the unchanging East does not lag so far behind the industrial societies: rather the opposite.

The book first presents the picture, documenting the increase in crime of various sorts. Particularly significant is the growth in the practice of 'fiddling'—whether it is expense accounts or tax returns or something else—and the general attitude to it. It is pointed out that 'both as a word and as a concept, fiddling is something new in conventional English.' This, for one thing, is surely relevant to India, though fiddling seems a rather small word for the scale on which we operate. Unfortunately, reading Inglis will bring much consolation to us, as we will be able to say, 'If even in England they fiddle

their tax returns, then we're not so bad after all.'

Talking of doping, fixed fights and bribery in professionalised sport, Inglis says 'All the indications... are that they are on the increase; particularly doping and bribery. And certainly the *attitude* to what used to be regarded as malpractices has changed; they are now often regarded as inevitable, even by the officials who are supposed to prevent them.' What we have to face, he says, is 'a new attitude bred by the affluent society.' Looking at the countries of Asia and Africa, it seems not very different from the attitude bred by the poor society.

Much of the change towards sexual freedom comes, he says because teenagers—and housewives—have more opportunity to live a life of their own. That is why there is so much talk of a new morality and that is why even bishops and quakers can talk about pre-marital sex in a way that would have been unimaginable even a few years ago.

Inglis believes that the conventional values have been formulated and imposed by the *umclass*, (is it possible to write a book nowadays without inventing a word or two?) his word for the upper-middle class that is educated at a public school plus Oxbridge. The values inculcated by these men and their system become the values of the whole society. But in the modern world there is no longer any place for such men. 'The old style "leader of men" which the public schools had turned out still had its value in the Second World War, though less than in the first; but since the war, owing the decline of Britain as a world power, he has become irrelevant... *Umclass* training is now an actual handicap...'

For an outsider it is difficult to believe that public school education is as anachronistic as Inglis says. Indeed, his description reads a little like a caricature. If it is a correct picture, then one must agree that *umclass* training has failed to adapt and is an actual handicap. He gives one amusing

example. He cites Peter Ustinov as saying that one of his school reports ran, 'He shows great originality which must be curbed at all cost.'

The interest for us in this book is, of course, not so much in what the author says about Britain but in finding that so much is applicable to India. In fact more than applicable. Everyone in India is busy deploring the decline, if not demise, of public morality. Perhaps India is worse off than others because a closely knit caste-conscious society inevitably develops standards for behaviour outside the group which are different from those for the 'insiders'. The government or public authority is always on the outside.

How does one combat this tendency? Is there a way of reversing the trend, or of developing new values which then will hold and apply? And here is what I think is the kernel of the book: 'The prevailing moral standards of a community...,' writes Inglis, 'are not formed by a kind of general will, making for goodness' (or, he might add, by any number of vigilance committees and inquiries) '—or badness as the case may be—among its members. They are formed largely by the nature of the institutions which exercise power, and of the people who run them; and if the institutions and the people who run them appear remote and self-seeking, the community will inevitably become irresponsible.'

AAMIR ALI

Divided Comrades

PEKING AND MOSCOW by Klaus Mehnert,
(Putnam's Sons, 522 pp. \$6.95)

PROFESSOR Klaus Mehnert has special competence for writing on the Sino-Soviet dispute. He has spent five years in Russia as a journalist and taught for five years in China. He is fluent in both Russian and Chinese and has had opportunities of observing at close quarters men and events in the communist world

without being involved in them. At the same time he has the scholar's advantage of having the critical apparatus indispensable for deciphering and interpreting the evidence that in such cases is certain to mislead the amateur or the half-learned.

The book is divided into four parts: *Peoples, Revolutionaries, Neighbours and Partners and Rivals*. The first part gives an analysis of the national characters of the Russian and Chinese peoples around the central theme that whereas Russia is essentially a Western country with a 'guilt culture', China has what the author calls a 'shame culture'. This important distinction is used to explain certain aspects of communism in the two countries and to foresee the broad features of its future development. Granting that any generalization about large human groups is always fraught with the danger of being woefully wrong, it must be conceded that Professor Mehnert seems to have emphasized here a vital element in the Sino-Soviet rift.

Mehnert asserts that 'the term "Asiatic" applied to Russia... is used by people who have no personal knowledge of either Russia or Asia.' According to him, 'communism came to Russia as the legitimate offspring of Western intellectual and social history.' It should be added that unlike 'West', 'Asia' is not a uniform concept standing for something common to the variety of nations from the Turks to the Indonesians, including the Indians and the Chinese. A consequence of this polymorphous character of the concept of Asia is that Chinese communism has to be understood essentially as *Chinese*, not Asian, and as communism. Failure to bear this fact in mind has sometimes resulted in a grievous misunderstanding of its nature on the part of Western commentators and Indian statesmen.

The next two parts of the book deal with the earlier history of the two communist revolutions and bring the record upto 1956, when the first cracks in the communist monolith became dimly visible on

'the second death of Stalin.' The fourth part traces the widening of the rift till early 1963 and ends with a chapter on *Prospects and Conclusions*.

According to Mehnert, the dispute between Russia and China is both ideological and power-political. This does not, of course, mean that ideology is unrelated to the national interests of the contenders. Whether it is the hypothesis of co-existence *versus* that of the inevitability of war, or the inevitability of an intermediate socialist stage before reaching communism as against the possibility of a short cut to communism through the instrumentality of People's Communes, ideology is inextricably mixed up with the politics of power. As a matter of fact, after the death of Lenin the role of ideology has generally been that of an instrument of power, and it is in the wielding of this as of other instruments of power that the differences between the national cultures of Russia and China become highly relevant. Professor Mehnert's conclusion is that the Chinese tradition predisposes the Chinese masses to an acceptance of the communist regime better than that of Russia. Recent history, even after allowing for the differences in the stage of economic development and political recognition achieved by the two countries, would suggest that Mehnert is right here.

Another conclusion drawn by Mehnert from his analysis is that 'the further development of the *Chinese revolution*, regardless of whether it be fast or slow, will continue to affect relations between Peking and Moscow' (author's italics). This was written before the dethronement of Khrushchev and it would be interesting to know what Professor Mehnert thinks now. What has happened since October 14 would indicate that the conclusion would stand with slight modifications made necessary by the disappearance of the personal factor from the dispute. The policy that the West adopts towards the communist world(s) will now be of greater relevance. Professor Mehnert sug-

gests that appeasement of Russia— or of China—would 'act as an additional incentive' to the beneficiary to break with the other, rival communist power only if it 'had written off the common goal of world communism and was prepared to share the world with the "monopoly capitalists" of the West rather than with the communist rival.' There is no evidence as yet to justify such an assumption. Wisdom for the West would therefore lie in 'the continuous manifestation' of her own strength. President Kennedy adopted this policy despite all its attendant risks and established its validity beyond doubt. It is a pity that Indians who consider themselves experts on China have failed to draw the necessary moral for India.

The blurb of the book describes it as 'a great International bestseller' and its author as 'the one man able to penetrate the past, present and future' of the Russo-Chinese relationship. The book really does not deserve such cheap publicity. One wishes that instead it carried more prominently Professor Hugh Seton-Watson's sober assessment of it in *Encounter*: 'It is a book for the intelligent general reader as well as the specialist.'

A. B. SHAH

Still British?

REQUIEM FOR EMPIRE by Maurice and Taya Zinkin. (Chatto and Windus, 184 pp. 21s.)

THE Zinkins who have individually written on many aspects of Indian life, make together a formidable team—Maurice with his extraordinary ability to simplify things, Taya with her inquisitive mind and her insatiable interest in persons. The point of view they develop in 'Britain and Indian' is attractive, not dissimilar to that of political students who regard Britain and the U.S.A. as branches of the same culture and civilisation. The Zinkins urge that there is an identity of thinking between the British and Indians which is

clearly visible despite all the pre- and post-Independence tensions, that Indian political institutions have many distinctively British traits, and that neither Briton nor Indian is as comfortable with the rest of the world as either is with the other. To quote: 'The Indian and the British modes of looking at power, of running politics, of harnessing their intellectuals, of containing conflict and ensuring that everyone's point of view is considered are very like each other. They are not nearly so like most other people's.'

Despite this optimism, however, the book argues that Britain will sooner or later link up with Western Europe and that India will look increasingly to the U.S.A. The result of these ties reinforcing presumably the old one between Britain and the U.S.A. is expected to be to increase the kind of influence one associates—in a favourable sense, of course—with Britain. As it has been expressed before, the main characteristic is the practical as against the theoretical approach, the interest in the concrete rather than the abstract, and a dislike of extremes. Possibly to express confidence in a particular line of development in future is to ensure to some extent that it will take place. But the differences postulated by the Zinkins between Britons and Indians, on the one hand, and the rest, on the other, should be, if they are valid at all, sufficiently influential to make the compulsive ties of common interest, proximity and similar considerations uncomfortable and even oppressive. The Zinkins have let their enthusiasm run away with them. The other trouble with them is their failure to take note of the rest of the world.

S. NATARAJAN

Exotica

MODERN AFRICAN STORIES. Edited by Ellis Ayitey and Ezekiel Mphahlele (Faber & Faber 227 pp. 18s.)

THE re-discovery of Africa is the grand adventure of our decade. Politics,

economics, sociology, anthropology, aesthetics, plain humanity—demands are made on our sympathies. In such a climate, books on and by, rather than for, Africa, proliferate. Cashing in on this temper, comes this compilation of 'Modern African Stories'.

As an illustration of how African writers in different parts of the continent use the English language, the book has a modest value. To claim for it distinction, other than of this purely sociological kind, as does the preface, is quite another matter. The use of pidgin English or the delineation of tribal attitudes alone cannot redeem writing which is otherwise sentimental, or an experience which is trite. Interest in the unfamiliar is a weak crutch to lean upon.

This collection of stories quickens speculation about the nature of writing in English by non-English writers, and comparisons with Indo-Anglian writing obtrude. To interpret the African experience is a valid objective. To utilise it mainly for its Africanness is a dead end.

The same problem faces Indians who choose to write in English. Gone are the days when delight lay in daffodils in the springtime. But the odour of the jasmine and the betelnut persists. The temptation to utilise the background, whether of topography or social attitudes, seems difficult to resist. A lot of Indian writing in English tends towards a documentation of—heavily-stressed—Indian experience. The surface splendours often prove sufficient, particularly as the market for approval is abroad.

It seems to me that we should learn to use the exotica of a foreign country—ours for non-Indians—less flamboyantly. The experience should move—be it in London, Lagos or Bombay. Many factors may account for this tendency in Indian (and African) writing in English. A sense of nationalism so delicately balanced on inferiority, demands that the richness of one's own world be recognised. Appreciation, whether in terms of depth or gain,

tends to be expected from non-indigenous quarters. Always, the panoply of the East, whether colourful, quaint or anti-progressive, proves journalistic grist.

Between journalism and the writing of fiction lies a gap. Politics, the mores of tribal society, the white man: an awareness of these themes may be a common concern in an educated African. From a less myopic point of view, it is the interpretation and exploration of such themes which count. It is at this level of meaningfulness that most of the stories in this collection fail.

To cite a common preoccupation: the attitude towards the village where tribal rhythms of life prevail. In a story such as Kwabena Annan's *Ding Dong Bell*, the village is presented through an arch humour which sees in the chief, the typical patriarch, the villagers as quaint, and the English official as the stock figure of the white man who never understands and so becomes the villain-fool. At this level of characterisation, the story becomes yet another anecdote of the proverbial resourcefulness of villagers.

Through realistic detail, the village scene emerges, but the backward looking perspective retains a rose-coloured tinge. So, in *A Meeting in the Dark*, James Ngugi romanticises the guilt felt by a Christian boy for his illicit love-affair with a tribal girl. But the characters retain their caricature definition—the Mission-educated African boy, the rustic beauty, the stern God-fearing father, the passive protective mother. The forest noises come alive, but not the particular experience of John.

Similarly, in *Cut me a Drink*, Christina Aidoo seems more interested in the method of exposition, rather than in what is being said. The story is a first person narrative of a young Ghana village boy, flavoured with colloquialisms, picturesque idioms and all the apparatus of immediate speech. The story itself recedes into outline—the old familiar tale of village girl turned city prostitute. The emphasis, most of the time,

is on detail, customs, speech-patterns. The stories themselves become anecdote, or have heavily-tailored O. Henry-type endings.

Humour is always tricky to handle. It can also be derivative. Casey Motsisi's *On the Beat* sounds like up-dated Damon Runyonese—junior league. The two Ghanian essays at humour: one of a self-consciously 'this is life' vintage; the other by Ellis Komey (one of the editors of the book) the typical topical political cold war vignette.

There are the exceptions. One is grateful for them, particularly in a book where such various levels of indifferent writing meet. More than ever, they emphasise the meaninglessness of such anthologies lumping together stories on the basis of a label. Among them, the two short Nigerian stories, one by Nken Nwanko, the other by the poet Gabriel Okara. Here, the use of pidgin English explores new possibilities of humour; more, it becomes a comment on mentality, adds tenderness.

Then there is Chinua Achebe's *Death of a Boy*. This is an episode from his first novel, *Things Fall Apart*. Again, the theme of tribal life, but here all similarity ends between this and the rest of the 'tribal' stories. Indirectly, he provides an object lesson: how to utilise Africanness in writing. In this extract, as in his novel, Achebe documents the tribal past of African society, tracing its downfall when confronted with the white man. The death of the boy is a comment on tribal law, and Okonkwo sees helplessly its strength and its futility. Behind the simplicity of his tone, lies control. Behind the pictorial details, the anthropological encounter.

Abioseh Nicol in *The Judge's Son* treats of Africa as do none of the other writers in this book. His central concern is with the boy of the title and his relationship with his parents. It is not the locale, but the loneliness of the boy which dominates. Unobtrusively, the African scene is established. Three other writers rather than the actual stories deserve mention—

coincidentally all South Africans. From Alex La Guma's understated awareness, James Matthew's biblically-stark tragedy, and snatches of Ezekiel Mphahlele's ebullient manner, the daily horror of life in South Africa emerges.

To be an African writer, and not trade on it. Ultimately, that is the situation. Elsewhere, writing of the relationship between the African novelist and his African readers, Chinua Achebe sees in

him a teacher—'to help my society regain belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-abasement'—a worthy objective. Yes, education is always a necessity. But can it not be a confining role for a novelist and writer of stories? Self-consciousness tends to creep in. That, more than varying concepts of education, becomes the cardinal flaw. This book is a salutary warning.

NITA PILLAI

OUR REVIEWERS

DAVID McCUTCHION teaches comparative languages at Jadavpur University, Calcutta.

J. N. CHUBB is a Professor of Philosophy at Elphinstone College, Bombay.

JILL HUGH-JONES has reviewed books for the *Spectator*, *Economist* and other papers. She lives in London.

AAMIR ALI works for the International Institute of Labour Studies, Geneva.

A. B. SHAH is general Secretary of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom. He is also an editor of the *Radical Humanist* and a keen student of politics.

S. NATARAJAN is a journalist and free-lance writer. He now works for the Council for Economic Education, Bombay.

NITA PILLAI teaches English at Wilson College, Bombay.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sir,

I am thankful to Mr. K. C. Lalwani for having bestowed some thought over my 'Approach to history'. If I may be permitted to say so, there is some confusion. European is no race, and equating it with Semitic, Dravidian or Aryan is not correct. Secondly, historical construction and methodology are not one and the same thing; they are two distinct entities. Methodology is a means to the end of historical construction, and the same methodology can give different constructions. Thirdly, the inhibited traditionalism comes in the way of correlating the archaeological and literary evidence in an analytical and synchronistic manner.

I propose to discuss the problems and positions of our history at some later date. For the present I would add that in the main there are three theories of cosmic evolution and historical growth, as known to the Indians, and those concepts have affected our vision of historical construction to a very large extent. The Brahmanic puranic tradition has a descending and dismal view of things: first we have the Satya-(or Krita) yuga (the best period), then Treta, then Dwapara and then Kali-yuga (the black period) — each succeeding period worse than the former in the performance of *dharma* as codified by Manu. The Jain tradition considers the universe to be without beginning or end, and explains it by means of the inter-play of two cycles of time, each divided into six periods. The Utsarpini cycle is succeeded by the Avasarpini cycle and then the latter by the former and so on. The Utsarpini is the ascending cycle and it begins with a period of gross misery and ends in a period of all happiness; the Avasarpini is the descending cycle, it begins with a period of all happiness and ends in a period of gross misery. The Buddhist tradition does not bother about cosmic evolution and has much the same view of historical growth as Christianity or Islam, with the founder as the principal historical landmark.

Faith and tradition have got so mixed up in our country that it becomes very difficult to be

detached. The emphasis on stagnation is mythical and unrealistic, and has its seed in the puranic traditionalism.

It may also be added that the task before us is to construct or reconstruct the history of India and the Indians, and not of merely Dravidian or Aryan society.

I also wish to add that Prof. M. P. Rege's 'Some reflections on the Indian philosophical tradition' is a very interesting piece and his conclusions are by and large quite acceptable. But I could not find any reason for his ignoring the Jain and the materialist philosophies. Perhaps the Jain logicians might have given him some new thoughts.

I also very much miss the concluding part of Mr. A. S. Ayyub's interesting reflections on 'Jawaharlal Nehru on Religion! I hope, he will conclude it shortly.

Dated Lucknow
January 19, 1965.

Yours sincerely,
Shashi Kant

Dear Sir,

Manohar Malgaonkar's *The Princes* may not be first rate literature (it is certainly not his best novel), but Jill Hugh-Jones' comments on it (Quest 44) do not represent first rate reviewing either. A reviewer's disapproval of a book must be objectively stated. Naive apologies like 'fortunately my tender post-colonial conscience is at work, saying that if one floods a country with one's second rate and vulgar culture one has precious little right to complain of the result' are uncalled for. Also one whole paragraph about the patronising attitude of British reviewers towards Indian novels serves no relevant purpose. She is reviewing an Indian novel for an Indian journal, not writing an essay on Indo-British relations, literary or otherwise.

In a magazine of the quality of QUEST one expects a little more from a reviewer than 'I liked the breakfast scene,' 'I like his tiger shoots,' and 'I do believe in them (the Bils).' One keeps

wondering why 'the Maharaja is *almost* first rate' and 'the forlorn Maharani is remarkably poignant.' According to the reviewer Malgaonkar's saddest failure is that the narrator Abhayraj is 'a feeble young man.' I fail to see the point. Does she demand that all heroes must be brave and noble and in the Homeric tradition? My own impression on reading the novel was that Abhayraj's weakness is the whole strength of the book. There is a tragic inevitability in the fact that in spite of all his democratic liberalism he turns out to be an image of his feudal father, only a weaker one. It is true that 'We do not see.... Abhayraj suiting his actions to his words,' but why is that important?

Nowhere does the reviewer substantiate her statement that the book is 'a very good popular novel, but of course it is not literature,' and though she exhorts readers to 'understand, analyse, and loudly enunciate the difference,' all that she succeeds in doing is in being loud. In conclusion, I would like to know if she has any other credentials for writing this review than 'has lived in India and reviewed books for several papers in Bombay'?

Meenakshi Mukherjee

Jill Hugh-Jones writes:

I am sorry to have disappointed Meenakshi Mukherjee by my review of *The Princes*, though I am not sure such heavy artillery is merited. To deal with some of her complaints.

1. Generally, when reviewing, I do not think

so much of the quality of the magazine as of the quality of the book under review.

2. I imagine all reviewers would prefer to illustrate their remarks with frequent references to the text, if it were not that evil editors limit their space. I do not think, by being more polysyllabic, I could have said much more about the breakfast scene or the tiger-shoot: they were fun.

3. I do not agree that 'reviewing an Indian novel for an Indian journal' should exclude all consideration of outside opinion. Such Swadeshi criticism would be quite alien to QUEST and remarkably hard to provide, I should imagine.

4. I think Miss Mukherjee strangely overestimates the novel if she reads into it anything like tragic inevitability; just as she strangely misreads my remark as an 'apology'. I found fault not with the hero for not being Homeric, but with the author for making him out to be a far finer fellow than our elementary good sense will let us believe.

5. I tried to relate this — but I am afraid I failed—to the general proposition that there exist in India — as elsewhere — fine responses whose only outlet is through a debased language — and I don't mean the decline-of-English-language-in-our-schools-and-universities.

6. As for my credentials — dear me, they are a shabby lot indeed now I come to thumb them over. I am an Oxford M. A. and I have reviewed for such papers as *The Spectator*, and *The Economist* among others, but except to say that I did not level a pistol at the editor's heart, I have no other excuse for myself.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

NIRAD C. CHAUDHURI is the widely known author of *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* and *A Passage to England*. The first volume of his comprehensive new book entitled *De Rerum Indicarum Natura* will be shortly published by Chatto and Windus.

NISSIM EZEKIEL is professor of English literature at Mithibai College, Bombay. He is Associate Editor of the books monthly, *Imprint* and Art Critic of *The Times of India*.

NARSING BAHADUR SINHA occupied the post of General Manager in a large industrial unit in Delhi for nearly 15 years; before that he served as Officer Commanding of a Labour battalion during World War II. He is a lawyer by profession.

G. S. P. MISRA is engaged in research work on Buddhism in the Dept. of History and Indian Culture, University of Rajasthan.

KRISHAN KUMAR has published short stories in various Indian periodicals including *Quest*.

OM PRAKASH SHARMA is lecturer in English at Govt. College, Ajmer.

HOANG VAN CHI joined the Viet Minh resistance against the French, but his opposition to Ho Chi Minh's Communist rule led him to escape from North Vietnam in 1955. Author of *From Colonialism to Communism: A Case History of North Vietnam* (Praeger and Pall Mall Press 1964).

ASHIN DAS GUPTA is professor of History at Presidency College, Calcutta.

RAJ KRISHNA and **PUNYA SLOKA RAY** were introduced in recent issues of *Quest*.

CEDOMIR MINDEROVIC, Director of the National Library in Belgrade and Chairman of the Society of Serbian Writers, was Secretary-General of the Association of Yugoslav Writers for a number of years. He has published many volumes of poetry and one of short stories.

JOAN MAS'S poetry has been published extensively in Australian magazines, including such well-known quarterlies as *Twentieth Century* and *Meanjin*.

MARY ANN DASGUPTA hails from the United States and is doing her M. A. in Calcutta.

AMARESH DATTA is Reader in English literature at Gauhati University. His poetry is known to our readers.

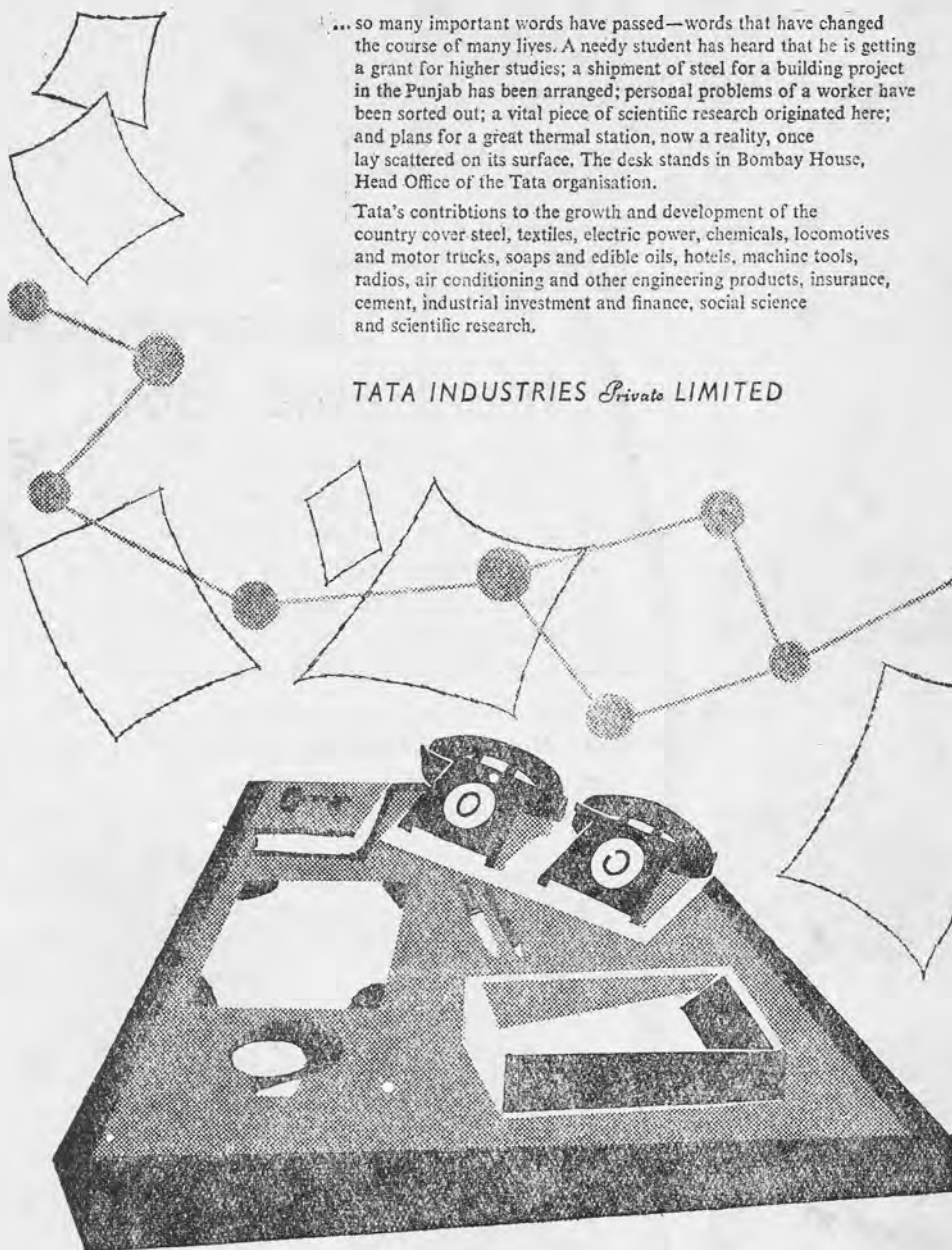
ABRAHAM ERALEY teaches History at Madras Christian College, Tambaram.

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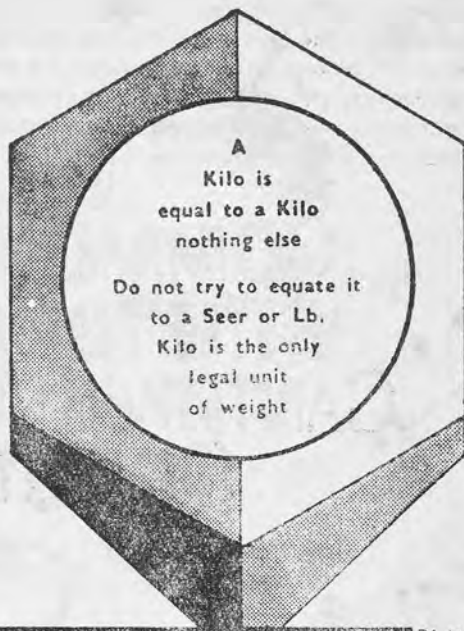
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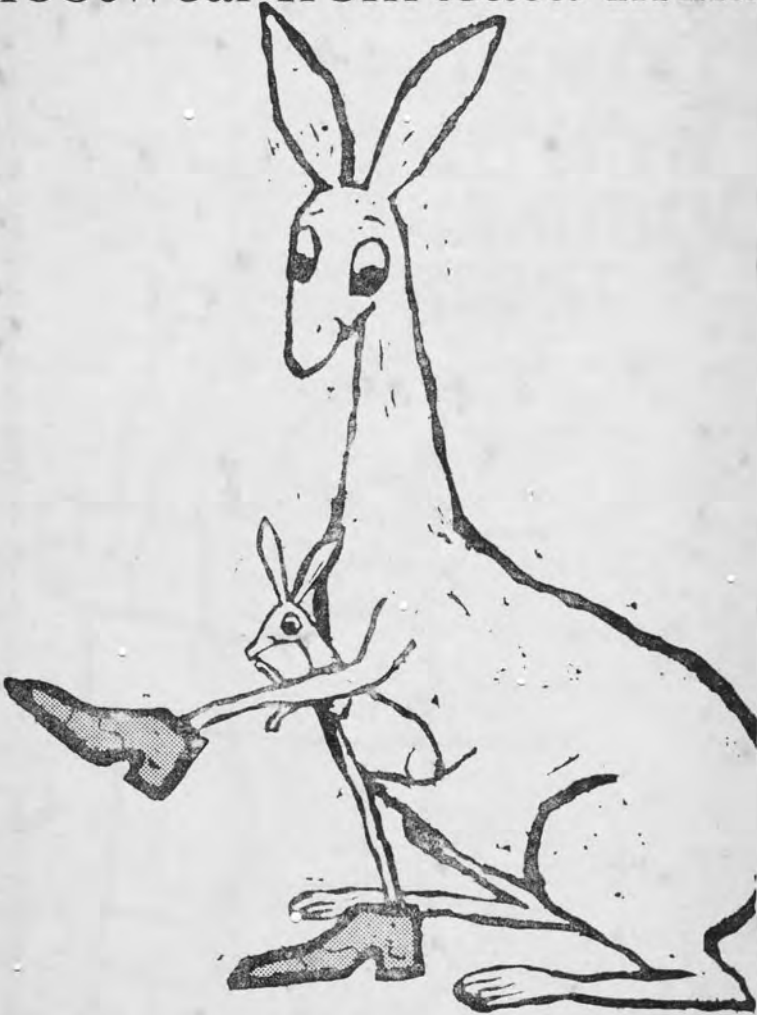
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