

# EDUDOC SERVICES: BOOK REVIEWS



## Book Reviews

March - 2019



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## INTRODUCTION

**Book Reviews** aims to identify the books published recently on all the subjects relevant to NCERT.

**Book Reviews** have been selected from Learned Periodicals & Newspapers received in LDD during the month of **March, 2019**.

**Book Reviews** are arranged under broad Subject Headings. Details about the Author, Title, Place of Publication, Name of Publisher, Year, Pages, Price, ISBN followed by analytical review with exact reference to periodicals in which reviewed appeared. It will be our endeavour to bring out this Book Selection Reference Tool.

**Book Reviews** will be useful to our faculty members in selecting / recommending relevant books for our library and also to keep abreast of latest publications in their specialization.

We eagerly await to receive your views and comments.

**Chairperson, LDD**

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momentous 2014 elections by analysing issues like development, terrorism, charisma, media, nationalism, rumour, truth, corruption, religion, vote-bank and caste. It puts forth an argument to understand electoral democracy as an algebra of warfare-welfare.

**Caste as Social Capital: The Complex Place of Caste in Indian Society**

R. Vaidyanathan  
Westland Books

₹799

The writer points out that businesses tap into caste networks by arranging finance and providing access to a ready work force. He examines the workings of caste through the lens of economics and entrepreneurship.

**Zucked: Waking Up to the Facebook Catastrophe**

Roger McNamee  
HarperCollins India  
₹599

A Facebook shareholder and early mentor of Mark Zuckerberg writes an account of an unmoored business sector inadvertently creating a political and cultural crisis and why the head of one of the world's most powerful companies has failed to face up to the damage that has been created.

**Empty Planet**

Darrell Bricker & John Ibbitson  
Hachette India  
₹599

A journalist and a social researcher argue that the global population will soon decline and immigration will be the key to prospering in this new social and political landscape. To limit the effects of 'enormous disruption' that lies ahead, they say nations must resist growing isolationism.



ARCHITECTURE

Hindu; 24/3/19; Pg-30  
**Life between spaces**



An architect on the jarring inequalities that confront our divided cities

GEETA DOCTOR

On the surface Gautam Bhatia, architect, artist, social historian could be said to have been one of the chosen ones. Not just endowed with a silver spoon, but a silvered sugar bowl, tray and tea-set.

With these he has stirred the landscape of architecture with a barrage of words that have now become a short-hand for all the jarring inequalities that confront our urban lifestyles.

Paradoxes define modern Indian aesthetics. They have only multiplied since the days when Bhatia first defined the hybrid nature of architectural aspirations in the terms he chose for his first book on Punjabi Baroque, or Bania Gothic.

**'Gulfistan, Lootgayens'**

In those distant days we did not talk of memes that could mutate and take on a life of their own.

Taking a hint from Bhatia's own glossary, we can come up with our own. For instance, the rise of 'Gulfistan' in the Gulf money-inspired houses of Kerala; the loss of the village in Gurugonia; the despoiling of Lootgayens bungalows as political prizes to be guarded with annexes for security purposes; the rise of Slumburbia encircling our cities with Dharavi, Asia's largest slum as a prime destination in the Poverty Tourism category.

Bhatia is, however, not the first to describe the gross disparity that defines our divided cities.

In what was the first and most blistering attack on how the obscene disparity between the growing wealth of a small segment of the Indian elite

and the vast majority would certainly lead to violence, the social critic David Selbourne who visited India during the Emergency years had this to say: "In addition, the miseries and strengths of the people arrayed and encamped on the land-mass of India, toiling and wasting in their hundreds of millions – at best, deceived, inert and pauperized, at worst alert and organized – indict and endanger power. As they are and as they stand, their very visibility and ubiquity are a source of danger to minority classes and factions. The constant and latent fear of the awesome power of the people, both inchoate and focused, arouses not only the reflexes of paternalism, contempt and hatred, but also violence. The use of such violence is the reflex of power; and redoubled violence, the reflex of power corrupted and additionally embattled."

**Wealth as mirage**

Add to this the impact of the burgeoning population, the electronic age with its tantalising ability to mythologise the good life, only to make it a mirage to the majority, the rise of a soulless middle class – reading Bhatia will confirm that there is worse to come.

His is not just a cry in the wilderness. It's a stunning indictment of not just the architect who has willingly submitted to the degradation that we see around us, but to the rest of us. We, the consumers, the deal-makers who have colluded with the official apparatus to destroy the

landscape and its finite resources to fuel the insatiable need for power and self-gratification.

A group of 13 architects organised a travelling exhibition entitled 'The Death of Architecture. Circa 2000' last year. As they explained in their brochure, "Through evocative art

works, poetry and prose, the exhibition decodes and amplifies actions some of which are orchestrated, others inconsiderate. The exhibition presents evidence that will allow discussions about our present, and yet at the same time is embedded with clues and signs that can help effect meaningful dialogues about the future."

This is where one has a problem with Bhatia's project. His despair is akin to Jean Paul Sartre's 'Nausea', a rejection of the system that is so acute that there seems no way out of it. Even the choices of images border on



**Stories of Storeys: Art, Architecture and the City**  
Gautam Bhatia  
Yoda Press/  
Sage Select  
₹895

the vapid and the absurd.

There are for instance a couple of montages that show Gandhi as Prince Charles standing next to a simpering Lady Diana, a conductor of a symphony orchestra etc.

When he offers potted histories of famous architects of the past, it's to tell us that Le Corbusier opted to drown himself at the end of a successful career, Frank Lloyd Wright did not smile, Mies van der Rohe was a space cadet with a passion for chairs, Robert Venturi created a bricolage of random choices.

For an artist and a man of his sensibility, Bhatia has allowed Punjabi Baroque to erode his soul. One can only weep for him, not with him.

₹345

• What is the relevance of Gandhi for India and the contemporary world? A professor of philosophy insists that we look to Gandhi in order to move toward a non-violent and sustainable future. Focusing on key themes in Gandhi's thinking, he compels us to rethink our positions today.

**Jawaharlal Nehru**  
Rudrangshu Mukherjee  
Oxford University Press

₹325

• This short primer on Jawaharlal Nehru traces his personal-political journey from being a rich, Westernised young man to a leader of the Indian National Congress. We get a glimpse of Nehru's relationship with Gandhi, his role in the birth of a fledgling nation as well as his contribution as the first prime minister of the country.

**A Quantum Leap in the Wrong Direction?**  
Edited by

Rohit Azad, Srinivasan Ramani & others  
Orient BlackSwan

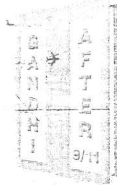
₹495

• This volume compares the promises made during the run-up to the 2014 general elections and the outcomes over the past five years. The writers examine demonetisation and GST, and look at sectors like agriculture, health and education.

**The Human Tide**

Paul Morland  
Hachette India  
₹599

• In 10 chapters, sweeping from Europe to the Americas, China, East and West Asia, North Africa, Morland gives us a panoramic view of the last 200 years in history. He explains how, precipitated by industrial revolution and profound social changes, population became a supreme force for change.



POLITICS

Hindu; 3/3/19; Pg-30

# Looking beyond numbers

Two books on the election process and why Indian voters take it seriously

VARGHESE K. GEORGE

**E**lections have a lot to do with numbers, but they are not only about numbers. These two volumes, timed for the 17th general election of India that already gives us a sense of foreboding for the fractious social milieu in the country, prompt us to reflect and engage with India's democratic process in an intimate and more responsible way. One is edited by S.Y. Quraishi and the other is written by Navin Chawla.

Both were chief election commissioners (CEC) of India, both worked together as election commissioners and both have previous books that showed their remarkable ability of storytelling. They do not disappoint us in the latest offerings.

**Many facets**

Quraishi's edited volume is on a range of election-related topics randomly selected and has some unpredictable authors such as Ratan Tata and Naina Lal Kidwai alongside several well-known election experts like Ornit Shani, Gilles Verniers and Yogendra Yadav.

Two politicians, the late Somnath Chatterjee, and Shashi Tharoor, also offer their unique perspectives. Collectively, these essays give us enticing glimpses of the many facets of Indian elections, including historical, legal and comparative. Milan Vaishnav's essay on confronting the influence of money and Rahul Verma's on the roll of opinion polls and electronic media deal with the challenges to the sanctity of the electoral process.

A particularly outstanding piece in the

collection is by Mukulika Banerjee on 'why does India vote.' Indian voters take the act of voting as sacrosanct and see it as an exercise of their equal status as citizens, her qualitative survey suggests. The act of voting itself is a form of empowerment for them.

Yadav's essay examines how the electorate negotiates its terms with the state through elections, and also some paradoxical features of Indian democracy, where popular aspirations are realised in very modest measure but the popular trust in the system continues.

**Voting patterns**

*Every Vote Counts* is Chawla's account from the CEC's perch, but it is also laced with anecdotes and snippets from history, court judgments and engages with global concerns such as fake news and unregulated propaganda that threaten democracy. While the ECI has over the years worked hard to keep the integrity of

the election process intact, accusations of tampering is as old as the elections themselves. One news report, without proof, said in 1952 the steel ballot boxes could be tampered without removing its seal! Incidentally, the maximum expenditure a candidate was allowed in a Lok Sabha constituency then was ₹7,000. Both Quraishi and Chawla make the point that the ECI was constituted a day before the Republic Day, in 1950 – a fact that underscores the criticality of

free and fair elections in the sustenance and nourishment of a democracy. Chawla tells us about the lone voter in the Gir sanctuary for whom a booth is set up and an election party travels several kilometres, an election team that trekked 45 km up the Himalayas through snow for two days to reach a booth in 2009 in Jammu and Kashmir – all to ensure that the last woman in the periphery has a say in the affairs of this vast country, however imperfect it may be.

A lot of Chawla's recollections are from the 2009 Lok Sabha election when he was CEC, but a more evocative section in the current context

is on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly election of 2008. The author, who otherwise maintains a detached poise as he narrates moments that he is personally involved in, is passionate in his description of how he fought the then CEC N. Gopalaswamy to ensure that elections were held in time in the troubled State. The CEC was opposed to conducting the elections then. As it turns out, Chawla and Quraishi, both commissioners, pushed ahead with the elections amid turmoil. He also recounts in some detail how one of his

predecessors J.M. Lyngdoh walked the extra mile in 2002 to restore the lost credibility and integrity of the election process in the State, which was one reason for Jammu and Kashmir's aggravating alienation from the rest of India and militancy.

In 2008, the ECI built on that to enhance the popular trust in the system. The line between democracy and majoritarianism is breached with violence and impunity these days. These books remind us why every vote must count.



**Every Vote Counts: The Story of India's Elections**

Navin Chawla  
HarperCollins India  
₹699



**The Great March of Democracy: Seven Decades of India's Elections**

Edited by  
S.Y. Quraishi  
Penguin Random House  
₹590

their minds. Of course, there is a coordination problem here. As long as there are practitioners and academics who still speak the old language, we must teach it to our students if we want them to make their way in the world. But, I feel that we are now at a late enough date that these

problems are no longer as severe as they used to be, and introductory courses in macroeconomics can afford to speak the new language from the beginning if they choose to. Despite these reservations, I think the book would serve as a valuable reference for teachers and

students of open-economy macroeconomics. I hope the author will consider a revised second edition to make it even more suitable for classroom use.

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## Theorising Capitalist Transformations through Culture

RAJAN GURUKKAL

An anthology of eight essays, apparently diverse case studies, *Another Economy Is Possible* is a brilliant volume of interconnected expositions, evocatively introduced and exquisitely summarised by Manuel Castells et al. The book is about how people in Europe, from Spain to Greece, United States, Australia, and several other countries lived the crisis of capitalism in 2008 and beyond, by adopting alternative economic practices like cooperatives, barter networks, ethical banking, community currencies, time-sharing banks, new means of payments, etc. Some of these were resorted to as survival strategies, while others resulted from the search for new forms of economic life least vulnerable to the consequences of global financial markets. These depended on alternative values, like the value of life against the value of money, or the value of cooperation against the value of competition.

### Crises

The crises manifest in the form of bankruptcy of financial institutions, a decline of investment, foreclosure of mortgages, the collapse of industries, loss of jobs, cuts in salaries, dislocation of families, huge debt liability of the state, and stemming of all social welfare measures. Social consequences of the crisis of 2008 were devastating for millions who faced a job loss, eviction, shrinking compensation, and substantial cuts in medical, educational, and social benefits. As Thomas Piketty (2014) revealed, the commons

**Another Economy Is Possible: Culture and Economy in a Time of Crisis** edited by Manuel Castells, Sarah Banet-Weiser, Sviatlana Hlebik, Giorgos Kallis, Sarah Pink, Kirsten Seale, Lisa J Servon, Lana Swartz, Angelos Varvarousis, Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press, 2017; pp xii +226, £17 (paperback).

were weltering in abject poverty, while the rich could increase their wealth tremendously. The commons reacted against the reckless financial practices and influenced public policies a bit, but they could hardly do anything to check global capital flows or force governments to regulate capital, to combine growth with equity, and to ensure distributive justice.

Governments, joining hands with financial elites and their world organisations, did everything to restore the economy. What else would governments caught up in global financial traps do, even though people desperately wanted their governments to redistribute wealth, enhance consumption, boost investments, and generate employment? Teased and frustrated by the capricious economy, people turned to their own alternatives and proved that another economy is possible. Alternatives emerged spontaneously when the dominant economic system failed to provide goods, services, and credit in the wake of crises. Resorting to cryptographic virtual currencies like bitcoins and fusing collective entrepreneurial disposition with digital technology, the alternative constituted an economic underworld of exchange that was based on its own norms. Most essays in the volume unveil

aspects of this underworld as accessed through theory, practice, quantitative analysis, and participant observation.

### Economy as Culture

Looking at the whole range of alternative economic practices, the essays in the volume observe in general or in specific terms of feminism or ecology that economy is culture. In fact, this is the central theoretical purport of the volume, as it seeks to expose the cultural foundation of economic practices. It implies that human culture, made up of ways of being, thinking, and doing with interests, values, and passions, determines economic practices.

In the opening essay, "Economy Is Culture," Sarah Banet-Weiser and Castells argue that economic practices are shaped by cultural values and maintain that there are as many economic practices as there are cultures. They maintain that capitalism owes its uniformity or universality to its cultural hegemony, and never to "homo economicus," neoclassical economics' essentialist assumption of human rationality. They disapprove of today's blind acceptance of the economy as the domain of rational choice and quantifiable outcomes. Criticising the practice of equating economic value to monetary value determined by the market in terms of the relationship between supply and demand as means to satisfy needs and desires, they underline the primacy of culture in human decisions. According to them, a researcher should seek an explanatory framework, powerful enough to account for the cultural diversity that guides human behaviour. They think that a multifaceted cultural analysis is indispensable to understand all human practices, including economic practices (production, consumption, and exchange) that are fully embedded in the social fabric of people's lives.

### Alternative Economies

Giorgos Kallis in his essay, "Economics without Growth," reinvents the economy as a political act. Kallis sees economy in diverse practices distributed across capital, labour, employment, voluntary care, ecosystem services, idleness, and pleasure. According to him, crises mark a disjuncture between the economy of finance and the economies of production, reproduction, and ecosystems. This disjuncture is inherent to growth that is inevitable to capitalism. Hence, limits to growth, though inescapable, cannot deter capitalism. Capitalism overexploits workers, care workers and ecosystems by unfurling finance and credit in favour of those who control them. Financial crisis leads to social crisis, which in turn becomes care crisis, and finally, environmental crisis. According to Kallis, what governmental responses like work sharing, basic income scheme, green tax, etc, seek is to reverse the crony capitalist redistributive finance, hoping to create conditions ensuring growth with equity. Kallis traces the seeds of the incipient change to such "alternative economies," which are quite operative at the micro level, but the scale of which is too small to effect systemic change.

Sviatlana Hlebiak argues in her essay, "Analysis of Worldwide Community Economies for Sustainable Local Development," that as the global monetary system goes increasingly unstable due to growth, complimentary currencies capable of assessing environmental resources better, become expedient, helping people and their enterprises during crises. She draws our attention to the revival of the local economy in response to the growing demand for the production and consumption of local goods.

Lana Swartz in her essay, "Blockchain Dreams: Imagining Techno-economic Alternatives after Bitcoin," undertakes a comparative analysis of the features and dynamics of the radical and incorporative blockchain dreams. Swartz maintains that the radical blockchain dreams have foolhardy targets to remake society for the better, while the incorporative blockchain dreams, which contain radical alterity, do not have any such aspiration. According to her, blockchain is an engine of alterity; an opportunity to

imagine a different world and imagine the mechanics of how that different world might be run (p 102).

In her study, "Consumer Financial Services in the us: Why Banks May Not Be the Answer," Lisa J Servon makes an analytical reading of the dysfunction that characterises the industry of consumer financial services and is the consequence of decades-long policy and practice. Hence, it cannot be changed overnight. According to her, "financial inclusion" should be based on alternative but informal practices transcending banks, payday lenders and check cashers. A further avowal is that any regulation of consumer financial services must be accompanied by policy to ensure fair wages and to check the increasingly entrenched income disparity. Servon questions the "banked/unbanked" frame currently in vogue in consumer financial services for its inaccuracy (p 125).

Angelos Varvarousis and Giorgos Kallis in their article, "Commoning against the Crisis," explain why new commons get constituted constantly and how they network and expand. Their central argument is that the network of commons expands maintaining its rhizomatic attributes and facilitates accumulation for the commons by sacrificing the rhizomatic constitution, interactions with the state, and dependence on the market. They further argue that stagnation and perpetual economic crises might be the new norm, and hence, lessons from the past movements and alternative economies cannot be a guide for the future (p 156).

In "Alternative Economic Practices in Barcelona: Surviving the Crisis, Reinventing Life," Manuel Castells and Hlebiak demonstrate that alternative practices of production, consumption, and exchange are not driven by motives of profit and consumerism. A significant development noted by the authors is the transformation of people's consciousness in the wake of the creation and expansion of alternatives. In the last study, "Imagining and Making Alternative Futures: Slow Cities as Sites for Anticipation and Trust," Sarah Pink and Kirsten Seale explain why "slow city" movement can provide only alternatives rather than solutions. Alternatives help people imagine the future as entangled,

using approaches like "slow city" movement or even those as yet unknown as threads, enabling the construction of futures of fairness and sustainability.

### Alternatives to Resistance

Capitalism has so far survived its recessions through fresh organisational strategies of expansion (globalisation—expansion of market, capital, labour, and inputs), organisational transformation (networking—a corporate form of organisation), and institutional reforms (liberalisation, deregulation, and privatisation of companies and markets, particularly of financial markets). Crises result from contradictions internal to the system and radical movements break out when the system fails upsetting social life. Significantly, this volume asks how such movements can surface when the mobilising political parties themselves are like mini state powers clogged in capitalist interests, bureaucracy, and hierarchy. In the case of the capitalist crisis of 2008, as the volume argues, protest movements erupted challenging the instituted value of life measured in monetary terms with an alternative value of life without financial intermediation.

Studies in this volume show people's preference for building resilience rather than resistance in their attempts to alter the power relations of the flawed system of financial capitalism. One or two essays in the book tend towards the entrenched theoretical position that power relations change under the pressure of radical social movements. Nevertheless, the overall thrust of the findings in the volume is on the cultural transformation, political change, and economic reorganisation. It is maintained that new forms of culture are not to be understood as blueprints of new economic policy, but as the outcomes of inherent human ability to define and redefine the conditions of social existence.

### Alternative Theorisation

An alternative theorisation of transformation is put forward in the volume, according to which cultures change and become contrary to the institutionalised order of the hegemonic culture. It then enables modification of social power

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relationships, leading to the prevalence of a new culture. Notwithstanding the lack of a clinching causality for cultural change, the volume generalises that

deeper social transformations depend on the emergence of new ways of perceiving, evaluating, and conceiving the human experience. (p 212)

Showing ambivalence about the theoretical position, it also maintains that

new cultures may eventually lead to new power-relationships, as an outcome of social struggles, and eventually to new institutions enforcing a new kind of economy. (p 213)

Epistemologically, culture-centric causation and generalisation are problematic. Cultural or ideational causality, not essentially a new enunciation, always fails to encounter what unmakes it. Why cultures change and under the pressure of which prime movers, are the questions that are dismissed in the volume. Instead, the changes and forces behind these are assigned to "many reasons." But, what are they? Lisa J Servon calls for significant

changes in the public and private sectors through collective, grass-roots action (p 124). Are such social struggles triggered just as a result of the cultural change? Let us not forget that capitalism has never overcome the survival struggles of people who have nothing to lose. It is only their micro scale that ultimately fails them.

Theoretical generalisation about transformations of capitalism in the light of alternative economic practices is problematic too. Is it not necessary to look at the class character of actors in alternative economic practices, before theorising the transformations based on them? It is not enough to characterise the current version of the capitalist system as the global informational? Studies in the critical theory of technology (Feenberg 1991), the rise of corporate experimentalist institutions of research in science-tech hybrid areas (Perelman 2004; Suarez-Villa 2009), and the phase of corporate capitalist organisation (Suarez-Villa 2012), have led to naming this version as techno

capitalism. It is not just informational, but heavily dependent on science-tech areas of knowledge production, consumption and exchange of patents and intellectual property rights. Such ontological differences apart, the volume under review, distinct for its eminently relevant discussions, commands worldwide readership.

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# Open Economy Macroeconomics Between Tradition and Modernity

JYOTIRMOY BHATTACHARYA

This is a difficult time to be a teacher of macroeconomics. Much of contemporary research in macroeconomics makes use of models in which agents solve dynamic optimisation models under conditions of uncertainty. There exist many excellent monographs and advanced texts teaching the use of these models, but they are accessible only to readers with substantial grounding in mathematical analysis and probability theory. Students entering postgraduate programmes in economics in India often do not have this level of preparedness. As a result, they struggle to make sense of contemporary macroeconomics. Even when they do succeed in deciphering the mathematics, the excessive focus on techniques leads to many of them missing the forest for the trees. As a result, they find the subject dry and tedious to learn. Anticipating this, teachers are tempted to confine themselves to simpler approaches long superseded in the research literature in the hope that they would be able to convey at least some economic understanding to their students.

One way to solve this problem would be to increase the opportunities for students of economics to learn the necessary mathematics at the undergraduate level and then to utilise this training as a prerequisite for admission to postgraduate economics programmes. Another solution would be to remove macroeconomics from the core postgraduate curriculum, making it an elective chosen by students who have adequate training in mathematics. The increasing specialisation in economic research provides a good argument for reducing the postgraduate core, and macroeconomics courses taught after postgraduate-level microeconomics and econometrics can be much richer.

In either case, and even under the present conditions, we need more books

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Macroeconomics and Markets in Developing and Emerging Economies** by Ashima Goyal, *Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2017; pp xix + 374, ₹1,095 (hardback).*

at the advanced undergraduate level which can introduce contemporary thinking in macroeconomics without too many mathematical prerequisites. This would correct the gap that presently exists between the old neoclassical synthesis macroeconomics taught at the undergraduate level and the dynamic models used in research. Students who would then go on to study macroeconomics at the postgraduate level would no longer have to unlearn anything. Instead, they would be able to develop their intuition through multiple iterations through the subject. At the same time, students who would not study macroeconomics any further would also benefit by being equipped with the vocabulary and conceptual apparatus to at least understand the basic issues in contemporary debates.

The book under review takes a big step in this direction. Although the title does not make it clear, it is essentially a text on open-economy macroeconomics and finance, and not on macroeconomics as a whole. With experience gained from Ashima Goyal's teaching at the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR), the book is written in a way that would be accessible to anyone with some undergraduate exposure to economics. For the most part, it uses only graphs and simple algebra to elucidate models. Yet, instead of remaining confined to traditional topics, it introduces students to contemporary themes and issues. At the same time, it aims to make the problems specific to developing and emerging economies an integral part of its discussion of macroeconomic theory.

Unusually for an introductory book, Goyal begins with a serious look at methodology. She argues for "abductive reasoning" in the sense of Pierce, roughly speaking—the practice of choosing hypotheses based on their explanatory power—as an appropriate framework for reasoning in macroeconomics as opposed to pure induction or deduction. In my opinion, the discussion suffers from the fact that Goyal does not explicitly characterise the notion of "explanatory power" to be used in choosing between hypotheses.

### Abductive Reasoning

One can understand the idea of a hypothesis not contradicting facts. But it is the ambition of abductive reasoning to go beyond mere falsificationism. Therefore, it must provide an "explanation" that is not merely non-contradiction and then go on to tell us how to rank alternative explanations. Goyal's discussion does not provide such an account. Neither does she discuss the ways in which one could come up with a universe of hypotheses among which the search for the best explanation would be carried out. Without addressing these two issues, it is very difficult to actually operationalise the idea of abductive reasoning or to judge its effectiveness.

Even if we take these problems to be resolved, abductive reasoning would reach an impasse when faced with multiple contradictory hypotheses of comparable explanatory power, all of which are consistent with the facts. This is a common situation in macroeconomics, given its limited empirical base. Perhaps, this is the reason for the ease with which fashions and fads take over the subject from time to time. Nonetheless, just the introduction of the idea of abductive reasoning is still useful signalling to readers that there exist methodological problems and approaches beyond the simple cookie-cutter version of the "scientific method" that most textbooks present.

After this introductory chapter, Chapters 2 to 9 cover the material traditionally taught in undergraduate courses on open-economy macroeconomics. Here, one finds discussions of balance of payments

accounting, the interest parity conditions, the monetary approach to exchange rates, purchasing power parity and alternative exchange rate regimes. The Mundell-Fleming and Dornbusch overshooting models are also included.

A number of features distinguish Goyal's approach to these traditional topics. First, the presentation of general models is interspersed with discussions of the specific problems of emerging economies and of the Indian economy in particular. These discussions are rich with concrete facts and data, drawing as they do upon Goyal's own extensive research in these areas. Thus, the balance of payments chapter explores the trends in India's balance of payments and compares foreign direct investment (FDI) flows to India and China, while the chapter on exchange market institutions discusses the evolution of these institutions and their regulation in India.

Unlike other introductory books, Goyal does not hesitate to switch from graphical presentations to the use of algebra, where required. For example, algebraic derivations are provided in chapter appendices for noise-trader equilibria and the existence of rational bubbles in exchange rate markets. Despite these clear improvements in presentation compared to other texts, the first half of the book is not fundamentally different from what can be found elsewhere. However, in the second half of the book, Goyal takes up themes closer to contemporary research.

### The Modern

The first of the themes taken up in the second-half of the book is the development of macroeconomic models based on representative agents, intertemporal optimisation and rational expectations or the so-called Dynamic Stochastic General Equilibrium (DSGE) models. In successive chapters, Goyal discusses the flexible price, money-in-the-utility-function two-country model of Obstfeld and Rogoff and then a New Keynesian sticky-price open-economy model. She then uses the latter model to discuss monetary and fiscal policies, and their interactions. While a better appreciation of these models may require that students take a simultaneous or prior course in macroeconomics,

enough details are provided in the book for readers to appreciate the fundamental economics at work. The attention to the specific problems of emerging economies continues here as well, with a section dedicated to adapting the base New Keynesian model to the dualism present in emerging markets by adding a subsistence sector, the members of which do not participate in financial markets.

The theme taken up in the second half of the book is that of foreign exchange and macroeconomic crises. The three generations of crisis models are discussed: the first generation, wherein crises arise from unsustainable macroeconomic policies; the second generation, wherein crises are understood in terms of coordination games with both crisis and non-crisis equilibria; and the third generation, wherein financial intermediation plays a major role. The last is discussed with reference to the East Asian crisis. The book ends with a chapter on the global financial crisis, the policy responses to it and the continuing risks for the global financial system.

### Conclusions

Given its level and content, the book would be most suitable as a text or reference for advanced undergraduate or post-graduate beginners. However, I would hesitate to use it as a primary text for a number of reasons. First, the book is not

as self-contained as a textbook should be. An absolute beginner may have no clue as to what a "Lakatosian defensive heuristic" is or what the "Lucas critique" was all about. This is in part a result of the large extent to which the book draws on the author's research papers. Many sections still carry the imprint of the original journal articles and lack the background and connective material to achieve a smooth flow with the rest of the text. Second, the wide range of topics covered in a span of around 400 pages has led to the discussion of many topics being too telegraphic. Students would be forced to refer to other texts for the details. In certain places, derivations are too brief. No problems or exercises are provided in any of the chapters.

At a more basic level, the book puts itself at a disadvantage by not making a break with the past while trying to introduce contemporary topics. The first half of the book stays within the Keynesian framework, while the second half uses contemporary New Keynesian/DSGE frameworks. Whether we may choose to see these new frameworks either as revolutionary or counter-revolutionary, they undoubtedly represent a fundamental break with the older Keynesian macroeconomics. I think that we do injustice to our students by asking them to carry these mutually contradictory methodological approaches simultaneously in

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their minds. Of course, there is a coordination problem here. As long as there are practitioners and academics who still speak the old language, we must teach it to our students if we want them to make their way in the world. But, I feel that we are now at a late enough date that these

problems are no longer as severe as they used to be, and introductory courses in macroeconomics can afford to speak the new language from the beginning if they choose to. Despite these reservations, I think the book would serve as a valuable reference for teachers and

students of open-economy macroeconomics. I hope the author will consider a revised second edition to make it even more suitable for classroom use.

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## Theorising Capitalist Transformations through Culture

RAJAN GURUKKAL

An anthology of eight essays, apparently diverse case studies, *Another Economy Is Possible* is a brilliant volume of interconnected expositions, evocatively introduced and exquisitely summarised by Manuel Castells et al. The book is about how people in Europe, from Spain to Greece, United States, Australia, and several other countries lived the crisis of capitalism in 2008 and beyond, by adopting alternative economic practices like cooperatives, barter networks, ethical banking, community currencies, time-sharing banks, new means of payments, etc. Some of these were resorted to as survival strategies, while others resulted from the search for new forms of economic life least vulnerable to the consequences of global financial markets. These depended on alternative values, like the value of life against the value of money, or the value of cooperation against the value of competition.

### Crises

The crises manifest in the form of bankruptcy of financial institutions, a decline of investment, foreclosure of mortgages, the collapse of industries, loss of jobs, cuts in salaries, dislocation of families, huge debt liability of the state, and stemming of all social welfare measures. Social consequences of the crisis of 2008 were devastating for millions who faced a job loss, eviction, shrinking compensation, and substantial cuts in medical, educational, and social benefits. As Thomas Piketty (2014) revealed, the commons

### Another Economy Is Possible: Culture and Economy in a Time of Crisis

edited by Manuel Castells, Sarah Banet-Weiser, Sviatlana Hlebik, Giorgos Kallis, Sarah Pink, Kirsten Seale, Lisa J Servon, Lana Swartz, Angelos Varvarousis, Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press, 2017; pp xii +226, £17 (paperback).

were weltering in abject poverty, while the rich could increase their wealth tremendously. The commons reacted against the reckless financial practices and influenced public policies a bit, but they could hardly do anything to check global capital flows or force governments to regulate capital, to combine growth with equity, and to ensure distributive justice.

Governments, joining hands with financial elites and their world organisations, did everything to restore the economy. What else would governments caught up in global financial traps do, even though people desperately wanted their governments to redistribute wealth, enhance consumption, boost investments, and generate employment? Teased and frustrated by the capricious economy, people turned to their own alternatives and proved that another economy is possible. Alternatives emerged spontaneously when the dominant economic system failed to provide goods, services, and credit in the wake of crises. Resorting to cryptographic virtual currencies like bitcoins and fusing collective entrepreneurial disposition with digital technology, the alternative constituted an economic underworld of exchange that was based on its own norms. Most essays in the volume unveil

aspects of this underworld as accessed through theory, practice, quantitative analysis, and participant observation.

### Economy as Culture

Looking at the whole range of alternative economic practices, the essays in the volume observe in general or in specific terms of feminism or ecology that economy is culture. In fact, this is the central theoretical purport of the volume, as it seeks to expose the cultural foundation of economic practices. It implies that human culture, made up of ways of being, thinking, and doing with interests, values, and passions, determines economic practices.

In the opening essay, "Economy Is Culture," Sarah Banet-Weiser and Castells argue that economic practices are shaped by cultural values and maintain that there are as many economic practices as there are cultures. They maintain that capitalism owes its uniformity or universality to its cultural hegemony, and never to "homo economicus," neoclassical economics' essentialist assumption of human rationality. They disapprove of today's blind acceptance of the economy as the domain of rational choice and quantifiable outcomes. Criticising the practice of equating economic value to monetary value determined by the market in terms of the relationship between supply and demand as means to satisfy needs and desires, they underline the primacy of culture in human decisions. According to them, a researcher should seek an explanatory framework, powerful enough to account for the cultural diversity that guides human behaviour. They think that a multifaceted cultural analysis is indispensable to understand all human practices, including economic practices (production, consumption, and exchange) that are fully embedded in the social fabric of people's lives.

# Tagores and Indigenous Modernity in Bengal

PRADIP KUMAR DATTA

Contemporary public intellectuals have thrown down the gauntlet to their Bengali counterparts by challenging to liberate Rabindranath Tagore from the thrall of provincial admiration. This has been an interesting development with the sesquicentennial birth anniversary of Tagore having kicked off a minor industry in his work and life in the English-speaking world of scholarship. In this context, Sibaji Bandopadhyay's *Tagores before Tagore* engages in a parallel—if not more radical—act of deliverance. The work achieves—or nearly accomplishes—the removal of the Tagore family from the biography of Rabindranath Tagore that normally overwhelms the story of the clan. It gives to the Tagore family an independent salience in plotting out the distinctive modernity of 19th century urban Bengal.

The name of Sibaji Bandopadhyay is no stranger to anyone interested in Bengali literature and cultural thought. Recipient of many awards, Bandopadhyay has a distinguished career in teaching, and is revered as an original thinker and a creative presence in writing and performance. It is only lately that some of his work has started being translated in English, beginning with his pioneering work on children's literature. *Tagores before Tagore* belongs to the oeuvre of his freshly translated works. It was published in Bengali in 2013 as a screenplay for a film project by Rituparno Ghosh, which was stalled by Ghosh's untimely demise. But, the screenplay is interesting in its own right, for it showcases the writer's unusual perspective.

## Presences Conspicuous by Absence

Somewhere in the middle of the book is a painting by Gaganendranath Tagore, a nephew of Rabindranath. Titled *The Inner Apartment*, it is rendered in a cubist style

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**Tagores before Tagore: A Screenplay** by Sibaji Bandopadhyay, translated from Bengali by Maharghya Chakraborty, India: OUP, 2018, pp xxxiv + 192, ₹695.

and features a room that looks like a stage. It is a room that has no walls but consists of screen-like structures. The painting pulls the eye into its recessed interiors, which consists of more openings into staircases and corridors. The apartment is devoid of any living figure, an absence that is underlined by the source of light located somewhere in the recessed background. It makes the viewer expect a living presence, which is not there.

Is the spectral apartment a representation of time? Is it about a time that constructs walls and corridors, divisions and passages, none of which are stable when seen from outside its frame? Is the apartment absent or present or is there a constant attempt to tease our thoughts about what is absent when we see what is present before us? In many ways the provocations of this painting are a visual version of some of the key concerns of the screenplay. *Tagores before Tagore* conjures up the presence of the historical past even while underlining its literal absence by telling us the story of the past in different ways. There are three histories of the absent past. Two of these—the foreword and the afterword—have been written in English by Bandopadhyay himself, for this volume. The addition of these sections actually changes the very design of the “original” play.

Seen as a play of absences and presences, the foreword is actually an integral part of the screenplay. It is a cherished story of the writer's friendship with the deceased film-maker Rituparno Ghosh, with whom he had collaborated to write this screenplay. Ghosh died

before the film could be made. The absence of the living relationship provokes the retrospect of their friendship and collaboration. Bandopadhyay spins out a story of the serendipity of the first meeting, the progress of the relationship through its angularities, subtle bouts of competitiveness together with mutual respect, warmth and the ache of loss, all of which make up the fabric of intimacy. Indeed, the death of that intimacy and its unfulfilled project makes the foreword a slice of contemporary, personal history. The paradox is that the personal history enables the histories of the 19th century to emerge in the form of a book that is independent from the film—an absent film to which it remains tied and indebted.

The past that Bandopadhyay conjures up in his screenplay is historical. Written as a family history, it opens up to the buried elements of the social context that inform and interpenetrate with the family history—as if it were that backlit apartment of Gaganendranath's painting which leads into other spaces. If one is to borrow an analogy from Western theatre, the script is something like an Ibsen play about the implosive heart of domestic life but rendered in the expansive manner of epic theatre that continuously leaks the individual stories into the histories of the past and the present.

## Verities of Elitist Asceticism

The screenplay is composed of many strands, as if it were a deck of cards from which different cards fall randomly. Indeed, one of the Brechtian devices that the screenplay uses is that of announcing each scene by a distinctive card. The entry of the Tagores is marked by the splendid consumption of Dwarakanath Tagore, Rabindranath's grandfather. He spends so munificently in his visit to Europe that it grabs the admiration of the King of France and the acerbic resentment of Charles Dickens, even as the extravagant expenditure, incurred at the expense of his many debtors in India.

But, the main character of the play is his son Debendranath. In sharp contrast with his father, Debendranath Tagore portrayed himself—and is popularly

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acclaimed—as one who conducted himself according to strict ascetic rules. The play reverses the self-image. Debendranath's renunciation of worldly possessions and his commitment to repay all of his father's debts, is mocked at by the raucous Rabalaisian humour of other characters. The play undercuts Debendranath's claim to produce an original Brahma text by revealing Debendranath's selectiveness in mixing and matching different citations of Hindu classics. These moves are seen as interchangeable with the work of the trickster. At the same time, Debendranath is shown as executing crafty strategies to pursue inheritance disputes.

The initial scenes that announce the death of Dwarkanath destabilise the gravitas of the Tagore legend. The first one features the large bellied Jaganmohan Gangopadhyay, a relative of Debendranath and the official "foodie" of the Tagore household. Jaganmohan entertains his young nephews with a display of the exquisite discrimination of his taste buds that can detect a sweet which is stale even by a day. The other scene features a boat that carries Debendranath and Rajnarayan Basu, his intellectual companion. The latter's invocations of Shakespeare are cut short by a storm, from which they are rescued by the labour and skill of the boatmen. It is a multiple materialist perspective.

The screenplay arguably provides a focal point from which to grasp the rich subjectivities of the 19th century. There is, for instance, the double engraving in the rings of the Brahma Samaj stalwarts. The rings carry the words *Aum* as well as the Persian epigraph, *E Ham Nakhahad Mand*, glossed as "This too shall pass." The syncretic double engraving goes to the heart of the world of the play. On the one hand it captures the sense of emptiness of presence, of the experience of life's insubstantiality even as it is lived. It is this sense that motivates and sanctions the ascetic renunciation of Debendranath. On the other hand, the transient emptiness of life defines the absolute substantiality of the *Brahman* embodied in the *Aum*. By an ironic trick of devotion, the singular and ultimate presence of the *Brahman* becomes identified with the self of

Debendranath and his strong interest in material investments, that sits easily with his publicly displayed indifference to the concerns of life.

There is an interesting scene in which Akshay Kumar Datta, a critical contributor to the *Tattwabodhini Patrika*, the journal of the Brahma Samaj, raises questions about the condition of the indigo cultivators who were the mainstay of the Tagore estate and who had come into conflict with Dwarkanath, their landlord. For Debendranath, the material basis of his wealth does not matter since, as he airily puts it, the only reality is that of the *Brahman*. The capacity of the belief in Brahma to insulate the individual self from the demands of others, is nowhere more evident than in the way in which it allows Debendranath to ignore the sensibilities of the women of the household. But, when they take recourse to the law in order to demand their share of the inheritance, Debendranath's skill in bargaining and protecting his property is wonderfully brought out to reveal the other side of the asceticism of the elite.

**Plural Narratives of the Past**

Let me put in a line of warning. My intention here is not to provide an authoritative gloss on the play. Instead it is simply to show the many ways in which this text allows itself to be traversed. What I have in mind is the multiplicity of the texts that open up different perspectives on Debendranath, but equally, through him, on the culture of a class caught in the splintered effects of time. This brings me to the third story of the past that is included in the English translation and the one with which it ends. This is the afterword in which the author provides us a more orthodox historical narrative on which this play is based. The narrative is not just a chronicle but provides an interpretative grid based on archival material. In this form it inserts the play and its characters into the institutional, social and textual world of their times—thereby exposing us to yet another narrative of the past. This effort also raises the question of genre, one that goes to the heart of historical narrative and historical fiction. Is the past that we

know, dependent on the form we choose to narrate it? The screenplay and the archival reconstruction makes the two pasts of their respective representations overlap with each other, even as they provide different experiences of it and pose separate issues. But, there is also the question of the orders of the past. How do the hauntings of our contemporary lives, of the absence of intimacies of friendships that is now the past of our own lives, shape the way we look at the distant past that we have never lived?

Let me say that while this screenplay is conceived in an ironic mode, that is, as one that seeks to destabilise the conventional cultural verities of the Bengal "Renaissance," it nevertheless carries with it a sense of excess. There is an enormous vitality that fills up the many worlds of the screenplay. What it bears, despite its politically correct and justified anti-colonial perspectives, is the sense of exuberance that the colonial encounter generated. There is a cultural excess of forms, of the various and intricate combinations of life and ideas and texts. Seen from this perspective Debendranath is not just a textual trickster, but something more, one who combines and improvises, thereby opening out new versions of ideas contained in "ancient" texts. He leads, at this level, a life that is as much excessive as the conspicuous consumption of his father that fatuously earns him the title of Prince Dwarkanath Tagore. Through them are shown a welter of self-generating energies thrown by the cultural, social and material turmoils of that period. It introduces a silent question with the entry of Rabindranath towards the end of the screenplay, an entry that is light but legible. What is the mode of excess represented by the cultural phenomenon of Rabindranath, in relationship to the life of the 19th century bhadrakalok? Does it represent a break? And how does Rabindranath overwrite and shape the popular imagination of the long 19th century in our lives today?

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# The Political Project of the MGNREGA

ANKITA AGGARWAL

**P**olitics and the Right to Work: India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Act by Rob Jenkins and James Manor presents a first-rate analysis of the politics of formation and implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGA). The MGNREGA legally entitles all rural households of the country to a minimum of 100 days of manual labour every year at a notified wage rate. Workers are entitled to demand work as per their requirement. The administration is duty-bound to allot work within 15 days. If it fails to do so, it is required to pay an unemployment allowance. Workers are also entitled to timely payment of wages and compensation in the case of delays. Their other entitlements include worksite facilities, timely redress of grievances, and oversight of programme implementation.

The book draws on primary data collected through field surveys in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan from 2008 to 2010 and interviews which continued in the subsequent years. Quantitative data is obtained from various government sources and independent studies. A wide range of other secondary sources also inform the book.

Jenkins and Manor present a total of six arguments. The first two arguments pertain to the evaluation of the MGNREGA's performance. The next two link the analysis of the MGNREGA's genesis and implementation with broader debates in Indian politics and political economy. The last two extend beyond India and apply more generally to development politics.

## Positive Impact

Jenkins and Manor's first argument is that, despite its imperfect implementation, the MGNREGA has played a crucial role in improving the material well-being of a significant section of the rural population. The authors acknowledge that this is not

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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**Politics and the Right to Work: India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Act** by Rob Jenkins, James Manor, New York: Oxford University Press, 2017, pp xiii, 323, £25.

a novel claim and, in fact, cite various studies which find a positive impact of the programme on rural incomes. The MGNREGA provides some employment to about 50 million households every year, approximately a quarter of the total rural population. Official data and independent studies confirm that the self-targeting nature of the MGNREGA has helped ensure that its benefits are largely directed towards those poor who would do manual labour for very modest wages (Desai et al 2015). As the MGNREGA has provided an alternative employment opportunities in villages, it has also contributed to the much-needed increase in rural wage rates for unskilled labour (Drèze and Sen 2013).

Jenkins and Manor, however, do not adequately discuss the economic gains accrued from the infrastructure created under the MGNREGA. Two careful studies show that the common criticism that MGNREGA works amount to little more than "digging holes and filling them up" is rather unwarranted. The first is a survey of over 4,000 MGNREGA assets and their users in Maharashtra, in which 90% of the respondents considered the public works to be useful or at least somewhat useful (Kulkarni et al 2015). The second is a survey of almost 1,000 wells in Jharkhand, which estimated the real rate of return of completed wells being used for irrigation to be close to 6%; a respectable level for any economic investment (Bhaskar et al 2016).

The authors' second argument is that the MGNREGA is part of a political agenda to entrench a rights-based approach to development. Unlike previous employment generation schemes in the country, the

MGNREGA entitles rural workers to on-demand access to work. This creates obligations on the state to deliver work, failing which it becomes liable to compensate workers through unemployment allowance. The MGNREGA also entitles workers to plan public works for execution through the MGNREGA and monitor the implementation of the programme. To facilitate such participation, the legislation provides a framework for decentralised planning and implementation of the programme and also includes provisions for transparency and accountability. Although local power relations and social structures often thwart workers' efforts to claim their entitlements, the legislation provides "institutional means to channel the ensuing discontent into a process of continuous democratic struggle" (p 11).

## Debates in Political Economy

The authors' third contention is that the largely elitist Indian state at times also heeds demands of redistribution. Apart from the MGNREGA, Parliament also passed the Right to Information Act, 2005, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, and the National Food Security Act, 2013. Jenkins and Manor illustrate how the "political opportunity structure" allowed a civil society campaign to successfully push for a national employment guarantee act. Exigencies of a coalition government and electoral competition forced the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance to promise and deliver such a legislation.

Similar arguments are made by other scholars as well. For Jean Drèze, the MGNREGA "shows that the underprivileged majority is not completely marginalized in this elitist political system. With adequate political organization, their demands sometimes prevail over privileged interests" (Drèze 2010: 511). Deepta Chopra (2011: 90) argues that the "fuzzy and porous boundaries between the state and society" allowed for "interwoven influences that different actors bore upon the formulation process of NREGA."

Reetika Khera (2013) contends that civil society groups used democratic politics to push for the MGNREGA and the National Food Security Act.

Advocates of the MGNREGA consider the legislation as an important shift towards post-clientelist politics, understood as “a system in which a government’s performance in delivering impartially on the ruling party’s stated objectives, and ensuring more effective mechanisms to hold appointed officials accountable, would increasingly influence its political fortunes” (p 14). The fourth argument of the book is that post-clientelist initiatives, such as the MGNREGA, have not eliminated clientelist politics in the country, but have instead altered their nature. In the case of the MGNREGA, provisions for participation, transparency and accountability gradually increased workers’ awareness about their entitlements under the act. This required state-level political leaders to be perceived as sincerely implementing the programme. As a result, instead of milking programme funds across the entire state, they had to restrict their loot to a few worst-governed districts.

### Development Politics

Although laws such as the MGNREGA, the Right to Education Act, and the National Food Security Act guarantee social and economic rights, their constituent entitlements are claimed through the exercise of civil and political liberties. Jenkins and Manor’s fifth argument is that the MGNREGA thus represents a new category of hybrid rights, which they term as “governance rights.” According to them, the three most important aspects of the MGNREGA that facilitate this hybridity are: (i) the universal eligibility to seek employment under this legislation; (ii) creation of special-purpose institutions to ensure effective participation of non-state actors in the implementation of the act; and (iii) multiple mechanisms for allowing citizens to directly engage in processes of holding government functionaries accountable.

The authors’ final argument is that the devolution of the MGNREGA funds to gram panchayats has brought the arena of claim-making much closer to the people.

Aided by the MGNREGA’s provisions for participation, transparency, and accountability, the people can demand their legal entitlements from their local elected leaders. Jenkins and Manor cite recent studies, in India and elsewhere, which find that, over extended periods, local elected councils can contribute to improving people’s well-being. Gradually, poor people acquire political awareness, confidence, and skills, which enable them to demand public goods and services from candidates contesting local elections. Once elected, local leaders are forced to fulfil at least some demands of the poor voters, in order to secure future electoral victories (Nagarajan et al 2014).

### Important Gaps

It is hard to disagree with any of the book’s claims. However, its readers can benefit from a more comprehensive presentation of recent developments and data on the MGNREGA. The book makes no mention of the central government’s move towards the mandatory linkages of the MGNREGA and other social programmes with the Aadhaar project. Since 2010, based on a faulty understanding of the issues that plague these programmes, the central government has been claiming that such a linkage will reduce exclusions from these programmes, improve the ease of accessing their services, and remove “ghost” beneficiaries from their lists (Khera 2011). The insistence on such a linkage has, in fact, increased exclusions from these programmes. The Supreme Court repeatedly prohibited the denial of any public service for the want of an Aadhaar number, but the government violated these orders with abandon. In case of the MGNREGA, many workers without an Aadhaar number could not get access to work (Aggarwal 2016).

The book also does not mention two important modifications in the guidelines of the act. The first is the drastic reduction in the rate at which workers are to be compensated for delays in wage payments. In the initial years after the enactment of the MGNREGA, workers could claim compensation of up to ₹3,000, as per the Payment of Wages Act, 1936. But, in 2013, the rate of compensation was slashed to 0.05% of the pending wages per day of delay.

Second, the initial guidelines of the act required the implementation of the MGNREGA to be consistent with the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, which mandates spending 3% of the programme funds for persons with disabilities. But, subsequently, this requirement was done away with.

The book was published in 2017, but the time series data is presented only till 2011–12. The reason for this is unclear, as the official MGNREGA website provides real-time data on most aspects of programme implementation, disaggregated till the gram panchayat level. The wealth of data available on this website, combined with other official statistics, could have been used much more for informative interstate comparisons and temporal trends in expenditures, scale of employment, composition of workforce, and other aspects of the functioning of the MGNREGA.

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Rajan Gurukkal, *Rethinking Classical Indo-Roman Trade: Political Economy of Eastern Mediterranean Exchange Relations*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2016, 330 pp., ₹950.

10.1177/0257643018804048

Rajan Gurukkal, an eminent historian of ancient South India, has written a book that presents a direct challenge to scholars who study what has been customarily called 'Indo-Roman trade'. Gurukkal argues—and this may be considered the leitmotif of the book—that the expression 'Indo-Roman trade' is a misnomer. The complex historical phenomenon to which it refers, he states, would not be pure 'trade', if one accepts the comprehensive 'Indo-Roman' extension, nor would it be 'Indo-Roman' if the word 'trade' is retained, rather than the broader concept of 'exchange'. According to Gurukkal, the contribution in terms of trade was so negligible from the Indian side that even renaming it 'Roman-Indian' would be a misrepresentation. It could not have been proper trade because the social formations of ancient India—especially in the Tamil South, which is the focus of Gurukkal's interest and inspires, not entirely justifiably, his more general evaluations—would not have been capable of actual trade, but only of exchange, at most. This is of course an oversimplification of a book that is theoretically aware, nuanced, wide in scope, rich in information and extremely stimulating. What follows will be a discussion of only a few of the many points of interest raised by this distinguished scholar.

The book is divided into six chapters and an afterword: an introduction on theoretical preliminaries and methodology (first chapter); a consideration of the source material and historiography (second chapter); an analysis of the Eastern Mediterranean overseas exchange (third chapter); a review of the ports, marts and ship technology in early South India (fourth chapter); a scrutiny of the exchange relations of early peninsular India (fifth chapter); and an evaluation of polity, statecraft and overseas exchange (sixth chapter). It is impossible to discuss in detail all the thought-provoking insights proposed and pointless to draw up a petty list of factual inaccuracies, which are inconsequential, when evaluating the force of the argument. I think it more worthwhile to highlight and discuss the core of Gurukkal's book: his method of 'rethinking' existing theoretical categories and his main conclusions.

Although the book contains sections related to the Ganges Valley and the Deccan, its main focus is Tamil South India, whose intercourse with Roman Egypt was of a different nature than Roman interaction with the emporia of the Indus Valley or the Deccan. Gurukkal's strategy can be summed up as follows: since 'the study of trade or any form of exchange [...] has to be made against its socio-economic aggregate'; since 'analysis of historical socio-economic production is best done within the Marxist theoretical framework of social production'; since 'it is quite intelligible to conceive forms of economic production as construed by Karl Marx and modes of exchange as conceptualized by Bronislaw Malinowski, Marcel Mauss, and Karl Polanyi', then 'a discussion of the salient features of the social formation of the contemporary Indian subcontinent' as revealed by the corpus of ancient Tamil poetry, 'is a necessary precondition to understanding the nature of

local and long-distance overland as well as overseas exchange'.<sup>1</sup> For Gurukkal, the main benefit of this methodology is to expose the widespread anachronism of using the term 'trade' to denote all kinds of transactions, precluding the possibility of differentiating trade from other forms of exchange.<sup>2</sup>

In sum, Gurukkal argues that scholars have underestimated the wide gap that separates the sociopolitical formations of ancient South India, as mirrored by the *Caṅkam Ilakkiyam*, and the political economy that produced the business model reflected in the Muziris papyrus. The distance was so great that the interaction between the two cannot be defined as 'trade'. Rather, it was an 'ensemble of different forms of exchange in which trade was just one and confined to Rome'.<sup>3</sup> Gurukkal repeatedly insists that no South Indian ruler would have adopted measures to support or profit from the transoceanic trade, let alone patronize commercial enterprises to Alexandria.<sup>4</sup>

Although one may wonder whether the *Caṅkam Ilakkiyam*, on which Gurukkal's interpretations ultimately rest, offers an always straightforward and overall unbiased representation of the South Indian social formation, many of Gurukkal's views are undoubtedly correct. Gurukkal is right in pointing out that neither *Puranānūru* 126, 14–6, nor the pottery fragments with Tamil graffiti found at Myos Hormos and Berenice justify the theory that Indian traders with Indian ships sailed from India to the Red Sea coasts of Egypt and travelled on from there to trade in Alexandria.<sup>5</sup> On the contrary, both the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (hereafter *PME*) 54 and *Akanānūru* 149, 7–16, serve as unequivocal evidence that Muziris' prosperity was due to visits by Western (and North Indian) ships. Gurukkal is also right in pointing out that such an effort would have been unnecessary, as long as Western merchants kept on visiting South Indian emporia, as well as uneconomical, because even if South Indian dealers aimed to maximize their profits, it is dubious that such a goal would have been achieved by organizing a commercial enterprise as complex as the one described in the Muziris papyrus.<sup>6</sup> One may also acknowledge that all the stages in the long chain of exchanges that brought Western Ghats and eastern Himalayan products to the political heart of the Roman Empire may not be characterized as profit-driven and money-enabled 'trade'. It is not coincidental that the Greek literary texts have stories about pepper (Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius*, III 4) and malabathron (*PME* 65)—the two major commodities imported from the emporia of South India—which show that the gatherers did not sell them, but just left them to be taken away for free. Although fictional, such tales clearly reflect an awareness that pepper and malabathron were first exchanged with behaviours that were different from those followed in the markets inside the Roman Empire.

<sup>1</sup> Rajan Gurukkal, *Rethinking Classical Indo-Roman Trade: Political Economy of Eastern Mediterranean Exchange Relations* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2016), 200.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 294.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 282, 284, 287, 295.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 284–5.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 247–8.

Yet we may ask whether the correct emphasis on the variety in forms of exchange must necessarily lead to the idea of restricting the term ‘trade’—that is, profit-oriented exchange using the medium of money—only when discussing Roman activities. Did the boundaries between trade and reciprocal exchange coincide with those between Roman and Indian actors?

The list of commodities available in the Limyrike emporia drawn by the *PME* (56) includes items from the Eastern Himalayan regions (Gangetic nard and malabathron) and China (silk). The most obvious explanation for their availability in South Indian emporia is that they arrived through the large Indian vessels that sailed across to Chryse and the Ganges region from Kamara, Poduke and Sopatma. Gurukkal minimizes the phenomenon: ‘Merchants of the Indian littoral were probably collaborating with Graeco-Roman merchants [...] by supplying them with cargoes from different parts for shipping [...] it is quite possible that Graeco-Roman overseas exchanges had involved formally negotiated relationships with the merchant-mariners of the Indian coasts.’<sup>7</sup>

However, it was that cooperation that made available considerable quantities of malabathron—the second most important commodity (after black pepper) in terms of weight and volume (*PME* 56)—for the Western merchants in the South India emporia. Moreover, it was Indian merchants who managed the redistribution of the goods traded in Muziris and Nelkynda along the coasts of South India and even forwarded to the Coromandel coast ‘the coins exported overtime from Egypt’ (*PME* 60). In this context, a thorough discussion of the pertinent though challenging lines at *Paṭṭinappālai* 209–11 would have been appropriate. Unless I am mistaken, it is regretfully missing.<sup>8</sup>

Gurukkal argues that South Indian emporia were little more than camps for foreign traders.<sup>9</sup> Foreign residents are particularly notable in Pukār (*Paṭṭinappālai* 213–8; *Cilappatikaram* V, 9–10) and the *Peutingar Table* places a temple of Augustus at Muziris. However, that does not make these sites mere encampments of foreign traders, much less of solely Roman traders. The excavations at Pattanam—a site very close to, if not inside, the Muziris area—have recovered overwhelming quantities of local pottery,<sup>10</sup> which suggest a strong presence of local people. Gurukkal thinks it reasonable to presume that the Indians resident at Muziris were just ‘providers of local provisions and services like manual labour’.<sup>11</sup> It seems more likely that they were pepper merchants ‘who piled up sacks of pepper in their houses’ (*Puranānūru* 343) waiting for the arrival of

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 246.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. R. Champakalakshmi, *Trade, Ideology and Urbanization. South India 300 BC to AD 1300* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 104: ‘The merchants of Puhār: we are told, set a fair price on all goods, probably depending on “supply and demand” for such goods [...] It is not easy to determine the degree to which the “market principle” guided these transactions: (emphasis mine).

<sup>9</sup> Gurukkal, *Rethinking Classical Indo-Roman Trade*, 189–94.

<sup>10</sup> Foreign ceramic is only 1.427 per cent of the total ceramic assemblage so far found at Pattanam. See P. J. Cherian, ed., *Pattanam Excavation Report 2015 9th Season* (Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015), 41–2.

<sup>11</sup> Gurukkal, *Rethinking Classical Indo-Roman Trade*, 181.

Western (and North Indian) ships. Gurukkal's claim that the *PME* (56) says that 'overseas vessels had to supply the staple grains for the overseas merchants at the ports' is an oversight. The text actually says that the ships bound for Limyrike had to load enough grain for (the round trip of) the men on board, because resident merchants (*emporoi* in Greek) did not use it: such merchants—who dwelt in the Limyrike emporia and neither ate nor craved for grain—were most likely local people.

Moreover, Gurukkal follows Casson in presuming that 'the Muziris loan contracts' mentioned in the Muziris papyrus<sup>12</sup> were signed in Muziris by a Greco-Roman financier who resided there.<sup>13</sup> However, the contract clearly shows that the lender was expected to be either in Coptos or in Alexandria at the time the borrower returned to Egypt from South India. Therefore, Thür was correct when he interpreted the formula as 'the loan contracts for (commercial enterprises to) Muziris'.<sup>14</sup> The loan contract was most probably signed in Alexandria, where the lender very often dwelled.

Gurukkal distinguishes the circulation of essential goods like salt, which would have had a mercantile form, from other forms of exchange that were based on reciprocity or redistribution.<sup>15</sup> He then suggests that caravans of salt traders (*umanaccāttu*, cf. *Akanānūru* 119; *Puranānūru* 102) may have facilitated the transfer of pepper, ivory, gems and so on, from inland regions to the coast. As far as pepper is concerned, the hypothesis cannot be right for the Limyrike emporia, where pepper was transported on river boats (Pliny, *Natural History* VI 105). As for pearls and precious stones, the merchants (*pakarnar*) who dealt with them (*Maturaikkāñci* 505–6) appear to be distinct from the salt merchants (*uppu pakarnar*, *Maturaikkāñci* 117).<sup>16</sup>

Gurukkal takes the title of '*kāviti* (< *gr̥hapati*?) of the *nikamam* of Veḷḷarai', borne by a donor recorded in a Tamil Brahmī inscription from Mānkuḷam,<sup>17</sup> as referring to an accountant of an organized body, not necessarily of merchants.<sup>18</sup> True, the functions of a *kāviti* are not clarified by the praise for the *kāviti mākkal* in *Maturaikkāñci* 493–9. However, it should be noted that the '*kāviti* of the *nikamam*' is also 'superintendent of pearls' (*kālītika*) and, in the *Caṅkam Ilakkiam*, the

<sup>12</sup> P. Vindob. G 40822 *recto*, col. II, ll. 12–3.

<sup>13</sup> Gurukkal, *Rethinking Classical Indo-Roman Trade*, 42–4.

<sup>14</sup> G. Thür, *Hypotheken-Urkunde eines Seedarlehens für eine Reise nach Muziris und Apographe für die Tétarte in Alexandria*, *Tyche* 2 (1987), 235, nt. 18; id., *Zum Seedarlehen κατὰ Μουζείριον*, *P. Vindob. G 40822*, *Tyche* 3 (1988), 229–33.

<sup>15</sup> Gurukkal, *Rethinking Classical Indo-Roman Trade*, 219–24.

<sup>16</sup> For two distinct levels of exchange, see Champakalakshmi, *Trade, Ideology and Urbanization*, 105–6.

<sup>17</sup> I. Mahadevan, *Early Tamil Epigraphy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2003), 318–9; see also 141, 548–50. 'Members of the *nikamam* of Veḷḷarai' (*veḷ-arai nikamatōr*) are mentioned in another inscription from the same place: Mahadevan, *Early Tamil Epigraphy*, 322–3; see also 551.

<sup>18</sup> Gurukkal, *Rethinking Classical Indo-Roman Trade*, 224. See also Champakalakshmi, *Trade, Ideology and Urbanization*, 195–6: '[...] interpreted as guild chief [...] organized guilds and trading networks [...] are certainly not visible in Tamilakam'.

word *niyamam* (= *nikamam*) denotes a commercial area, sometimes characterized by abundance of gold (*pon uṭai niyamattu*) or toddy (*kaḷ uṭai niyamattu*).<sup>19</sup>

When Gurukkal argues that the Limyrike emporia had little local base<sup>20</sup> or that ‘forest products and spices too, particularly pepper [...] do not seem to have given rise to a prominent and influential group of cargo suppliers’,<sup>21</sup> he is underestimating what it takes to convey thousands of tonnes of pepper each year. It is not coincidental that Ptolemy located in his map both the bends and their sources of the rivers on which Muziris and Nelkynda lay (*Geography* VII 1, 33–4), because it was via these waterways that pepper was conveyed to the coastal emporia. A comparison with Cochin’s trade in the early modern era clarifies that without strong connections with the pepper-gathering communities of the Western Ghats, ensured by an adequate group of pepper merchants and a political power overseeing their activity, it would have been impossible to put together thousands of tonnes of pepper each year.<sup>22</sup>

Another point to be briefly discussed concerns the role of political power. Gurukkal is too dismissive when he claims that ‘there is no evidence to show that the chieftains had governed the ports’ or that ‘systematic governance was not within the capability of chiefdom-level political formations precluding bureaucracy’.<sup>23</sup> Customs duties officials of the Cōḷa king are attested in Pukār (*Paṭṭinappālai* 126–41) and although encrypted in the poetic codes of the *Caṅkam Ilakkiyam*, the pivotal role of the Cēra king emerges in *Puranānūru* 343: the ‘*Kuṭṭuvan* with the golden garland [...] offers toddy as if it were water to those who come [sc. to Muziris] to pour there the goods from the mountains and those from the sea’. As mentioned, toddy characterizes the commercial areas and also is referred to as the commodity for which elephant tusks or other goods were exchanged.<sup>24</sup> Likewise, it is significant that in the same poem, the Roman gold coins are alluded to as the ‘the golden gifts (*por paricam*) brought by the ship’. The expression hints at the redistributive exchanges made by the ruler in favour of his ‘gift-seekers’ (*paricilar*) and would be hardly comprehensible if the political power did not take for himself, one way or another, a good portion of those coins.<sup>25</sup>

Gurukkal’s characterization of the *vēntar* as merely major chieftains also sounds like an understatement—or, at the very least, as not in keeping with the lexicon of the Western sources, who knew how to define weaker political formations. The author of the *PME* refers to the Cēralar and Pāṅṅiyar as kings (*basileis*) (55). The

<sup>19</sup> *Tirumurukāruppaṭai* 70; *Maturaikkāñci* 365; *Malaipaṭukaṭām* 480; *Narrinai* 45, 4; *Patirrupattu* 15, 19 (*pon uṭai niyamattu*); 30, 12 (*pon uṭai niyamattu*); 75, 10 (*kaḷ uṭai niyamattu*); *Akanānūru* 83, 7; 90, 12.

<sup>20</sup> Gurukkal, *Rethinking Classical Indo-Roman Trade*, 176–82.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 246.

<sup>22</sup> Pius Malekandathil, *Portuguese Cochin and the Maritime Trade of India 1500–1663* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2001), 40–71.

<sup>23</sup> Gurukkal, *Rethinking Classical Indo-Roman Trade*, 280.

<sup>24</sup> *Patirrupattu* 30; 68; 75; *Akanānūru* 245. The abundant toddy enjoyed by the fishermen of Koṅkai is probably received for the pearls they fish: *Maturaikkāñci* 136–8.

<sup>25</sup> F. De Romanis, ‘Aurei After the Trade: Western Taxes and Eastern Gifts’, in *Dal denarius al dinar*, ed. F. De Romanis and S. Sorda (Roma: Istituto Italiano di Numismatica, 2006), 69–82.

same status is denied, for example, to the rulers of the Somaliland ports of trade, who are labelled just as chiefs (*tyrannoi*) (14). The distinction has its reasons. As the trimmings of ivory tusks mentioned in the Muziris papyrus strongly suggest,<sup>26</sup> the Cēra king had an army with hundreds of war elephants. The familiarity with the inland located residencies of both the Cēra and Pāṇṭiya kings (*PME* 55; Pliny, *Natural History* VI 105; Ptolemy, *Geography* VII 1, 86; 89) suggests that the Western merchants were able to gauge the solidity of those dominions. It is true that the *Caṅkam Ilakkiam* very often repeats a heroic rhetoric and reflects an unstable political landscape, where the supremacy of the *vēntar* was frequently challenged and required constant reaffirmation. However, despite Gurukkal's alternate suggestion,<sup>27</sup> the impression one gets from the texts is that the rank of the *vēntar* was justified by their role as protectors of their subjects (*kāvalar*), and sustained more by the tributes they extracted than by the booty they plundered.

These quick notes consider only a few of the many interesting questions raised by a book that makes an important contribution by reminding scholars of the need to refine and clarify their theoretical concepts. Such interrogations are necessary to improve our understanding of a complex phenomenon like inter-regional exchange and will remain, even for those who do not agree with all of Gurukkal's views, a landmark for future research on the subject.

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**Kazim Abdullaev, *Buddhist Iconography of Northern Bactria*, Manohar, New Delhi, 2015, 274 pp., ₹1,295.**

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Since colonial times, Gandhara art tradition has acquired a significant place in the art historical analysis of ancient India. Today, Gandhara is located in the North-West Frontier province of Pakistan, and excavations in the region have yielded considerable amount of antiquities. It attracted scholarly and public attention within Pakistan as well as Europe and America. While the post-Cold War era changed the dynamics of the geopolitics of the region, archaeological interest in the area remained, and explorations and mapping of the Buddhist past became an important part of many endeavours that resulted in the unearthing of numerous archaeological sites in the area. Bactria is located in the Valley of Oxus River and once was part of Achaemenid Empire in the fifth–fourth century BC. It is located in the present-day northern part of Afghanistan and southern Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The area also constitutes part of the Silk Road. In his book *Buddhist Iconography of Northern Bactria*, Kazim Abdullaev has explored many facets of

<sup>26</sup> F. De Romanis, *Ivory from Muziris*, <http://dlib.nyu.edu/awdl/isaw/isaw-papers/8/> (accessed on 21 November 2018).

<sup>27</sup> Gurukkal, *Rethinking Classical Indo-Roman Trade*, 272–3.

# Enterprise and change

A riveting account of the changing social profile of Indian industry, the book warns that the arrival of consolidation and the requirement of huge capital will likely alter the scheme of things in the foreseeable future. BY RAMESH CHAKRAPANI

TEN years after it broke new ground in tracing the history and changing social profile of India's business class, Harish Damodaran's *India's New Capitalists* returns in an updated and revised edition. The book still makes for riveting reading and remains relevant to the changing times and circumstances.

The book, which won the Ramnath Goenka award for excellence in journalism, gives a deep insight into the rise of non-traditional business communities, offering a thorough and meticulous assessment of what India's business landscape looks like and how it has mutated. Going beyond chronicling the evolution of the country's business class, it offers a prognosis of what is in store in the foreseeable future for aspiring entrepreneurs and how the arrival of consolidation and the requirement of huge capital, a significant entry barrier, will likely alter the scheme of things.

Existing scholarship on India's business communities was narrow in focus and scattered over time, not easily available to the lay reader. It was against this backdrop that

Damodaran went over and beyond by doing pioneering research to collate material from far and wide and put together a fascinating analysis of how the profile of the Indian businessman has been changing since Independence. Alongside, he pieces together the social and caste histories behind several success stories that dot the length and breadth of the original book. In this updated edition, he paints a clear picture of the developments in the past decade, coming as they do amid paradigm-altering political and economic changes not seen since 1991, when liberalisation unleashed the latent po-

tential of Indian entrepreneurship.

The most crucial development since 2006, especially in the current decade, is the "destruction of capital" and the drastic reduction in the number of new entrepreneurs, the author states in his preface to the revised edition. Amid rising unemployment and a political dispensation that does not seem to have fully grasped the enormity of the situation, the drying up of "new capitalists" is certainly a worrying trend, for private enterprise has a bigger role to play than any other section of society in stemming the rising tide of joblessness; there is only so much that any government

can do. It is in society's best interest to ensure that more and more opportunities are made available as the pool of job-seeking people widens with the spread of education.

Most of the new entrepreneurs of note have been restricted to a narrow segment of e-commerce and mobile-enabled services, the author notes. It is anyone's guess how far this will go in rejuvenating a moribund economy that has been battered by external factors such as the global recession and internal developments such as mounting debt, the collapse of several corporates, and rising bankruptcies.

The author bemoans, and rightly so, the increase in consolidation and the fact that it cuts across sectors. As big players with deep pockets start dominating more and more sectors through mergers and acquisitions, smaller entities get shunted out as it becomes more and more difficult to stay in business competing against behemoths, while the investment requirement becomes insurmountable for aspiring entrants to even get a foothold in industry. The prognosis is certainly bleak and it is



**India's New Capitalists**

**Caste, Business, And Industry in a Modern India**

By Harish Damodaran

Hachette India, 2018 (revised and reprinted)

Pages: 425

Price: Rs.599

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**HEPINGTON FOUNDER** R. Srinivasan, HCL founder and chairman Shiv Nadar and Cyber Media chairman and managing director Pradeep Gupta, at the Chennai International Centre in Chennai on August 1, 2017.

hard to be optimistic about what the foreseeable future holds.

However, another significant development since the first edition, which the author faithfully records, has been the emergence of Dalit industrialists. The author describes the rise of four company builders—Gaddam Vivekanand, Rajesh Saraiya, Ashok Khade and Bhagwan Dharmaji Gawai—and their success stories are heartening and inspiring. The road to Dalit emancipation is paved not only with education and ensuring adequate representation in government but also in setting up private enterprises. Dalit success stories in industry embolden and inspire others within the historically marginalised communities to look beyond the

available career choices and allow their entrepreneurial spirit to flourish.

In the preface to the first edition, the author had said that the book, as it were, was originally intended to be an edit page piece or a fairly long paper at best. The reader can only be thankful that it meta-

morphosed into a comprehensive and compelling account of the changing profile of business in India simply because some saw the germ of an excellent and rewarding book in the author's idea and encouraged and supported him in transforming the idea into reality.



**IN A SPINNING MILL** in Coimbatore.

This confession is in itself a point to ponder over—to consider the possibility that several such books are waiting to be written if only authors can find the wherewithal and support to expand on ideas and expend time and energy in bringing them to fruition.

Damodaran's book carries the secondary title *Caste, Business, and Industry in a Modern Nation*, making it abundantly clear right at the outset that caste plays as important a role in the book as it does in Indian society. Few works talk about the overweening presence of caste in everyday Indian economic life; the world of business and industry is no exception when it comes to caste determining the line between success and failure. Damodaran's candour in taking the caste bull by the horns and talking unabashedly about how historically it played a key role

J. MANOHARAN

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ence of communities such as the Shikarpuri and Hyderabad Lohanas and the Nattukottai Chettiars, how Parsis made pioneering moves in manufacturing, and the rise of clans such as the Bhatias and the Gujarati Baniyas.

The chapter also accurately describes the changing fortunes of some of these once-dominant communities and how others among them have been able to reinvent themselves and thrive in a rapidly evolving world, where new technologies are disrupting traditional markets and new markets are being created even as some old ones fall by the wayside.

#### NON-TRADITIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNITIES

With the preamble out of the way, the book plunges into its core objective—the study of the growth of non-traditional business communities. The author begins with a chapter on “Brahmins, Khattris and Babus”, the social groups that were in the best position to challenge the entrenched traditional communities in trade and commerce, having acquired the advantage of

education early on in colonial times. The author highlights the importance of education and how it enabled some enterprising members of the scribal castes to establish themselves in unexplored terrain despite inherent disadvantages relating to capital and acumen.

The next three chapters are devoted to other communities such as the Kammas, Reddys and Rajus of undivided Andhra Pradesh; the Naidus and Gounders of Tamil Nadu, and the Nadars (of Tamil Nadu); and Ezhavas (of Kerala), the last two sharing a common past of caste-sanctioned oppression and caste-ordained occupation despite different geographies. It is telling that a significant chunk of the book is focussed on south India, where castes from all strata within the *varnasrama* order were able to disrupt the hegemony of the trading castes owing to its history of social justice, education, land reforms and social upheaval. In most other regions in the country, the rigidity of the caste system proved to be a deterrent to disruption.

A chapter on Patidars and Marathas and one on

why northern farming communities failed to make the leap into industry, along with a note on minorities, round off this absorbing work.

Traversing through the book is a learning experience not only in terms of what goes into the making of a success story in capitalist enterprise but, equally importantly, how various extraneous factors, primarily caste networks and associations and clan practices and support systems, contribute towards those successes and how one builds on top of another. Kinship networks enable a business success, which, in turn, strengthens those networks and concretises the caste legacy that is passed on through generations, be it in terms of providing capital needs, organisational resources, acumen, trade skills and knowledge and inspiration.

It is striking how each chapter and the business case studies in focus become an exercise in learning the history and sociology of the times gone by and also how, by virtue of upsetting the dominance of established castes, the upstarts also brought about significant and lasting social change, both within their communities and in the society at large.

This book is essential reading for anyone interested in exploring the symbiosis between caste and industry in India and students of business history and sociology in particular, for it is a study in how the changing face of private enterprise not only reflected a society in churn but also became an instrument of change in it. □



M. KARUNAKARAN

in ensuring success and aiding growth is rare and commendable.

The author starts off with an introduction to the traditional mercantile communities of the country and their general trajectories in pre- and post-Independence India. In this fascinating chapter, he delves into how, before 1947, the Marwari-Baniyas rose to become a pan-Indian network wielding enormous clout in society, and the far-reaching influ-



THE HINDU ARCHIVES

G.B. NAIDU, an enduring symbol of Coimbatore's engineering ethos.



KARSANBHAI PATEL, founder of the Nirma group.



V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM

J. VIVEKANAN, vice chairman of Visaka Industries.

ECONOMY

# Coming up short

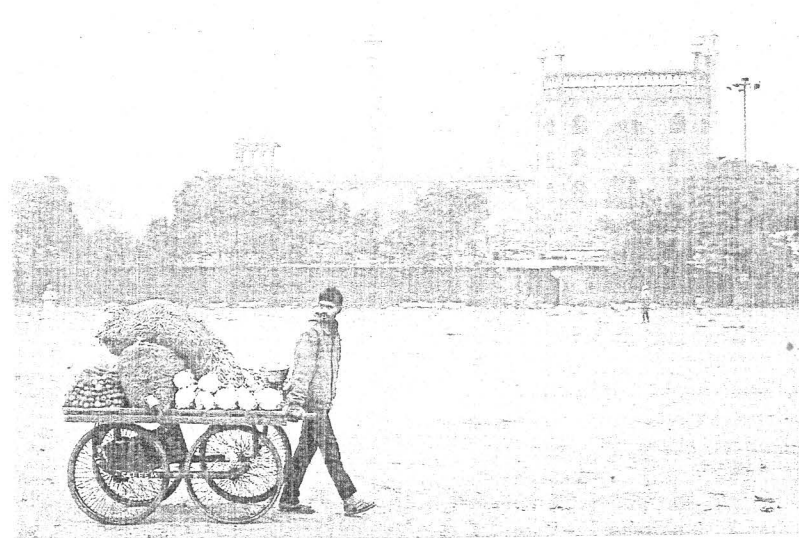
Examining a lopsided economy where growth is dependent on state levers

PUJA MEHRA

One reason the second UPA government suffered an angry backlash from voters was its visibly poor management of tensions between business interests seeking favourable policies and the market-economy imperative of a level playing field. The 1991 liberalisation, it was hoped, would see the policy framework graduate from being pro-business to pro-markets. But has it?

Vast swathes of the Indian population – informal sector workers that constitute more than 90% of the work force and rural Indians – continue to remain on the margins of the market economy. While some progress has been made in those areas where the business class stands to gain, the reforms that would benefit the masses mostly remain pending.

Indeed, a peculiarity of the BJP-led government is its preference for an economic system in which rather than market forces and private enterprise, growth is dependent on state levers – public investments in infrastructure and a model of redistributive schemes



Still excluded Informal sector workers are still on the margins of the economy. AP

such as for houses, toilets and other handouts to the disadvantaged. This lopsidedness of the Indian economic system is an under-studied area.

### Tilt towards business

*Business and Politics in India*, as the title suggests, tries to address the gap. It examines the accelerated shift in the

balance of political power – in ways both direct and indirect – towards business. Scholars analyse the nature of business power and the manner in which it shapes political change in India.

Business had started aligning with more and more right-of-centre political forces, both within and

outside the Congress, during the tenure of Indira Gandhi. But Narendra Modi is the first prime minister openly anointed by captains of the business community.

A striking example cited is of the pro-business policies attempted by the Communist Party of India (Marxist), despite its relatively lower dependence on corporate finance, when it was in office in West Bengal.

The analyses of influence on policies concerning two factors of production, labour and land, show labour's position is already increasingly under threat as a consequence of the pro-business skew.

The book concludes that business power has moved to agenda setting power, that is power to mould future patterns of political and social change. These powers have limits, and they remain focussed on rent-seeking, rather than actively seeking to mould urban politics.

The population excluded by the market economy, the informal labour and rural segments, is unlikely to passively let business dominance over the state go unchecked beyond a point.

The play of the pro-business dynamics is compared across three States: Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat, where private industry already played a much more significant role in the economy even before 1991.



**Business & Politics in India**  
Edited by  
Christophe  
Jaffrelot & others  
OUP  
₹750

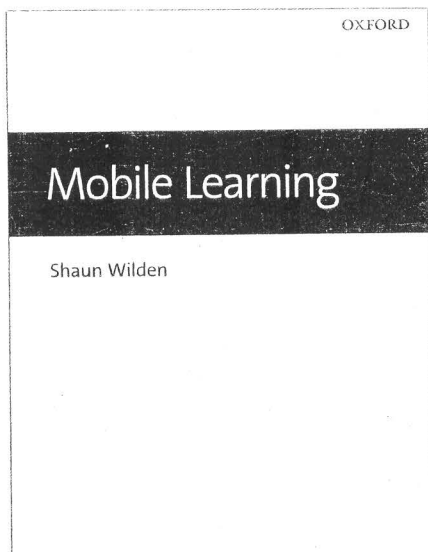


policies with regard to it. He looks at policies in the EU, where CLIL has particular significance, in the ASEAN countries of South East Asia, at Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. The next chapters look at the key participants in EMI – teachers and students. Taking into account the debate over native/non-native ownership of English, and the rise of English as a Lingua Franca, Macaro asks the questions ‘Which English in EMI? Which Teachers?’ Subsequent chapters provide a cost/benefit analysis of EMI, look at interaction in the EMI classroom, examine the changing role of EMI teachers, and describe learner strategies, before a final chapter brings the findings of the book together into a thematic approach.

Written in a style which is, at the same time, both scholarly and accessible while employing a relaxed, and occasionally irreverent tone, and drawing on a wide range of TESOL and Applied Linguistics methodologies, *English Medium Instruction* is a welcome introduction to a significant field which merits fuller investigation. Just as English teaching is no longer the property or province of native-speaker teachers, so the teaching of English may be moving out of the ELT-exclusive classroom into the wider educational context, and spreading itself across the curriculum. Whether you consider this to be a good or bad thing will depend on both your teaching/learning experience and your own language background. However, it is not a question Ernesto Macaro is shy of asking in this excellent handbook.

Viv Midlane  
Glossop, UK

✓ **Mobile Learning**  
by Shaun Wilden  
OUP 2017  
978-0-19-420039-4



With my teenage students clamouring to use their mobile devices (mainly their smartphones) in class, and with more and more articles in the ELT press suggesting that we should be embracing our students’ phones as an extra resource, rather than banning them from our lessons or forcing the students to drop them into a box at the classroom door on entering, I decided to take the plunge and experiment with a few mobile learning ideas. To help me, I chose Shaun Wilden’s book *Mobile Learning*, and I was very glad that I did.

What a treasure trove of practical and imaginative ideas it turned out to be! Almost every page has at least one activity to try out, some as many as five or six. A small icon of a hand with the words ‘Try this’ next to the task title makes the

activities easy to find, and there are also helpful ‘Getting it right’ tint boxes to help teachers set an activity up most effectively, avoid potential pitfalls, and navigate such things as data protection laws, etc. Also very useful are the ‘Why this works’ boxes, which give a brief and clear rationale for the activities, outlining the benefits and anchoring them in sound pedagogy.

Divided into three parts (‘Implementing mobile devices’, ‘Taking the first steps’ and ‘Mobile devices: projects and beyond’), the book moves from assistance with the basics – help in getting started and understanding the essential functions of mobile devices and apps – to far more sophisticated project ideas, including digital storytelling and augmented reality, something I had heard about but never fully understood until I read the author’s clear explanation. The section on virtual reality was, perhaps, a step too far for me – I really can’t see myself equipping my students with Google Cardboard headsets, or the even more sophisticated alternatives, so that they can enter different and seemingly solitary worlds where they interact with images rather than with each other – but at least now I understand what everyone is talking about, and I dare say, in due course and in the right circumstances, it might even be something that I would be prepared to consider for the future.

For now, though, I can’t wait to try out more of the ‘here and now reality’ activities in the book with my students, who, for the first time in my teaching career, seem to regard me as being somewhat ‘cool’ – perhaps not in comparison with other teachers, who have taken to technological gadgetry much more swiftly, but certainly in comparison with my former self. Gone are the days when my students roll their eyes at my apparent inability to understand the simplest of technological tools, and I think I can honestly say that their motivation and general enthusiasm for English has increased markedly.

So thank you, Shaun Wilden, not only for providing a wealth of activities to keep my students happy and engaged in learning and practising English, but for rescuing me from the Dark Ages!

Ernest Dickinson  
London, UK

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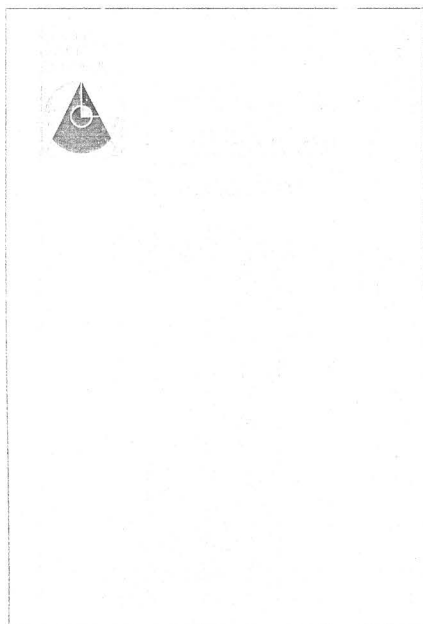
# Reviews

## English Medium Instruction

by Ernesto Macaro

OUP 2018

978-0-19-440396-2



In *English Medium Instruction*, Ernesto Macaro surveys what he describes as a neglected field, with wide gaps in knowledge, in research and in the provision of norms of good practice. The book traces the rapid growth of EMI – English Medium Instruction – over recent years, claiming that it represents for education ‘a transformation, the like of which it has not experienced for many decades’.

Macaro is the founding Director of the Centre for Research and Development on English Medium Instruction at the University of Oxford and, as such, possibly uniquely placed to provide a comprehensive survey of the expanding field of EMI. He points out that the concept of EMI is elusive and may mean different things to different people and in different places, with ‘few attempts ... in the literature to define ... what is actually being talked about’. Before devoting the entire first chapter to this difficulty of definition, Macaro helpfully gives his own on the first page of the introduction: ‘the use of the English language to teach

*academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries ... where the first language of the majority of the population is not English’.*

While many readers may think EMI is just an alternative name for CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), as used here it is an umbrella term which includes CLIL but also various other educational contexts. Macaro points out that the history of teaching through the medium of a language which is not the LI of all the students can be traced back to classical times, where Roman children were educated through the medium of Greek, seen as the language of culture and scholarship. In more recent times, the colonial legacy has often led to education in formally-colonised countries being provided in the language of the colonial power, a situation which may persist into the post-colonial period. In this context, biology, geography, engineering or experimental psychology might all be taught via the medium of English. One reason for this persistence may be that the country in question has a population who speak a range of languages. This diversity leads to the need to find a lingua franca for education and, with its growth as a

world language, English has often been chosen. This kind of English medium teaching has been around for a long time; what is more recent is the growth of EMI not only as a means of delivering course content across the curriculum, but also as a way of providing additional input and promoting the learning of English. This approach includes CLIL, but is not exclusive to it. Macaro also discusses immersion programmes in Canada which aim to encourage integration between speakers of the two national languages, French and English.

Macaro is by no means an uncritical advocate of EMI, and he devotes time to discussing its dangers. Amongst the disadvantages he traces are the effects of increased English use on existing national languages, which may suffer domain loss as English becomes the language of a range of activities or professions, including education. He also emphasises the potential for EMI to become socially divisive as ‘elite’ – ie richer – students follow English medium courses not available to those less socially advantaged.

Following his search for a definition of EMI, Macaro moves on to examine how governmental or supra-governmental agencies set language



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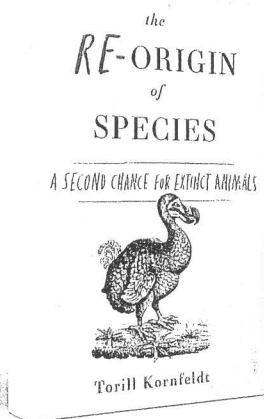
BOOKS

**THE RE-ORIGIN OF SPECIES**  
A Second Chance for Extinct Animals

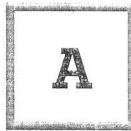
by Torill Kornfeldt

WESTLAND

₹699; 256 pages



# Life on Earth



rodent made global headlines last week: the disappearance of the

'Bramble Cay melomys' was recorded as the first mammalian extinction credited to global warming. The critters, whose only habitat was a low-lying Australian islet, were wiped out by rising sea levels. It's small consolation, but those rising tides are also generating a swell of excellent science writing addressing the karmic consequences and dilemmas of the Anthropocene.

Swedish journalist Torill Kornfeldt's *The Re-Origin of Species: A Second Chance for Extinct Animals* is a remarkably accessible dive into the world of various 'Lazarus projects'—scientists on the threshold of resurrecting extinct species, from the woolly mammoth to the American chestnut tree. Kornfeldt never sidesteps the complex ethics and motivations of these projects and is clear that, in any attempt to resurrect the past, we're making choices about our future.

Lewis Dartnell's *Ori-*

*gins: How the Earth Made Us* meanwhile, is a lively and well-researched reminder that modernity cannot escape prehistory. It's packed with interesting and revelatory anecdotes: a chapter on the geography of the planet's energy reserves reveals an astonishing match between carboniferous coal deposits and Labour party voters in the UK.

Vybarr Cregan-Reid's *Primate Change: How the World We Made is Remaking Us* sounds almost like a sequel to Dartnell's book and it does offer a stern, but ultimately hopeful, coda to the stories in *Origin* and *Re-Origin*. "The Anthropocene human is one whose body has changed—not as a result of evolution but in response to the environment we have created," Cregan-Reid argues—and it's not good for our psychic or physical health. He suggests that the path to healing ourselves, and perhaps the planet, begins on foot, with walking and running, a return to a more physical 'being in the world'. Lucky us. The poor melomys had nowhere to run. ■

—Kai Friese

**ORIGINS**  
How the Earth Made Us

by Lewis Dartnell

BODLEY HEAD

₹629; 352 pages



**Primate Change**

How the world we made is remaking us.

**PRIMATE CHANGE**  
How the World We Made is Making Us

by Vybarr Cregan-Reid

CASELL

₹499; 320 pages

## NAVEL GAZING

good-natured, informative and age-appropriate sex-ed book for

Indian pre-teens, *How I Got My Belly Button* uses a framing narrative of two 9-year-old siblings (the twins Neal and Kiara) quizzing their very well-prepared parents about life's mysteries. While there's no shortage of answers here, curmudgeonly, age-inappropriate readers may leave the

book with more questions than they began with.

We wonder, firstly, why it's being promoted as 'India's First Kids' education book'. A Google search reveals at least 11 precursors from a variety of Indian publishers, notably Tarshi, Zubaan and Menstru-edia. Some passages seem cloyingly coy and quaintly gender-normative ('A man and a woman's body are like two pieces of a jigsaw puzzle').

That said, we read it after binge-watching *Sex Education* and *Big Mouth* on Netflix and all that puberty-com did leave us wondering what kids are streaming these days. And whether *Belly Button* isn't really a comforting fairy tale for parents. By all accounts, the book's launch in Mumbai was great fun—for adults. Manisha Koirala, Boman Irani and Pooja Bedi were there. Bellywood... ■

—Jabir



**How I Got My Belly Button**  
by Anju Kish

OM BOOKS INTERNATIONAL

₹395; 208 pages

(89) (25)

# National Waters

By Amita Baviskar

**F**rom being a backwater where scholars lurk in murky archives, India's environmental history is now a lively torrent, brimming with novel ideas and perspectives. A bookshelf studded with superb recent works like Thomas R. Trautmann's *Elephants and Kings* and Neeladri Bhattacharya's *The Great Agrarian Conquest* now bulges with two more big books: Sudipta Sen's *Ganga: The Many Pasts of a River* and Sunil Amrith's *Unruly Waters: How Mountain Rivers and Monsoons Have Shaped South Asia's History*.

Sen's epic details, from prehistory to the present, the kingdoms and cities that rose and fell along the Ganga. For millennia, the river basin has witnessed the passage of pilgrims and traders. Its three mile deep alluvium has produced the surplus to support specialised guilds and castes. Its wealth has provided patronage to poets and sculptors. Sen eruditely documents this efflorescence. Bristling with formidable scholarship, *Ganga* demands the reader's close attention. Reading it felt a lot like swotting for a school exam, trying to keep track of the rise and fall of empires and dynasties. In his focus on political history, Sen even forays at length into the realms of the Chola and Pallava kings of the south, only to make a minor point about the role of Ganga mythology in claiming legitimacy.

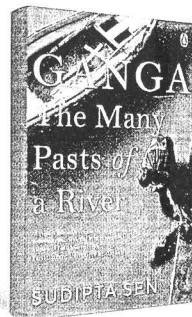
The river disappears from sight altogether when Sen weighs in on the question of Aryan presence in the Indus Valley Civilisation or holds forth on Kautilya's 2nd-century BCE treatise on governance, *Arthashastra*. We learn a lot about the spread of Buddhism, get a guided tour of the iconography of the Sanchi stupa and the Ellora temples in central India and glimpses into Tughlaq-era government and more, but struggle to relate it to the river basin. A surfeit of information makes the book sag under the weight of its scholarship. Curiously, there's only a sketchy account of the colonial period when agrarian life in the Ganga basin was transformed by new crops and forms of exploitation. The post-Independence period is missing altogether. There are also numer-

ous errors, especially about flora and fauna. *Ganga* begins with a luminous chapter about the sacredness of the river and how its presence in cosmology, myth and metaphysics runs deeper than kingdoms and empires. But such insight, and the enduring material connections between land, water and life that inspire it, are lost in the minutiae of a tome that should have been called 'Sen's General History of India'.

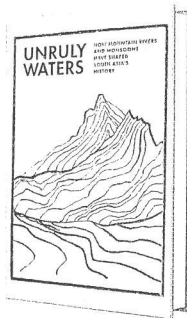
Amrith's *Unruly Waters* is more engaging, though it too bites off more than it can do justice to. Its central thread is the story of the endeavour to map the monsoons, the annual winds on which ride India's economic fortunes. Amrith deftly describes the colonial development of meteorology through its early heroes who devised new statistical techniques and created scientific infrastructure that now spans the subcontinent. He paints a vivid backdrop of the droughts and famines that prompted these initiatives and shows how imperial measures employed a calculus of profit and loss that superseded benevolence. To make their revenues monsoon-proof, governments built dams and promoted groundwater extraction, but these eventually worsened the water crisis. Amrith persuasively shows how the hubris of technological mastery continues to propel Indian efforts, even as climate change reveals the immensity of ecological uncertainty. How China has dealt with its water crises is an interesting leitmotif running through the book.

Amrith occasionally falters when he tries to leap over large and complex events and processes: he asserts that land productivity in Bengal fell in the 20th century because of water hyacinth and railway embankments! Crucial snow-fed rivers like the Ganga and Brahmaputra barely figure in the book. A handpump is labelled an electric tubewell. Several spaces for illustrations are left blank: censored maps perhaps? Overall, though, this is a book environmentally-concerned lay readers will learn a lot from. ■

*The reviewer is an environmental sociologist*



**GANGA**  
The Many Pasts of a River  
By Sudipta Sen  
PENGUIN  
₹ 799; 464 pages



**UNRULY WATERS**  
How Mountain Rivers and Monsoons Have Shaped South Asia's History  
by Sunil Amrith  
ALLEN LANE  
₹ 799; 416 pages

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## Myth Under A Microscope

A new history of Jallianwala Bagh gives due emphasis on the suffocatingly hostile nationalist backcloth and the lack of pre-meditation on both sides

BY ZAREER MASANI

**A** century on, after several popular and scholarly books, it's hard to say something entirely original about the Jallianwala massacre. But Wagner succeeds in pulling together the threads and presenting all the evidence. He even presents evidence counter to his own ideological craze for deeming the massacre symptomatic of British oppression, rather than exceptional.

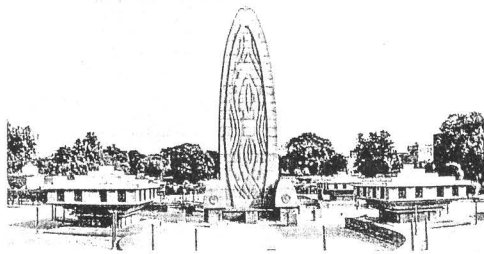
To his credit, Wagner eschews any squeamishness in describing anti-European rioting in the Punjab and elsewhere during the days leading up to Jallianwala. Although Mahatma Gandhi had issued a call for peaceful satyagraha, the response was anything but non-violent. A poster on the clock tower next to the Golden Temple called on people to be prepared to 'die and kill'. There are graphic descriptions of Indian crowds pelting security forces with brickbats and frightening police horses. The British in Amritsar found themselves fending off 'a determined attempt to rush the Civil Lines', where most of them lived.

Wagner doesn't shrink from detailing how three British bank clerks and two railwaymen were unlucky enough to get bludgeoned to death by the mob. Worst of all, Miss Sherwood, a missionary schoolteacher, was knocked off her bike, severely beaten and left for dead.

Gen. Reginald Dyer, later dubbed "the Butcher of Amritsar", was incensed by all these, most of all by the sight of Miss Sherwood, and by the dormitories of British women and children herded into the old fort. What is missing from Wagner's account is much clue to Dyer's psychology, seen as a loner with a chip on his shoulder by his British peers, country-born and bred and popular with his Indian troops. It's a shock to hear that he was felicitated by the Sikh mahants of the Golden Temple just days after he had

ordered the massacre next door.

The mystery at the heart of the massacre remains whether Dyer massively over-reacted on the spur of the moment or whether his was a premeditated plan. Wagner is rightly sceptical about pre-meditation on either the colonial or nationalist side. The latter, he argues, gathered mostly ignorant of Dyer's ban on public meetings and with no plan of action. Dyer, for his part unfamiliar with the city and with the layout of the Bagh and its tiny exits, might well have seen the meeting as a direct challenge. The horrific result was six to ten minutes incessant firing directly at a crowd of several thousand, resulting in Wagner's estimate of



Wagner doesn't give much clue about Dyer's psychology. Shockingly, he was felicitated by the mahants of the Golden Temple days after he ordered the massacre.

500-700 dead and many more wounded.

This book rightly explodes several nationalist myths around the event. There were hardly any women present and few Muslims (only one-sixth of the crowd), despite Amritsar then being a Muslim-majority city. Wagner is convinced that it was memories of the Mutiny of 1857 that shaped the British response in 1919, and he accuses the Raj of paranoia and "racialised violence". But he pays scant attention to the good intentions of people like

Edwin Montagu, secretary of state for India in Britain's then Liberal government, introducing constitutional reforms designed to take a federal India to responsible and representative government, as in the white dominions of Australia and Canada. Instead, we are told the reforms were designed to perpetuate British power.

Contrary to Wagner's own assertions of inherent colonial violence, this book supplies plentiful evidence of widespread British revulsion at and condemnation of Dyer's massacre. The most dramatic examples come from the House of Commons where the massacre was condemned as "un-British" by none other than Dyer's boss, Winston Churchill, then secretary for war. Poor Montagu was described by Dyer's Tory supporters as "a Jew rounding on an Englishman and throwing him to the wolves". Wagner describes how the debate divided not only Parliament but the British press and public, seeing Dyer ejected from the army but receiving a handsome public purse from admirers who saw him as the saviour of the empire.

In India, Gandhi called off his civil disobedience, calling it a "Himalayan miscalculation". The government set up the Hunter judicial enquiry, with three Indian members who submitted a minority report roundly condemning Dyer's "inhuman and un-British" methods. One positive note that emerges from this book is that Miss Sherwood returned to the Punjab, aged 70, to help with relief work among Partition refugees. The Bagh itself has become a family picnic park. "The names of the 379 people known to have been killed are nowhere to be found," Wagner complains, "and, a hundred years after Dyer walked down the narrow passage with his 50 troops, Jallianwala Bagh is no longer a place for mourning the dead, as Gandhi originally envisaged, but a celebration of a nationalist myth. □

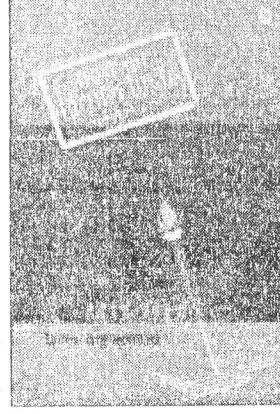
# दमित किसान विद्रोह

चमनलाल



‘अवध का किसान विद्रोह’, सुभाष चन्द्र कुशवाहा की जन विद्रोहों पर केंद्रित इतिहास की यह दूसरी किताब है। सुभाष चन्द्र कुशवाहा ने अपनी पहली किताब, ‘चौरी चौरा विद्रोह और स्वाधीनता आंदोलन’ (पेंगुइन प्रकाशन) से पर्याप्त ख्याति प्राप्त की है। इस बार ये ब्रिटिश कालीन भारत के बीसवीं सदी में हुए अवध किसान विद्रोह को लेकर आए हैं। पुस्तक के प्रारंभ में लेखक ने तत्कालीन समय के सामंतों की नजर में अच्छे किसान के बारे में बताया है कि अच्छा किसान वह समझा जाता था जो सीधा-साधा हो, जो बीवी और बेटी बेचकर भी भू-कर देने को तैयार रहता हो। यह सही है कि तमाम जुल्म और दमन के बावजूद किसान संगठित नहीं होते थे क्योंकि उनमें एकता का अभाव था। पहली बार अवध किसान आंदोलन ने जवाहरलाल नेहरू को गरीब किसानों की वास्तविकता जानने का आधार मुहैया कराया। तालुकेदारों के विरुद्ध 1920-22 में पूरे अवध प्रांत के सभी जिलों में स्वतःस्फूर्त ढंग से किसान विद्रोह दिखाई दिए। इस विद्रोह के नेता थे, बाबा रामचन्द्र, छोटा रामचन्द्र, देव नारायण पांडेय, रहमत अली, मदारी पासी और कुछ अन्य। सुभाष चन्द्र कुशवाहा का मानना है कि अवध के किसान विद्रोह को, आज के किसान संदर्भों को समझने के लिए जानना जरूरी है और इसलिए उन्होंने इस कार्य को संपन्न किया है। उनका मानना है कि यद्यपि बाबा रामचन्द्र ने अवध किसान

आंदोलन का नेतृत्व किया था तथापि छोटा रामचन्द्र और मदारी पासी के क्रांतिकारी तेवर को उपेक्षित किया गया। उन्होंने डी.एन. धनगरे, कपिल कुमार और सुशील कुमार द्वारा अंग्रेजी में किए गए कार्यों का तथा महेन्द्र कुमार सिंह द्वारा हिंदी में किए गए कार्य का भी उल्लेख किया है। इस



किताब में ग्यारह अध्याय और नौ परिशिष्ट दिए गए हैं। पहले परिशिष्ट में प्रतापगढ़ जनपद में कन्या विक्रय के मामलों का उल्लेख है कि 5 से 12 साल की लड़कियों को उनके पिता या भाई द्वारा 200 से 500 रुपए में भू-स्वामियों को विक्रय कर दिया जाता था। द्वितीय परिशिष्ट में तालुकेदारों द्वारा ब्रिटिश सरकार को लड़ाई चंदा दिए जाने का उल्लेख किया गया है। तीसरे में किसानों के लिए बाबा रामचन्द्र की 22 प्रतिज्ञाओं का उल्लेख है। चौथे में प्रतापगढ़ किसान सभा की नियमावली दी गई है। पांचवें परिशिष्ट में गणेश शंकर विद्यार्थी (संपादक: प्रताप) के पक्ष में 65 गवाहों की सूची दी गई है जिनमें नेहरू और मदन मोहन मालवीय भी शामिल थे। छठे में मुंशीगंज पुल पर गोली चलाए जाने की घटना का उल्लेख है। सातवें परिशिष्ट में मुंशीगंज पुल पर गोली चलाए जाने से मारे गए 21 किसानों की सूची दी गई है जो वहां के स्मारक पर दर्ज है। परिशिष्ट आठ में मुंशीगंज पुल गोलीकांड में घायलों की सरकारी सूची दी गई है और नौवें परिशिष्ट में इस गोलीकांड में मारे गए 6

लोगों की सूची दी गई है।

यह किताब कुल ग्यारह अध्यायों में अच्छी तरह से व्यवस्थित है। प्रथम अध्याय में ब्रिटिश भारत के भू-कर व्यवस्था के बारे में उल्लेख किया गया है जो ईस्ट इंडिया कंपनी द्वारा 1757 के प्लासी युद्ध के बाद भारत में पांव जमा लेने के बाद, 22 मार्च,

1793 से प्रारंभ की गई थी। यहां आगरा और धौलपुर में क्रमश 1669 और 1672 में हुए जाट विद्रोह का उल्लेख किया गया है। दूसरे अध्याय में ब्रिटिश इंडिया में किसानों और मजदूरों के विद्रोह पर ध्यान आकृष्ट किया गया है। पुस्तक में पूरे भारत के किसान विद्रोहों का संक्षिप्त विवरण दिया गया है जैसे कि निम्न जातियों का 1767-1777 का चुआड़ विद्रोह, 1770-77 का चरो विद्रोह, 1772 का संन्यासी-फकीर विद्रोह जो मंजू शाह के नेतृत्व में हुआ। संन्यासी विद्रोह मूलतः भू-कर के उच्च दर के विरोध में हुए जो 1817-25, 1831, 1843 में भी जारी रहे। साहूकारों द्वारा लगान बढ़ाने के विरुद्ध सबसे बड़ा विद्रोह 1855-56 में संथाल में देखने को मिला। नील की जबरिया खेती कराए जाने के कारण 1859-60 में नील विद्रोह हुआ।

1920 तक ब्रिटिश सरकार ने अपने आर्थिक हितों के लिए 35,000 मील रेल लाइनें बिछा दी थीं जो विश्व की चौथी बड़ी रेल लाइन थी। 1917 में ब्रिटिश जमींदारों के विरुद्ध चम्पारन में किसान विद्रोह हुआ जिसे गांधी जी ने संगठित



किया था. 1920 के आसपास अनेक किसान और मजदूर विद्रोह हुए. सांप्रदायिक दंगे हुए. 1917 के रूसी बोल्शेविक क्रांति के प्रभाव में भारत में कुल 110 मजदूर आंदोलन हुए जिनमें 25 लाख के लगभग मजदूरों ने भाग लिया. 1921 में 48 मजदूर यूनियनों बंबई में सक्रिय थीं. 1921 में दक्षिण भारत में मोपिला विद्रोह देखने को मिला जिसमें हजारों जानें गईं. मोपिला विद्रोही कैदियों को मालवाहक ट्रेन में ठूस-ठूसकर बंद किए जाने के कारण 70 कैदियों ने दम तोड़ दिया था. मोपिला विद्रोह में 3266 किसान मारे गए थे. 1927 में गुजरात में बारदोली किसान सत्याग्रह का नेतृत्व बल्लभ भाई पटेल ने किया. सहजानंद सरस्वती के परिदृश्य पर आने के बाद 1930 तक अनेक किसान संगठन देखने को मिले. 1947 के पहले और बाद में तेभागा किसान विद्रोह दिखाई दिया.

उपरोक्त के अलावा लेखक ने और भी किसान आंदोलनों का उल्लेख किया है मगर सामान्य तौर पर उन्होंने 1920-22 के अवधि किसान विद्रोह पर अपना ध्यान केंद्रित किया है और मदारी पासी के एका आंदोलन पर लंदन के अखबारों में हुई चर्चा को पहली बार प्रामाणिकता के साथ प्रस्तुत किया है.

तीसरे अध्याय में लेखक ने संयुक्त प्रांत के किसान विद्रोहों की पृष्ठभूमि की चर्चा की है. इससे 1857 में शामिल अवधि प्रांत के किसान विद्रोहों को समझने में सुविधा होती है. अवधि के सामंत इतने निर्दयी थे कि उनके राज्यों में 1877 से 1900 के मध्य सात बार सूखे पड़े और उनमें 15 लाख लोग मारे गए तथापि सामंतों ने बेगार कराना और नजराना वसूल करना बंद नहीं किया.

पुस्तक के अगले पांच अध्यायों में लेखक ने मुख्यतः पांच जिलों—प्रतापगढ़, रायबरेली, फैजाबाद, सुल्तानपुर और हरदोई

में हुए किसान विद्रोहों की चर्चा की है. पांचवें अध्याय में प्रतापगढ़ के किसान विद्रोह की चर्चा करते हुए लेखक ने 1901 के सर्वेक्षण के आधार पर सामाजिक-आर्थिक आंकड़ों को प्रस्तुत करते हुए प्रतापगढ़ की 9 लाख की जनसंख्या में खेती किसानी करने वाली कुर्मी जाति की जनसंख्या को सर्वाधिक बताया है जो लगभग एक लाख के बराबर थी. दूसरे और तीसरे स्थान पर क्रमशः ब्राह्मण और राजपूत थे. अवधि का किसान विद्रोह प्रतापगढ़ जिले से प्रारंभ हुआ था जहां किसानों की भीड़ ने एक बार बाबा रामचन्द्र को जेल से मुक्त करा लेने में सफलता पाई थी. वहां पर निम्न जातियों के 20 से 25 किसान सभाओं को खड़ा करने में झिंगुरी सिंह ने सफलता पाई थी.

फिजी से लौटे बाबा रामचन्द्र का प्रभाव 1920-21 में चरम पर रहा. वह रामकथा वाचक थे. प्रतापगढ़ के गांवों में जून, 1920 के आसपास लगभग 50 किसान सभा की शाखाएं खुल गई थीं. किसानों को जोड़ने के लिए आठ प्रतिज्ञाएं कराई जा रही थीं. सामंत विरोधी आठ प्रतिज्ञाओं में जमींदारों और किसानों के बीच सौहार्द पैदा करना, किसानों को सामाजिक और राजनीतिक अधिकारों के संबंध में शिक्षित करना, किसानों के लिए लाभदायक कानून बनाना, गैर कानूनी कृत्यों से रक्षा करना, लाभदायक शिक्षा का प्रचार, ग्राम पंचायतों की स्थापना, शासक और शासित के बीच मधुर संबंध और खेती-किसानी के कल्याण के लिए कार्य करना, शामिल थीं. लेखक के अनुसार किसान सभा की ये अपीलें बेहद कमजोर थीं. पंडित नेहरू और गौरी शंकर जिले में सितंबर, 1920 में तब आए जब 10-11 सितंबर को कचहरी में निम्न जातियों के किसानों की छह हजार की भारी भीड़ जमा थी. किसानों ने 38 घंटे तक आंदोलन चलाया था. यह आंदोलन निर्दयी तालुकदारों

के विरुद्ध था. इसी आंदोलन के बाद जांच के लिए नरमगंठी डिप्टी कमिश्नर वी.एन. मेहता के नेतृत्व में 'मेहता कमेटी' का गठन हुआ था.

पुस्तक के छठें अध्याय में रायबरेली के किसान विद्रोह पर ध्यान केंद्रित किया गया है. जिले की दस लाख जनसंख्या में से नब्बे प्रतिशत हिंदू थे. रायबरेली शहर की जनसंख्या 18 हजार के लगभग थी. वहां निम्नजातियों के किसानों पर बेइतहा जुल्म ढाए जा रहे थे जिसके कारण 1921 में स्वतःस्फूर्त दंगे से किसान विद्रोह फूट पड़ा. पहला हिंसक विद्रोह 2 जनवरी को उड़वा में प्रकाश में आया. किसानों की 8 से 10 हजार की भीड़ ने दिनांक 6 जनवरी को फुरसतगंज और 7 जनवरी को मुंशीगंज बाजार पर धावा बोल दिया. फुरसतगंज कांड में सरकारी सूचनानुसार चार किसान मारे गए थे और 24 गिरफ्तार किए गए. इनमें से अधिकांश मुराई, पासी, चमार, कुर्मी, कोरी, भुजी जातियों के लोग शामिल थे. मुंशीगंज पुल पर तीन हजार से लेकर दस हजार तक की भीड़ जमा हो गई थी. मनाही के बावजूद वहां पंडित नेहरू पहुंचे थे. उन्होंने तीन से चार हजार किसानों की भीड़ को संबोधित किया था. एक तालुकदार वीरपाल सिंह ने गोली चलाकर किसानों को उत्तेजित कर दिया. वहां सेना द्वारा 15 राउंड गोली चलाई गई. यहां तक कि ब्रिटिश अखबार भी गोली चलाए जाने का उल्लेख किए थे. 600 किसानों को गिरफ्तार किया गया था. विस्फोटक स्थिति 11-12 जनवरी तक नियंत्रण में आ पाई. सरकारी आंकड़ों के अनुसार छह किसान मारे गए थे और 18 घायल हुए थे. गणेश शंकर विद्यार्थी के संपादन में निकलने वाले अखबार प्रताप ने इस घटना को सचित्र प्रकाशित किया था. उनके विरुद्ध मानहानि का मुकदमा चला जिसमें सुप्रसिद्ध साहित्यकार वृंदालाल वर्मा ने भी मदद की थी. मोतीलाल नेहरू, जवाहरलाल नेहरू और मदन मोहन

मालवीय ने भी उस मुकदमे में विद्यार्थी जी के पक्ष में गवाही दी थी. इनके अलावा अन्य क्षेत्रों में भी किसान विद्रोह देखे गए.

लेखक ने सातवें अध्याय में फैजाबाद किसान विद्रोह पर ध्यान केंद्रित किया है. फैजाबाद, 1760-80 तक अवध की राजधानी थी. 1921 में शहर की जनसंख्या अस्सी हजार थी. अमेरिकी अखबार न्यू कैसल न्यूज के अनुसार फरवरी 1921 में संयुक्त प्रांत के विद्रोही किसानों को कुचलने के लिए दस हजार घुड़सवार सेना भेजी गई थी. यहां पर मुख्यतः निम्न और अछूत जातियों के किसान, ब्राह्मण भू-स्वामियों के विरुद्ध विद्रोह कर रहे थे. फैजाबाद में बाबा रामचन्द्र का कोई प्रभाव न था. यहां के किसान विद्रोहों का नेतृत्व युवा क्रांतिकारियों, देव नारायण पांडेय, केदारनाथ और सूरज प्रसाद या छोटा रामचन्द्र के हाथों में था. छोटा रामचन्द्र ने तो समानांतर सत्ता की स्थापना कर ली थी. ये विद्रोही एक-दूसरे को पसंद नहीं करते थे और कांग्रेस पार्टी, बोल्शेविक विचार से प्रभावित उन किसान आंदोलनकारियों को पसंद नहीं करती थी जो भूमिहीनों और निम्न जातियों के किसानों को संगठित कर रहे थे. एक निर्दयी तालुकेदार अबू जफर, किसानों से जबरदस्ती अफीम की खेती कराता था. लंदन के अखबारों ने जनवरी, 1921 में लगभग 37 गांवों में फैले किसान विद्रोहों का उल्लेख किया है. फैजाबाद से 77 किलोमीटर दूर बसखारी में किसान विद्रोह की गूंज सुनाई पड़ी. एक आलोपी नाम के निर्दयी जमींदार ने 19 जनवरी, 1921 को देवनारायण और केदारनाथ पर आक्रमण कर दिया था. 27 जनवरी को गौहन्ना में 30-40 हजार किसान जमा हुए. वहां चली पांच घंटे की सभा को नेहरू ने भी संबोधित किया था. सभा में हिंदू-मुस्लिम एकता भी देखी गई थी.

छोटा रामचन्द्र भूमिहीन किसान था

और क्रांतिकारी स्वभाव का था. उसकी गिरफ्तारी तिथि 29 जनवरी, 1921 के बाद गोसाईगंज रेलवे स्टेशन पर किसानों ने विद्रोह कर दिया. वहां जमा पांच हजार किसानों की भीड़ पर गोली चलाई गई. किसी के हताहत होने की जानकारी नहीं दी गई मगर घायलों की संख्या बहुत ज्यादा बताई गई थी. 1922 के आसपास अकबरपुर क्षेत्र का एक और किसान विद्रोही नेता चर्चित हुआ था जिसका नाम अहमद खलील था.

आठवें अध्याय में सुल्तानपुर के किसान विद्रोह पर फोकस किया गया है जहां 14 नवंबर, 1920 को किसान सभा का गठन किया गया था. लखनऊ और गोंडा में भी किसान सभा के गठन की जानकारी दी गई है. इस प्रकार पूरे अवध प्रांत में सामंती जुल्म के विरोध में किसान विद्रोहों के बारे में जानकारी उपलब्ध है. नौवें अध्याय में हरदोई के प्रमुख एका आंदोलन का उल्लेख किया गया है जिसका नेतृत्व मदारी पासी कर रहे थे. वहां के गांवों में सुपारी बांटकर एका सभा आयोजित की जा रही थी. गीता और कुरान, हिंदू और मुस्लिमों के धार्मिक ग्रंथों को सभा में रखा जाता था. लंदन के अखबार, डेली मेल ने मार्च 1922 में इस आंदोलन को खतरनाक बताया था.

मदारी पासी के बारे में जो सूचनाएं उपलब्ध हैं, उनके अनुसार उनका जन्म 1860 के लगभग गांव मोहनखेड़ा, तहसील संडीला में हुआ था. उनकी मृत्यु सत्तर साल की उम्र में 1930 में हुई. भगत सिंह से मदारी पासी की मुलाकात की जो कहानी बताई जाती है वह किसी तथ्य पर आधारित नहीं है. लेखक ने उसे कपोलकल्पित माना है. ब्रिटिश अभिलेखों में मदारी पासी के गिरफ्तार होने, मुकदमा चलाए जाने का कहीं कोई उल्लेख नहीं है. साहित्यकार कामतानाथ ने अपने उपन्यास कालकथा

में मदारी पासी के चरित्र का वर्णन किया है. इनके अलावा भी कई किसान विद्रोही थे, जिनका 1922 के मध्य तक सेना द्वारा दमन कर दिया गया था. यहां मदारी पासी के बारे में पहली बार विस्तृत एवं प्रामाणिक सामग्री देखने को मिलती है.

दसवें अध्याय में किसान विद्रोहों के संबंध में गांधी जी की भूमिका का जिक्र किया गया है जिनको 1917 के चम्पारन किसान आंदोलन के बाद भारतीय राजनीति में स्थापित किया जा चुका था. गांधी ने बाबा रामचन्द्र के साथ 25 नवंबर, 1920 को दस हजार के किसानों की सभा को संबोधित किया था. बाबा रामचन्द्र को 10 फरवरी, 1921 को गांधी जी की उपस्थिति में गिरफ्तार कर लिया गया था. सहजानंद सरस्वती ने भी किसान आंदोलनों में गांधी की भूमिका को जमींदारपरस्त बताया है. लेखक ने सी.एफ. एन्ड्रूज के करीबी, डॉ. मणिलाल का भी उल्लेख किया है जिन्होंने फिजी और मारिशस में भारतीयों को संगठित करने में महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका अदा की थी.

अंतिम अध्याय में उपसंहार के तौर पर लेखक ने बताया है कि बाबा रामचन्द्र 1923 में जेल से मुक्त हुए और कांग्रेस के लिए काम करने लगे. 1924 में उन पर किसान सभा के धन के दुरुपयोग का आरोप लगा. उन्होंने 1929 में एक बार फिर किसान मुद्दों पर आंदोलन की कोशिश की. 1930 में जवाहरलाल नेहरू कांग्रेस के अध्यक्ष चुने गए लेकिन तब भी कांग्रेस ने किसान मुद्दों से दूरी बनाए रखना उचित समझा. अंत में सी.पी.आई. के सहयोग से अखिल भारतीय किसान सभा का अस्तित्व 11 अप्रैल, 1936 को प्रकाश में आया और सहजानंद सरस्वती उसके अध्यक्ष बने. लगभग उसी समय पी.डब्ल्यू. ए. और ए.आई.एस.एफ. भी प्रकाश में आए. बाबा रामचन्द्र 1930, 1941 और



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1942 में जेल गए और 1950 में उनकी मृत्यु हो गई.

सुभाष चन्द्र कुशवाहा ने अपने शोध को क्रमबद्ध और व्यवस्थित तरीके से एक मंजे हुए शोधार्थी की तरह प्रस्तुत किया है. यह किताब, उनके 'चौरी चौरा विद्रोह और स्वाधीनता आंदोलन' किताब के बाद प्रकाश में आई है जिसका समय 1922 था और इस किताब का समय काल 1920 से 1922 है. कमोबेश दोनों किताबों का समय काल आसपास ही है. इस अध्ययन ने किसान आंदोलनों के उन पक्षों को उजागर किया है जिसे शोधार्थियों और वामपंथी विद्वानों ने भुला दिया था. जन नायकों को प्रमाण के साथ इतिहास में स्थापित करने का यह एक प्रशंसनीय कार्य माना जा सकता है. ब्रिटिश औपनिवेशिक काल में खेती-किसानी, सामाजिक परिवर्तन को प्रभावित करने वाला मुख्य कारक होते हुए भी, दमन और शोषण से तबाह थी. किसानों का दमन चरम पर था. नजराना और बेदखली से किसान टूट चुके थे. इसी कारण उन्होंने विद्रोह किया यद्यपि नेतृत्व की कमी के कारण उनका विद्रोह बिखरा-बिखरा रहा. लेखक ने फैजाबाद जिले के भूमिहीन और निम्न जातियों के किसानों के संघर्ष को विशेष तौर पर रेखांकित किया है. अवध किसान आंदोलन को तेभागा, तेलंगाना और पेप्सू के भूमिहीन किसान आंदोलन की कड़ी में ही अध्ययन किया जाना चाहिए.

**पुस्तक : अवध का किसान विद्रोह**  
**लेखक : सुभाष चन्द्र कुशवाहा**  
**प्रकाशक : राजकमल प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली**  
**मूल्य : 299 रुपए**

संपर्क : म.न. 2690, अरबन स्टेट, फेज-2, पटियाला-147002

मार्च, 2019

**लघुकथा**

**अनुशासनहीनता**

रमेशचन्द्र शर्मा

“बच्चो,” शिक्षक ने कहा, “आशावादी आधा भरा हुआ गिलास देखेगा जबकि निराशावादी आधा खाली गिलास देखेगा.”

“सर,” एक छात्र ने कहा, “जो भरा हुआ गिलास देखकर संतुष्ट हुआ वह खाली गिलास को भरने का कभी प्रयास नहीं करेगा क्योंकि वह इस बात से संतुष्ट है कि आधा ही सही मगर गिलास भरा हुआ तो है. मगर सर, जिसने गिलास आधा ही भरा देखा, उसके जेहन में हमेशा यह बात रहेगी कि गिलास आधा भरा है और सर, इसे पूरा भरना है.”

लड़के ने अपनी बात समाप्त करते हुए कहा, “सर, दुनिया में अब तक जितनी तरक्की हुई है, इसके पीछे संतुष्ट नहीं, बल्कि असंतुष्ट लोगों का बड़ा योगदान है. सर, संतुष्ट लोगों ने तो यही कहा है—रूखी-सूखी खाय के ठंडा पानी पीव, देख पराई झोंपड़ी मत ललचाए जीव.

लड़के के विचारों से शिक्षक ने प्रधानाध्यापक को अवगत कराया. लड़के को अनुशासनहीनता के आरोप में स्कूल से निष्कासित कर दिया गया.



संपर्क : द्वारा राधेश्याम पोरवाल  
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**फार्म-4**

प्रेस तथा पुस्तक पंजीयन अधिनियम की धारा 19 'डी' के अंतर्गत अपेक्षित 'हंस' नामक पत्रिका से संबंधित स्वामित्व और अन्य बातों का विवरण—

1. प्रकाशन का स्थान 2/36, अंसारी रोड, दरियागंज, नई दिल्ली-2
2. प्रकाशन की आवर्तता मासिक
3. मुद्रक का नाम रचना यादव खन्ना  
क्या भारतीय नागरिक हैं? हां  
पता 2/36, अंसारी रोड, दरियागंज, नई दिल्ली-2
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मैं रचना यादव खन्ना, एतद् द्वारा घोषित करती हूँ कि मेरी जानकारी और विश्वास के अनुसार उपरोक्त विवरण सही हैं.

—रचना यादव खन्ना



## Book review

Norwich, B. (2017) *Experiencing special educational needs and disability: lessons for practice*. London: Open McGraw-Hill Education, University Press.

*Hannah Roberts*

As the SENCo in a large junior school, this is possibly one of the most relatable books I have read when considering current policy and practice in the area of special needs. There will, without reservation, be pupils within your school setting or wider professional experience that mirror or share similarities with the chosen case studies in this book. As a result, the content is extremely accessible and relevant.

It is not a book that preaches how to be perfect, and it does not leave you feeling like you are failing children with additional needs either. Instead it encourages the reader to be reflective about the provision in place for specific areas of need and to strive for improvements that are realistic in terms of school budget and resources.

Each case study offers something different to the reader; so while many of the headings are repeated in each chapter (giving a familiar structure), the content is as individual as the child it centres around. The chapters are succinct and the accounts are expertly illuminating, partly because they are concise and to the point.

It brings to light key issues for schools trying to meet diverse and often complex needs at a time when services are becoming stretched. Equally, it illustrates the challenges and frustrations parents face in ensuring their child is in receipt of an education where provision is personalised and appropriately supported. As a practitioner I certainly felt that many of those issues were shared and common to both parties. One example of this is the

parent of Marian (p. 11), who, when talking about Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans, states:

*'I think it's not enforceable. there's not the finances when considering EHC Plans. This reflects hugely on practitioners who feel they never do their job well enough because there isn't the resources and of course this leads to parental mistrust.'*

Each case study reinforces and reminds us that positive relationships are often key to success and addressing the dilemmas faced.

We are in a fortunate position where we can break down barriers that affect how both children with additional needs and parents of those individuals are perceived and supported in practical ways that also ensure empathy and understanding.

What this book does so effectively is that it allows honest and open expression of experiences from different perspectives, with the child placed at the centre. In doing so, it not only identifies negative practices, but also celebrates positive models. For me, anyone working with children or young people with special educational needs and disabilities should read this. The reader will come away with strategies to break down barriers, to increase the tolerance and acceptance of children within their own setting and ultimately improve provision, practice and, vitally, relationships.

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*Inclusive edu. ✓*



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Extended book reviews



their ability to provide humanitarian assistance abroad and military modernization efforts, as examples of India's economic growth. By extension, her suggested policies to bring India closer to the US, also stem from a neo-liberal stance. She questions India's tentativeness on removing its protectionist policies and argues that it was 'understandable as an anti-colonial strategy' but unsuitable for today's interconnected economy.

While she does bring up a range of major domestic problems such as unemployment or parliamentary gridlock in her book, these do not figure in her recommendations or in her overall thesis of over-optimism. In the book, Ayres identifies that unions and conservative rural voters have held back India's progress by articulating their preference to remain a semi-isolationist economy due to their vulnerability to market fluctuations. She then proposes the removal of protectionist policies to speed up the growth of the Indian economy.

However, the recent spate of farmer protests and suicides in India serve as an example of why this recommendation would be contradictory to resolve domestic problems. The agricultural distress stems from a decline in state protection for farmers' vulnerability to commodity markets. Since rural India holds 66 per cent of India's population, with 43 per cent being employed in agriculture, and occupying 342 out of 543 electoral seats, the political clout of the rural vote is too large for the Indian government to simply implement open market policies which would affect the rural population significantly. The February 2019 announcement during the Indian interim budget of the PM Kisan scheme, which will provide farmers Rs 6,000 per year as income support, came three months before the start of the India's April 2019 parliamentary elections. The perceived need to offer subsidies to rural voters reveals the inability of the Indian government to decrease such subsidies, let alone remove them. Ayres proposed recommendation of doing away with subsidies to rural voters appears context-removed and contradictory to actual solutions targeted at domestic issues.

One of the recurring themes in Ayres' book is the insight she provides into Indian security and foreign policy formulation today based on the ancient Indian political treatise of *Arthashastra* by Chanakya. Ayres uses the political philosophies, such as the mandala theory, laid out in the *Arthashastra* to explain India's difficult relationship with its neighbours. Using *Arthashastra*'s philosophy that 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend', Ayres argues that this explains India's volatile relationship with its immediate neighbours Pakistan and China. Yet while this philosophy

might explain India's tumultuous relationship with its neighbours, the settling of the boundary dispute with Bangladesh under Modi and the recent soft power outreach to its regional neighbours Myanmar and Nepal by establishing a history based Buddhist connection with them, illustrates that difficult relationships with neighbours can be overcome through targeted policy outreach programmes by the Indian government.

Overall, Ayres brings her significant study and analysis of India to bear in 'Our Time has Come', arguing that India is heading for a bright future on the world stage citing examples of its economic, geo-strategic and diplomatic strength. While her neo-liberal and US-centric lens leads her to downplay the gravity, for example, of fractured Indian governance and leads her to be over-optimistic on the feasibility of instituting her recommended neo-liberal reforms, Ayres provides rich historical insights into India's geo-strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific. These make the book well-worth reading.

Vani Swarupa Murali

Research Analyst, ISAS,

National University of Singapore

**OPEN EMBRACE: India-US Ties in the Age of Modi and Trump** by Varghese K. George. Penguin India, Gurugram. 2018.

HOW similar are Modi and Trump, and their respective foreign policies? Convergences and contrasts between BJP-ruled India and 'America First'-obsessed United States are the focus of *Open Embrace: India-US Ties in the Age of Modi and Trump*. Author Varghese K. George argues that ideological affinity makes the two leaders and their countries 'natural allies', yet unsettled questions – ranging from trade balance to US policy towards Pakistan – prevent their 'embrace' to come to a 'close' just yet.

On the one hand, there is Trump's America, a 'combination of neoconservatism and mercantilism' (p.16), whose Manichean view of the world, according to George, is rooted in a deep identity crisis. On the other hand, Modi's India: militaristic, assertive, *Vishwa Guru* (teacher of the world, global leader) and destined superpower; understanding China through the lenses of ultra-realism, and Pakistan and Kashmir through those of the 'clash of civilization'.

There is no doubt about the fact that Hindutva – i.e. 'political Hinduism' – has framed the Modi government's policies within India since the BJP's 2014

electoral victory. George goes a step further, maintaining that far from being limited to the realm of Indian domestic politics, Hindutva's shaping role encompasses India's foreign policy as well, giving birth to what he dubs 'the Hindutva Strategic Doctrine'.

The Hindutva Strategic Doctrine is a compelling and plausible thesis that George presents with plenty of details. However, his arguments are partly contradictory. If Hindutva is the basis of Modi's approach to international affairs, the latter shall presumably result in a policy distinct from previous foreign policy directions. Nevertheless, George also argues that Modi – and Trump like him – is mainly continuing on the path established earlier, in spite of claims of a 'new course'. Moreover, if the revanchist US and rising India are 'natural allies', it is not completely clear to what extent such a potential US-India alliance would be viable, if a gradual retreat of America is equally desired, as the author maintains, to provide necessary strategic space for New Delhi's ascent.

Another compelling part of the book is the author's take on the popularity of Modi among Indian-Americans. He suggests that caste plays a role in the diaspora's support for Hindutva: Indian immigrants, predominantly upper caste, preserve a sense of disempowerment and are receptive to the BJP's condemnation of appeasement politics implemented by former governments.

George also reviews India-US ties vis-à-vis the relations with most relevant actors, i.e. China and Pakistan. While doing so, however, he mainly focuses on the past rather than on current affairs and their possible development. On the issue of terror, he highlights that both Trump and Modi have a similar policy of applying force as the solution to Islamist terrorism. George places Pakistan's policies at the centre of the destabilization affecting the region, including the prolonged Afghanistan conflict, the Kashmir conundrum and the spillover of Islamic terrorism into India, and suggests that Pakistani leaders have successfully fooled the Americans in the past. Americans too are presented as misguided and deceptive, with an overly simplistic conception of India as Hindu, and a limited understanding of Islam. The author argues that the US approach to the region has lacked a forward-looking vision and has often tried to use a country against the other, like in the case of China and India, based on the need of the hour. George highlights the old argument that theocratic Pakistan was preferred to democratic and secular India.

Overall, the book offers a comprehensive account of Indo-American relations and of the way Modi's and

Trump's rise to power introduced changes. It argues that the two leaders' visions of their respective countries and of their foreign policy show remarkable ideological similarities, and that these similarities influence their relations with each other and the rest of the world. George's book suggests that since Hindutva shapes Modi's domestic and international agenda, analysis of the two should not be separated. Its take on Modi's foreign policy is also distinct from that of other analysts who claim that he has a pragmatic and non-ideological worldview. In fact, according to George, in Modi's doctrine there is no contradiction between *vikas* (progress) and ideology, as his politics are development-oriented and Hindutva-grounded at the same time.

The main contribution of the book is the idea of a 'Hindutva Strategic Doctrine' sustaining Modi's approach to international affairs, and its comparison with Trump's agenda. The ideological underpinnings of Trump and his political behaviour are not new. White supremacy, misogyny, Islamophobia, revanchism, racism, and xenophobia – to name a few – have been widely identified as pillars of Trumpism and its policies – both domestic and international. The ideological foundations of the Bharatiya Janata Party are equally well known. What this book brings to the table is an explicit comparison of the two ideologies – Trumpism and Modi's Hindutva – as well as a demonstration of how the latter structures India's international performance.

The author, Associate Editor of *The Hindu*, brings his journalistic style into the prose of the book, which abounds of long quotes from political speeches, extracts from interviews and reports, and concessions to first-person narration. The book is less structured and theoretical, compared to traditional treaties by political scientists, strategists, or historians, but also an easier and lighter read.

Those looking for clear-cut conclusions on India-US ties will not fail to notice that the book ends with a short afterword and without a conclusive chapter. It is probably not supposed to have one, as the political phenomena and international relations considered are in a state of flux, preventing the delivery of any final verdict. Under Trump and Modi, the US and India have found new common ground in terms of political beliefs and goals. At the same time, various questions remain unsolved. These include bilateral issues like the trade surplus targeted by Trump, India's own dislike for alliances and attachment to strategic autonomy, and both countries' fluctuating relations with China and Pakistan. The title of the book, a phrase George borrowed from strategic expert Tanvi Madan (p.59) might justify the

### परख

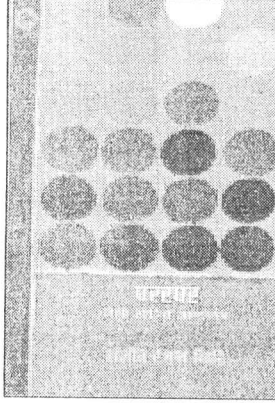
अपनी अभिव्यक्ति-क्षमता के कारण ही मनुष्य की एक संज्ञा 'व्यक्ति' भी है. अभिव्यक्ति की यह क्षमता भाषा के ही माध्यम से मनुष्य को हासिल है. 'काव्यादर्श' में दण्डी की उक्ति है— "इदमन्धंतमः कृत्स्नं जायेत् भुवनत्रयम्/यदि शब्दाहयं ज्योतिरासंसारं न दीप्यते."—यानी यह त्रिभुवन घोर अंधकार से आच्छादित हो जाता, यदि सृष्टि के प्रारंभ से ही शब्द (भाषा) का प्रकाश संसार में व्याप्त नहीं हुआ होता. भाषा, साहित्य और आंदोलन विषयक विमर्श से जुड़ी युवा आलोचक राजीव रंजन गिरि की एक सार्थक पुस्तक 'परस्पर' नाम से हाल ही में प्रकाशित हुई है, जो भाषा और बोली के अंतर्संबंधों को रूपायित करने के साथ-साथ, इनसे जुड़े आंदोलनों के निहितार्थों और परिणामों को प्रमुखता से रेखांकित करती है. वस्तुतः भारत में भाषायी अस्मिता के बहुआयामी विन्यास, प्रकृति और संभावनाओं की पड़ताल करने वाली यह एक सार्थक-और गंभीर कृति है.

'परस्पर' का भाषा विषयक विमर्श तीन अध्यायों में विभक्त है—प्रथम अध्याय में उन्नीसवीं सदी में ब्रजभाषा बनाम खड़ी बोली विवाद को व्यापक फलक पर प्रस्तुत करते हुए कई शोधपरक स्थापनाएं भी दी गई हैं. दूसरे अध्याय में राष्ट्र-निर्माण के सपनों के संदर्भ में संविधान-सभा की कार्यवाही आदि के जरिए भाषा-विमर्श को एक तार्किक आधार प्रदान करने की कोशिश की गई है, जिससे तथ्यों के विवेचन में सारगर्भिता और मौलिकता समाहित हो

सकी है. पुस्तक का तीसरा अध्याय लघु पत्रिकाओं के आंदोलन, उनकी संरचना और प्रकृति तथा प्रासंगिकता पर सार्थक रूप से विचार करने के लिए कई गंभीर प्रश्न खड़े करता हुआ दिखता है, जो भाषा और साहित्य के अंतर्संबंधों और पारस्परिक व्यवहार का भी सूत्रण करता है.

उन्नीसवीं सदी में ब्रजभाषा बनाम खड़ी बोली के विवाद पर युवा समालोचक राजीव रंजन ने बड़ी बारीकी से नजर दौड़ाई है तथा कई ऐसी शोधमूलक बातें भी सामने लाने की कोशिश की है, जिनकी वजह इस सवाल को एक नई दिशा और दृष्टि भी मिल सकी है. युवा आलोचक की यही मौलिकता और वस्तुपरक दृष्टि उसे गंभीरता से आगे भी पढ़े और समझे जाने के लिए प्रेरित करेगी.

'परस्पर' के प्रथम अध्याय में बोली और भाषा के सवाल को गंभीरता के साथ उठाते हुए लेखक ने इसके ऐतिहासिक पहलुओं को भी ध्यान में रखा है. लेखक ने बड़ी विनम्रता से इस अध्याय में यह स्पष्ट करने की कोशिश की है कि हिंदी को कैसे भाषा का दर्जा मिल गया और दूसरी ओर 'ब्रजभाषा' एक बोली के रूप में सिमटकर रह गई. हिंदी साहित्य में खड़ी बोली हिंदी को एक भाषा के रूप में प्रतिष्ठित करने का श्रेय सीधे तौर पर भारतेन्दु और उनकी मंडली के रचनाकारों तथा आचार्य महावीर प्रसाद द्विवेदी और उनकी पत्रिका 'सरस्वती' के प्रयासों को मिला है. राजीव रंजन गिरि ने एक सवाल



यहां यह खड़ा किया है कि भारतेन्दु के निधन (1885) और 'सरस्वती' के प्रकाशन की शुरुआत (1900-1903) के बीच के कालखंड में खड़ी बोली के विकास हेतु किए गए प्रयासों को आखिर नजरअंदाज क्यों किया गया? राजीव रंजन ने 'हिंदी साहित्य का इतिहास' लिखने वाले

आचार्य रामचंद्र शुक्ल की एतद् विषयक स्थापनाओं से दूरी बनाते हुए मुजफ्फरपुर निवासी पं. अयोध्या प्रसाद खत्री की भूमिका को रेखांकित करने का सार्थक प्रयास किया है. खत्री जी ने खड़ी बोली बनाम ब्रजभाषा को आंदोलन का रूप दिया था. उन्होंने खड़ी बोली का पद्य (दो भाग) प्रकाशित कराकर डॉ. ग्रियर्सन सहित उस समय के कई विद्वानों को मंतव्य के लिए भेजा था. भारतेन्दु, पं. प्रताप नारायण मिश्र, बालकृष्ण भट्ट, राधाकृष्ण गोस्वामी, श्रीधर पाठक, राजा शिव प्रसाद 'सितारेहिंद' सरीखे कई विद्वानों के विचारों को राजीव रंजन ने 'बिहार-बंधु', 'ब्राह्मण', 'पीयूष-प्रवाह', 'हिंदी प्रदीप', 'भारत जीवन', 'हिंदोस्तान' आदि के हवाले से प्रस्तुत भी किया है. राजीव रंजन बताते हैं कि कैसे भारतेन्दु और उनके साथियों ने ब्रजभाषा को ही काव्यभाषा बनाए रखने की वकालत की थी. श्रीधर पाठक ने खड़ी बोली की कविता में संस्कृतनिष्ठता को श्रेयस्कर माना था. भारतेन्दु ने अपने प्रिय कवित्त, सवैया आदि छंदों के अनुकूल खड़ी बोली को नहीं पाते हुए ब्रजभाषा को ही काव्यगत कोमलता और हृदयस्पर्शिता के अनुकूल माना था. लेखक ने स्पष्ट किया है कि भारतेन्दु

और उनके अनुयायियों का विरोध करते हुए तब पं. अयोध्या प्रसाद खत्री ने ही खड़ी बोली पद्य के रूप में 'मुंशी स्टाइल खड़ी बोली' को आदर्श माना था. अयोध्या प्रसाद खत्री भाषा-नीति के लिहाज न यद्यपि राजा शिव प्रसाद 'सितारेहिंद' के ज्यादा करीब थे, किंतु वे राय सोहन लाल की भाषा को आदर्श मानते थे. वे खड़ी बोली की लोकतांत्रिक प्रकृति को उभारने के उद्देश्य से हिंदी-उर्दू लेखकों के पारस्परिक सहयोग के हिमायती थे. पं. अयोध्या प्रसाद खत्री भारतेन्दु को शब्द-शास्त्र की जानकारी के मामले में अनाड़ी मानते थे. अयोध्या प्रसाद खत्री के भाषा विषयक चिंतन के जरिए युवा आलोचक राजीव ने रामचंद्र शुक्ल की उन यत्नज असंगत स्थापनाओं पर भी सवाल खड़े किए हैं, जो प्राकृतिक न्याय या तार्किकता के निकषों पर खरा उतरने के बजाय स्थानीयता के आग्रहों के ज्यादा वशीभूत नजर आती हैं.

इस पुस्तक का सर्वाधिक महत्वपूर्ण और पठनीय इसका द्वितीय अध्याय है, जिसमें राष्ट्र-निर्माण के सपनों के संदर्भ में राष्ट्रियता की अवधारणा तथा संविधान-सभा में हुए भाषा विषयक विमर्शों को प्रस्तुत किया गया है. इसी अध्याय में हिंदी की राष्ट्रभाषा के रूप में संभावनाओं और अन्य जनपदीय भाषाओं से उसके बनते-बिगड़ते रिश्तों की भी सही पड़ताल की गई है.

आज स्वतंत्र भारत में आजादी के 71 वर्षों बाद भी यह कहा जाता है कि हिंदी किसी पर लादी नहीं जानी चाहिए, नहीं तो देश टूट जाएगा. यह अत्यंत हास्यास्पद तर्क है. वस्तुतः आज हिंदी लादी नहीं जा रही, हिंदी लोग स्वेच्छा से पढ़-लिख रहे हैं. तमिलनाडु के नवजवान को राजधानी दिल्ली में रहकर 'सिविल सर्विसेज' की तैयारी करने के लिए बोलचाल हेतु हिंदी पढ़नी-समझनी पड़ती है. विदेशी बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनियां अपना व्यापार भारत में फैलाने के लिए हिंदी भाषा के विज्ञापनों को जारी

करती हैं और हिंदी भाषी युवाओं को धड़ल्ले से अपनी कंपनी में नियुक्त भी कर रही हैं. स्पष्ट है, हिंदी आज की आवश्यकताओं और बाजार की भी भाषा बन गई है.

आज यह एक वास्तविकता है कि संपर्क भाषा के रूप में, साहित्य की भाषा के रूप में, व्यापार की भाषा के रूप में, मनोरंजन की भाषा के रूप में—हर तरह से हिंदी की स्वीकार्यता बढ़ी है. हिंदी ज्ञान की भाषा बनने की दिशा में तेजी से आगे बढ़ रही है. हिंदी भाषी इलाकों में बढ़ी साक्षरता इसका एक प्रमुख कारण है. आज हिंदी समाज में यह संकल्प उभरा है कि अब सिर्फ ज्ञान ही नहीं चाहिए, बल्कि ज्ञान के इस उत्पादन में उन्हें भागीदारी भी चाहिए. संचार-क्रांति ने इस दिशा में उछेरक का काम किया है. आज 'इंटरनेट' की पहुंच उस आमजन तक है, जो गांवों की गरीब और मलिन बस्तियों में रहते हुए भी धड़ल्ले से एंड्रायड फोन का उपयोग कर रहा है. हिंदी में काफी संख्या में शॉर्ट फिल्में बन रही हैं. हर तरह के विषयों पर ब्लॉगों और वेबसाइटों की संख्या में लगातार इजाफा हो रहा है. ये सब स्थितियां हिंदी के बहुमुखी विकास का मार्ग-प्रशस्त कर रही हैं.

राजीव रंजन ने साफ तौर पर माना है कि इन सबके बावजूद हिंदी का संघर्ष भी कम नहीं है. उसे विभिन्न मोर्चों पर जूझना पड़ रहा है. हिंदी-उर्दू विवाद ने तो दोनों भाषाओं के हितों को तो नुकसान पहुंचाया ही है, हिंदी का झगड़ा अब उन भाषाओं या बोलियों से भी बढ़ता जा रहा है, जिनका खून अब भी हिंदी की रगों में दौड़ रहा है. अवधी, ब्रज, मैथिली, भोजपुरी, बुंदेलखंडी, राजस्थानी और अन्य कई पहाड़ी बोलियों का हिंदी से रिश्ता और बिगड़ता जा रहा है. हिंदी ने इन सहयोगी भाषाओं से लगातार शक्ति अर्जित करते हुए भी इनके साथ सद्भावपूर्ण व्यवहार नहीं किया है. हिंदी के तथाकथित कई हित-चिंतक इन सहयोगी भाषाओं या बोलियों के विकास में हिंदी का अहित देखते हैं. इन बोलियों

या भाषाओं के रचनाकार हिंदी को सम्मान के साथ देखते हैं, परंतु हिंदी जिसका इतिहास इन बोलियों के इतिहास से भी काफी बाद का है, इन बोलियों के अस्तित्व पर ही खतरा उत्पन्न कर रही है. हिंदी को इसकी वजह हिंदी पट्टी में ही संशय की दृष्टि से देखा जाने लगा है. आज बड़ी धूर्ततापूर्वक हिंदी के पाठ्यक्रम से लोकभाषाओं के श्रेष्ठ कवियों, जिन पर आज भी हिंदी गर्व करती है, उनको पाठ्यक्रमों से भी गायब किया जा रहा है. सूर, तुलसी, कबीर की जगह सिर्फ खड़ी बोली के कवियों को हिंदी का बताया जा रहा है. इसी का परिणाम है कि भिखारी ठाकुर को हिंदी के पाठ्यक्रम में बिहार में भी शामिल नहीं किया गया. भिखारी के जीवन-चरित्र और साहित्य को लेकर खड़ी बोली में कहानियां, उपन्यास और कविताएं तो लिखी जा सकती हैं, पर भिखारी के साहित्य को हिंदी में शामिल करने के समय कन्नी काट ली जाती है. संविधान की 'आठवीं अनुसूची' को शामिल नहीं करने के पीछे दलील दी जा रही है कि इनकी स्वतंत्र लिपि नहीं है. यह तर्क कितना हास्यास्पद है. हिंदी बगैर स्वतंत्र लिपि के राष्ट्रभाषा बन जाए कोई बात नहीं, परंतु भोजपुरी और राजस्थानी जैसी कतिपय बोलियां, जिनमें अकूत साहित्य-संपदा है और आज भी श्रेष्ठ साहित्य इनमें रचा जा रहा है, सांविधानिक संरक्षण हासिल नहीं कर सकतीं.

राजीव रंजन गिरि ने संविधान की 'आठवीं अनुसूची' में भाषाओं को शामिल किए जाने के पीछे छिपी राजनीतिक मंशाओं को उकेरकर अपनी पुस्तक की रोचकता तो बढ़ा ही दी है, इसे भाषायी विमर्श का एक अनिवार्य कारक भी बताने में चूक नहीं की है. उन्होंने पूरी साफगोई से स्वीकारा है कि क्षेत्रीय भाषाओं को दबाते हुए हिंदी की अस्मिता गढ़ने और उसको 'राष्ट्रभाषा' का दर्जा दिलाने के जो भी प्रयास होंगे, उनसे क्षेत्रीय भाषाओं का तो भयंकर अहित



हो ही जाएगा, हिंदी का 'राष्ट्रभाषा' बनने का सपना भी पूरा नहीं हो पाएगा. संविधान की आठवीं अनुसूची के मूल प्रस्ताव में सिर्फ 12 भाषाएं शामिल थीं. 'संविधान-सभा' में बहस के दौरान पं. नेहरू की पहल पर इसमें उर्दू को तथा श्री के.एम. मुंशी के अनुरोध पर संस्कृत को स्थान मिला. किंतु यहाँ यह स्मरणीय है कि 'संविधान सभा' के एक सदस्य श्री जयपाल सिंह जी के अनुरोध को दरकिनार कर किसी भी आदिवासी भाषा को इसमें शामिल नहीं किया गया. जयपाल जी ने देश की 176 आदिवासी भाषाओं में से सिर्फ 3 भाषाओं को इस 'अनुसूची' में सम्मिलित करने की मांग की थी. इस सूची के अवलोकन से यह स्पष्ट होता है कि तब इस सूची में संविधान-निर्माताओं ने उन्हीं भाषाओं को शामिल करने का मन बनाया था, जिनकी किसी न किसी रूप में हिंदी से प्रतिस्पर्धा थी, या यों कहें कि जिन्होंने हिंदी को लेकर अपने तनाव का इजहार किया था. मतलब कि हिंदी के प्रति सहयोग और सौहार्द्र का भाव रखने वाली भाषाएं इस 'अनुसूची' में शामिल होने के सौभाग्य से वंचित रह गईं. आज कालांतर में यह स्पष्ट हो चुका है कि जिन भाषाओं को इस 'आठवीं अनुसूची' में शामिल कर सवैधानिक संरक्षण प्रदान किया गया, उन्होंने यथासंभव विकास कर पाने में सफलता पाई, पर जो इस 'कवच' से वंचित रहीं, हिंदी आज उनको अपना विरोधी मानने पर तुली हुई है और हिंदी वाले राष्ट्रवादी सोच के वशीभूत इनकी हकमारी करने पर पूरी तरह उतारू हैं. इस मनोवृत्ति से जाने-अनजाने हिंदी का ही अहित हो रहा है. उस पर अभिजन संस्कृति की पोषिका होने का आरोप लग रहा है. हिंदी-पट्टी के देहाती इलाकों में हिंदी बोलने वालों को झोंपड़ियों में रहने वाली गरीब आम जनता 'अंग्रेजी झाड़ने वाला' ही कहती है. यह हिंदी वहाँ आज भी अंग्रेजी की तरह

मानसिकता वालों की भाषा है. वस्तुतः हिंदी की सहयोगी क्षेत्रीय जनपदीय भाषाओं को दबाने के पीछे जो तर्क दिए जाते हैं, वे पूरी तरह अलोकतांत्रिक भी हैं. भाषा और बोली के कृत्रिम अंतर के निरस्त किए जाने के बाद अब यह तर्क गढ़ लिया गया है कि संविधान की 'आठवीं अनुसूची' में शामिल होने को आकुल क्षेत्रीय भाषाओं में अभिव्यक्ति की पर्याप्त सामर्थ्य नहीं है. क्या ऐसा ही आरोप आज हिंदी पर भी अंग्रेजी वाले नहीं जड़ते? अंग्रेजी-आग्रहियों के ऐसे आरोपों से त्रस्त हिंदी वाले क्या उसी मनोवृत्ति के बल पर हिंदी को 'राष्ट्रभाषा' बनाना चाहते हैं, जिससे आज भी वे स्वयं त्रस्त हैं. क्या यह सच्चाई नहीं है कि 'आठवीं अनुसूची' का मान्यता-कवच प्राप्त हो जाने के बाद छत्तीसगढ़ी, संथाली, मैथिली आदि के विकास और प्रसार के मार्ग अधिक प्रशस्त हुए हैं? फिर आज भोजपुरी, राजस्थानी आदि क्षेत्रीय भाषाओं को लेकर क्यों बहाने ढूँढे जाने लगे हैं?

आज जब हम स्वतंत्र भारत में हिंदी को 'राष्ट्रभाषा' बनाए जाने के सवाल पर विचार कर रहे हैं तो हमें हिंदी को लेकर उठने वाली आपत्तियों के साथ-साथ हिंदी के लोकतांत्रिक चरित्र को लेकर भी संजीदा होना होगा.

पुस्तक का तीसरा अध्याय लघु पत्रिकाओं के आंदोलन, उनकी संरचना, प्रकृति और प्रासंगिकता पर आधारित है. यह अध्याय ऊपरी तौर से देखने पर पुस्तक के केंद्रीय विषय से थोड़ी दूरी बनाए हुए जरूर दिखता है; परंतु लघु पत्रिकाओं ने भाषा और साहित्यिक विमर्शों को धारदार बनाने के साथ-साथ उनकी गति-मति निर्धारित और नियंत्रित करने में जो भूमिका निभाई है, उसकी बदौलत इस अध्याय की प्रासंगिकता सहजतया समझ में आ जाती है.

आलोचक राजीव रंजन गिरि के तीन शोध-निबंधों का एक ऐसा संग्रह है, जिसमें न केवल हिंदी भाषा के विमर्श और संघर्षों

के लंबे इतिहास पर एक संतोषप्रद दृष्टि डाली गई है, बल्कि हिंदी-विकास की भावी संभावनाओं के मद्देनजर उन आशंकाओं को भी इसमें संतुलित ढंग से विवेचित किया गया है ताकि हिंदी और उसकी सहयोगी जनपदीय भाषाओं के साथ के उसके रिश्ते में उभर रही खटास को कमतर किया जा सके. गांधी-जयंती के 150वें वर्ष में गांधी-साहित्य की भी बेहतर समझ रखने वाले इस युवा आलोचक ने इस पुस्तक के प्रणयन के पीछे राष्ट्रभाषा के रूप में गांधी की हिमायत को निश्चय ही अपने दिमाग में आदरपूर्वक बनाए रखा होगा. गांधी ने अपने समकालीन स्व. अनुसूया प्रसाद पाठक को हिंदी के विकास के संदर्भ में लिखा था कि—'मेरे प्रिय अठारह रचनात्मक कार्यों में हिंदी का प्रचार भी एक है.' गांधी ने हिंदी के संदर्भ में अन्यत्र एक जगह बाद में लिखा—'जो नेतागण मेरी हां में हां मिलाते थे, शासन की गद्दी पर बैठने के बाद मेरी इच्छा का अनादर करने लगे. तुम धैर्य रखो. होनी जब काम करने लगेगी तो एक दिन में करेगी.' हिंदी के लिए यह 'होनी' आखिर कब आएगी? गांधी का 150वां वर्ष क्या इसके लिए उपयुक्त नहीं, जब हिंदी भी राष्ट्रभाषा की अधिकारिणी बन जाए और इसकी जनपदीय भाषाओं की भी हकमारी न हो. 'परस्पर' का प्रकाशन गांधी की 'होनी' की संभावनाएं तलाशने की दिशा में भी एक सार्थक पहल माना जा सकता है.

□

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मार्च, 2019





Fatima Bhutto

The Runaways | Viking | 422 pages | Rs 599

## Misfits Before Mosul

Three damaged youths are seduced by a jihadi future, and reflect upon a cold desert

BY BINDU MENON

**A**S Monty and Sunny, two of the three main characters in *The Runaways*, wait endlessly in the middle of the blistering Iraqi desert after days of a long march, a sense of uncertainty grips the two young jihadi recruits. "This whole exercise felt like a waste. What were they doing? No one from the Ummah Movement had bothered to check on them, no one debriefed them, no one even seemed to know they were out here."

It is this bumpy journey towards radicalism that Fatima Bhutto attempts to explore in her new novel, through the intersecting lives of Sunny aka Salman Jamil, son of a Lucknowi immigrant in Britain, Monty (aka Mustafa), the scion of an affluent Pakistani family who is unenamoured by his legacy, and Anita Rose, the Christian girl from a Karachi slum who wants to soar high above the shackles of her gender, religion and poverty.

Along the way, Bhutto tackles the millennial insecurities of the Muslim youth, primarily through Sunny, the lonely boy growing up in Portsmouth. Embarrassed by his father's attempts to blend in with the Brits, frustrated by those mocking Taliban jokes lobbed at him and battling questions of identity and sexuality, Sunny finds himself clamped down in his insular

The insecurities of Muslim youth are tackled through Sunny—embarrassed by attempts to blend in with Brits, frustrated by Taliban jokes hurled at him.

world. Trying to deal with the unremarkability of his life and surfing for answers in YouTube sermons, the wall around him seems unscalable until the meeting with his Syria-returned cousin Oz, who seems to have all the right and ready answers.

The search for a purpose in life is what takes the three young characters to the dusty nowhere in Iraq but it's not certain if this is the new world order they were seeking. For Monty, it's the search for Layla, the love of his life, that brings him to Mosul. For Anita, her new avatar as preacher of violence and redemption is the ultimate fightback for all the crosses that she has had to bear. It's also a promise that she must keep for Osama, the avuncular neighbour who had fired her intellect and hunger for freedom. As for Sunny, it's the journey itself that completes his descent, or ascent as he'd like to believe, into manhood. "Yesterday, he cut a man's throat, and now he gazes upon the dying stars and sings to his Kalashnikov."

The walk into the novel is much like the long haul across Mosul's arid landscape. Bhutto takes a back-and-forth narrative spanning four years, dwelling rather inordinately long on her characters, and hopping from Portsmouth to London to the ghettos of Gulshan and posh enclaves of Clifton in Karachi. Halfway into the novel, the terrain shifts to Mosul and then Nineveh, the setting for the dramatic finale. This is perhaps unfamiliar ground, as Bhutto has revealed in interviews, where she has had to mine information from books, Live-Leak videos, and other online sources. But perhaps paradoxically, that's where the narrative gets taut, starker and more pulsating. That's when the characters too get denser and less pixellated. And it's in these passages that Bhutto triumphs as a writer. □

## ON THE RACKS



Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar

My Father's Garden | Speaking Tiger

Through gripping, taut prose that glints like a knife in moonlight, Shekhar follows his narrator from medical school in Jamshedpur, a lengthy sojourn in Pakur to a disillusioned return to his adivasi politician-father's place in Ghatsila. A record of three consuming relationships, Shekhar is also very good at writing about sex (a rare quality, as ever), with Ray's Memory Game put to a startling use.



Rajiv Dogra

Second Night | Rupa

The hop from a cliché romance set in Delhi University to quick sketches of characters in Mussoorie happens quickly enough to get any sceptical reader interested in the material. Our protagonist is pining lover, jolly drinker, day-dreamer all at the same time. Nestled in between somewhere are those two honeymoon nights in Mussoorie, around which the tale is spun.



Vivaan Shah

Living Hell | Penguin

A film historian, actor and thespian parades the old Hollywood plot and parcels it into a novel: the disgruntled owner of a vapid, sadsack life stumbles into murder and sinister conspiracy and runs for his life and sanity. "Mr Makhija sat on the commode, his mouth agape, his eyes looking on in the distance and his neck greatly swollen and disfigured." Pure Hitchcock manqué.

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**books** Ravi Shankar Etteth

Killing Time in Delhi | Westland | 206 pages | Rs 599

## Slippery Barbie Tattoo

Neon-lit, pulpy prose tracks the scapegrace Charlie in his myriad mishaps across Delhi

BY ANJANA BASU

**T**HE title is a pun in a book filled with neon prose and pulp fiction. Charlie, who prefers to be called Seth, has his girlfriend distastefully OD on him just before a party. Charlie being Charlie, he abandons the body to his Chinese manservant as he flits off to his evening at the Jogis.

Charlie dodges kisses and dubious wheeling dealing only to stumble upon another corpse in the Portaloo. Unfortunately, he has no alibi since his hosts cannot tell when he arrived at the party and the girls he glimpsed on his way have vanished. The policeman Nik has an axe to grind, because Charlie has never invited him to a party and is determined to arrest him for something or the other, despite Charlie's line to the commissioner of police. A mysterious femme fatale who smells of Shalimar appears and winds her tendrils around Charlie's heart.

Etteth cocks a snook at the high life in Delhi where Moet et Chandon is inferior champagne and only drunk by social climbers in a world where forgettable women chase after Lamborghini. He specialises in metaphors—traffic as thick as the head of a Gurgaon bouncer for example—and they pepper the pages striving for effect while upping the hilarity. Shiva is referred to as 'the smoky

Etteth cocks a snook at Delhi high life where Moet et Chandon is inferior champagne in a world where forgettable women chase after Lamborghini.

dude' by a swami who materialises with equal strangeness in Charlie's life. The glamour quotient is high, with short Chanel miniskirts and legs that stretch all the way to heaven. It goes side by side with the violence quotient—a shikari grandfather who has his throat torn out by a leopard in a wild act of revenge in a dream estate called Silver Cloud. Sort of like James Hadley Chase meets Judith Krantz.

Perhaps there are too many femme fatales—Asha the loved and lost wife with the dimpled chin, who was more attractive than Princess Di, the only one who really held Charlie's heart until.... Then, Sheena, the efficient and beautiful secretary who reigns over Charlie's office and organises his fashion show. And finally, supremely Mandira, strangely familiar, strangely haunting, who takes complete charge of Charlie's life. Would we miss Asha if she weren't there, apart from the poetry of her dimpled chin and Charlie's Barbie tattoo?

As the story proceeds, it gets more nuanced and tangled until Charlie is knotted so tightly that he doesn't know how to breathe. There are touches of dark comedy and surreal moments when the manservant Chow reimagines himself as an Antonio Banderas figure.

Etteth sketches characters in a few strokes—possibly it goes with having been a graphic novelist. Rudra Prap Deo, the princely fugitive from Bastar with a posh accent and 'hair as white as cocaine', who does not smell of eau de fear. Buffet Bhat, the grossly overweight freeloader whose fallen body rests on its blimp of a belly. Etteth's language conjures up a cloying world that is yellowing at the edges, like a spider lily as it rots. Is it overload, is it overdrive, or is it a way of killing time? Whatever it is, it has its own dark poetry. □

## ON THE RACKS



Harsh Mander  
Partitions of the Heart | Penguin

The epigraph of this socio-political polemic (*Unmaking the idea of India*) by Harsh Mander indicate his subject. Through victims and incidents of the Gujarat pogrom, cow vigilantism, encounter killings, lynchings and the bogey of 'anti-nationals', he skewers the communal partitions of the new India that target minorities and fracture our nation. Laced with his own encounters, this is a book to be heeded.



Ashok Alexander  
A Stranger Truth | Juggernaut

Alexander left a cushy job to head Avahan, the Gates foundation's programme to combat AIDS. While tracking the HIV trail, he steps into a nightmarish world of trafficked girls, drug abuse and gay/lonely men who often speak in their own words ('Raju was very white'). A book of many heartbreaks, it ultimately charts miraculous recoveries—of hope, redemption and courage that make the heart sing with pride.



Sohaila Abdulali  
What We Talk About When We Talk About Rape | Penguin

One horrible fact about humanity is the shame visited upon victims of crime, and nowhere is this acuter than in victims of rape—stifled not only in pursuit of justice but even in efforts to talk about the crime. Rape survivor Abdulali talks with other victims and comes up with solutions for prevention, educating youth and the current debates/gender politics around discussing/reporting rape.

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# Sting operation

An ambitious ensemble novel about women whose lives criss-cross briefly at a riverside resort.

BY ABHIRAMI GIRIJA SRIRAM

A SPECTRE haunts Anita Nair's ambitious new novel. Trapped in a piece of finger bone, the ghost of writer Sreelakshmi, "Kerala's Virginia Woolf", has been waiting in a vault for over 50 years when a chance discovery thrusts her into the thick of the 21st century. At a riverside resort in present-day Kerala, the lives of nine women criss-cross briefly, tangentially. One after another, their deepest secrets reveal themselves to Sreelakshmi, the seeker of stories.

Sreelakshmi claims an unusual vantage: "Ghosts and writers are more alike than you think. We can be what you want us to be. We can hear your thoughts even if you don't tell us. We can read the silences and shape your stories as if they happened to us. And I was both: a ghost and a writer." And thus it is that this ghost-writer comes to preside over a procession of life stories, including, in the end, her own.

*Eating Wasps* is a novel of interesting conceits. The title is a throwback to an incident from Sreelakshmi's childhood when she takes a wasp for a bee and chomps hard on it, hoping for a mouthful of honey. She becomes, irrevocably,

"the girl who ate a wasp". An act of innocent curiosity turns into a stinging portent of things to come. To eat wasps, then, is to fly headlong in the face of a humdrum life. It is also to discover, as Sreelakshmi and each woman in the novel does in her turn, that any expectation of sweetness will be rewarded with an acrid dose of reality.

And then there is the conceit of the finger bone. Compared to "a teacher's

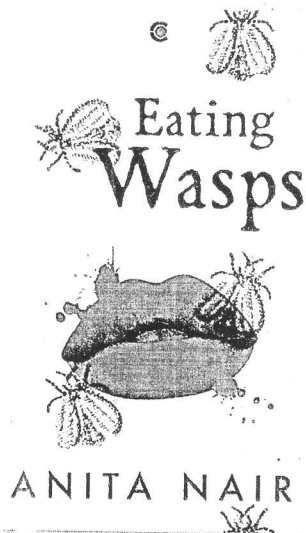
chalk that could write, but not on its own" and "a die about to be cast in some game of chance", it plays the omniscient narrator to a fault.

Passed baton-like from chapter to chapter, the bone divines every dark secret, every scar of violation ever endured by the woman holding it. In many ways, it performs a sting operation, making its stealthy way through the forbidden territory of for-

gotten memories. However, it is less voyeur than empath, feeding as it does on the fear and the rage of women whose lives have not gone the way they would have wanted them to go. Even as it nudges each woman imperceptibly towards her own moment of reckoning, it also brings about a semblance of closure for Sreelakshmi, who after immersing herself in others' stories finally musters the courage to tell her own.

*Eating Wasps* is an elaborate ensemble of hope and heartache, of headstrong women ("goddesses with tummy fat, bat wings and cellulite") who are chastened and thwarted at every step but who soldier on with their choices and disappointments all the same.

The character of Sreelakshmi has obviously been modelled on the legendary Malayalam writer Rajelakshmy, the first woman novelist to win the Kerala Sahitya Akademi award. Like Rajelakshmy, Sreelakshmi crosses boundaries to study science at Benares Hindu University in the 1960s and become that triple anomaly of a successful writer, scientist and single woman; like Rajelakshmy, Sreelakshmi takes her own life at the age of 35. But when Sreelakshmi returns to look back on her life, it is as though a sisterhood has linked hands across time and space. This time, she understands that if only the women survive their broken present, their lives need never be the same again. □



**Eating Wasps**

By Anita Nair  
Context, 2018

Pages: 256  
Price: Rs.599

The character of Sreelakshmi is obviously been modelled on the legendary Malayalam writer Rajelakshmy.



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Hanu laughed out loud. The purohit's outburst seemed to have amused him. "Ha, Ha! Why? Am I better off than a chandaal now? Do you want to know what I can foresee? Kites will peck at your shrivelled body! Now tell me, whom have you allowed to occupy my place? Answer. Answer, you who are about to die."

"Who am I to allow anyone to sit there? What is the mandir committee for? Go ask them. In fact," the purohit continued. "a shop is going to be set up in that corner. There will be a mela on the whole field. The Devi's glory will spread far and wide. Bhajans are to be sung in her praise for seven days and nights. The glorious Devi is pleased and there is to be a grand union of Siva and Parvati. Whoever is lucky enough to witness this momentous occasion will bodily ascend to heaven. Not that an infidel like you would be so fortunate!"

Hanu spat at the purohit. The priest left the verandah in a huff, seeking refuge in the innermost sanctum of the mandir.

"Ai, Hanu!" The voice held both admonition and sympathy. It worked like magic, for Hanu calmed down immediately. Wiping the spittle off his chin, he turned around and saw Ahalya standing there. With a heavily made-up face, hair parted in the middle and a broad band of sindoor in it, Ahalya was a prostitute. If Hanu listened to anybody, it was to Ahalya. Her house was in a corner of the market and she lived by selling her body. Hanu did not know how long she had been standing there, listening to his abuses. Now she reproached him, "Chee, chee, Hanu. Did you have to pollute your mouth even before daybreak?"

"Why are you out so early? Didn't you get any customers last night?" retorted Hanu.

Ahalya was nonchalant. "Who says business is bad? All these traders who have come for the mela..."

"Mela? Why is the mela being held out of season, Ahalya?" Hanu recalled what the purohit had said and wanted to find out more. The mela usually took place in the dry season.

"You simpleton! Don't you know? The Devi has found a partner. And she will be going to her bridegroom's house soon," joked Ahalya.

Hanu could not believe this.

"Be careful, Ahalya. Don't say such things."

But Ahalya was still in a playful mood, and continued, "Ha! When you talk rubbish before the Devi, then it's

not a sin. But if I say something, it's wrong. Anyway, come. I've brought some malpua for you to eat."

Hanu retraced his steps to his place under the satiana tree. Ahalya followed, a little distance between them. Someone had stuck a few stakes in the ground there to mark the site for a shop. Hanu could feel a sudden surge of anger. Since Ahalya was there, he controlled his rage and moved to sit under another tree. The malpua doused the fire in his belly.

Ahalya and Hanu were old acquaintances. They had met many years ago. Though an ugly hunchback, Hanu had been young and virile then, with a newly sprouted beard. While returning from the mela one day, he had found Ahalya half-dead—raped and abandoned by a gang of drunkards. He had taken her to his hut and nursed her back to life. But for him, she would have surely

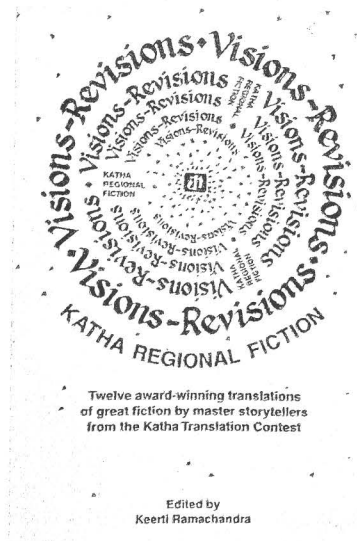
died. In return, she had gifted him some unforgettable moments one night—an introduction to the pleasures of adulthood. His experience of lovemaking was restricted to that one night. And he guarded it jealously, an experience to be savoured little by little in his thoughts alone.

Now that he was afflicted with the dreaded disease. Ahalya, too, avoided touching him. The sight of his abominably swollen body repulsed her. But she also felt sorry for him. She could understand a little of what the purohit could not. She realised that his behaviour was a reaction to his misfortune, born of his helplessness. It was an expression of his frustration. And the extent of his agony was such that even the Devi did not escape his ire. No one but Ahalya sympathised with him, which is why she often brought him food or some rags to cover his nakedness.

It was Hanu's belief that the mandir's Devi had been cruel and unjust to him. Otherwise why should he suffer like this—he, who had devoted his life to her and had played an important role in the building of the mandir? But for him, this stone-hearted Devi would not have been as important as she was.

It had happened when the pond was being dug—the one which had provided Hanu with a means of earning his livelihood. It was meant to be a convenient source of drinking water for visitors to the bazaar and the weekly haat. The hunchbacked, adolescent Hanu had been allowed to join in this good work.

One day, just as he had started to



"VISIONS-REVISIONS: Katha Regional Fiction" edited by Keerti Ramachandra (below), who is a teacher and translator from Marathi, Kannada and Hindi to English.



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## Benevolence and blessings poured forth from the veiled Devi in the dark sanctum. Her mysterious presence aroused the curiosity of devotees and strengthened their faith. Legends of her powers spread.

dig, Hanu's spade hit something hard, making a metallic sound. Quickly, he dug around it and found a carved stone idol of a devi. A part of the nose had been chipped off. Still, it was a devi's idol. Hanu took it to the chairman of the market committee.

The news spread like fire. People thronged the spot to see this miraculous find. Soon it was decided that a mandir would be built there. The market committee took on the responsibility of supervising the work. The idol was first housed in a straw hut, then in a tin shanty, and finally in this concrete, pillared structure.

Gradually the mandir became an important place of pilgrimage for the Devi's bhaktas. A mela began to be held there every year. With the increase in devotional fervour and the number of visitors to the temple, some elements meant to satisfy baser needs also made their surreptitious entry—small sheds serving liquor or bhang, and of course, women like Ahalya, who sold their bodies.

Since the Devi's nose was broken she could not be kept in full view of the devotees. So a light muslin cloth screened her from them. Only the purohit was permitted to see her, as he was in charge of the rituals. He would bathe the idol and adorn it with flowers and ornaments. Benevolence and blessings poured forth from the veiled Devi in the dark sanctum. Her mysterious presence aroused the curiosity of devotees and strengthened their faith. Legends of her powers spread.

Hanu had been associated with the temple right from the beginning—when this bountiful Devi was not so well known. Initially it had been his duty to strike the gong in the morning to announce the opening of the doors of the mandir. Then he took on the exclusive task of supplying drinking water to thirsty pilgrims, earning a little money in the process. But now, that same Hanu was in this sorry situation.

Ahalya's malpuas had cooled Hanu's temper as well as his hunger. He was eager to find out more about the off-season mela. So he asked her again.

"I would have told you, but I didn't get a chance because you were so angry."

Ahalya told him that a Siva linga had been found recently on a snake-infested hillock a little distance away. The linga, it seems, was a natural one—not fashioned by any human hand.

"Who found it?" Hanu wanted to know.

"I don't know. They say that the chairman of the market committee dreamt that this Siva linga is our

Devi's bridegroom. She wishes to join him, it seems. She will stay on the hill for six months of the year and spend the remaining six here."

The mela was being held to celebrate this union of Siva and Parvati. In the dream, the Devi had promised that those bhaktas who were present at her wedding would be delivered from all suffering. Even sinners would be pardoned.

"The Devi and her bridegroom will be on the same platform for a fortnight and then be put on individual pedestals. The goddess has promised to bless anyone who witnesses the union. Hanu, if you can somehow be there, you might be cured!"

Breaking into loud guffaws. Hanu said, "Did you know I broke the nose of that heartless one? Unknowingly, of course! That's why she's punishing me now. Why should I go to enjoy her amorous adventure? But, what about you? I don't think you will be able to make it. Your business has picked up, you said."

Ahalya was shocked. "Are you mad? The Devi's listening. You shouldn't say such things, Hanu." She moved away quickly, before he could utter any more profanities.

Preparations for the mela picked up. It promised to be a big one. The whole area was alive with people and noise. Everything had to be just right for the puja. Expensive muslin of different quantities was brought from the big market far away. Hundreds of packets of agarbatti and dhoop were bought, mounds of the best quality Joha rice, ghee and spices were piled up—offerings for the Devi.

Groups of people from different areas set up camp. Their kirtans went on day and night, echoing in the surroundings. Other goods, too, were brought in for the mela. On bullock carts, hand-pulled carts, even on motorcycles. There were glass bangles, cosmetics, spurious medicines, brass and stone utensils, earthenware, aluminium pans and ladles, religious texts next to tales from the Arabian Nights and illustrated sex manuals. And almost on cue, came the palmists, showmen with monkeys and bears, magicians and bodybuilders—even a circus company. Temporary sheds sprang up overnight, displaying their wares—vegetables, tamarind pulp, and blue, red and yellow sherbet. Also, delicacies like nimkin, gajja and khurma, liberally garnished with flies. Mango and jackfruit pherwalas came. And barbers. Attracted by all this, even more people visited the mandir. They thronged the temple grounds until about midnight. In

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the din, Hanu's loud voice almost went unheard. Ahalya did not have time to enquire after him. There was, however, no shortage of food for Hanu. Visitors often threw away food, half-eaten. So there was enough for him and the other beggars, though they had to fight for it.

But that did not stop Hanu from ranting. He could not join in the fun because of his physical condition. It made him even more irritable. Most of his abuse was directed at the purohit. But he did not spare the Devi and would describe her body in gutter language. The purohit's warning, "You'll surely go to hell!", only served to increase the volume of the expletives. His disease saved him from a thrashing, perhaps even from being murdered by irate bhaktas.

A day before the Devi was due to leave for her bridegroom's house, the doors of the mandir were closed to the public. There were so many rituals to go through. The Devi had to be ceremonially bathed to make her more radiant for the occasion. She had to be decked out in rich clothes and adorned with jewels. Then she would be placed in a beautiful palki, which was to be carried on a big-wheeled vehicle made to look like a rath. Accompanied by chants and kirtans, thousands of devotees would pull the rath to the hilly abode, where her husband—a block of stone—awaited her.

Suddenly, the procession stopped. The chants were replaced by a deathly silence. The purohit was the first to discern the reason for this unnatural silence.

Once the doors of the temple were closed, the pilgrims thronged the mela. The courtyard of the mandir fell silent. The purohit and his assistants were busy with preparations for the next day's festivities. But the purohit was worried. He was afraid Hanu would defile the holy atmosphere. Fortunately, Hanu had stayed away until then.

Another problem occurred to the purohit. Suppose Hanu wanted to pull the rath with everyone else? The Devi had appeared in a dream and commanded that nobody was to be stopped from drawing the rath on that auspicious day. To overcome this problem, a separate rope was attached to the vehicle, though the purohit hoped Hanu would remain sullen and refuse to join them. At midnight, all the preparations were over. Everyone went home to rest. The mela, too, had broken up.

By dawn, the temple compound was teeming with people. The Devi was already in the palki, behind a

beautiful muslin screen. It would not be removed until she was united with her bridegroom. She would be taken to the foot of the hill on the rath. From there, the members of the committee would carry the palki on their shoulders. The purohit would accompany them, chanting mantras all the way. Bhaktas could follow the palki, at some distance.

The procession began to move forward slowly, led by the members of the committee. The elated cries of the bhaktas rent the air. The sound of conch shells and gongs added to the fervour. Women ululated. Kirtan singers beat their drums and clanged the cymbals. Holding on to the palki, the purohit sat on the rath.

They stopped about three kilometres away, at the foot of the hill. The palki was taken down, the Devi still behind the muslin screen. Even the purohit was not allowed to see her until she faced her bridegroom.

Carefully lifting the palki on to their shoulders, the leaders of the procession moved up the hill. The purohit and the devotees followed. It was an arduous journey. Steep. The path lined with thorny bushes. The fear of snakes. But the expectation of instant salvation egged them on. They huffed their way up, undeterred.

The stone, eight to nine feet high, was visible from quite a distance, standing majestically alone. It looked exactly like a Siva linga. Eager to attain salvation, the bhaktas regarded this piece of stone as an unmistakable sign of Mahadeva. Their cries of praise reverberated in the sky and the space beyond.

Suddenly, the procession stopped. The chants were replaced by a deathly silence. The purohit was the first to discern the reason for this unnatural silence. A man sat cross-legged at the base of the Siva linga, staring at them with bulging eyes.

"Hanu! You sinner! What are you doing here?" screamed the purohit, panic-stricken. "Get away. Move."

But Hanu sat there, unmoving. Absolutely still. The purohit inched forward cautiously. It was as he had suspected. Hanu was dead—had been dead for some time. He held something in his arms. What could it be? On my god! The Devi! Hanu must have stolen the broken-nosed idol last night.

What then had they been carrying in the palki all this while? The palki was still on the shoulders of the carriers. Trembling with fear, the purohit rushed to it and pulled away the muslin screen. The crowd could see that it had accompanied a slab of stone. Hanu had placed the stone there in the dark of the night.

Terror chilled the blood of all present. To the committee members, the palki suddenly seemed to weigh several maunds more. They dropped it abruptly. All eyes now turned to the huge stone, the embodiment of Siva. In the play of sunlight, all they saw was a lifeless monolith, jutting into the sky, indifferent to their plight.

A stampede broke out. The terrified bhaktas rushed down the hill. A snake slithered down the side of the broken-nosed idol in Hanu's arms and disappeared. □

*Story selected by Mini Krishnan*

*Reprinted courtesy the publisher, Katha*



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prejudices. The aptly-titled book comes in time for the forthcoming days of heat and laziness.

**King of Scars**  
Leigh Bardugo  
Orion

₹449

• The young king, Nikolai Lantsov, has always had a gift for the impossible. No one knows what he endured during his country's bloody civil war — and he intends to keep it that way. As enemies gather at his weakened borders, Nikolai must find a way to forge new alliances and stop a rising threat.

**Out of the Dark**  
Gregg Hurwitz  
Penguin Random House

₹399

• Evan Smoak returns in Hurwitz's bestselling *Orphan X* series. Evan knows about the American President's dark past. And that's dangerous knowledge to possess. To save himself and his country from lethal enemies, Evan must ask himself one question: how do you kill the most well-protected man on earth?



REALISM

# Whiff of a revolution

Hinder; 24/3/19; Pg-28

A darkly comic throwback to the 1970s' Naxal uprising in Calcutta, set in a prison where the inmates are planning a jailbreak

SUDIPTA DATTA

When Manoranjan Byapari won the first Hindu Prize for Non-Fiction this January, he was overwhelmed on stage, breaking down in tears and unable to talk for a few minutes. Later, when a mike was placed in his hands, he spoke movingly about what it meant to him. Byapari, who taught himself to read and write in his 20s, never having been able to cross the threshold of school, lived life on the margins, mostly hand-to-mouth as goatherd, tea-stall helper, coolie, security guard, rickshaw-puller, sweeper, cook, the *dom* (at funeral pyres). Byapari learnt the alphabet and began reading — and eventually writing, thanks to a chance encounter with writer Mahasweta Devi.

“The world I have seen is what I write about,” an article reproduced in

*There's Gunpowder in the Air* quotes Byapari as saying. Most of his books, *Rickshaw Chalai* (*I Pull a Rickshaw*), *Chandal Jibon* (*Life of a Dalit*), *Omanushik* (*Inhuman*), to name just three, and short stories mirror his experiences. Two of his books have been translated into English, his powerful autobiography, *Interrogating My Chandal Life* (*Itibritte Chandal Jibon*), published in 2018, and now *Gunpowder*. In his memoir, we get a glimpse of his world, the impoverished beginnings in Barishal district of East Bengal, when often there would not be even a grain of rice to cook; life in refugee camps and days of more starvation. “People speak of poverty, destitution, starvation, penury. But none of these nice poetic-sounding words can describe what we

went through then,” he writes.

## The awakening

Belonging to the lower caste Namashuddra community meant unimaginable misery, and soon Byapari fled home. In 1974-75, Byapari,

who considered himself a Naxal, was arrested and put in Alipore jail. The charges included use of guns and bombs, and disturbing the peace, and though a search of the place he lived in yielded no cache of arms and ammunition, he was jailed for two years on a number of cases. It was in jail, when he was around 24 years old, that he met an older prisoner — Byapari calls him *mastermoshai* (teacher) — who taught him to read. “At this age,” he had asked hesitantly, to which



**There's Gunpowder in the Air**  
Manoranjan Byapari,  
trs Arunava Sinha  
Eka/Westland  
₹499

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# Folklorist's tale

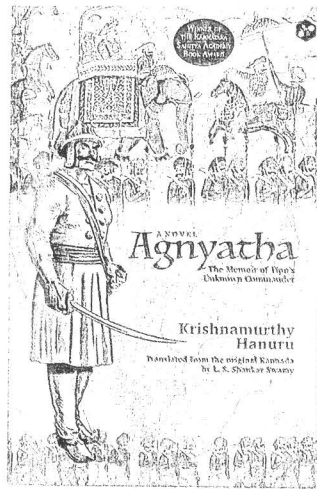
The lore of an unknown commander of Tipu Sultan told in a blurry mix of the real and the imagined.

BY SANDHYA RAO

HOW we understand history is coloured by how and what raconteurs and historians choose to communicate, and our own distance from times past. In Krishnamurthy Hanuru's short novel, the life and times of Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan of Mysore only provide a context; the view is from the other side. *Agnyatha* is the story of a nameless commander in Tipu's army, told in bits and pieces, revealing facets rarely considered except perhaps in historical fiction. Hanuru, who won the Karnataka Sahitya Akademi award in 2012, goes a step further.

In the introduction, he observes that while he was researching matters relating to folklore in Chitradurga district of Karnataka, he realised that "the historical details that one experienced on field was different from what we read in textbooks".

Textbooks are always about rulers, whereas folk songs and stories speak about the people, for instance, the suffering of women following pillaging and looting by soldiers. He contends that it is because of this that shrines dedicated to saints who try to improve the lot of people become places of pilgrimage.



## **Agnyatha** **The Memoir of** **Tipu's Unknown** **Commander**

By Krishnamurthy Hanuru  
Translated by L.S. Shankar Swamy  
BEE Books, Kolkata, 2018

Pages: 180

Price: Rs.325

The novel opens with a description of a hero stone showing a bearded man bowing before a horse. This is Kudure Desigayya. A local man called Suleman is in possession of a manuscript that tells the bearded man's story. Although many worship at the shrine, only some seek out Suleman for the story. The contents of the manuscript is revealed from the second chapter onwards in a blaze of shifting points of view, threaded together with various storylines. My confusion was cleared to some degree only after I re-read the beginning of the novel.

The overriding voice is that of the unknown commander who, we may assume, later became Kudure Desigayya. He talks about capturing ti-

gers for his ruler and women for himself, one woman in particular. We see how enslaved women coped and how unstable the lives of soldiers were. We briefly see how Tipu's mind works. When there is a religious disturbance in the south, he commands: "Do not meddle with the leaders responsible for this. See if the palace can confiscate the land which has been the origin of this dispute. Arrest and bring all of them in, irrespective of the numbers."

We see the reluctance of soldiers to mount yet another assault despite being plied with incentives: "Let alone corn, the soldiers wouldn't have agreed even if they could kidnap and bring home a beautiful maiden of the village. I was standing with folded arms

with my head tucked into my shoulders."

Suleman's manuscript also contains detailed illustrations, descriptions of which intersperse the narrative. The reader is called upon to imagine the scenes as the story moves back and forth, peppered with songs and poems, anecdotes from myths and legends, and sketches of real life.

The folklorist in Hanuru comes through in the telling, which is a blurry mix of the real and the imagined. While history textbooks offer only linear narratives, Hanuru's novel flows freely through shifting timelines, offering fresh perspectives and a challenging read. Has the English language flattened the narrative, eroded some of the nuances of the original Kannada? This question automatically pops up.

While Girish Karnad and U.R. Ananthamurthy have praised the novel and we can only humbly agree with them, some sections of the English version of *Agnyatha* seem laboured in translation or are simply awkward. A sentence like this one, for instance: "They have never served the people, believing only in soldiers for people were untrustworthy." Or these sentences: "They would heap large stones and poisonous plants on the graves to avoid dogs and jackals from pulling out bodies from the graves. The ground was boggy and difficult to walk on."

However, I would not make much of this. I would read *Agnyatha* and be enriched. □

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about tree speech. The other pieces are *Jam*, which examines violence and "the devaluation of feminine labour", and *Name, Place, Animal, Thing*, inspired by her concern for children who grow up as servants.

**Something I Never Told You**  
Shravya Bhinder

Penguin  
₹250

• This is about falling in and out of love. After an arduous wooing, Ronnie gets his first crush, Adira. As they get close and comfortable with each other, life takes on another hue. From magical it becomes routine as egos and doubts clash. Ronnie and Adira will probably never find their happily-ever-after.

**To Kill the Truth**  
Sam Bourne

Hachette  
₹399

• Former White House operative Maggie Costello has sworn off politics. But when the Governor of Virginia seeks her help to stop a series of killings, she knows that this is bigger than any political game. Black Lives Matter protestors clash with slavery deniers: the conspiracy could ignite a new civil war.



REALISM

Hindu: 10/3/19 ; Pg-28

# The years of the flood

A luminous novel that draws you out from its constructed world and throws you down in front of today's newspaper

(21)

LATHA ANANTHARAMAN

Where is that land where water flows free? This is the refrain of a song that Chikka's cattle-skinner father sings, longing for renewal in a swift river. His daily reality, however, is the pond in the untouchable colony: frothy, filthy, boiling with algae, and cooking poison. Githa Hariharan's novel *I Have Become the Tide* begins a few centuries ago, on the day Chikka's father is buried. Chikka flees the colony, carrying nothing but his drum and his despair, and finds refuge with two men who are part of a utopian society.

In the embrace of their new village, Anandagrama, where caste will not determine where Chikka lives, what he eats, or whom he loves, his tears and words are ready to flow like the river that runs through the story. A band of mystics and revolutionaries have envisioned a life free of caste,

cautiously negotiating a space around the town and its temples, the hard kernel of orthodoxy. They work, they sweat, and they sing about the land they love, the land on which they do not own one blade of grass, one grain of dust. Chikka becomes a washerman, he marries, and it is his son – child of a washerman, grandson of a cattle-skinner – who becomes known as the poet Kannadeva.

**Pursuing Kannadeva**

The novel braids together Chikka's story with a modern-day quest. Professor P.S. Krishna, studying Kannadeva, looks through old manuscripts to get a fuller picture of the saint-poet. The quest does not make for narrative suspense – whenever the professor looks for centuries-old palm leaves or singers of old songs,

they fall conveniently into his hands – but it is a proper literary chase.

Hariharan has the old-school capacity to build a character from the ground up. From the professor's talks with his students, his mornings with his wife, and his play with his grandson, we not only know what he believes but can also intuit how he has lived his life. As he writes of his new discoveries about the poet, he is shadowed by a "Hindu patriot" who is armed and ready to silence a thoughtful voice.

Another contemporary thread in the novel is the story of three young friends. The diligent Satya in medical school, Asha, studying to be a nurse, and Ravi, enrolled for a science degree. They are all labelled as quota admissions, irrespective of their abilities, and they try to keep in touch and support



**I Have Become the Tide**

Githa Hariharan  
Simon & Schuster  
₹499

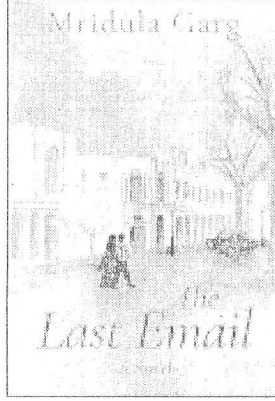
अलका सरावगी

परिचय

वरिष्ठ लेखिका मृदुला गर्ग का अंग्रेजी में लिखा उपन्यास 'द लास्ट ईमेल' कई तरह से चकित करने वाला उपन्यास है. अंग्रेजी में इसलिए लिखा गया, क्योंकि लेखिका के अपने कहे अनुसार यह हिंदी में अनुवाद जैसा होता. ईमेल पर दो पूर्व प्रेमियों के बीच चालीस साल बाद फिर से संपर्क और स्मृति-चारण के बीच यह एक लेखिका की शब्द-यात्रा, देह-यात्रा और जीवन-यात्रा को परत दर परत हमारे सामने रख देता है. इन परतों में कथा का विलय समय के सीधे प्रवाह में नहीं है, तो इसलिए भी कि स्मृतियां अक्सर टेढ़े-मेढ़े तरीके से लौटती हैं. बीते हुए समय का कौन-सा भूला हुआ टुकड़ा कब वापस चला आता है, इसका कोई पैटर्न नहीं होता. इसके अलावा यह जानना दिलचस्प है कि किसी प्रेम-संबंध में स्त्री और पुरुष कैसे अलग-अलग स्मृतियों को संजोए रखते हैं और कौन-सी बात किसके लिए ज्यादा याद रखने लायक होती है.

माया एक लेखिका है और चूंकि मृदुला जी के उपन्यासों का जिक्र, चितकोबरा, कठगुलाब, अनित्य आदि का, उनके नाम से ही होता है, पूरी तरह निश्चय न होते हुए भी यह माना जा सकता है कि यह एक आत्मकथात्मक उपन्यास है. माया का प्रेमी 'केविन' भारत में रहा हुआ एक पूर्व स्कॉटिश मिशनरी है, जो फिलहाल स्कॉटलैंड में इंग्लैंड से पूरी तरह नहीं तो आंशिक स्वतंत्रता की लड़ाई लड़ रहा है. वह भी एक किस्म का लेखक है. उपन्यास की

कथा में भारत की आजादी की लड़ाई और पार्टीशन से जुड़े कई मसले और उसके समानांतर केविन की अपनी आजादी की लड़ाई से जुड़े कई विचार, तथ्य और लेखन के हिस्से चले आते हैं. आज का पाठक कथा में इस तरह के अवांतर हस्तक्षेप का आदी हो चुका है और उसे कथा में



विघ्न की तरह नहीं देखता. संवाद के लिए ईमेल के माध्यम का प्रयोग और उसे उपन्यास के रूप में पढ़ना भी उस पाठक वर्ग को तो कम से कम परेशान नहीं करेगा, जो इंटरनेट के उपयोग का आदी है. बल्कि टेक्नोलॉजी का यह सबसे सुंदर मानवीय पक्ष है कि वह सात समंदर पार के छूटे हुए रिश्तों को भी शब्दों के माध्यम से जोड़ने में काबिल है.

हर कथा अलग-अलग तरह के पाठकों के लिए अलग-अलग मायने रखती है. स्वयं एक समकालीन (अलबत्ता उम्र में दो दशक के अंतराल के साथ) लेखक होने के नाते मेरे लिए यह उपन्यास एक अग्रज लेखिका की प्रेम करने की हिम्मत, संघर्ष और अपने निजी को सार्वजनिक बनाने के साहस का पर्याय होने के साथ एक स्त्री और पुरुष के बीच परकीया प्रेम के तमाम सामाजिक और भावनात्मक दबावों से गुजरने का एक अवसर है. केविन और माया के बीच का प्रेम दैहिक निष्पत्ति की तमाम स्मृतियों में छाया हुआ है और एक तरह से यह तथ्य भी खुलता है कि इस प्रेम के अनुभव के बाद ही माया का सृजनात्मक पक्ष उभरता है. अब 40 साल बाद ईमेल

पर केविन का माया के इंटेलेक्चुअल रूप से ज्यादा परिचय हो रहा है, हालांकि इस बीच वह माया के लेखन से अपरिचित नहीं है. माया इस प्रेम-प्रसंग में अपेक्षाकृत अधिक सशक्त पात्र है, क्योंकि वह लगभग 'गिल्ट' या 'अपराधबोध' से मुक्त है.

इस प्रेम-प्रसंग की समाहित पहले भी 'केविन' ने ही की थी क्योंकि वह अपनी पत्नी को धोखा देते रहना नहीं चाहता था. अपनी आत्मकथा में भी केविन यह असत्य लिखता है कि अपनी पत्नी लिंडा के अतिरिक्त उसने किसी स्त्री से प्रेम नहीं किया. ईमेल के आदान-प्रदान की समाप्ति भी उसी की तरफ से होती है, क्योंकि वह नहीं चाहता कि माया से उसके प्रेम-संबंध को कोई भी उसके रहते या मरने के बाद जाने. इसके बरक्स है माया की अनुभूति की गहराई और उसको न छुपाने का साहस. एक भारतीय स्त्री, जिसे आमतौर पर हम बहुत सामाजिक और परंपरावादी मानते हैं, का एक पाश्चात्य संस्कृति या क्रिश्चियन संस्कृति के पुरुष की अपेक्षा अपनी अनुभूति की सच्चाई और उसकी पवित्रता पर दृढ़ रहना काफी आश्चर्यप्रद है.

स्त्री, अपनी तमाम यात्रा और पहुंच के बावजूद, बहुत नाजुक और 'वल्लरेबल' है. यह उसकी मानसिक बुनावट का ही शायद एक हिस्सा है. अपने बेटे-बहू को कार-एक्सीडेंट में खोकर माया जिस अतल दुख के सागर में डूबती-उतराती है, उसके साथ कहीं एक डर जुड़ा है, जो उसकी



यातना को बहुत बढ़ा देता है. 'केविन' से संबंध तोड़ने के बाद उससे कभी न मिलने की प्रतिज्ञा तोड़ने का ही तो यह दंड नहीं था? इस खयाल से उबरना उसके लिए बहुत मुश्किल है.

मृदुला जी का एक लेखक के रूप में सफर, उनके ऊपर अश्लीलता का आरोप लगाकर गिरफ्तारी के आदेश जैसा हादसा और तत्कालीन लेखकों द्वारा उनका साथ ना देने का दंश जैसे प्रसंग भी उपन्यास में आते हैं. हमारे समाज की तत्कालीन सीमित सोच और अनुदारता, या कहें कि ऐतिहासिक पिछड़ापन भी उसमें उजागर है. व्यक्ति की कथा अंततः समाज और समय की ही कथा होती है. चितकोबरा (1979) का वह अंश, जिसके लिए मृदुला गर्ग पर वारंट जारी किया गया था, उन्होंने दसक वर्ष पहले दिल्ली में ब्रिटिश काउंसिल के सेमिनार में पढ़कर सुनाया था. तब आश्चर्य हुआ था कि इसमें अश्लील क्या है? हिंदी की दुनिया में मृदुला गर्ग अपने समय से आगे की लेखक हैं.

लिखते-लिखते यह खयाल आ रहा है कि कहीं मृदुला गर्ग इस उम्र में फिर से उसी हिंदी समाज को चुनौती तो नहीं दे रहीं? क्या पता कि आत्मकथा जैसे लगने वाला यह उपन्यास आत्मकथा हो ही नहीं? मृदुला गर्ग इस उपन्यास में 'चितकोबरा' को आपबीती की तरह न देखने के लिए आलोचकों का उपहास करती हैं. अब कहीं वे एक नए सिरे से अपने उपन्यास के 40 साल पुराने पात्र से दैहिक उत्ताप को पुनर्जीवित कर-स्मृति में ही सही-अपने आसपास की दुनिया की प्रतिक्रिया करने के लिए ललकारती नहीं रहीं?

प्रेम-वह भी एक विदेशी से, प्रेम के सांस्कृतिक पक्ष भले ही कुछ भिन्न हों-पर उसकी तन और मन में व्याप्ति की सघन स्मृति इस उपन्यास का कथ्य है. अपने जिए हुए को स्मृतियों में पुनर्जीवित

कर क्या उसी तरह अनुभव किया जा सकता है और वह भी उम्र के ऐसे मोड़ पर, जब उसे फिर जीने की संभावना नहीं है. शायद यह नितांत संभव है और एक तरह से खुद अपने लिए अपने जीवन का लेखा-जोखा और उसका निचोड़ है. दिलचस्प यह भी है कि इसके तमाम भावनात्मक ताने-बाने इससे जुड़ी कहानियों में बुने जा चुके हैं. माया केविन को अपनी एक कहानी 'रिक्रैटेशन' भेजती है जिसमें प्रेम के अंतिम क्षणों को भोगकर विवाहेतर संबंध के खत्म होने की परिणति प्रेमिका की आत्महत्या में होती है. पर वह ऐसा करने के पहले प्रेमी को शराब में जहर देकर गहरी नींद में सुला जाती है. नितांत कम शब्दों और बिना किसी व्याख्या के अपने निर्मम प्लॉट में कहानी पाठक को स्तब्ध कर जाती है. इस कहानी की तुलना में उपन्यास अपने फैलाव में कई बार दोहराव लग सकता है, पर अंततः वह अपने उद्देश्य में सफल है-दुनिया के अलग छोरों पर अपनी-अपनी जिंदगी जीते हुए दो प्रेमियों का शब्द और स्मृति के माध्यम से अपने जीए हुए को रेशे-रेशे फिर जीना. सिर्फ इतना ही नहीं, उनमें छूटे हुए पलों को भी फिर से रेशे भर उन स्मृतियों को सघनतर बनाना, इस एहसास के साथ कि कोई भी रिश्ता पूर्णकाम नहीं होता. न ही बीते हुए की स्मृतियां दो व्यक्तियों के लिए एक समान होती हैं.

□

**पुस्तक : द लास्ट ईमेल (अंग्रेजी उपन्यास)**

**लेखक : मृदुला गर्ग**

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- सलीब पर सच (कविता-संग्रह), सुभाष राय, बोधि प्रकाशन, जयपुर
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## लक्ष्मी पांडेय

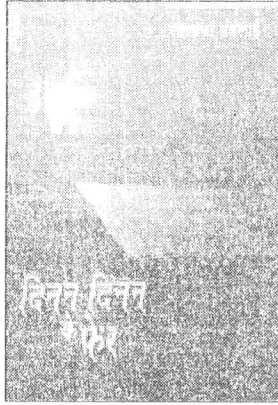
परम

मंडलोई जी की इस तिथिहीन लेकिन तथ्यपूर्ण डायरी को मैंने यही नाम दिया है 'सांस-सांस जिंदगी'. कारण यह कि जिस भाव प्रवण भाषा शैली में नर्मो-नाजुक अहसासों के साथ स्मृतियों के रेले-मेले में वे पाठकों को ले जाते हैं वह सांस-सांस गुजरती जिंदगी के चित्रों की नुमाइश को देखते चले जाने का-सा मर्मस्पर्शी अनुभव है जबकि लोक से उठाई गई यह उक्ति 'दिन-दिन के फेर' में जो 'फेर' शब्द है वह व्यक्तित्व, समाज, राष्ट्र के काया पलट या तख्तापलट जैसे गूढ़-गंभीर परिवर्तन को दर्शाकर ही सार्थक होने की प्रतीति करता है. इस डायरी में 'फेर' शब्द वाली मार्मिक गूढ़ता अनुपस्थित है बल्कि उन स्वाभाविक परिवर्तन चक्रों की बात है जो मनुष्य के जीवन में घटते ही हैं. जीवन का यह चक्र स्वाभाविक गति से चलते हुए ही प्रेम करने, घृणा, मित्रता, आसक्ति-विरक्ति के लिए अवकाश उपलब्ध कराता है. मंडलोई जी की डायरी इस सांस-सांस बहती जिंदगी का प्रमाण है इसमें अस्वाभाविक कुछ नहीं...जिसे गहरी आह भरकर 'दिन-दिन का फेर' कहें.

डायरी के प्रथम फ्लैप पर प्रभु जोशी संकेत देते हैं कि—"मंडलोई के इस लिखे धरे में ढेरों अल्पाक्षरा, लेकिन अर्थ बहुला पंक्तियां हैं. जिनके बीच हमें ऐसी बहुतेरी छूटी हुई जगहें बा-आसानी बरामद हो जाती हैं जहां डायरी लेखन की अचूक निस्संगता और किसी एक प्रिय को संबोधित

पत्र-लेखन की अलभ्य अंतरंगता एक-दूसरे में एकमेक हो जाती है." यह पूरी डायरी की सुंदर, सुगठित समीक्षा है. 'बा-आसान बरामद हो जाने वाली छूटी जगहें' डायरी की आरंभिक और (मेरी बुद्धि के अनुसार) अटपटी कविता में ही बरामद हो जाती हैं तथा किसी प्रिय को संबोधित, प्रेमिल स्मृतियों में पगी गद्यात्मक कविताएं और कविता जैसे गद्यांश डायरी के अंतिम यानी छोटे खंड 'यमुना के पुलिन पर' में अत्यंत मर्मस्पर्शी, सुंदर सपनों सी कोमलता और मिठास लिए अभिव्यक्त हुए हैं.

क्या आप मुझे जानते हैं? लिखकर मंडलोई जी ने यह स्पष्ट कर दिया कि मैं ही वह लेखक हूँ जिसने गुप्त लिपि में यह अलिखा गद्य लिखा है और जिसे लोग लेखक की तरह नहीं जानते. भीतर खुलने से जो छूटा है वह जीवन के आरंभिक दौर के अभाव, पीड़ा, अतृप्ति के दर्श हो सकते हैं जिन्हें पढ़ने के लिए (सहृदय नहीं) गरीब की आत्मा ही चाहिए...ऐसा शायद इसलिए क्योंकि अभावों, संघर्षों से थकी, पीड़ा से सदा लबरेज, रहने वाली गरीब की आत्मा ही इस गुप्तलिपि के पीछे बहती पीड़ा की नदी की सहगामिनी हो सकती है. किंतु यदि गरीब जो केवल रोटी ही पढ़ता-लिखता है उसका इतना बौद्धिक परिष्कार न हो कि वह 'छूटे हुए को' अवकाश में पढ़ सके...तब? यह संभव भी है...केवल धन से गरीब नहीं, बड़े समृद्ध लोग संवेदना के स्तर पर अत्यंत गरीब होते हैं उनकी बुद्धि भी इस 'छूटे हुए' को



नहीं पढ़ पाएगी—इसके लिए काव्यशास्त्र ने 'सहृदय अर्थात् हृदयसहित, संवेदनाओं से परिपूर्ण हृदय की व्यवस्था दी है.' गरीब की आत्मा पद उपयुक्त नहीं लगता...फिर जो खिल गया वह अलिखा कहां रहा? खिलना एक सकारात्मक क्रिया है. खिलना यानी स्वयमेव लिख जाना ...'छूटे हुए को' तथा 'गरीब की आत्मा' ऐसे पद हैं जिनसे मैंने अनुमान लगाया कि 'छूटा हुआ' वह...अभाव, पीड़ा, संघर्ष, विपन्नता का ही द्योतक होगा तभी तो इस स्थिति को समझने की सामर्थ्य गरीब में ही होगी, ऐसा लेखक मानता है.

प्रथम खंड में दो विचित्र बयान हैं. प्रथम—"मेरी पुकार को सिर्फ बर्बर और शैतान ही समझते हैं—उन्हें जानते हुए मैं नहीं पुकारता प्रधानमंत्री को." यहां प्रधानमंत्री शब्द को विशेष रूप से रखने से पढ़ते हुए कुछ कर्कश जैसी अनुभूति होती है...राजनीतिक महत्वाकांक्षाओं से उपजा असंतोष या राजनीतिक चोट ही इसके मूल में हो सकती है. द्वितीय—"मैं कविता से अधिक सृष्टि की अमरता के लिए लिखना चाहता हूँ." बंधु, न कवि अमर है न कविता अमर है, न सृष्टि...सब नश्वर हैं...सब जानते हैं फिर यह आत्म-रति, आत्म-छलना क्यों? सृष्टि के रहते मानवता जीवित रहे...यही सबसे बड़ा प्रयास होना चाहिए...

प्रथम खंड 'पुरखों से नाता' में अंतर्मन रूपी डार्करूम में पुरखों की स्मृतियों, नसीहतों, सीखों की झकझोरने वाली ठक-ठक

है. द्वितीय खंड 'सूर्य के हमजोली' में सतपुड़ा की पहाड़ियों के बीच छिंदवाड़ा नामक स्थान में आदिवासियों के बीच बिताए बचपन का चित्रण है. यहीं लेखक ने आपसी सौहार्द, एकता, मिले-जुले उत्सव-त्योहार, ऋतुओं का, प्रकृति का सौंदर्य जाना, अनुभव किया जिसका विस्तार अगले खंड पेड़ और पक्षी तक है. प्रकृति के बीच घूमते-जीते हुए तब लेखक ने 'अमर घर चल' का पाठ पढ़ा था अब तकनीकी, बाजारवाद से ओत-प्रोत पाश्चात्य शिक्षा के प्रभाववश बच्चे घर पर ही रहते और खेलते हैं प्रकृति को नहीं जानते-पहचानते ...यह विडंबना दुखद है. चतुर्थ खंड—'मां और पास-पड़ोस' में लेखक एकल परिवारों के कारण प्राप्त एकाकीपन, रिश्तेदारों के आने से उत्पन्न अव्यवस्था के आनंद का अभाव, व्यवस्था की जड़ता, समाज की संवेदनहीनता से भयभीत मां जो 35 वर्षों का वैधव्य तथा असुरक्षा का भय झेलते इतनी कातर हो उठी है कि उसकी प्रार्थनाएं भी भय से भरी होती हैं, की मर्मस्पर्शी अभिव्यक्ति करता है.

दिनकर, इलाचंद्र जोशी, धीरेन्द्र वर्मा, शमशेर बहादुर सिंह आदि अनेक लेखकों ने सार्थक डायरियां लिखी हैं. महात्मा गांधी तो डायरी लेखन को अनिवार्य मानकर इसका व्रत की तरह पालन करने की शिक्षा देते थे. डायरी लेखन में स्वयं को उद्घाटित करते हुए विरेचन की वह प्रक्रिया भी संपन्न हो जाती है जिससे हम स्वयं को पा सकते हैं, निर्मल मन-प्राण उस विराट की निकटता को प्राप्त कर सकते हैं. एक शेर याद आता है—

न बचा बचा के तू रख इसे, तेरा आईना है वो आईना.

कि शिकस्त: हो तो अजीजतर है निगाहे आईना साज में...

पारदर्शी, निश्छल, निष्कपट, बेलाग अभिव्यक्ति ही डायरी की सार्थकता का पैमाना है. इसमें आत्मकेंद्रित ही नहीं समाज

केंद्रित चिंतन भी हो सकता है. मंडलोई जी के चिंतन का विस्तार साहित्य, समाज, भाषा तक है.

इस काव्यमयी डायरी की भाषा सरस और भाव प्रवण है. भाषा वैविध्य ध्यान आकर्षित करता है जैसे एक ही पृष्ठ पर वापरना, अबरना, तई जैसे शब्द...कहीं शब्द प्रयोग में चूक भी अस्वाभाविक लगती है जैसे पृष्ठ 15 पर हवा का चूम जाना कि जगह यदि 'सहला जाना' होता तो उस परिस्थिति में उचित होता. 'मद्यपान का सेवन' पान और सेवन पुनरुक्ति दोष है. 'हमजुल्फ' का अर्थ सादू भाई होता है संभवतः, यानी दो बहनों के पति आपस में हमजुल्फ होते हैं अतः यहां जिस अर्थ में प्रयोग है वह क्यों है, नहीं समझ पाई...

बहरहाल, डायरी रोचक, प्रेरक और पठनीय है.

स्मृतियां चाहे सुख के क्षणों की ही क्यों न हों—दुख ही देती हैं, ऐसा अनुभूत सत्य है सबके लिए सब जगह...किंतु काव्यशास्त्र में दुखान्त भी सुख की ही अनुभूति कराता है तभी तो हम दशरथ मरण के प्रसंग को पढ़ते हुए (रामचरित मानस में) रोते हैं किंतु बार-बार उसे पढ़ना चाहते हैं. मंडलोई जी की डायरी भी ऐसी ही स्मृतियों की पोटली है...जिसे पृष्ठ दर पृष्ठ खोलते-पढ़ते जाओ—इसी में लेखक की समृद्ध, विकास यात्रा के बीज छिपे-दबे हैं.



पुस्तक : दिनन-दिनन के फेर

लेखक : लीलाधर मंडलोई

प्रकाशक : साहित्य भंडार, इलाहाबाद

मूल्य : 500 रुपए

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# योगिनी मंदिर

गीताश्री

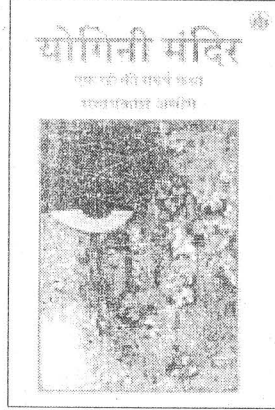
परख

**यो**गिनी मंदिर, यथार्थवादी राजनीतिक उपन्यास है। मौजूदा दौर में जब साहित्य में कई पीढ़ियां सक्रिय हैं और अनेक प्रवृत्तियां एक साथ दिखाई पड़ रही हैं, ऐसे में एक राजनीतिक उपन्यास का आना चौंकाता है। राजनीति के छलिया चेहरे से आजिज आ चुके समाज को राजनीतिक उपन्यास शायद कुछ देर सुकून दे। वरिष्ठ पत्रकार सत्यप्रकाश असीम का लंबा कैरियर पत्रकारिता में बीत रहा है, जहां वे राजनीति के बीहड़ों में खूब भटकते रहे हैं और संवेदनशील नागरिक होने और सजग पत्रकार होने के नाते स्त्रियों की समस्या को संवेदनशील नजरिए से देखते रहे हैं। पत्रकार-उपन्यासकार असीम उन चंद पत्रकारों में से रहे हैं जिन्होंने हिंदी पत्रकारिता में लड़कियों के प्रवेश के लिए द्वार खोले थे और उन्हें पर्याप्त अवसर दिए। उनकी प्रतिबद्धताएं उपन्यास में दिखाई पड़ती हैं। अन्यथा एक उपन्यास में पांच प्रमुख स्त्री पात्रों को लेकर न्याय करना आसान कहा जाता। हालांकि स्त्री पक्षधरता के कारण उपन्यासकार अतिवाद का शिकार भी हो गए हैं। इसके लिए सवाल उठाए जा सकते हैं कि जीवन भर गलत काम करने के बाद मंदिर या आश्रम उसे पुण्य में बदलने की शरणस्थली कैसे हो जाता है। या कोई चाहे तो जीवन के अंत में अपने पाप योगी या योगिनी बनकर धो सकता है। कहीं न कहीं उपन्यास से इस तरह की ध्वनि सुनाई देती है। लेकिन यह भी समकालीन राजनीति की सच्चाई

है, इसे राजनीति में धर्म के हस्तक्षेप और घुसपैठ पर तंज की तरह भी देखा जा सकता है।

इस उपन्यास में पांच महिलाएं हैं। उपन्यास के कवर पर भले लिखा हो कि एक स्त्री की संघर्ष कथा है, यहां एक नहीं, पांच अलग-अलग मोर्चों पर लड़ती हुई स्त्रियों की संघर्ष कथा है।

इमरती, लक्ष्मी, इनरी, पिकी और सलमा। लक्ष्मी और सलमा पुरानी परंपरा की, इमरती बीच की पीढ़ी की और इनरी, पिकी आधुनिक युग की स्त्री हैं। लक्ष्मी सामंती परिवार में सारे अत्याचार और घुटन सहकर भी अपने परिवार की चिंता करती हुई मर्यादा में रहती हैं। पति और बेटे, की हत्या के बाद जब विधवा बहू राजधानी में रहने लगी और छोटा बेटा भी समानांतर वामपंथी आंदोलन के एजेंडे को आगे बढ़ाते हुए कमलाकांत की जगह लेकर व्यस्त हो जाता है तब लक्ष्मी सलमा के साथ तीर्थ पर निकल जाती है जहां अंत में, योगिनी मंदिर में योगिनी मां से उसकी भेंट होती है। सलमा हालात की मारी अपने पतिहंता के घर में ही 15 साल गुजार देती है, वह ठाकुर के छल का शिकार होती है। इस बात को लक्ष्मी समझकर उसे स्नेहपूर्वक रखती है और सलमा भी परिवार के प्रति पूरी वफादारी रखती है। जवान बेटे सलीम के जेल जाने के बाद भी सलमा लक्ष्मी की सेवा करती है और लक्ष्मी अपने पति के हत्यारे की मां सलमा के प्रति कोई दुर्भावना नहीं रखती है, क्योंकि वह अपने पति के करतूतों को जस्टीफाई नहीं करती।



उपन्यास की मुख्य पात्र इमरती का जीवन गरीबी में बीता है, अभाव से जूझते हुए भी उसने अपनी अस्मत बचाकर रखी। लेकिन 36 पार करते ही ठाकुर की पंचायत से उसकी नियति ने उसका रास्ता बदल दिया। ठाकुर से संबंध बनने के बाद, पहले ठाकुर ने उसका और बाद में उसने, ठाकुर

का भरपूर इस्तेमाल किया।

यहां गौर करने की बात यह है कि स्त्री सशक्तीकरण के नाम पर ठाकुर ने उसका शोषण किया और अपनी 'जागरूकता' का ध्यान कर उसने अपने शोषण की कीमत वसूल कर खुद को न सिर्फ स्थापित किया बल्कि ठाकुर को दूध की मक्खी की तरह निकाल भी दिया। अपनी तीक्ष्ण बुद्धि से उसने मुख्यमंत्री पद प्राप्त किया और अनपढ़ रहकर भी कुशलता से शासन किया।

कमलाकांत की हत्या के बाद वह भीतर से टूट गई और विरोधियों की घिनौनी, आधारहीन लांछनों पर जनता की बढ़ती दिलचस्पी से अत्यधिक खिन्न हो गई। उसने सोचा कि जब लोगों के लिए हमने इतना कुछ किया, एक पैसे मैंने कि व्हाइट में नहीं लिए, फिर इन दो कमीने पूर्व मंत्रियों के चलते मेरे ऊपर हत्या का आरोप लगा रहे हैं लोग! अब तो न ठाकुर रहा, न कमलाकांत जी, उसको सपोर्ट कौन करेगा? क्या किसी सफल स्त्री के लिए भी हमेशा एक पुरुष का संबल जरूरी है?

ध्यान देने की बात यह है कि विधानसभा में इमरती को पूरा समर्थन था, उसे पद छोड़ने की कोई संवैधानिक या



तकनीकी वजह नहीं थी, लेकिन उसकी अंतरात्मा उसे कुछ और ही संदेश दे रही थी. इस्तीफे के बाद उसने पति और पुत्र का मोह भी त्याग दिया और गुरुजी के आश्रम चली आई. आश्रम में भी उसने अपने सेवा भाव और त्याग का परिचय दिया.

अंत में, इमरती ने योगिनी मां के रूप में लक्ष्मी देवी और सलमा को साथ रखकर देनों की क्षमा करने की अद्भुत क्षमता को सम्मान दिया और अपनी विशालता का बोध भी कराया. संघर्ष शारीरिक से अधिक मानसिक होता है और जब अनायास कोई सपना उग आए और आप उसे पूरा करने में अपना सर्वस्व लगा दें, सपना पूरा हो जाए फिर उसे पूरी दृढ़ता से वहीं छोड़कर आगे त्याग और तप के मार्ग पर आगे बढ़ जाए तो कोई सामान्य बात नहीं होगी. इमरती भी असाधारण थी.

चौथी स्त्री पात्र है इनरी. इनरी थोड़ी पढ़ी है, इमरती की तरह निरक्षर नहीं है. समय के साथ बदलती और अपनी सूझबूझ से पुरुषों की भूखी दुनिया में खुद को निवाला बनने से रोकने में कामयाब इनरी, आज के अद्यतन युग की स्त्री का प्रतिनिधित्व करती है.

वह पुरुष-प्रधान व्यवस्था को अपनी मर्जी से चलाती है और रेडिकल वामपंथ की आइडियोलॉजी पर बनी अपनी सरकार की मूलभूत व्यवस्था को बड़े करीने से अपने नए सलाहकार (नव हिंसामुक्त वामपंथी) प्रभाकर के साथ बदलने का काम कर रही है, जिसमें पूंजीपतियों का सहयोग लेकर उनका समुचित उपयोग भी कर रही है. यही चेहरा आने वाले कल का चेहरा है.

पांचवीं स्त्री पिंकी रईस घराने की पढ़ी-लिखी लड़की है जिसकी राजनीतिक ट्रेनिंग यूनिवर्सिटी की छात्र राजनीति से हुई है. वह रघुवर का अनपढ़ या कम पढ़ा होना इसलिए इनोरे करके शादी करती है कि परिवार में राजनीतिक स्कोर्पियो है. वह ससुर की कमजोरियों को गहरे समझती

है किंतु सजग और सतर्क रहकर अपने कदम बढ़ाती है.

जब उसके ससुर शराब के नशे में उसके साथ खींचतान करते हैं तो बहुत चालाकी से खुद को बचा लेती है. वह अपने पति के भी चरित्र को खूब बढ़िया से समझती है इसलिए उस पर कोई लगाम लगाने की फालतू मशक्कत नहीं करती है. पिंकी आज के जमाने की प्रैक्टिकल लड़की है जो फ्री मूवमेंट तो करती है लेकिन उसको कोई टेकेन ग्राटेड नहीं ले सकता. या यों कहें कि कॉरपोरेट कल्चर की सोशल फेस है पिंकी.

पूरा उपन्यास इतनी बारीकी से बुना गया है कि हर धागा और हर गांठ अपने साथ कथा का रिदम लिए हुए महत्त्वपूर्ण है. कुछ बातें हैं जो उपन्यास में, शब्दों में नहीं होते हुए भी इसका अहम हिस्सा हैं जैसे :

1. सूबे में नक्सली प्रभाव की सरकार है, जो एक ब्राह्मण के इशारे पर चलती है.

देश में जितने भी नक्सली संगठन हुए हैं उनका नेतृत्व प्रायः ब्राह्मण या ठाकुरों के हाथ में रहा है. हाल के वर्षों में जब नई पीढ़ी नक्सल मूवमेंट में सक्रिय हुई, तब उसने नरसंहार और हिंसा का विरोध किया. इसी के चलते नए प्रभाकर (ठाकुर) ने पुराने कमलाकांत (ब्राह्मण) को उन्हीं के तरीके से साफ कर उनकी जगह ले ली.

2. राजनीति के पुराने जातीय समीकरण हरिजन, मुस्लिम और ठाकुरों को मिलाकर सत्ता पाने की ट्रेनिंग पाए मुखिया राधो सिंह उस सामंती कोढ़ का प्रतिनिधि है जिनकी हरकतों से समाज में नफरत और प्रतिशोध के साथ टूट होती है. लेकिन उसी परिवार में पत्नी लक्ष्मी दिल से समाजवादी और छोटा बेटा प्रभाकर नव-साम्यवाद का नायक है.

3. सत्ता के शीर्ष पर दलित (स्त्री) को बिठाने की मजबूरी या समझदारी जो भी हो लेकिन जब अपनी अहमियत पता हो जाय तो फिर कोई उसे कठपुतली या

मोहरा नहीं बना सकता.

4. स्त्री का हृदय कितना विशाल होता है ये योगिनी मंदिर में अंततः जुड़ी तीन स्त्रियों के अंतिम निर्णयों में साफ-साफ दिखता है.

□

**पुस्तक : योगिनी मंदिर**

**लेखक : सत्यप्रकाश असीम**

**प्रकाशक : ऑथर प्रेस, हौजखास एनक्लेव, नई दिल्ली**

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# मुलाकात डरी हुई लड़की से

नवरत्न पांडे

परख

भारतीय ज्ञानपीठ का लोकोदय ग्रंथ माला के तहत ज्ञान प्रकाश विवेक द्वारा लिखित एक उपन्यास आया है—'डरी हुई लड़की' उपन्यास बहुत कंजूसी से थोड़ा-थोड़ा पढ़ने के बावजूद भी आखिर खत्म हो गया और पीछे छोड़ गया एक सन्नाटा, एक खलिश, एक अजीब-सी बेचैनी, मतलब समसामयिक कालखंड में उपन्यास एक जरूरी घटना सा प्रतीत होता है. उपन्यास ठीक ऐसे समय पर आया है जब अखबारी और मीडिया जगत् की सुर्खियां पढ़कर संज्ञान में आई घटनाओं के मद्देनजर लगता है कि यह उपन्यास जरूरी था और एक संवेदनशील पाठक की हैसियत से नेट-शेल में कहीं तो अगर आप बहुत दिन से एकांत में रोए नहीं हैं अथवा जिंदगी की जद्दोजहद में अपने रोने को भिस कर रहे हैं तो 'डरी हुई लड़की' पढ़िए. यह भाषाई कौशल का एक शानदार दस्तावेज है. वह लाचार है, बेबस है, उसकी अस्मिता खंडित हुई है, उसके भीतर छटपटाहट है, वह टूटे पंखों की चिड़िया-सी है, जिसे पता है कि भ्रष्ट व्यवस्था के पहाड़ से टकराकर वह अपने प्राण तो दे सकती है लेकिन बिगाड़ कुछ भी नहीं सकती. तो फिर लेखक का आशय क्या यही है कि हार जाओ और चुप्पी का कंबल ओढ़कर कहीं निर्जन एकांत का वरण करो और जिल्लत भरी जिंदगी को ढोओ. नहीं, ऐसा नहीं है. डरी हुई लड़की के भीतर सुलगता छटपटाहट का लावा और उसके

भीतर की बेबसी पाठक को झिंझोड़ने में कामयाब हुई है जिसे पढ़कर उसके मुंह का स्वाद कसैला हो जाता है और वह उपन्यास बीच में ही बंद करके बाहर खिड़की के आसमान पर थूक देता है. पाठक का यह थूकना ही उपन्यासकार की जीत है. जैसे पाठक स्वयं पर अथवा पूरी



भ्रष्ट व्यवस्था पर या कि कामुक और लंपट पुरुष समाज पर ही थूकता है.

ज्ञान प्रकाश विवेक की भाषा एक अजीब-सी खामोशी में लिपटी हुई भाषा है. ठीक गुज़ल की भाषा, पढ़ते-पढ़ते कई बार ऐसा लगता है कि इसकी तनुता, इसकी डेलीकेसी कहीं खत्म न हो जाए. इसमें बेमतलब का तीखा प्रतिकार भी नहीं है. इसमें एक विवशता है जो बाकायदा पाठक को समाधान निकालने का मौका देती है कि बताओ अगर ऐसा आपके साथ हो जाए तो आप क्या करेंगे? और यही एक खालिश अदीब की जदीदियत है. उसकी मैच्योरिटी है. और ऐसा शायद संभव हुआ है ज्ञान प्रकाश विवेक लंबे समय से एकांत में रहते हैं और उनका वह एकांत उनकी भाषा में भी उतर आया है. उपन्यास में कथानक लगभग न के बराबर है और कथानक यहां होता तो व्यर्थ ही लगता है. कथानक होता तो पात्र भी होते और पात्रों की भीड़ कहन के तीखेपन को भोथरा कर देती.

असल में पात्रों की जरूरत उपन्यासकार को तब पड़ती है जब वह कथानक को

आगे बढ़ाना चाहता हो. यहां ऐसी कोई दरकार नहीं है. बल्कि कई बार तो ऐसा लगता भी है कि कथानक धूम-फिरकर फ्लैट के उसी कमरे में लौट आए जहां नंदनी (पात्र) अपनी नियति और कशमकश के साथ मौजूद है.

लेखक उपन्यास में आज

की जिंदगी के सच को दिखाने से नहीं चूकता लेकिन उसे अपना लक्ष्य याद रहता है. जैसे 'मनीष की आत्महत्या' के जिक्र से आज की लाइफ स्टाइल पर विचार का आग्रह है लेकिन वह अपना अस्तित्व खोकर टूटने की हद तक छटपटाती डरी हुई लड़की के पास पुनः लौटता है और पाठक को फिर उसी माहौल में ले आता है. उपन्यास का नायक एक गैर-शादीशुदा, नौकरीपेशा युवक है और अपने खामोश सपनों के साथ अपने फ्लैट में अकेला रहता है. खामोशी उसका बाना है. लेकिन उसने अपने जमीर को जिंदा रखा है. यहां तक कि उसे अपनी खामोशी भी अखरती है. उसे खामोशियों के फर्क भी मालूम हैं. फ्लैट के अंदर दो शख्स और दोनों चुप. घर में मैं अकेला होता तो मुझे मेरी चुप न अखरती. मेरी चुप मेरे पैरों में, पैरों की हवाई चप्पलों में या जूतों के तसमों में छुपी रहती है. कई बार तो चुप किसी किताब के भीतर किसी गुमशुदा किस्सागो जैसी, तो कई बार वह चुप लोकल बस की पुरानी टिकट जैसी फर्श पर रेंगनी-सी लगती है. अकेले आदमी के साथ-साथ कोई नहीं



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Handwritten signature: "Utkarsh"

चल रहा होता उसकी चुप चल रही होती है. वह चुप वीरानी में लिथड़ी हुई होती है. और इस फ्लैट की चुप अजनबीयत के तारकोल में. अकेले घर में रहने वाले इंसान की चुप दिलकश होती है, दिल फरेब होती है, और दिल शिकन भी. खिड़की के सलाखों पर बैठा चांद किसी डाकघर के डाकिए जैसा लगता है. कमबख्त उसके सारे अंतर्देशीय खामोश प्रार्थनाओं का अनुवाद ही तो होते हैं.

लेखक कहीं-कहीं इतना विनम्र हो गया है कि उसकी विनम्रता के बरक्स पाठक स्वयं को असहाय पाता है. परिणामतः उसे नंदनी की समस्या अपनी समस्या लगती है. लेखक के खुले मन से अपनी अनभिज्ञता को स्वीकार करता है. मसलन, "वह यह भी मान लेता है कि ऐसी स्थिति में लड़की को इस मानसिक आघात से कैसे उबारना है उसे नहीं पता." लेकिन उसे नहीं पता के पीछे उसकी बहुत बारीक मनसा भी है कि वह पाठक को यह बताने में कामयाब होता है कि इस तरह के मानसिक आघात की स्थिति में लड़की आपके किसी भी संवाद को अथवा किसी भी बातचीत को कैसे लेगी और कैसे रिएक्ट करेगी?

कुछ तय नहीं होता क्योंकि उसका विश्वास दुनिया से और पुरुष प्रजाति से उठ चुका होता है. दुष्कर्म पीड़ित लड़की की साइकी को समझना और फिर उसको कथावस्तु बनाकर उपन्यास में प्रस्तुत करना कोई आसान काम नहीं क्योंकि लेखक सिर्फ लेखक ही होता है. कोई मनोवैज्ञानिक अथवा डॉक्टर नहीं. लेकिन लेखक ने जिस तरीके से और जिस सलीके से लड़की का मनोविज्ञान उपन्यास में प्रस्तुत किया है वह चकित तो करता ही है बल्कि उसने कथ्य के साथ पूरा न्याय किया गया है.

लेखक एक स्थान पर अपनी मां और पिताजी के व्यक्तित्व पर प्रकाश डालता

है. यहां उसका आशय कथावस्तु को महज खींचना नहीं है बल्कि अपने माता-पिता की चारित्रिक विशेषताओं के माध्यम से वह 'मैं' पात्र के चरित्र के साथ पूरा न्याय करता था-प्रतीत होता है. साथ ही वह नायक के संपूर्ण व्यक्तित्व को आदर्श बनाकर पाठक के समक्ष प्रस्तुत करने में कामयाब भी होता है. कई जगह पर तो उसकी व्यवस्था इतनी विनम्र होती है कि पाठक के पास रोने के अलावा कोई चारा नहीं बचता. जैसे एक स्थान पर स्थिति कुछ यूं होती है, "अभी वह बाथरूम में है. मैंने दलिया दो प्लेटों में रख दिया है. मैं उसकी प्रतीक्षा में हूं. मैं जिस लड़की के इंतजार में हूं उसके रूठने-मनाने की बात सोच भी नहीं सकता. मैं न मां हूं, न मैं डॉक्टर हूं, न मनोचिकित्सक हूं. काश! होता, कुछ भी होता है, कुछ न होता तो कम से कम एक स्त्री ही होता. लेकिन मैं कुछ भी नहीं." यहां 'कम से कम एक स्त्री होती है'. यह वाक्य लेखक की नजर में स्त्री के विराट अस्तित्व की पराकाष्ठा है, और चरमोत्कर्ष भी.

समीक्षाओं की अपनी सीमाएं हुआ करती हैं अतः एक-दो बात कहकर अपनी बात समाप्त करूंगा. एक तो कहीं-कहीं 'मैं' पात्र की जो उम्र है उस पर परिपक्वता का कहीं-कहीं बोझ दिखाई पड़ता है. यानी कहीं-कहीं एक गैर-शादीशुदा नौजवान प्रौढ़ लगने लगता है. और दूसरी बात पाठक बड़ी उम्मीद के साथ उपन्यास के अंत में पहुंचता है कि शायद...? लेकिन तब तक नन्दिनी राजन के फ्लैट पर एक पत्र छोड़कर जा चुकी होती है. तो पाठक के दिमाग में फौरन एक बात आती है कि इसका दूसरा पार्ट भी लिखा जाना चाहिए और यह परंपरा अब इस उपन्यास के साथ डाली जानी चाहिए क्योंकि फिल्म का सीक्वल बन सकता है तो 'डरी हुई लड़की' का सीक्वल भी लिखा जाना चाहिए. ऐसी

गुजारिश पाठक इस उपन्यासकार से करता है.



**पुस्तक : डरी हुई लड़की**  
**संपादक : ज्ञान प्रकाश विवेक**  
**प्रकाशक : भारतीय ज्ञानपीठ, नई दिल्ली**  
**मूल्य : 300 रुपए**

**संपर्क : प्रवक्ता हिंदी, गांव व डा.**  
**रावलधी, जिला : चरखी दादरी,**  
**भिवानी-127306**  
**मो. : 9896224471**

**'सम्बोधन' के पूर्व सम्पादक**  
**कवि, कथाकार एवं उपन्यासकार**  
**कमर मेवाड़ी की संस्मरण पुस्तक**  
**यादें**



**प्रकाशन वर्ष : 2019**  
**पृष्ठ : 144 मूल्य : 395 रुपये**  
 नंद चतुर्वेदी, राजेन्द्र यादव, कमलेश्वर, मनमोहन ठाकौर, आचार्य निरंजननाथ, हरीश भादानी, सावित्री परमार, मणि मधुकर, काशीनाथ सिंह, आलमशाह खान, स्वयं प्रकाश, मधुसूदन पाण्ड्या, राजकमल चौधरी, आचार्य तुलसी, वेद व्यास, हेतु भारद्वाज, महेन्द्र भानावत, देवेन्द्र कर्णावट आदि हिंदी के 26 दिग्गज लेखक, पत्रकार, संत एवं सामाजिक कार्यकर्ताओं के दिलचस्प संस्मरण

**'हस' के पाठकों के लिए 30% रियायती दर पर उपलब्ध**

**आज ही आर्डर करें**  
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**नीरज बुक सेंटर**  
 सी-32, आर्यनगर सोसायटी, प्लॉट-91  
 आई.पी. एक्सटेंशन, दिल्ली-110092  
 मोबाइल : 08800139684



✓ **Maxim Storchevoy**, *A Scientific Approach to Ethics: Developing Greater Respect for Ethics in Business and Society*, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. 147 pages, ₹147. ISBN: 978-3-319-69112-1.

DOI: 10.1177/0971685818806628

Although ethics is considered to be a well-established discipline, it has constantly been subjected to its own critique. Given an indifferent attitude of people towards human values and the most dominating voices of sciences, one of the significant questions is whether ethics could or should be built like a science (or it is already a science!) in order to convince people in regard to its efficacy. In the book under review, Maxim Storchevoy addresses this concern and attempts to develop a new understanding of ethics as a truly scientific discipline. Putting himself against the backdrop of the standard view that defines ethics as a bunch of subjective opinions and disagreements, the author suggests that ethics could and should indeed be rebuilt as a discipline of science. The author argues that scientific ethics is the closest to the social sciences (especially to disciplines such as psychology, sociology, economics and political science) owing to its focus on human relationships and behaviour. With a historical overview of the methodological evolution of normative ethics, the author provides a scientific methodology for its development. He strongly feels that developing normative ethics as a social science discipline would certainly aid in improving its reputation.

Divided into seven chapters, the book starts with a general discussion on the nature and justification of science. In the first chapter entitled 'Why Science? What Science?', the author aims to locate the reasons behind the lack of respect for the discipline of ethics among the teaching and learning community. The author believes that the reason for laxity could be traced in the 'unscientific' approach of the discourses of ethics. It is indisputable that there is an inherent respect for science in the society due to its pragmatic values. For instance, as the author himself puts forth, people have somewhat unquestioned faith on the physicists or the geneticists as they are considered someone who would give solution to the real world problems such as global warming or human diseases. Science is something, which is considered objective, well-organized and reproducible knowledge. However, the ethicists do not necessarily discover such 'truths' and thus, the society is sceptical of its position as a science, a major challenge faced by the business ethics academia among others. The significance of addressing the elements towards establishing normative ethics as a scientific discipline through a robust scientific methodology becomes inevitable here.

The existing cynicism towards considering ethics as a science leads us to the second chapter where the author attempts to develop his version of a scientific approach to normative ethics. Thus, in the chapter titled 'A Scientific Approach to Normative Ethics', the author primarily emphasizes the positivist concept (of science) as an indispensable foundation of contemporary science. He uses one variant of this concept towards building his scientific approach for normative ethics, that is, using experimental psychological observations for the validation of ethical concepts and decisions. The author further states that the rationale behind the selection of this particular method is to ground ethics 'on simple and realistic assumptions'. The positivist methodology is a brilliant contender of speculative ethicizing since it is based on the primary principles which are easily accessible to the end consumers of even an ordinary intellect.

One of the major contributions of the book lies in its attention and focus on the four characteristic features of science which could profitably be used to rebuild ethics as a scientific discipline in lines with Thomas Hobbes (p. 48): (a) accurate definitions, (b) correct logic, (c) empirical verification and (d) accurate measurement. Moreover, the author explains each of these distinguishing relation of the positive normative ethics in adequate details while taking into account various contexts.

The author has not confined himself merely to the analysis of the general normative ethics but also demonstrated the way in which it could be reinforced with the convincing methodology of sciences. The author argues that it is essential to analyse the 'evolutionary model of man' in order to comprehend people's behaviour in terms of an individual's rationality, desires and feelings and offer a scientific explanation of the same. Accordingly, he dedicates a complete chapter on the topic which, he believes, is 'quite important for developing a more grounded normative ethics'. One of the key observations is that a moral theory should not be rooted on intuitions or emotions. Such as the concept of 'disinterestedness' is an integral element in what Robert K. Merton named the 'ethos of science' apart from universalism, communism and organized scepticism ([https://www.collier.sts.vt.edu/5424/pdfs/merton\\_1973.pdf](https://www.collier.sts.vt.edu/5424/pdfs/merton_1973.pdf)).

Yet another major contribution of this book is the historical narrative of the methodological progression of normative ethics that the author provides towards offering a holistic account of the discipline. The author considers 'the appearance of the idea of science and the following construction of a new type of knowledge based only on rational argumentation' as one of the most interesting periods in the development of ethics and thus, presented a sufficiently elaborate analysis in the chapter titled 'Normative Ethics before the Twentieth Century'. Tracing back the idea of science in the ancient and mediaeval ethics, he describes how one set of philosophers, surprisingly, believed in the probability of structuring a scientific alternative of ethics while another set of philosophers carried the strong view that scientific ethics is impossible, giving rise to a kind of scepticism. Nevertheless, the author observes that from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, nearly each and every element of a scientific approach to ethics were visible in the writings of different scholars. For instance, the British philosophers Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) and John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) came closer to the concept. While Thomas Hobbes is considered as 'the first thinker who explicitly built a moral theory based only on rational premises in his famous *Leviathan*' (1651), John Stuart Mill suggested, 'laws should be discovered through observation and induction, and required empirical verification'. Mill called for the application of the same scientific approach to moral philosophy.

Carrying forward his account of the methodology in normative ethics, the author further reviews the development of moral philosophy and the rational or scientific approach for normative ethics in the first and second half of the twentieth century, respectively, in two consecutive chapters, namely, Chapter 5 titled 'Moore, Vienna Circle, and Meta-Ethics' and Chapter 6 entitled 'Contractarianism and Rational Choice'. While normative ethics experienced a nonlinear movement before scientific development by the sixteenth century, the enthusiasm on the scientific approach to philosophy observed some serious advancement during the first decade of the twentieth century. As the author argues, the first half of the twentieth century was actually the time when the influence of the English scholar George Edward Moore's (1873–1958) denial of ethics and propagation of analytical philosophy had a very strong influence on the discipline of moral philosophy. His influence was greater than his predecessor British philosopher Henry Sidgwick during the 1880s who did propose a number of elements for a scientific approach to ethics but could not construct a 'new theory' capable of replacing the older ones. The author further draws attention to the eminent Vienna Circle which, within the same period (from 1907 to 1936), took the leading role in reassessing general scientific methodology to the discipline. One of the celebrated and influential members of the circle was the Austrian physicist and philosopher Ernst Mach (1838–1916). The Vienna Circle emphasized on a unified science with philosophy as the most general knowledge avoiding metaphysical theorizing and with a clear language, strict logic and empirical verification.

The author explains the second part of the twentieth century's contributions for a scientific approach to normative ethics through the work of scholars such as John Rawls, Robert Nozick, Amartya Sen, John Harsanyi, David Gauthier and Thomas Scanlon. He observes that during the time, several rational choice or scientific approaches for normative ethics developed to the contractarian ethics. For instance, as a new

contractarian approach, John Rawls published his *A Theory of Justice* in 1971, which he believed should replace utilitarianism. Nevertheless, the author argues that contractarian and utilitarian ideas are essentially integrated by the scientific moral theory. Finally, the concluding chapter entitled 'Other Approaches' largely concentrates on factors such as emotivism, intuitionism and prescriptivism as the architect of normative ethics over rational choices. Exploring the possibility of scientific ethics further, the author provides an in-depth analysis on the development of virtue ethics which, he believes, has a place in scientific ethics and accordingly, 'should be conceptually embedded into normative, positive, and practical ethics to achieve a more efficient theoretical framework'.

Overall, the book provides an enriching explanation towards developing normative ethics as a purely scientific discipline. Among many others, the historical narrative involving a detailed account and intense analysis of the works of various philosophers and thinkers towards the development of the concept of scientific ethics is certainly a significant and commendable contribution of this book.

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itself as cares or concerns which are directed away from our own performance and accomplishments. Here, Bommarito points out that a case of untreated attention deficit disorder, would not necessarily indicate the virtue of modesty since the incapacity to consistently maintain one's attention on anything for some extended time period is not the same as having our cares directed away from our own achievements.

My only real concern with Bommarito's argument is in his concluding remarks concerning the cultivation of moral character. Here, Bommarito points out that since we do not have any immediate or direct control over the psychological states which nevertheless reflect significantly on our moral character, that we would do well to make attempts to cultivate our character, as we would in the sense of growing and maintaining a garden. The problem as I see is that, however, we may necessarily proceed in working to improve certain aspects of our inner moral lives, this task would ultimately only be possible in light of both self-reflection and/or feedback from our social environment. If this is the case, then it would appear that a large part of the moral character of our innermost psychological states would rely for their development on the 'effects' of these states themselves, at least in so much as we are committed to cultivating, improving and refining our character. In this respect, I would suggest that the purely internalist take on moral character, here, advocated by Bommarito may in the end fair a little better with a bit of externalism, at least in relation to character cultivation.

This notwithstanding, it is clear to me that today in a time of media saturation, where advertisers, news outlets and social media platforms all scramble to manipulate our attention, emotions and pleasures, with ever more sophisticated methods and dubious algorithms, a book such as *Inner Virtue*, that asks us to meditate on our interior moral lives for a change is not only welcome but also an urgent necessity today for anyone interested in building a future just world. Without hesitation, I highly recommend Nicolas Bommarito's new book, *Inner Virtue*.

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✓ Jake H. Davis (Ed.), *A Mirror Is for Reflection: Understanding Buddhist Ethics*, New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017. 358 pages. ₹1,395, US\$69.95. ISBN 978-0-19-049977-8 (hardcover), ISBN 978-0-19-049976-1 (paperback).

DOI: 10.1177/0971685818805831

*A Mirror Is for Reflection: Understanding Buddhist Ethics* is an interesting collection of articles on Buddhist ethics. The academic worth of this collection lies in its projection of the ways contemporary scholarship looks at the nature, relevance and limitation of Buddhist ethics. The major concerns are the following: Is Buddhist ethics strictly religious with otherworldly promises or is it a secular way of living? Does it provide any theoretical model to deal with the moral concerns of the modern society? How far is it relevant to the culturally other? These issues are raised with a serious concern to seek some guidelines from Buddhism, which would help the people of twenty-first century across cultures find answers to their moral quandaries. The unity of the whole project may be seen in the addressing of two basic questions raised by Owen Flanagan in his insightful Foreword: (a) *What exactly is the nature of Buddhist ethics?* (b) *What sort of resources for living good human lives does Buddhism provide to the denizens of WEIRD cultures, for Western, educated, industrialized, rich and democratic peoples?* (p. xi, italics original).

In search of his own answers, Flanagan remarks that though resourceful in moral messages, Buddhism does not provide any systematic ethical theory on Western standards. Another worry is that the Buddhist metaphysics of impermanence seems to be an inadequate ground for morality as per Abrahamic standards. Even if Flanagan is excused for his category mistakes, his remarks can be contested on the basis of the volumes of works published by the analytic philosophers of his own tradition which show that Buddhism is neither philosophically weak nor deficient in moral principles. Buddhism can be seen responding to both the worries through, for instance, its concept of person (*pudgala*) matching here and there with the responses of Anglophone philosophy, at the same time eluding from any sectarian separation. However, the contemporary Buddhist scholarship may like to take the challenge (posed in the Foreword). Turning to the second question, Flanagan rightly suggests that there is more to learn from Buddhism on other-directed altruistic morality and the worth of doing the cross-cultural philosophy is in its facilitation of such learning. The Forward truly sets in the points of debate undertaken by the scholars of repute in the following pages.

The volume in hand has six parts, each consisting three articles. Part one includes the articles on the Buddhist approach to ethical thinking and the Western categories of ethics. The nature of Buddhist ethics is the subject matter of the articles in part two. Part three focuses on the basic principles of Buddhist ethics, namely, karma and rebirth. Part four and part five include the articles exploring the link between the Buddhist psychology and its moral precepts. The articles in the last part focus on the Buddhist principles relevant to mental and global peace. Overall, the volume covers most of the contemporary perspectives on the topics including the nature of Buddhist ethics as a whole, karma and rebirth, mindfulness, narrative, intention, free will, politics, anger and equanimity. It is therefore a stimulating exploration into the Buddhist ethical thinking in light of the recent debates among the moral philosophers. The literature considered ranges from the Pāli Theravāda tradition to Sanskrit and Tibetan Mahāyāna Buddhism.

In the following paragraphs, my intention is not to reflect on each article thoroughly; instead, I would restrict myself to comment on the treatment of the common issues of each part. To begin with, it is pertinent to refer to Jonardon Ganeri's remark in his introduction to the edited book *Indian Logic: A Reader* about comparative study of logic:

Comparative project is liable to catch the Indian theory in a double-bind: either Indian logic is not recognized as logic in the western sense at all; or if it is, then it inevitably appears impoverished and underdeveloped by western standards. The only way to escape this dilemma is to reclaim for Indian logic *its own distinctive domain of problems and applications*, to see how it asks questions not clearly formulated elsewhere, and in what way it seeks to solve the problems it sets for itself. (2001, p. 21, italics mine)

What is said of Indian logic in the above quote is equally applicable to the Buddhist ethics. Consider, for example, Damien Keown's observation in his article (the first article in the book under review) that Buddhist moral thinking falls short of moral theorizing that could be compared directly to Western meta-ethical systems (p. 19). He offers several explanations for this 'curious absence' such as the absence of a precedence, different approach towards knowledge, emphasis on practice than theorizing, unfavourable metaphysics, more concern for renunciation than regularization of social life and a general disinclination for theory building in Indian systems of philosophy. One possibility of getting over this lacuna is suggested (p. 31) to adopt the approach of the key thinkers of the West like Aristotle (virtue ethics), Kant (deontology) and Mill (utilitarianism). Bronwyn Finnigan surveys the viewpoints of the scholars who argued in favour of either of these Western theories of ethics capturing the essence of the Buddhist ethics. Alternatively, a hybrid version like virtue consequentialism would take proper care of the Buddhist ethical viewpoint. She offers a logical demonstration of the philosophical complexities that

prevent an easy solution to the question of how to fit the Buddhist ethics into Western philosophical categories. She finally tries a meta-ethical approach to see the nature of Buddhist ethics. Christopher Gowans corroborates with Keown in his belief that the Buddhists never saw any need for theorizing moral ideas (p. 55). Moreover, his article is more engaging on the issues Finnigan deals with.

The first article in the second part by Jin Y. Park seeks to develop the Buddhist ideas of morality away from the categories of the Western theories. She focuses on the nonduality (between the enlightened Bodhisattva and the unenlightened sentient beings) of the Zen and Huayan Buddhist traditions for the purpose. She then deals with the challenges posed by nondual perspectives for formulating an ethical framework. She suggests that the enlightenment needs to be accompanied with compassion to be of any moral/social worth. The process of transformation begins with the metaphysical realization of nonduality between existence and emptiness. It is this project which is essential for the progress of humanity than any amount of theorizing, she maintains. Graham Priest underlies the Buddhist assimilation outside of its birthplace. In need of epistemic evidence, he finds it difficult to accept rebirth, the notion crucial to the moral precepts of Buddhism. He, however, says that an allusion to the phenomenon of rebirth is not essential to the Buddhist ethics. For the doctrine of karma is enough (p. 96) and the Buddhist practices are meant to facilitate the peace of mind (*ataraxia* in Greek, *upekkhā/upeksā* in Buddhism translated as equanimity). What makes Priest's article worth reading is his general defence of ethics.

Another constructive approach about Buddhist ethics is offered by Christian Coseru in terms of Buddhist neuroethics (a version of consequentialism concerned with the neural basis of enlightened moral agency, p. 113–114). He employs the resources of neuroscience to see the effect of contemplation and compassion on the cognitive functioning of the practitioner's mind and the way it can advance the philosophical debate concerning freedom and determinism. The spontaneity of a Bodhisattva behaviour, however, remains a challenge for such interpretation. Charles Goodman explores the psychological dimension of the kārmic engagement and argues that understanding karma psychologically makes the case of a consequentialist interpretation of Buddhist ethics stronger than the virtue-theoretic one.

Jan Westerhoff seeks to examine the naturalistic approaches (of a materialist philosopher Ajita Kesakambalī as well as of cognitive science) to Buddhist ethics: If death is the end of everything, the prudent way to put an end to one's suffering would be suicide rather than painstaking inculcation of ethical behaviour, concentration and wisdom advocated in Buddhist texts (p. 149). He argues that a further exploration into the Buddhist understanding of the continuity of mental life is more enlightening than any attempt to arrange the Buddhist ideas in light of the contemporary naturalistic interpretation. Sallie B. King, in her descriptive analysis, presents an overview of the place of karma in Engaged Buddhism, a contemporary movement in the Buddhist world to engage with the social and political issues. She presents both negative as well positive interpretations of the principle of karma. She also highlights B. R. Ambedkar's appeal to rethinking the foundational ideas of Buddhism in order to get over the misrepresentation of the original intent of the precepts.

Sara McClintock drives her attention to 'ethical reading' of the Buddhist canonical literature for the transformation of individual consciousness. The canonical narratives are believed to showcase and motivate the reader to attain higher levels of inner awareness leading to, on the one hand, the familiarity of the nuances of Buddhist ethics, on the other hand, spontaneous moral behaviour (p. 187). It is a practice in 'mindfulness'. McClintock instantiates her points through the stories of Panthaka, Dharmaruci and Svāgata of the Buddhist literature. Jay L. Garfield affirms the efficacy of Buddhist literature in his remark that Buddhism can significantly contribute to cognitive science due its deep moral psychology rooted in phenomenological reflection. An intensive analysis of the states of awareness is foundational to all moral development. Alluding to the Mahayāna philosopher Śāntideva, among others, Garfield argues that mindfulness is necessary for spontaneous virtuosity. Moreover, what is important for a spontaneous mindfulness is continuous practice and training of mind. In his article, Editor Jake H. Davis

Ethics Philosophy

offers a naturalistic reconstruction of early Buddhist ethical theory. By reference to the results of experimental psychology, he explains how the training of mindfulness shows a positive result in engendering good (*kuśal*) intention leading to naturally moral decisions.

Some scholars emphasize the role of intention in Buddhist ethics. Karin L. Meyers's contribution to this volume is seen in this direction. She focuses on Vasubandhu's analysis of intention in his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* where he defines intention (*cetanā*) as 'a mental action that shapes/constructs the mind' (p. 240) and says that sans intention there is no accumulation of karma (p. 245). Riccardo Repetti invites our attention to the Buddhist literature as good resources to enrich the philosophical discussion on free will. He discusses Marie Friquegnon's three readings of free will in Buddhism: selfless moral agency unrestrained by any divine power, unethical actions of a defiled mind and the spontaneous behaviour of an enlightened mind. The attempt in this article is to match the Buddhist viewpoints with different Western positions related to free will and determinism. Mark Siderits, in his article, aims to show how Buddhist analyses of action without an agent might prove a resource for contemporary philosophical theories of action. He appropriates what he calls the folk theory of action propounded by E. J. Lowe in order to articulate a Buddhist theory of action.

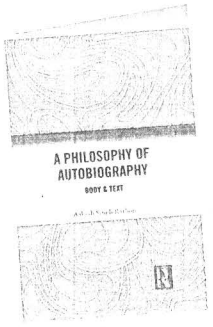
Three articles in the last part deal with the apparent incompatibility between the metaphysics of Buddhism and its pragmatic value. Christopher Kelley points out a tension between the Mahāyāna Buddhist view on selflessness and emptiness and its moral implications. He argues that the Buddhist non-essentialist metaphysics provides a better philosophical basis for conceptions of human rights than essentialism. However, he recognizes a paradox of inherent dignity of selfless persons and suggests that it can be philosophically dissolved with due consideration to the doctrine of two truths (*saṃvṛti* and *paramārtha satya*) in the Mahāyāna Buddhism (p. 306). One may, however, wonder whether the creation of such binaries is essential to proper understanding and ordering of human affairs such as human rights at conventional level and absolute freedom from suffering at the ultimate level: Is there really an irresolvable conflict between the conventional and ultimate aspirations? Is this a proper dilemma or dilemma-like? A convincing answer to this quandary of Indian culture seems unavoidable to achieve a harmonious state of existence. Amber Carpenter explores the relationship between injustice and anger, and elicits a Buddhist mode of eliminating anger from Buddhaghosa's (c. fifth century CE Buddhist Theravāda commentator) and Śāntideva's (c. eighth century CE Mādhyamaka Buddhist scholar) viewpoints. She suggests that the Buddhists focus more on the ethics of care (*karuṇā*) which is recognized as the affective and practical recognition of no-self metaphysics (p. 329). Emily McRae, in the last article of the volume, underlies equanimity as the cardinal virtue among the four great virtues in Buddhist ethics, namely, love (*maitrī*), compassion (*karuṇā*), sympathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekṣā*). Given the intensity and diversity of the discussions, the editor Davis is rightly optimistic in saying that the volume prepares 'a groundwork for future...cosmopolitan exchange about issues that matter deeply to us all' (p. 12).

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**books** Aakash Singh Rathore

A Philosophy of Autobiography | Routledge | 164 pages | Rs 995

## Shadowland Of Our Selves

A theory of autobiography, through inspection of famous examples, demands earthy inclusivity. A close textual-psychological study, however, is missing.

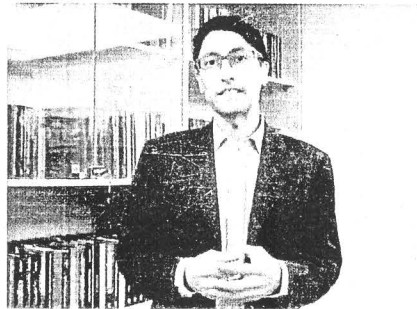
BY R. KRISHNASWAMY

**A** *Philosophy of Autobiography* by Aakash Singh Rathore, a distinguished professor of philosophy, is an interesting take on the genre of autobiography. The title of the book might belie the radical way in which autobiographical narrative technique is interpreted. A central premise of the book is that all autobiography—rightly executed and interpreted—is an exercise in not only telling the story of a personal life but also privileging the lived experiences of the author.

The life lived ultimately must be mediated through the many somatic experiences that the writer has had, Rathore argues. The book is also a lesson in how we must break away from the habit of thinking of lives lived as merely expressed in their artistic or scholarly productions. It is very tempting to think of the 'body of work' of an author or a writer as their many linguistic and artistic expressions. This temptation is most acute when we come across scholars and writers whose prodigious contribution to philosophy, literature, history or any field of scholarship, baffles our interpretive capacity and we wonder at their genius. Then, we are prone to say that they lived a 'life of the mind', thinking that beneath their calm quotidian lives there must have been a whole field of ideas and concepts jostling with immense energy, crucial to the genius of their expressive capacity.

We carry around with us this dichotomy of the life of the mind versus the body and its many normative implications as a prejudiced yardstick to measure our own lives and its potential for fulfilment. Through the many authors' autobiographical accounts that Rathore handles, he has given a powerful counter-narrative to our entrenched narratives regarding what

constitutes our lives and its values. A central lesson of his work is that we need to break away from the usual rut of our commonsensical belief that somehow there is a life of the mind that can be divorced from our many bodily affectivities. He makes the even more strong claim that not only must we account for the different experiences we have had in our lives when we recount our lives, but that the human body and its parsed and unarsed behavioural potentialities is ultimately the site of



Rathore says we need to break away from the idea of life of the mind and that of the body as separate categories, to recognise bodily behavioural potentials as possibilities.

any possibility of having a meaningful life at all. This claim is much more interesting, because it is more radical than the argument that we should give discursive space not only to our thoughts but also to how we have acted and been acted upon.

The book is divided into 12 chapters and each chapter deals with a writer's autobiography—loosely interpreted. We find philosophers like Nietzsche, Gandhi, Ambedkar, Mary Angelou, Ernest Hemingway, Elie Wiesel, Daya Pawar, Kamala Das, Yukio Mishima,

Andy Warhol, Art Spiegelman, and Marjane Satrapi and their literary forays into discursively representing their own lives. Through engaging with the lives of writers, activists, scholars, politicians and their accounts, Aakash has rendered us a double favour. One, he has effectively dismembered and remoulded our understanding of what influences a person's choices in life and their expression and two, he has also, through the choice of such eclectic personalities across time and geographies, stressed that the axis of the human body and its centrality in our existence, is the new anti-essentialist paradigm.

One of the things that I personally wish the author had delved into a bit more is dissecting this almost primal need that these writers felt to document their lives. Unlike Socrates, all of these writers wrote one way or the other a testimony that they intended to stand witness to their lives and their many endeavours. How is linguistic expression related to bodily affectation? That is a central philosophical question that calls out for an answer in these writers. If Aakash Singh Rathore had tried to unpack the link between the performative aspect of these writers' lives and their expressive need, he would have for sure given us much more to think about than what he already has. What he has given so far is in itself very engaging stuff.

In terms of style, it is refreshing to read a book like this which is enlivened with prose that is vibrant and not in any way 'academic' or distant. But all the same, it has all the rigour of scholarship expected of books of the highest quality. This is both informative and academic without the trappings of arcane use of words that can sometimes put off readers uninitiated in academese, even scholars who have worked in this area. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in philosophy, literature, or history. □

Hindu; 17/3/19; Pg. 31

# Fighting peacock

Layered insights into Myanmar, one of our least understood neighbours

SURESH SESHADRI

Myanmar, as Burma has come to be known since 1989, has been in the news in recent years for the persecution of the Bengali-speaking Muslim Rohingya and the crackdown on media coverage of happenings in southwestern Rakhine State.

Its civilian leader, State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, has fallen from grace in the eyes of the global community. From having been a Nobel Peace Prize-winning symbol of quiet defiance against the nation's repressive military junta, to now being seen as an apologist for the army's 'genocidal' excesses in Rakhine, the leader of the National League for Democracy remains an enigma, like her country, to most people. It is against this backdrop that Abhijit Dutta's brilliantly researched and constructed *Myanmar in the World – Journeys Through A Changing Burma* is set. The book makes for a compelling read, offering as it does deep and layered insights into one of our least known and understood

neighbours; and the crucial pivot for India's 'Look East Policy'.

As a journalist who flies into Yangon on a whim, in 2012, and finds himself inextricably tied up with the momentous by-elections that would place Suu Kyi in her country's Parliament, Dutta proceeds to take the reader along on his personal voyage of discovery of the land and its people. Its history and culture are shaped by geography, sited as it is between India to its west and northwest and China to its north and northeast. One small crib here though, the publisher ought to have included maps.

Dutta's eye for detail and a desire to ensure that his narratives are grounded in experience result in sharply etched vignettes of a country and society in flux. With an almost ethnographic approach, he constructs his narratives around the locals he meets and befriends during his travels across the country. For instance, Gulam, a taxi-driver who turns Airbnb host and muse for the book's first chapter, 'India's farthestmost province', is the grandson of a sugar



Fall from grace Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the National League for Democracy, remains an enigma to the world. REUTERS

merchant from Gujarat who ended up settling in what was then Rangoon. Dutta weaves a fine tapestry using historical strands that shuttle across time and context to bring into relief the colonial era capital city's impact on contemporary Myanmar.

From the Rakhine State to the Green Borderlands, Dutta's spare prose offers insights into the soul of Burma's multi-ethnic Buddhist

society. The book is a poignant picture of a country grappling from birth with multiple insurgencies that have centralised the role of the majority Bamar dominated Tatmadaw and its powerful generals, who remain loath to cede power. "Will Myanmar be a vibrant society a decade from now?" Dutta asks in his Epilogue. The answer he submits would hinge on Suu Kyi's survival and success.



**Myanmar in the World — Journeys Through A Changing Burma**  
Abhijit Dutta  
Aleph  
₹799

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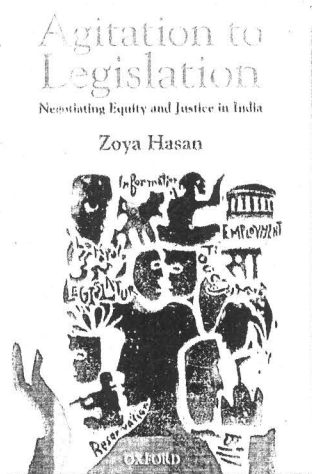
# Protests & policy

The second volume of Zoya Hasan's trilogy on policymaking offers valuable insights that enhance our understanding of political developments during the UPA regime. BY SHAIKH MUJIBUR REHMAN

THE book under review is the second volume of a trilogy that Zoya Hasan has embarked on, devoted mainly to the politics of policymaking, with a special focus on the interaction between state and civil society during the tenure of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government between 2004 and 2014. The first book of this series was titled *Congress after Indira: Policy, Power and Political Change (1984-2009)*.

The 10-year tenure of the UPA provides enough research material to make sense of India's policymaking world as well as its democracy. Having published several volumes on various themes of Indian politics, the author was well-prepared to address the theme of this book with considerable intellectual depth and rigour. She also served as a member of the National Commission for Minorities during the UPA period. Her association and experience as a policymaker has given her a unique advantage.

Although the book is mainly focussed on India, its narrative constantly reminds the reader of the changing global context in which policy deliberations take place. The end of the



**Agitation to Legislation**  
**Negotiating Equity and Justice in India**

By Zoya Hasan  
Oxford University Press, 2018

Pages: 178  
Price: Rs.675

Cold War and the decline of Left politics were key factors that made privatisation a legitimate goal for Indian society and not just the Indian state, according to the author.

One of the crucial conclusions she derives from this research deals with the need for a rights-based approach to development. She argues that a "rights-based approach to development is a major gain in the transcendence of capitalism. Although the implementation of a rights based approach is extremely flawed, it is still better to have a rights based approach to development than simply to set goals which are not enforceable or justiciable" (page 167). She compares and contrasts three particular

campaigns: the right to employment and right to food campaigns, the anti-corruption (Lokpal) movement, and the women's reservation Bill.

Zoya Hasan shares interesting insights based on her analysis of success and failures, and some of these are very conceptual in nature. For instance, she draws a sharp distinction between "social movement" and "campaign". The initiatives she has examined in the book, she argues, cannot be described as social movements and instead need to be termed campaigns because networking and engagements with the state and other stakeholders are central to them.

It is also important to take note of the idea of

justice and equity that she pursues very carefully throughout her narrative. This is not a typical public policy work devoid of ethical and moral concerns; although such ideas are not vastly elaborated on, there is enough political theory, which the author uses to make a connection between policymaking and the functioning of democratic institutions and their goals.

This trilogy will fill a crucial void in research on Indian politics of recent years. Both the books are based on extensive interviews with many key players, which no doubt played a major role in providing the insights in these writings.

The author is also candid about what she is not interested in exploring as part of her research agenda and what she is. These clearly outlined announcements on her objective present a direction to what a reader should or should not expect from this publication. This research, she clarifies, is not about the political mobilisation or social movements *per se* but about the relationship between campaigns/mobilisation and policymaking and the politics involved.

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Also, she notes, this is not an evaluative study. Nor is this research interested in offering a history of social movements or mobilisations or public protests in India. In that sense the book is sharply focussed and built on a clear research agenda.

The author recognises the prevalence of a strong link from the mid 2000s to 2012 between social and political mobilisation on the one hand and policy-making and development on the other. She also explains why there is a need to scrutinise the relationship between the growth of mobilisation and the rising demand for equal opportunities, social justice, and so on.

Compared with the Narendra Modi regime, under the UPA I and II governments the relationship between civil society groups and policymaking was robust, especially with the formation of the National Advisory Council in which many distinguished members of civil society groups, accomplished academics and other professionals took part. The author is correct in stating that if we set aside the ideological partners of the Modi regime, conventional civil society groups hardly had any role to play in the post-UPA period. The Modi regime was hostile to many of them, and erected as many hurdles as possible to impede their work. The author forecasts a rather bleak future for civil society interventions if right-wing forces continue to dominate Indian polity and policymaking.

Additionally, the author observes correctly that the Modi regime faced

far fewer protests or agitations compared with what was witnessed during the second UPA term. Does this imply that the Modi regime has been more responsive or has it pre-empted the protests? Or is it a result of a honeymoon period that any regime often enjoys? Given that the Modi-led National Democratic Alliance came to power after 10 years of UPA rule, some of the groups were perhaps considerate, including even Anna Hazare, who is constantly threatening to resume his agitation for a new Lokpal that passes his test.

**ANNA MOVEMENT**

There is growing evidence that the Anna movement was backed by some right-wing think tanks, which raises questions regarding the sincerity or apolitical character that the movement sought to present to the public in its early days. The book presents an elaborate analysis of these developments. The analysis of the Anna movement and the politics linked to India Against Corruption, which forms the second chapter, is the most fascinating part of this research.

However, it cannot be claimed that all such movements began during the UPA regime. India has a long history of movements, although in terms of frequency or scale a perceptible change has occurred. In part, the proliferation of media and competitive coverage encouraged these movements, particularly the Anna movement.

Some reflections, or even a limited narration, on this would have added

further value to this research, but one cannot hold it against the author since she has stated that her decision to set aside the history of movements was deliberate.

Zoya Hasan seemingly connects the current trend to a global context that has impacted politics and the economy. She looks at it from the point of view of the ideological struggle unfolding in the world, particularly from the vantage point of the Left versus Right debate. Readers are reminded rather politely that politics needs to be seen through an ideological lens and is invariably driven with ideological considerations, and that institutions and individuals are merely pawns in the bigger game of ideology.

We learn the following things that are part of the trend: in the domain of economy, state retreat was seen as the only way to address development, which also altered the relationship between state, economy and society; in the social domain, class-centred analysis became obsolete and identities such as caste, tribe, etc., became prominent; in the arena of party politics, one-party dominance was challenged with the rise of multiparty politics led by regional parties, though most of these parties are dynastic in nature. Furthermore, economic growth led to the rise of a middle class that has developed an abiding trust in privatisation.

As part of her attempt to demonstrate the global trend, the author reminds us of the financial crisis in 2008 that also triggered public protests worldwide

against inequality and injustice, particularly in Europe. According to her, these protests were the result of a growing dissatisfaction with economic policies and public institutions that generated pervasive discontent, thus shaking the very foundations of society and politics. The author suggests that various civil society groups comprising non-governmental organisations, voluntary groups and judicial activists, leaders of social movements and human rights activists moved in to mediate and often represent these disgruntled social and economic groups.

Lastly, the author argues that Congress leader Sonia Gandhi was not able to put as much pressure as necessary to enact some laws, particularly the women's reservation Bill. She recognises that the presence of the Left parties in the UPA's first term helped put the necessary pressure for policies such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act to be formulated and that their absence in the second term made a big difference to similar policy formulations and weakened the role of civil society.

The book is a valuable intervention by a senior political scientist. Scholars interested in the role of civil society, state and policymaking will profit enormously from it as it will enhance their understanding of political developments of the UPA regime. □

*Shaikh Mujibur Rehman teaches at Jamia Millia Central University, New Delhi.*

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POLITICS

# Displacement diaries

## How the son-of-the-soil syndrome scarred the Northeast

ABDUS SALAM

Last month, rampaging mobs, agitated over the State government's proposal to 'discuss' the issue of granting Permanent Resident Certificates to six non-tribal communities in Arunachal Pradesh, laid siege to the Assembly building in Itanagar. Overnight violence and the deaths of three protesters sent the plan into deep freeze. In adjoining Assam, an insistent Supreme Court, in early February, asked for the July deadline for finalisation of the National Register of Citizens to be met irrespective of a general election in the intervening months.

The fate of 3.6 million people, of around four million who were left out of the list and have filed claims for inclusion of their names, hangs in the balance. From NRC to PRC, the insider-outsider dialectic in the Northeast is as old as its hills.

The rage on occasion is turned



Life nowhere For the Chakmas, inclusion remains a will-o'-the-wisp in Tripura and Mizoram. THE HINDU PHOTO ARCHIVES

inward, violently as in Itanagar and when Meiteis protesting against the extension of the ceasefire with the NSCN(I-M) to Manipur set the Assembly afire in 2001, or in slow burn, as in Assam's Brahmaputra Valley over the Centre's bid to enact the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in favour of 'persecuted minorities' from

Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. But oftentimes the rage is directed against peoples perceived as the non-indigene.

The editors of *Insider/ Outsider – Belonging and Unbelonging in North-East India* offered a wide interpretive canvas to its contributors but the anthology is, at its core, an exposition

of how the son-of-the-soil syndrome bedevils the region.

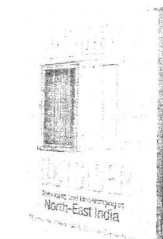
### Trauma twice-lived

For communities such as the Hindu Sylhetis, the trauma of displacement and dispossession was twice-lived, first on account of Partition and then owing to the pogroms carried out by Khasi ultra-chauvinists. For the Assamese elite that grew up in the macro-State of which Shillong was capital, the descent to Guwahati after the carving out of Meghalaya was more benign, leaving nostalgia intact. For the 'mainlander', acceptance was hard to win, even if – as an author did – one married into the local community.

For others still, such as the Chakmas, inclusion remains a will-o'-the-wisp in two States.

The pieces have a Shillong skew, with 11 of the 16 referencing the 'Scotland of the East'; perhaps the urgency of bringing out the volume while the tailwinds of NRC-citizenship Bill still blow dictated such a selection.

Yet as account after account illustrates the crumbling of the hill town's cosmopolitanism in pursuit of constitutional protectionism, the horror of the *dkhars* (non-tribals) realisation that 'the ground they stood on wasn't theirs enough' hits home. *Insider/ Outsider* holds a mirror to a Northeast increasingly seeking a warmer embrace in the wider India, retelling what must be retold: do unto others as you would have them do unto you.



**Insider/ Outsider:  
Belonging and  
Unbelonging in  
North-East India**  
Edited by Preeti  
Gill & Samrat  
Choudhary  
Amaryllis  
₹399

Vol. 35, No. 1

Nayanjot Lahiri and Upinder Singh (eds), *Buddhism in Asia: Revival and Reinvention*, University of Manchester Press, Manchester, 2015, ix + 208 pp., ₹1,395.

10.1177/0257643018804316

This collection on Buddhism in Asia is ambitious in its range as it includes essays from India, Sri Lanka and China, and though it is subtitled 'Revival and Reinvention', the geographical spread, clearly dictated by constraints of seminar funding, makes for a certain looseness of the volume, which is otherwise coherent in essence. Be that as it may, many of the individual essays are extremely informative, interesting and stimulating because they bring together archaeology and the written word as different ways to straddle the time-span and the spatial moves that the book tries to hold. Since there are many essays and many interesting ideas, this review is shaped by my own familiarity with Buddhism and will reflect that unevenness.

The heart of the book, from my point of view, is the first segment focused on archaeological history and the rediscovery of Buddhism in India, though these essays are preceded by the late Meera Kosambi's essay, which is interesting in itself. Kosambi had earlier written a marvellous book, *Nivedan*, on her grandfather Dharmanand Kosambi and his amazing journeys and even more amazing life. Here, his interest in Buddhism is placed in juxtaposition with Ambedkar's from a completely different location, or rather need: the search for a way of thinking that would redeem his brethren, the downtrodden, whom he could possibly lead to a collective quest for dignity and a more democratic culture from the one they were born into, but were deeply at odds with. I am not sure this opening will leave a lasting impact, even though Meera Kosambi was a fine scholar who dealt with a range of subjects all through her academic life.

The next four essays are well-argued, well-researched and most informative. All four are interesting and complementary, though Sonali Dhingra's otherwise engaging essay is disappointingly marred by very poor reproduction of her photographs. Her essay is focused on Amaravati across its many stages, including an attempt to provide a view of what the future stupa would look like, to other attempts to appropriate a special Buddhist connection for the region of Andhra. This serves two purposes: regional pride and a claim to the past for contemporary political reasons. Huge statues of the Buddha have been installed in places like Hyderabad to appeal to Dalit constituencies and to satisfy liberal secular upper-caste claims to ancient glory. Singh and Lahiri have over the years moved away from their doctoral research work to write on the history of archaeology in India, going from researching inscriptions to monuments and their recovery in colonial times. They have earlier written on the rediscovery of stupas and their afterlife under the British who, even as they recovered the monuments of the Buddhist past, also ended up stripping them, first to adorn the homes and gardens of the rich back home in England, and later the display cases of museums. Sraman Mukherjee's essay explores the archaeological heritage in many sites but dwells closely on the revival of Buddhism in modern India, the Mahabodhi Society's attempts to reclaim ancient

Buddhist sites which were unsuccessful in the main, especially in failing to gain control of the Maha Bodhi temple at Bodh Gaya. This is the one essay that links India and Sri Lanka together as it explores the relic sites in particular.

Collectively, the four essays recover the complex history of Buddhist monuments in Sanchi, Amarvati and Nagarjunakonda, throwing up a number of issues, such as the politics of restoration and who funded and supported these ventures, which are important issues at this fractious moment. For example, it was the Begum of Bhopal who financially supported the restoration of Sanchi, and even funded the publications of Marshall, because the monuments were in her state and the people there were her people. It was their collective heritage. Nayanjot Lahiri's essay also points out the role of the men behind the scenes like Gulam Rasool, who conducted the dig in Sanchi and earlier at Taxila.<sup>1</sup>

In Upinder Singh's account of Nagarjunikonda, we go from the site and its treasures to the conflict between development goals in the 1950s, with the early independent state trying to figure out its priorities: should one place the site over the need for food and water for the hungry millions? (As I recall from my student days, there was the example of UNESCO and the Aswan Dam, but which was before and which afterwards I do not now recall so these were parallel developments across ancient sites.) But the shifting of the site here to the top of a hill in the middle of the lake, making it both picturesque and reverential, was the crowning achievement of the work of the Archaeological Survey of India and the Nagarjunisagar administration.

But for me, the most fascinating part about the essays on the archaeology of monuments is the little-known account of what was embedded in the depths of the stupa, the relics and the reliquaries that the excavations threw up.<sup>2</sup> So was the Buddha a real human being and can the materials found be remnants of this real person? Given the manner in which the religion/s of India were regarded as fixated on multitudes of gods and goddesses and were impossible to pursue in any useful manner as linked to 'real' people, the very corporeality of the Buddha was a core aspect of the fallout of the excavations. It generated on the one hand a complicated set of manoeuvres between the colonial government—with constituencies not only in India but Burma and Ceylon too that actually had Buddhist populations (triggering off a kind of relic diplomacy)—and newly arising formations of Buddhist revivalists who became invested in being regarded as the 'true inheritors' of the relics. The matter was no longer in the hands of the Archaeological Survey or the leaders of the excavation, but a matter in which the Government of India and emerging political leaders like Nehru (even the Hindu Mahasabha made itself visible in the general clamour). Buddhist diplomacy preceded nationalist diplomacy of the post-independence years. As in the past, when Buddhism travelled to many lands in Asia, the corporeal remains in the

<sup>1</sup> Nayanjot Lahiri, 'Buddhist Revival and the Restoration of Sanchi', in *Buddhism in Asia: Revival and Reinvention*, ed. Nayanjot Lahiri and Upinder Singh (Delhi: Manohar, 2016), 70.

<sup>2</sup> Sraman Mukherjee, 'Relics, Ruins and Temple-Building: Archaeological Heritage and the Construction of the Dharmarajika Vihara, Calcutta', in *Buddhism in Asia: Revival and Reinvention*, ed. Nayanjot Lahiri and Upinder Singh (Delhi: Manohar, 2016), 149.

form of the relics set off competitive politics between Buddhist communities through their newly constituted spokesmen like Anagrika Dharmapala, the fiery Sinhala revivalist, and even the emerging Mahabodhi Society in Calcutta, which was being set up in the early twentieth century. This excitement, and the claiming of the relics had an emotive power.

The second segment of the book comprises three essays on Sri Lanka, especially on what I might term as the practice and politics of revivalist Buddhism, first during colonial times and then in independent, modern Sri Lanka. Kitsiri Malagoda plots the relationship between a revived Buddhism with print culture and the creation of Buddhist manuals, to be used in schools and learning centres which purported to displace the Christian teaching manuals but were modelled on the displaced other in many ways. Many figures were involved in the making of the manuals, the books of catechism, with a newly commercialized Colombo playing a critical role, as there was something of a renaissance of learning in and around Colombo in the late nineteenth century. Malalgoda describes some of the major manuals and delineates their pre-history in earlier texts, drawing from the Pali canon. Interestingly, there were links between Sinhala Buddhist revivalists such as Dharmapala and Col. Olcott of the Theosophical Society, until differences arose between the two as their respective constituencies were ultimately different and sometimes contradictory. Malalgoda's essay had resonances but also critical differences with what was happening in India in roughly the same extended moment.

Dharmapala assumed a different persona with Kumari Jayawardena's interpretation of him through the lens of gender, as he has had a critical impact on Sri Lankan revivalism. Although he gave himself the title of Anagarika (the homeless one), Dharmapala did not become a monk till the very last stages of his working life. From the organizing of schools to women's clothing, his views shaped the way modern Sri Lanka or rather Sinhala consciousness came to be what it was in the nineteenth century.

Buddhist revival is the theme of H. L. Senivaratne's contribution in this volume; like all revivalist projects, it came to dwell on an ancient idyllic past, which was Aryan, a moral society which ended when the Westerners came to Sri Lanka. That stage was marked by deracination, in which the people embraced the habits and customs of the invader; this deracination trickled down from the elite groups to other classes. But there was also the fall from the earlier moral society, through the rituals and beliefs that the rural folk adopted, thus generating false beliefs. Dharmapala was at the forefront of a campaign that was venomous in its attacks against Westernism, as also against the common people for their stupidity. His self-presentation added to his verbal skills, so that to be abused by him was regarded as an honour. He changed his name to drop its Western connotation, becoming a semi-monk, a status he created. He also created a bunch of soldier monks, leading directly in later times to the political monk, who was certainly not going to conquer by persuasion. The project of revivalism and recourse to the idyllic past led directly to the Sinhala Only Act of 1956, and later to the declaring of a special status for Buddhism in 1972.

The militant narrowing of religious concerns to political projects, rather than philosophical or spiritual churnings, is the subject of Anuruddha Pradeep's essay,

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which delineates the politicization of the monks in Sri Lanka. From a time when they had no role in politics in the pre-colonial era, the militancy of Dharmapala has led directly to the politics of today. But changes had begun earlier, from a time when Buddhism had no role in state power to the time of the war with King Elara in the Northeast,<sup>3</sup> leading to the idea that the faith had to be 'defended' with the use of arms. In this essay, Pradeep takes us through many stages of Sri Lankan politics, providing us with a panoramic view and a way to understand the island's fractious recent history, which has brought death and destruction to both the Tamils and Sinhals. This is a far cry from the time of the attempt to rule peacefully according to the *dhamma*.

The last segment of the book comprises four essays on Buddhism in modern China: Tansen Sen examines the reestablishment of brotherly affinity between China and India, which went along with internal transformations of Buddhism in China; he also includes an in-depth account of Taixu's goodwill mission to India, during which the idea of an international university in India inspired by Buddhism seems to have first come up. The next three essays deal with assorted subjects in the revival of Buddhism, including tensions in post-revolutionary China, and the reconciling of Buddhist practices during a period of new business ventures in newly opened Shanghai. The last essay of the book is on the construction of a world Buddhism.<sup>4</sup> 'A useful collection' is how I would sum up this review; I remain partial to the first segment of the book as it will be a most useful resource in the newly developing courses around archaeology and preservation studies, alerting students to the histories and politics of preservation work in India, something that we sorely need as we seek to rewrite history under the narrow and sectarian political impulses of the Governments of the day.

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**Manu S. Pillai, *Rebel Sultans, Juggernaut*, New Delhi, 2018, 336 pp., ₹599.**

10.1177/0257643018813591

In *Rebel Sultans*, Manu S. Pillai presents a history of the five Deccani Sultanates, together with the Vijayanagar Empire, the Marathas, the Mughals and other dynasties with which they came into contact, in an elegant and lucid style. Pillai brings together a wide range of sources to weave a fascinating narrative of a historically important and understudied region and period in South Asian history.

<sup>3</sup> Anuruddha Pradeep, 'The Political Dimension of Buddhism in Sri Lanka', in *Buddhism in Asia: Revival and Reinvention*, ed. Nayanjot Lahiri and Upinder Singh (Delhi: Manohar, 2016), 266.

<sup>4</sup> Peter van der Veer, 'The Construction of World Buddhism', in *Buddhism in Asia: Revival and Reinvention*, ed. Nayanjot Lahiri and Upinder Singh (Delhi: Manohar, 2016), 365–85.

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On the other hand, Pakistan has moved closer to China due to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the flagship project of BRI. These undercurrents have caused Washington and New Delhi to view each other as partners that share common interests. In other words, China ascendancy as a global player and its increasing assertiveness in South Asia has made India ever more critical to the US due to India's role as a counterbalancing power. Yet these issues are not dissected here.

Another shortcoming of the book is that the impact that America's relations with one South Asian country has on its relations with another, receives little attention. For example, the US-Pakistan alliance is also strained because of Pakistan's complicity with the Taliban. US policy towards the Taliban changed from one which supported the Taliban in Afghanistan during the 1970s through the mid-1990s and used them as a bulwark against communist advancements in the region, to one where the Taliban became a formidable adversary for the US in the post-Cold war era. Today, as an absolute victory against the Taliban is ruled out, the US is seeking a diplomatic resolution to expedite its exit from Afghanistan. Although a settlement is necessary, a hasty withdrawal will have grim consequences. While Raghavan mentions these points, he does not deal adequately with the intertwined role US-Pakistan relation plays in Afghanistan's security and stability.

Nevertheless, as US engagement with South Asia continue to be influenced by the shifting contours of globalization, Raghavan's 'Fierce Enigmas' reminds us that the past and the present are intertwined. To understand contemporary US relations with South Asia, we must study the manifold dimensions, trends and transformation this relationship has undergone over the years. As such, his book provides important lessons for contemporary American policymakers as they navigate through the various issues confronting South Asia.

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**OUR TIME HAS COME: How India is Making its Place in the World** by Alyssa Ayres. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2018.

58 ✓ THE title of the book, *Our Time Has Come*, is a synthesis of quotes by two very different Indian prime ministers, Narendra Modi and Manmohan Singh who articulated their belief that India was poised to regain

its place on the global stage. Ayers' use of the quote as her title reflects her shared optimism of India's future and captures a prevailing sense within India that the world is transitioning towards becoming a multipolar one, with India emerging as a global power.

Ayers' explores the tension between India's inward-looking history vis-à-vis its present attempts of integration into the global economy, through a neo-liberal lens. It also assesses the role that India could play as it gains global prominence, especially in terms of its economy and geopolitical power. Throughout the book, she aims at convincing American officials about India's potential, suggesting that it is a good time to invest, collaborate, build and improve ties with India. Yet, this underlying aim to pitch India to America comes across as over-optimistic and underplays the internal issues that prevent India from growing at a faster pace.

Ayers has twenty-five years of experience analysing South Asian politics, including as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia during the Obama administration. This places her in a unique position of being able to fuse her knowledge and experience from both American and South Asian perspectives. Her experience on India is reflected in her division of the book into three main components: Indian foreign policy until the 1990s, the transition period over twenty years, and India's present global ambitions.

The book is an excellent guide for those seeking to understand the complexities of contemporary Indian domestic and foreign policy. Ayres provides a summary of India's domestic policy beginning from Nehru up until Modi. The ideas of self-reliance propounded by Nehru, juxtaposed with India's international ambitions of being an economic power, set the stage for Ayres' rationalization of India's two-steps-forward, three-steps-back speed in the opening up of their markets. She also uses this narrative to be critical of Indian foreign policy while attempting to justify India's seemingly fluctuating foreign policies vis-à-vis the United States where India remains weary but also keen on pursuing a good relationship with the US. Her analysis of India's geo-strategic interests within the region using naval examples, and that of India's foreign policy vis-à-vis its neighbours and China, serve as stand out features of the book.

Looking at the Indian economy through a neo-liberal lens, Ayres suggests that since the economic liberalization in the 1990s, India's economy has grown significantly. She cites the example of India's louder voice within the WTO and G20, the larger role of Indian business chambers in international channels,

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their ability to provide humanitarian assistance abroad and military modernization efforts, as examples of India's economic growth. By extension, her suggested policies to bring India closer to the US, also stem from a neo-liberal stance. She questions India's tentativeness on removing its protectionist policies and argues that it was 'understandable as an anti-colonial strategy' but unsuitable for today's interconnected economy.

While she does bring up a range of major domestic problems such as unemployment or parliamentary gridlock in her book, these do not figure in her recommendations or in her overall thesis of over-optimism. In the book, Ayres identifies that unions and conservative rural voters have held back India's progress by articulating their preference to remain a semi-isolationist economy due to their vulnerability to market fluctuations. She then proposes the removal of protectionist policies to speed up the growth of the Indian economy.

However, the recent spate of farmer protests and suicides in India serve as an example of why this recommendation would be contradictory to resolve domestic problems. The agricultural distress stems from a decline in state protection for farmers' vulnerability to commodity markets. Since rural India holds 66 per cent of India's population, with 43 per cent being employed in agriculture, and occupying 342 out of 543 electoral seats, the political clout of the rural vote is too large for the Indian government to simply implement open market policies which would affect the rural population significantly. The February 2019 announcement during the Indian interim budget of the PM Kisan scheme, which will provide farmers Rs 6,000 per year as income support, came three months before the start of the India's April 2019 parliamentary elections. The perceived need to offer subsidies to rural voters reveals the inability of the Indian government to decrease such subsidies, let alone remove them. Ayres proposed recommendation of doing away with subsidies to rural voters appears context-removed and contradictory to actual solutions targeted at domestic issues.

One of the recurring themes in Ayres' book is the insight she provides into Indian security and foreign policy formulation today based on the ancient Indian political treatise of *Arthashastra* by Chanakya. Ayres uses the political philosophies, such as the mandala theory, laid out in the *Arthashastra* to explain India's difficult relationship with its neighbours. Using *Arthashastra*'s philosophy that 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend', Ayres argues that this explains India's volatile relationship with its immediate neighbours Pakistan and China. Yet while this philosophy

might explain India's tumultuous relationship with its neighbours, the settling of the boundary dispute with Bangladesh under Modi and the recent soft power outreach to its regional neighbours Myanmar and Nepal by establishing a history based Buddhist connection with them, illustrates that difficult relationships with neighbours can be overcome through targeted policy outreach programmes by the Indian government.

Overall, Ayres brings her significant study and analysis of India to bear in 'Our Time has Come', arguing that India is heading for a bright future on the world stage citing examples of its economic, geo-strategic and diplomatic strength. While her neo-liberal and US-centric lens leads her to downplay the gravity, for example, of fractured Indian governance and leads her to be over-optimistic on the feasibility of instituting her recommended neo-liberal reforms, Ayres provides rich historical insights into India's geo-strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific. These make the book well-worth reading.

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OPEN EMBRACE: India-US Ties in the Age of Modi and Trump by Varghese K. George. Penguin India, Gurugram. 2018.

HOW similar are Modi and Trump, and their respective foreign policies? Convergences and contrasts between BJP-ruled India and 'America First'-obsessed United States are the focus of *Open Embrace: India-US Ties in the Age of Modi and Trump*. Author Varghese K. George argues that ideological affinity makes the two leaders and their countries 'natural allies', yet unsettled questions – ranging from trade balance to US policy towards Pakistan – prevent their 'embrace' to come to a 'close' just yet.

On the one hand, there is Trump's America, a 'combination of neoconservatism and mercantilism' (p.16), whose Manichean view of the world, according to George, is rooted in a deep identity crisis. On the other hand, Modi's India: militaristic, assertive, *Vishwa Guru* (teacher of the world, global leader) and destined superpower; understanding China through the lenses of ultra-realism, and Pakistan and Kashmir through those of the 'clash of civilization'.

There is no doubt about the fact that Hindutva – i.e. 'political Hinduism' – has framed the Modi government's policies within India since the BJP's 2014

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CULTURE

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# The god in Telugu films

From devotee to voter, a study of cinema and its impact on politics

HARI NARAYAN

There are two developments that lend an air of topicality to *Deities and Devotees*. One is the biopic made on one of its key subjects, N.T. Rama Rao (NTR). The other is the renewed vigour of life scholar M. Madhava Prasad's conception of 'cine-politics' has received with the entry of Kamal Haasan and Rajinikanth into the fold.

The book seeks to provide a concept of spectatorship that sees a cinephile-viewer of Telugu mythological as a citizen-devotee, one whose identities as a fan, an informed viewer, a citizen, and a devotee overlap.

Placing a mythological movie, which is a 'founding genre' of Indian cinema, within the ambit of the 'Hindu mythological', the *Encyclopaedia of Indian Cinema* says such films have always been used for "explicitly ideological ends". This applies to Telugu mythologicals as well, where the 'citizen devotee' figure became a 'citizen-voter' in the case of NTR.

However, the transformation of his



**Deities and Devotees: Cinema, Religion and Politics in South India**  
Uma Maheswari Bhrugubanda  
Oxford University Press  
₹895



Syncing success NTR's figure as a god was a fusion of Telugu pride and assertiveness of a regional identity. THE HINDU ARCHIVES

Telugu viewers from fans to voters was not totally uninformed, Uma Maheswari Bhrugubanda's book says.

## Pride in identity

NTR's figure as a god was a fusion of Telugu pride and assertiveness of a regional identity, a factor that resonated with people of Andhra Pradesh. And unlike M.G. Ramachandran (MGR), NTR was able to

not just do negative roles, but also critique the social order through such roles. His roles in *Dana Veera Soora Karna*, where he played Karna, Krishna as well as Suyodhana, had him questioning the exclusion of 'lower-caste' Karna from the archery contest.

However, the critique ultimately reinforced the status quo – Karna was still defeated in battle later. The aim here was not to take on the caste

system but to present NTR as a torch-bearer of a certain form of 'Teluguness'.

In the realm of mythologicals, NTR's contemporary in Tamil cinema was not MGR but Sivaji Ganesan, whose roles in *Thiruvilayadal* and *Thiruvatcheivar* are considered iconic. He even played both the divine and the layperson in *Saraswati Sabadam*. Could the *Parasakti* actor's failure in politics then be explained merely in terms of his parting of ways with the DMK and his joining hands with the Congress, a party that was considered emblematic of the 'centralising old guard'? This is a question that could make for interesting scholarly analysis.

Compared to Rachel Dwyer's *Filming the Gods*, Bhrugubanda's treatise feels somewhat incomplete as it does not explore much how the faiths of non-Hindus have figured in Telugu cinema.

Considering that Urdu was in use in the Deccan much before it gained popularity in the North, the use of 'Islamic culture' in Telugu cinema deserved a chapter of its own, rather than just mentions at a few places.

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# Voice of protest

A critical look at Dalit works, their literary value and political role

PRAKASH BAL JOSHI

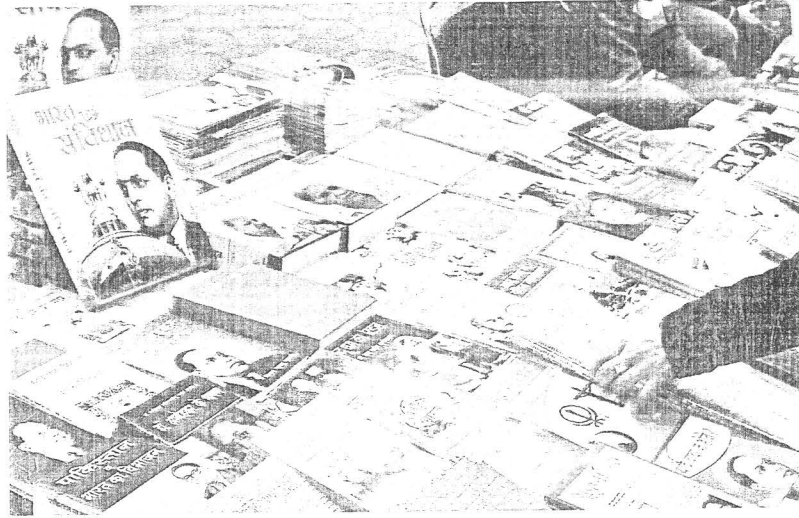
**H**ow far and in which direction has Dalit literature travelled? The second edition of *Dalit Literatures in India* outlines efforts behind collection of scholarly articles written on various aspects of Dalit literature, its impact on awakening the community and the politics of protest by marginalised people from different regions in India.

Initially, Dalit literature was mainly autobiographical in nature, stories of suppression and social exclusion collected in novels, autobiographies, poems, short stories, dramas, pamphlets, poster poems, letters.

Joshil K. Abraham and Judith Misrahi-Barak write in the introduction, "The fact that Dalit literature has for a long time been a political tool is more and more obvious in the present day from the rise in everyday violence against Dalits and other marginalised communities."

### An awakening

This volume, a collection of scholarly essays and research by over 20 authors, takes an in-depth look at Dalit



Due process Dalit literature is debated upon in academic and literary circles. PRATEEK KUMAR

literature. The essays have dissected and thoroughly analysed writings by Dalit authors to assess their literary value.

As most of early Dalit literature emerged out of new awareness of self-righteousness, thanks to the teaching and writings of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, social scientists, political thinkers and other

academics took note of them as a part of their social and political studies giving very little attention to assess the writings from the point of literature.

### Power politics

By the beginning of 1990s, mainline literature in India had accepted and accorded Dalit literature its due importance in literature as well as its

contribution to Dalit awakening and the part it played in a larger canvas of power politics. The book has played a very significant role in encouraging and presenting serious research work on Dalit literature, caste and democracy, difficulties in translating Dalit literature in English and so forth.

One of the essays on art, 'Tense - Past Continuous', has taken a critical look at the casteist under-currents in modernism of Indian art which was mainly concerned with the hegemony of Western domination in post-modern visual art.

As vindicated in the book, Dalit literature is still evolving with new experimentations and dimensions subverting the mainline literary traditions and norms to sharpen its suppressed voice.

As editors say in the foreword to the second edition, Dalit literature is still playing a significant role as a tool to give voice to the marginalised people for their legitimate rights.

Debate on Dalit literature continues in academic as well as literary circles in India. Does Dalit literature form a part of modern Indian literature or should it be treated only as a special genre? The book tries to answer and resolve these questions by taking a critical look at the complex issue.

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**Dalit Literatures in India**

Edited by Joshil K. Abraham, Judith Misrahi-Barak  
outledge India

# Mapping Muslims in the Development Landscape

TANWEER FAZAL

In times when love jihad, Babri-Ram-janambhumi, purdah, talaq, *ghar-wapasi*, and cow-slaughter seize much of the public debate on Muslims of India, *Working with Muslims: Beyond Burqa and Triple Talaq* by Farah Naqvi is an effort to retrieve the developmental questions that are usually and often deliberately glossed over. A marked shift in the policy quarters was noticed in the previous decade with the institution of the Sachar Committee and the submission of its report in 2006 thereafter. The cultural myopia that framed much of the state-community interface all through the post-independence phase was significantly being altered with the arrival of Muslims as a development subject. For Naqvi, this was also a moment to map the extent of the presence of Muslims—as victims, beneficiaries, activists and planners—in the development landscape of the country, especially in the flourishing non-state arena of civil society activism. The book is the outcome of a research project that painstakingly tracked, categorised and analysed non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the pattern of their activities among the Muslims of India. In addition, through its analyses of Muslim-headed NGOs, the project also sought to gauge the extent of development consciousness and the nature of activism among them.

## The Absent Muslim in Civil Society

Admittedly, the subject is a critical one, and considering the cognitive absence of Muslims as a development category, an onerous one too. The paradox is compounded by the sheer enormity of NGOs present in every nook and corner of the country, by the scale of their operation ranging from local, provincial, national and at times, even international levels, and by varying focus of their interventions; from all-encompassing ones to those that specialise in particular activities

**Working with Muslims: Beyond Burqa and Triple Talaq—Stories of Development and Everyday Citizenship in India** by Farah Naqvi, *Gurgaon: Three Essays Press, 2018; pp xviii + 416, ₹460.*

such as child rights, gender equality, environment or education. Various referred to as non-profit, voluntary, third sector, or the more generic “civil society” organisations, definitional accuracy was yet another challenge that an exercise in mapping development NGOs was bound to face. Relying on the most acceptable indicators of development, the study focused on NGOs working with Muslims in sectors such as education, livelihood, health, income generation, credit, skill development, access to civic amenities/public services, and so on. That the research project gave considerable attention to the processes of leadership development and grass-roots engagement of Muslim women is commendable. Aided by a team of enthusiastic researchers, the study was able to map around 373 NGOs spread across 105 districts and 10 states.

Indeed, the book is a storehouse of empirical information on development activism among Muslims. We are informed of their assumptions, prejudices and the various ways in which the activists overcame them. Some of the findings are revealing and suggest the precarious location of Muslims as citizens and as vulnerable minorities in post-independence India. For instance, despite evidence of their engagement with Muslims, many organisations denied that they did so. In fact, the framework of caste was far more acceptable than that of religion. However, compared to the field staff, the NGO leadership displayed greater reticence in accepting their interventions with Muslims, as a result of which some of the NGOs—despite meeting the criterion of having at least 30% of the beneficiaries from the community—

categorically refused to be a part of such an exercise. Naqvi explains this in terms of the pressing compulsion felt by the NGOs to present themselves as “secular” so as to avoid the unwarranted gaze of security agencies and have their funds frozen.

Despite their poor performance on development indicators, the study discovered relative absence of any focused engagement with marginalised Muslims amongst the mainstream development agencies. The section on leadership development among Muslim women and their empowerment is particularly interesting and refreshing. The narratives portray Muslim women as not just silent victims in the existing community/religion legitimated patriarchies but as active agents who struggle, negotiate and act not only on health, education and land rights, but also on feminist subjects such as domestic violence, personal laws, etc. There are narratives of women activists who overcame barriers of identity and patriarchy, while there are others who would strategically deploy them to achieve development goals. Based on reports collated from the field, the book breaks persistent stereotypes as it notices the desire among Muslims to seek modern education, both for boys and for girls. The findings also noticed a generational shift in the NGO leadership with younger people increasingly taking the initiative. Evidently, the new generation introduced new idiom as they challenged the silences on questions of identity, caste hierarchies and gender inequality.

The restraint among mainstream NGOs as well as donor agencies to accept Muslims as a “target group” prompts Naqvi to make a strong case for sectoral portfolios and committed funding for developmental work amongst them. In addition, a focus on “real needs” and an enabling role on the part of mainstream NGOs is suggested. A rights-based approach coupled with policy advocacy is what she would expect from the NGOs emerging from the community. Most interesting is Naqvi’s discomfort with the term minority which, arguably, overshadows all discussions on Muslims. In the process, the specific needs of different

religious groups as well as linguistic minorities are overlooked.

### Rethinking Development?

The book, however, breaks no fresh ground in terms of development thinking, or in adopting a broader understanding of agencies involved in development activism. A pronouncedly liberal-modernist framework colours the choice of indicators as well as selection of organisations. Consequently, despite its awareness of the development activism of faith-based organisations (FBOs), the project chose to omit them (barring a few exceptions) from its purview. Amongst the reasons cited for the exclusion of FBOs are those that reflect the ideological inhibitions and predispositions of the researchers. The FBOs, it is stated, are “unlikely to engage in transformational social agendas,” and their contribution, the researchers apprehended, would “remain restricted to service delivery,” leading to the promotion of a “self-defined, religious agenda” (p 46). A field-based research that begins with such preconceived notions not only compromises on objectivity, but also leaves untouched a whole area of faith-based development activism: their motivations and inspirations, the issues that they undertake, the shifts in objectives, the organisation pattern, and their idea of development.

Likewise, targeted violence is a subject that touches the core of minority experience in India. There are certain regions, states and towns that are more prone to anti-Muslim violence than others. Not only is violence a dampener in human efforts to progress from existing drudgery, occasionally it is a manifestation of poor or lopsided development. As the data suggests, many NGOs felt the need to work among Muslims, and many Muslims took to social activism following anti-minority violence. The overview essay makes a special reference to this. The strictly materialist frame adopted by the survey leaves questions of justice, peace and rehabilitation unattended. How do the development imperatives play out for those living in conflict situations? How do questions of reconciliation and justice become central to the development question? These are

important questions that this research exercise leaves out.

Though defined as a non-state arena, NGO interaction with the state and its various agencies is almost routine. This may range from partnering in implementing developmental schemes, mediating interaction with sections of the citizenry, ensuring responsiveness of the local administration, to influencing the framing of policies. The study could have been further enriched by introducing the state into community-NGO engagement, not necessarily as a monolithic category, but as comprising various levels, which often work in isolation, or even in contradiction with each other. This is a lost possibility since the book, while laying down the framework, does refer to the entanglements between the state and the NGO sector, but somehow this aspect does not get translated in the course of collection of empirical data. It is difficult to gauge whether politics has been divorced from the frame deliberately or inadvertently. Thus, we are denied information about why schemes do not reach Muslims, or how some of them have actually been able to strike a chord.

Is there a lack of concurrence between felt needs, conceptualisation of problems, designing of schemes and their implementation? A whole stock of knowledge of the Muslim activists' engagement with state functionaries at various levels is therefore also not explored. Wherever there are snatches of such an interaction, the picture is fuller: for example the case study of the All India Kabadi Mazdoor Mahasangh (AIKMM), working among rag-pickers, gives both the sides of the state; on the one hand, Bengali-speaking Muslim rag-pickers are frequently picked up by the police, and on the other, the AIKMM also successfully collaborates with the government agencies such as the Ministry of Environment and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to secure the livelihood rights of the rag-pickers. But barring a handful of such narratives, the state and its various wings do not find any emphasis, at least in the cases that have been listed.

### Non-homogeneous Group

The author cautions against treating Muslims and their concerns as a homogeneous block. In fact, one of the book's

NEW

## EPWRF India Time Series (www.epwrfits.in)

### Wage Rates in Rural India

The **EPW Research Foundation** has added a module on Wage Rates in Rural India to its online database, EPWRF India Time Series (EPWRFITS).

This module provides average daily wage rates, month-wise, in rupees, for various agricultural and non-agricultural occupations in Rural India for 20 states starting from July 1998 (also available, data for agricultural year July 1995–June 1996). Additionally, it presents quarterly and annual series (calendar year, financial year and agricultural year), derived as averages of the monthly data.

The wage rates for agricultural occupations are provided for ploughing/tilling, sowing, harvesting, winnowing, threshing, picking, horticulture, fishing (inland, coastal/deep-sea), logging and wood cutting, animal husbandry, packaging (agriculture), general agricultural segment and plant protection.

The non-agricultural occupation segment presents wage rates for carpenters, blacksmiths, masons, weavers, beedi makers, bamboo/cane basket weavers, handicraft workers, plumbers, electricians, construction workers, LMV and tractor drivers, porters, loaders, and sweeping/cleaning workers.

The data have been sourced from *Wage Rates in Rural India*, regularly published by the Labour Bureau, Shimla (Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India).

With this addition, the EPWRFITS now has 18 modules covering both economic (real and financial sectors) and social sectors.

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critiques of the Sachar Committee Report is its tendency towards approaching Muslims as an undifferentiated category. While the Sachar report itself devoted one entire chapter on the status-based caste differentiation amongst Muslims, the book also relies on interviews with certain social scientists to argue along this line. But again, despite its emphasis on treating Muslims as stratified along caste, the statistical data that has been presented tends to display the same tendency of portraying the community as a monolith. Therefore, we have information regarding proportion of Muslim activists in various NGOs, the number of Muslim-headed NGOs, also the share of women amongst them, but there is no figure disaggregated along status groups in Muslim societies. Thus, again, a sociologically significant analytical point is lost. There are some assertions as to how the Ashrafs are more

welfare-oriented compared to the rights-based approach of the Ajlafs and Arzal activists. But such neat compartmentalisations are not substantiated with narratives or other evidence from the field. In the absence of concrete substantiation, these reflections and observations of a journalist and an academic remain vacuous.

*Working with Muslims* is fairly representative of regional variations in the cultural, sociological and developmental profile of Indian Muslims. Yet, the analytical tools deployed rarely explore inconsistencies in need of articulation and nature of activism across regions whose developmental profiles differ significantly. Given the prevailing inequities in developmental achievements, do social activists and NGOs active in different parts of the country conceptualise the development problem among Muslims differently? In what ways do local politics,

geographies and cultures facilitate or inhibit social development? Does developmentalism then necessarily have a uniform model, universal indicators, tools and instruments? What do the experience of NGO workers from different parts of the country suggest? These are the questions that warranted a deeper probing, and the book only partially attends to them. Nevertheless, the book, by interrogating the hitherto ignored relationship between Muslims and developmental NGOs, has opened the field, and hopefully will spur others to raise many more questions.

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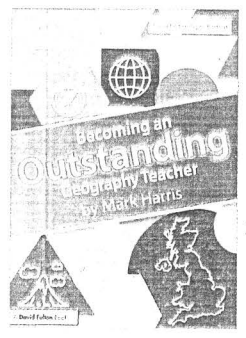
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Reviews

# Reviews

Reviews of new geography resources.

## BOOKS



**Becoming an outstanding geography teacher**  
Mark Harris  
ISBN: 978-1-138-69721-8  
£19.99 Routledge

This book aims to support geography teachers at all levels on their journey towards becoming outstanding and is suitable for trainee teachers as well as more established teachers who want to explore different approaches. This text could be a valuable support to non-specialist teachers. That said, most of the examples are based on generic techniques that could be applied to the teaching of a whole range of subjects. Even though some of the techniques were familiar, as a teacher of 20 years and a head of department for 15 years, I found the support and guidance contained within each of the 16 chapters excellent, well researched and explained clearly using classroom examples.

Each chapter sets the scene by exploring why the key element helps promote outstanding geography, and then supports this by highlighting many different practical examples that could be used in your own classroom. Illustrations of worksheets and templates are also included to provide further inspiration. The chapter ends

with a review of the key element, and a 'nutshell' bullet point list summarising the key aspects.

The approach taken is based on the author's personal classroom practice and this helps to bring context to the examples. It was also refreshing to hear the author suggest that the examples outlined could not be used all the time, and will need practice, as there are no 'off-the-shelf' fixes to becoming outstanding.

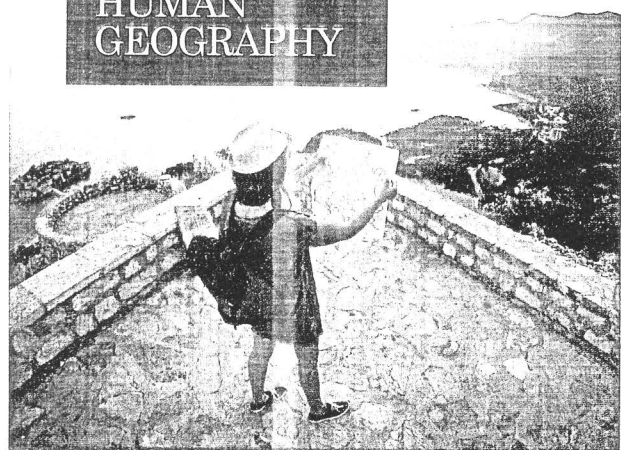
The book is well written and easy to read. Each chapter is self-contained, so teachers can tackle different elements of their classroom practice when appropriate. I shall be using the concept of FAIL and SAIL that Mark explores in many of his chapters – a method of showing progress and instilling in students a growth mindset approach in the classroom.

One downside to this excellent book is the lack of online resources to accompany the book, for example the templates that are illustrated in each chapter. There are also relatively few geography-specific references.

Overall, this is a useful reference book.

*Paul Hunt is Subject Leader for Geography at The Appleton School and is Co-Chair of the GA's Secondary Phase Committee*

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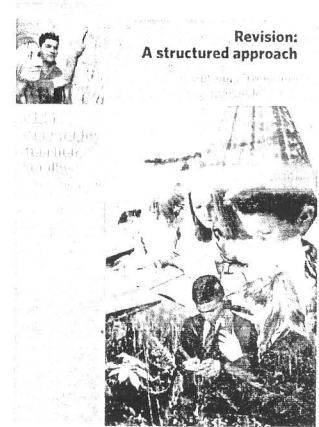
## Revision: A structured approach



Catherine Owen and Sebastian Witts

This Toolkit can be used as a whole revision scheme of learning, dipped into to complement a school's own scheme of work for revision or used throughout the GCSE course to support students.

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**£21.99 (Non-members)**



For more details go to:  
[www.geog.org.uk/revision](http://www.geog.org.uk/revision)



Online resources

Download larger versions of Figures 3 and 4. Go to <https://www.geography.org.uk/Journals/Teaching-Geography> and select Autumn 2018.

**Paul Hunt** is Subject Leader for Geography at The Appleton School and is Co-Chair of the GA's Secondary Phase Committee.

Email: [phunt@theappletonschool.org](mailto:phunt@theappletonschool.org)

I have also seen a change in the way my students approach images. By looking at images critically and from different perspectives the students were able to improve their analysis of the images. They have become more questioning, asking where the images are from, wanting to know the context of the image and the viewpoint of the artist or photographer.

Embedding at key stage 3 and GCSE

The next step is to embed this framework into our schemes of work at GCSE and key stage 3, bringing critical thinking into the curriculum from year 7 onwards. 'Thinking like a geographer' is a term we often hear, and perhaps also use in our classrooms, and one key element of that is to think critically.

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# Reviews



Reviews of new geography resources.



## BOOKS

Inside Teaching: How to Make a Difference for Every Learner and Teacher

John Blanchard  
ISBN 978-1-138-71229-4  
£15.99 Routledge

This book is a 'must have' for anyone entering the teaching profession or returning to teaching. While not written specifically for geography teachers it is a very useful read and draws examples from both primary and secondary schools.

The book is very readable and jargon is explained and does not dominate the text. It is very evident that this book is firmly based on what goes on in schools from someone who has seen and done it rather than just read theories about teaching, all of which adds to its credibility as a text.

A clear structure makes for a very useful book to dip in and out of. There are three sections:

- Part 1 – Your pupils – looking at support, motivation, working with parents, etc.
- Part 2 – Planning teaching and assessing – looking into aspects of teaching and learning.
- Part 3 – Job satisfaction and continuing to learn about teaching.

Each part has a number of chapters which appear almost like a series of papers. The content is clearly written and makes reference to both school-based examples and to theoretical texts on the issue.

The chapters themselves would make good starting point for discussions as part of CPD programmes. Overall this practical book would be an essential resource to have within any school setting.

*Sue Carstairs, Retired Senior Teacher/ Geographer, member of the GA's Assessment and Examinations Special Interest Group*

## PHOTOCOPIABLE PACK

16 Models and theories for A level Geographers  
Ref: [web/8038](http://web/8038)  
£99 Zig Zag Education

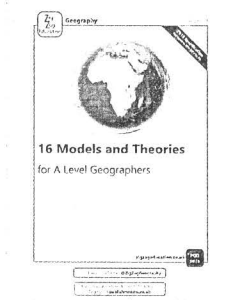
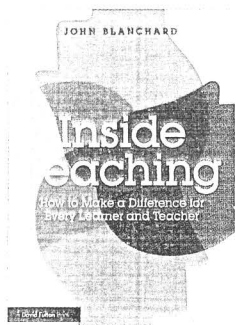
This photocopiable resource brings together sixteen of what the authors claim to be the most relevant geographical models and scientific theories that underpin physical and human geography at A level. At a time when theory is taking on more importance in the A level course, and when text books seem to be even more expensive, a resource like this is a useful addition to the teachers' armoury. However, two of the examples only appear in one of the main specifications, a further two appear only in the Welsh specifications and three will have been studied at earlier key stages in some detail.

The pack comes with an introduction for teacher and student alike showing how it might be used both as a class activity or by the individual as needed. There is detailed explanation, notes on relevance and a critique where this is necessary.

The questions and answers that are provided allow for a useful review of the material, although some of the 'quick-fire' questions are rather simplistic. Some 'application' questions reflected what might be expected at A level and others did not. It would have been useful for the student and the teacher to have been able to test the material in the context of an examination style question.

One is left to wonder if other theories might have been included, Modelski for example, to make this an even more useful resource. Nevertheless, having them all in one place is a great advantage for student and teacher alike and should provide a useful tool.

*Iain Palôt is Chair of the GA's Post 16 and Higher Education Phase Committee.*



Hindu; 24/3/19; Pg. 31

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# Birth power and women's rights

A primer on surrogacy and the Bill in the context of India and its poor

RAMYA KANNAN

The *Oxford India Short Introductions* is a wonderful idea, as book compilations go. Seeking to offer concise, stimulating introductions and accessible guides to different aspects of India, these books sometimes hit the nub.

Its latest in the series, *Surrogacy*, provides some key insights into the highly controversial subject. It does meander to get to the point, though, and does so with a heavy reliance on Bollywood examples.

### Towards equality

If books have a heart, this one does too. It talks about the inequalities, primarily from the point of the surrogate who bears the child. Often forced into it by her circumstances, she is sometimes given the short shrift, denied what was promised and not given her due.

Majumdar makes sure that that side is well told, a little dramatically at times, but it is important to tell the stories of both mothers in the context of law.



In the light It is important to tell the stories of both the mothers. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

The introduction gives a hint of what is to come: A text built on studies, treatises, and movie sequences. Chapter 5 is key in this slender volume as it discusses the Surrogacy Bill, and other Bills that came before on the subject. While the Bill hinges on surrogacy as an altruistic act, and the adoptive parents

are required to pay for the IVF procedure, medicines and nutrition, there is no word on compensation for the surrogate.

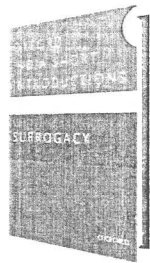
This chapter is laid out after a rather elaborate analysis in the previous section setting the ground for the introduction of surrogacy in the real Indian context. The author makes

a sympathetic case for the surrogate, given the real conditions of Indian women who sign up to bear other peoples' children. The form that the surrogate and her husband are meant to sign has only a fleeting mention of compensation for her, making it immediately an "inequitable arrangement".

It also touches on the integrity of women's bodies, and what happens after repeated surrogate pregnancies, the woman's agency in this case. To understand this is to truly understand not just what drives surrogacy in India, but to understand India itself.

However, *Surrogacy* is not a book you reach for if you are seeking to understand the medicine that assisted reproductive techniques ride on.

But for an introductory note on the techniques, the book takes readers on a journey through mainly the aspects of commercial surrogacy, its transnational connect – the emergence of Repro Travellers – the laws of the land binding such transactions, and the rights of parties involved within the complicated rhetoric of altruism and sacrifice that surrogacy seems to be trapped in.



**Surrogacy**  
**Oxford India**  
**Short**  
**Introductions**  
Anindita  
Majumdar  
OUP  
₹325

# Measuring women's work

In this book of collected essays, Professor Devaki Jain constructs an alternative theory of economic life that values work for what it is and moves towards human well-being and dignity. BY C.T. KURIEN

If the title of the book is somewhat enigmatic, the subtitle immediately reveals its contents as a contribution to the growing body of literature on women's studies. The author is widely known among those who are engaged in women's studies. She is also a high-profile academic, respected for her scholarship as an economist, as one of the founding members of Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), a member of the South Commission of the 1980s chaired by Julius Nyerere, a leading figure of the United Nations' committees on women's issues, and a participant in all the world conferences on women. She has worked closely with the Planning Commission and was a member of the Karnataka Planning Board.

A constant theme in women's studies is that women's work is not reckoned in calculations of gross domestic product (GDP). Women put in, on a day-to-day basis, much effort at home, in the fields, in gathering firewood and carry-

ing water, but this is totally left out of calculating "output", while work of similar kind that men do and for which they get paid forms their income and enters the GDP. The unfairness of this procedure forms the basis for many to take up the cause of women. Devaki Jain also fights this injustice, but she walks many more miles. The 15 pieces brought together in the volume (papers and lectures) deal with those extra miles, of evidence, analysis, interpretation and a new approach. At the end of the book, there is a bibliography of works consulted and an even more

impressive "Bibliography of Selected Works" by the author that runs into almost 20 pages.

One of the early chapters provides the running theme of the book. "I found that while women were engaged in what in economics is called 'free collection of goods', namely gathering berries and leaves, etc., it was actually a great source of employment and in many ways a contribution to the GDP. But because these goods were called 'minor forest produce' and had no particular status in so-called 'production' and 'employment' concerns, this activity does

not get the attention that in fact it deserved." This is because values are determined not by effort but are based on money and markets. The arbitrariness and injustice of this procedure forms the basis for Devaki Jain to champion the cause of women, especially because what men do and get paid for is based on the unrecognised and time-consuming work that women do.

## CRITIQUE OF GDP

That leads to a critique of GDP, which is a measurement of work largely of what men do and is valued by the market. Consequently, women usually get excluded in discussions of development of which the main component is the increase in the GDP identified as "growth". The basis of the injustice to women is this customary, and perhaps unconscious, systemic exclusion that they are subjected to. Each specific instance of injustice must be exposed and fought against, and that is what women's movements usually do. However, it is more important to go beneath the surface and provide an alternative approach that values work for what it is and moves towards human well-being and dignity. It is in this sphere that Devaki Jain has made her most significant contributions, although much of it remains seminal. When a new frame of analysis of human well-being is perfected and becomes widely accepted, she will be remembered as one of its early pioneers.

This volume provides



### Close Encounters of Another Kind

Women and Development Economics

By Devaki Jain  
Sage, 2018

Pages: xxv + 398

Price: Rs.1,095

Women Studies ✓  
Bibliography +



KAMAL NARANG

IN MEWAT REGION, Rajasthan, a woman and her two daughters carry fodder for their cattle.

its crucial ingredients. From that perspective, the significant chapters are 9, 10 and 14, that, not surprisingly, are quite autobiographical as well.

Early in her professional career as an economist, particularly through the work of the South Commission and the membership of DAWN, Devaki Jain noticed that “women were bearing the greater share of the burden of poverty, whether measured in terms of scarce resources, food, clothing, shelter, medical care and education, or social hierarchy”. It led her to the conviction that time (and not money) should become the measure of value “which would entail a reversal of the values ascribed to men’s and women’s work”.

It is not surprising that her new understanding of “work” led Devaki Jain

closer to Mahatma Gandhi. For Gandhi, the poverty of the many was the obverse of the prosperity of the few, and he maintained that there was enough for everybody’s need but not for everybody’s greed.

On the other hand, modern economics maintains that wants are unlimited and follows it up with the perpetual quest for more and more production. If that is the justification for “growth”, increasing inequalities will invariably accompany it as is being witnessed today all over the world. Inequalities result also from the bulging of the “services” sector in the economy, while agriculture and manufacturing, the real productive activities, lag behind.

Gandhi, therefore, exhorted the people of India to undertake constructive work and set an example

by his own use of the charkha to produce thread for handwoven cloth. Once set in motion, it would lead to more productive activity meeting other needs.

Devaki Jain coins the expression “the bubbling up” theory of growth and claims that this alternative theory would argue that putting incomes and political power in the hands of the poor could generate the demand and the voice that would direct productive activity and political mobilisation. Contrasting it with GDP, she quotes another writer who said: “GDP is simply a gross measure of market activity, of money changing hands. It makes no distinction whatsoever between the desirable and undesirable, or costs and gain.... The crucial economic functions performed in the household and volunteer sectors go entirely un-

reckoned. As a result, GDP not only masks the breakdown of social structure and the natural habitat upon which the economy—and life itself—ultimately depend; worse, it actually portrays such breakdown as economic gain.”

Constructing an alternative theory of economic life to replace, or at least seriously challenge, what has now been accepted as conventional wisdom is not an easy task. It is much more than a mental exercise too. If it is to reflect the realities of life, it must arise from life, its struggles, joys and agonies. To Devaki Jain the women’s movement is symbolic of the commitment to that calling. While joining hands with women in the fight against the built-in injustice, Devaki Jain also urges them to go to the root of the problem. □