

India

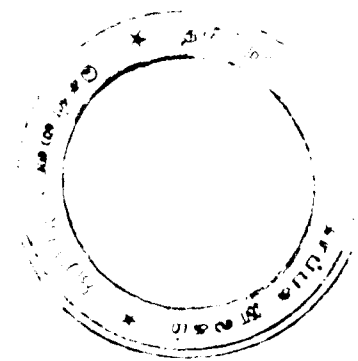
Past and Present



vol. 1

• 1982

no. 2



651/87

INDIA PAST AND PRESENT

A BIENNIAL JOURNAL OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

VOLUME I

1966

NUMBER 2

SOURINDRANATH ROY
COMMEMORATION VOLUME



V 2 m N84

N84.1.2

698 b5

INSTITUTE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH
MARINE LINES, BOMBAY 400 020

12 m, NS4
NS4.1.2
698 b5

SEN
1 Jun
mber
ditor
LAEs
ditor
RNI
ditor
AVIC
ditor
KAR

INDIA PAST AND PRESENT

A BIENNIAL JOURNAL OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

VOLUME 1

1984

NUMBER 2

SOURINDRANATH ROY
COMMEMORATION VOLUME



INSTITUTE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH
9, NEW MARINE LINES, BOMBAY 400 020

CONTENTS

ARTICLES

- Guest Editorial .. ERETT MUKERJEE
- The Mahabharata and
Modern Man .. KRISHNA CHATTOPADHYAY
- India's Imperial Legacy
and China's Frontier Gains .. PARUL JAIN MEHRA
- Contribution of Cunha Rivara
to Indian Historiography .. GEORGE M. MORAES

REVIEW ARTICLES

- Freedom Struggle .. N. C. MAHRA
- Jawaharlal Nehru:
THE FINAL YEARS .. L.M.S. NAMBOODIRIPAD ..

Notes and Queries

In the publication of the Sourindranath Roy
Commemoration Volume, *India Past and Present*
gratefully acknowledges the grant-in-aid received
from the Indian Council of Historical Research,
New Delhi, and the financial support from
advertisers and donors.

GUEST EDITORIAL

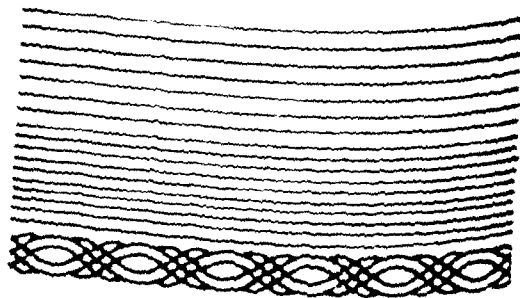
INDIRA GANDHI - INDIA'S DAUNTLESS PRIME MINISTER

INDIA PAST AND PRESENT has called on me to join in
the tribute that the world has paid to Indira Gandhi, our country's
dauntless Prime Minister, into whose frail physical frame a hail
of bullets was pumped at point blank range by ferocious fanatic
gangs on October 31, casting our people suddenly into sorrow
beyond words.

If in the British House of Lords, a former Lord Chancellor,
Lord Elwyn-Jones, could say that "all of us have felt diminished
by her death", how much more should we, her own people, feel
"diminished" by Indira's death! For let it be proclaimed from
the house-tops that however controversial the ultimate assessment
of her, there was, at her best - and History, no hanging judge,
always notes the most positive factors - a certain nobility and
strength in her life and work, in her character and her courage.
She died at her post, unflinching, in harness, unto the last, facing
menaced assassins behind whom lurked hideously the contemptible,
current conspiracy to disrupt, debilitate and destabilize India.
It has been with a martyr's halo that Indira has passed into history.

It is difficult for one who had the happiness of having been
admitted to the affections of Jawaharlal Nehru and thus enabled
to know Indira for a long period of time and at close quarters
to write her obituary. Some time must pass before one can write
imposedly, let alone comprehensively, on Indira Gandhi. The
way she evolved from a lonely, sensitive, indrawn young woman
to a powerful, if also always perceptive and graceful, political
leader of world stature and eminence is a fascinating study.
Such study should before long be made - and in a spirit far differ-
ent from the New York Times' depiction of her so-called metamor-
phosis "from a china doll to Iron Lady".

There can be no doubt that behind Indira's killing there
has been for quite some time a cruel, cowardly conspiracy on
the part of some of India's rankest religious chauvinist reaction-
aries, deliberately and diabolically propped up by interests abroad
that have never yet forgiven India her freedom and would like



BEST COMPLIMENTS

E. S. ANDRADES & CO.
BUILDERS & CONTRACTORS

Andrades Bhavan,
Station Road,
Near Umela Phatak,
BASSEIN (Dt. Thana),
Phone No. 166.

Rahadoor
2nd Floor, S.A. Brelvi
Opp. Pherozeshah Mehta
Fort, BOMBAY - 40
Phone No. 29

THE MAHABHARATA AND MODERN MAN THINKING ALOUD ON A PROJECT IN PROGRESS KRISHNA CHAITANYA

I

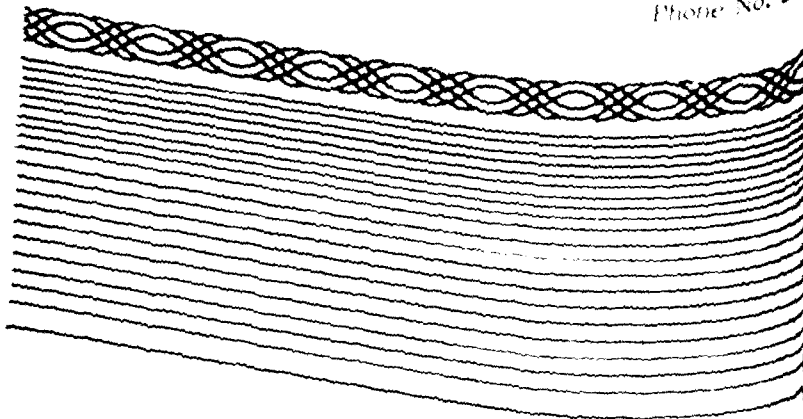
Of all the epics we have inherited from the distant past, from the civilisations of antiquity, the Mahabharata is the biggest in scale. With its eighteen Parvans [Books or Cantos], twelve hundred chapters and two hundred thousand lines of verse. It is eight times as long as the Iliad and the Odyssey put together, larger than the united extent of all the epic poems in the European languages.

In India, the epic provided the material for numerous narrative poems [Kavya] and dramas of classical Sanskrit literature, its translations became the foundational classics for the vernacular languages in the formative phase of their evolution, and generated once again a vast crop of narrative poems and plays in these languages too. Folk ballad has retold it in every region of India. It has been the inspiration of sculpture and painting, music and dance. Down the centuries, it has been a most important influence moulding the Indian psyche. As Sukthankar said in 1943, while recording the progress made on the critical edition undertaken by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, this book is our past which has prolonged itself into the present. We are it: I mean the real we".

But are we it today? Have we not severed our links with his great legacy of the past?

As far as I know, there is not a single comprehensive study of the epic, analysing its major characters, tracking their motivations and actions that trail out into the world to web into constellations of objective, historic reality that become dramatically meaningful, both as nemesis and redemption. But the catalogues from the various publishing houses I get every month show that we are steadily churning out books with three digit prices on second and third line British poets and novelists.

The spurious cosmopolitanism or universalism affected by our elite may be provoked by this way of putting it to claim that we should open our windows wide to the world, and to accuse me of chauvinism or insularity. If we were really as cosmopolitan as assumed here, we would have been producing books also on



ade it even more unorthodox, and perhaps impermissibly so, many. But I had no alternative. Conceptualising man as freely unaccepting imperatives in the light of his capacity for normative linking and distancing experience enough to relish it aesthetically involved assumptions that went counter to the canonical position almost all the modern disciplines that claim to be scientific. the level of psychology, for instance, take the Freudian schematisation. Freud decomposes the human personality into three components: of these the id is blindly instinctual; the ego is blindly materialistic, for the growth from the Pleasure Principle the Reality Principle which Freud speaks of is no growth because the ego still remains driven by the hedonistic stimulus, though the ego may adopt a more cautiously realistic stratagem; and lastly, the super ego is blindly moralistic because all morality is reduced to interiorised parental and social dictates. The entire scheme is mechanistic, making the freedom of man inconceivable within its framework. And Freud's system was only the tip of the iceberg. its enormous base was the anti-human theoretical structure built by all the sciences over several centuries.

The idea of working on this project has been steadily gaining in strength over two decades and I would like to say a few words about it, not necessarily because this did not get published and I be suffered, but because it has a direct bearing on the human importance of the project itself. As early as in 1962, when I brought out my *New History of Sanskrit Literature* (Asia, 1962), revised, Manohar, 1977), I had noticed this feature of the Indian epics. They were, quite decidedly, a third approach to the aesthetic one, to the features, problems and imperatives of existence which had already engorged the metaphysical speculation of the Upanishads and the ethical thinking of the Dharma Sastras. The creative insight of art had to contemplate the plenitude of life, with its myriad types of human and non-human events, see whether the aesthetic world-view harmonised with the time gained through the other two perspectives, and by the time I completed my *Sanskrit Poetics* (Asia, 1969), I had further realised that in the analysis of poetic experience and the world-view that could be built upon it, there was profounder philosophy than in any of the classical systems of the schools. In exploring from the aesthetic perspective, Vyasa had reached upon the discovery that the aesthetic reading of existence that the challenges of life have both to be confronted by resonant action and relished in serene delectation - was a far more satisfying philosophical position than the other interpretations proposed by various metaphysical systems. The Gita as well as many significant episodes of the Mahabharata came in for detailed analysis in *Sanskrit Poetics* which probably made it unorthodox as a treatise on rhetoric.

The interdisciplinary approach in that book must have been ultimate experience. The interpretation of creation as play (*lila*) which is the primordial form of art, in the *Brahma Sutra*

but I also feel that this conclusion has to be justified in terms of a detailed analysis of the aspects of the poem that definitely show it to be a creative design and therefore the creation of a poet. And aspects after aspects reveal to us a unique and brilliant personality. Like Flaubert, and like Valmiki, Vyasa uses a minimal style with the maximum graphic quality. A single verse can complete a highly-portrait of this one of Drona, the venerable preceptor, "white-robed, with a white sacred thread, white sandal marks and garlands and with white locks crowning his head". Graphically vivid vignettes even of turbulent episodes are achieved by this style which makes up for its economy of its speed in evocation. The onrush of soldiers towards each other and the carnage are tersely expressed in one line. "The earth rising from the earth settled, moistened with blood". In a brilliant analysis of Gogol, Belyi¹⁰ has studied the colour references in the former's works. Belyi's patiently collected statistical show the yellow graph rising steadily from the joyous *Evening in the Village* through Taras Bulba and making its greatest qualitative leap upward in the second volume of *Dead Souls*, where the gold is not the gold of gold plate and gold thread, but the gold of the cathedrals and crosses of the Orthodox Church. At this depth, colour has become symbol and expression of inner temper. Such an analysis, if applied to Vyasa, would reveal frequently the bright lustre of fire glow throughout the epic in metaphor and simile. The body of a beautiful woman glows like fire. An ascetic, though clad in rags, a priest, like glowing embers below the layer of ashes. Soldiers, carrying an enemy warrior like the circle of fire described in space by whirling flames. The battle is like the conflagration which consumes the universe at the end of an era. The armed warrior glows like a burning pillar.

Eisenstein was making a great contribution to aesthetics itself, and not just writing a book on cinematography, when he gave us his *Film Sense*.¹¹ Here he showed that narration does not come to life if it is only logically connected; it should be images composed of very specific elements which "shall evoke in the perception and feelings of the spectator the most complete image of the theme itself"; these images may be used as recurring motifs in various contexts. And he has analysed the writings of Pushkin and others to show how rich great literature is with such images of visual amplitude and wealth of thematic meaning. Vyasa presents many images of this type and they recur at no point of the narrative, though great alertness is needed to find them because of the tremendous span of the epic. In the crucial episode where the Pandavas lose their realm in the chess game many central motifs of the theme of the epic - the cupidity of men leading to treachery and terrible injustice, the irrepressible passion for revenge it creates - fuse into a stark image: Draupadi, queen of the Pandavas, clad only in one garment, being dragged by her hair to the Kaurava assembly by Dussasana. Since the insult is unforgivable and avenging has to be anticipated, this image shrouds in the unconscious mind of the old king Dhritarashtra and he has nightmares of the entire Kaurava army being similarly molested by Pandava valour "as if it were a weak, helpless woman". The image recurs once again, when the war is lost and all the Kauravas lie dead in the field. The widowed princesses, aloof and correct even in the company of their maids-of-honour, flee to the battle-field, "with their hair dishevelled and clad only in single garments". The recurring image not only epitomises the theme: it follows the Karmic maturation of crime as fear and final retribution. There are several images of this type that need to be noticed in a literary evaluation of the epic. They bind the theme into a unity, point to the unitary origin of the work in the mind of a poet of exceptional brilliance.

III

Feuerbach, though a philosopher himself, has voiced some misgivings about the philosophy of the schoolmen. He feels that academic philosophy has become "essentially a training in disputation in the medieval tradition" and proceeds to make a significant point. "While our professional philosophers practise their respective non-philosophies, the function of philosophy itself has been assumed by religious thinkers, historians, scientists, novelists". What Feuer notes about today is true of the past too and what he says about the novel applies to the narrative poem as well. Liberalising the religious and philosophical spirit from creed and institution, Tillich defined it as ultimate concern and this is the prime characteristic of the *Mahabharata*. But it is the creation of a poet; and for the novelist, dramatist and the poet, the story or plot is the prime metaphor. Heilmann has clarified this. "A series of dramatic statements about one subject does constitute a bloc of meaning which is a structural part of the play. This bloc may be understood as one of the author's metaphors. It is a metaphor just as a body of reciprocal images, with its burden of implications, is a metaphor. The dramatist's basic metaphor is his plot. All of his metaphors are valid parts of his total meaning, the search for which must include a study of the relationship among the parts. All the constituent metaphors must be related to the large metaphor which is the play itself".

Vyasa's plot is his metaphor and he cast it in an antique mould, that of a *chanson de geste*, and it seems to heave up

like a gigantic warship from the depths of the stormy seas¹⁵ Imbbers. It is this that gives him the idea of falling upon the old legend. The many features of old literature seen in the Mahabharata have been cited by some to argue that it was a story¹⁶ surviving Pandava warriors as they sleep in their tents and massaging them. The story within the story is also an antique feature. The turbulence and immediacy of the narration of the eighteen-day war may make us forget that it is not given directly by the poet but reported to Dhritarashtra by Sanjaya who was given visionary powers. Vyasa had a deep purpose here. The fountainhead of the dark stream of causalities that detonated at last in the catastrophe of war is Dhritarashtra and, throughout his reporting, Sanjaya drives home the basic responsibility of the old king, even more blind morally than physically, every time Kaurava fortunes suffer a serious blow. Sanjaya is used here like the chorus of Greek tragedy, commenting on current disaster with recall of past misdeed.

IV

Riddles are a common feature of the folklore tradition. But they are used in subtly escalated role in the scene where the god Dharma, in the guise of a Yaksha, tests Yudhishthira in the forest pool.¹⁷ The riddles themselves are not random. They give many clues to the author's outlook and convictions. Does the sun rise and set? Eternal Law. On what depends the status of a Brahmin? Not on birth or knowledge of the Ved but on conduct alone. What is that the surrender of which makes one rich? Cupidity. What is real knowledge? Comprehension of the ultimate reality. What is compassion? Doing good to all. But the session of riddles matures further into a meaningful episode. Dharma offers to bring back to life any one of the brothers lying dead by the pool and asks Yudhishthira to choose. And he chooses, not Bhima or Arjuna who are his brothers-in-law on whose valour he has to depend to win back his realm, but Nakula, his step-brother. "My father had two wives, Kunti and Madri, therefore let each have a surviving son. I make no distinction between the two mothers".

The beast fable is a very important component of the folklore tradition and the *Panchatantra* is a world classic. Nowhere has it been used in the sombre and fateful way Vyasa uses it in connection with the darkest deed of the Kurukshetra war. The Kauravas are completely routed. Sleepless in feverish desire for vengeance, Aswatthama, the Kaurava commander, lies awake at the foot of a tree in a wood where he has taken refuge. Then he sees an owl, that preys in the night, attacking the birds sleeping in their nests and killing them in

The Gita too is part of this indirect reportage, a story narrated by a character in the main story. And thus we come upon the most complex and the central problem of the epic. Actually there are two problems. Is the Gita genuinely a part of the text? Does it have a function, and a clear thrust of meaning that adequately discharges the function?

The Gita uses the Anushtubh which is the common metre of the epic. The latter uses the Trishtubh too, in high points of the narrative where emphasis is called for. The Gita too changes over to this metre in the scene when Arjuna reacts in awe to Krishna's revelation of his cosmic form. The similarity in the use of words, language, metre, versification and letter combinations (sandhi) revealed by the study of Telang and the parallel use of forms which are non-standardised compared with classical Sanskrit of a later epoch studied by Sarma seem clearly to establish that the Gita is part of the epic. But then one can argue, as Roy does, that all this need indicate only the similarity of early origin, not necessarily the inclusion of the Gita in the epic at the time of its final shaping as a meaningful component.

It would therefore be necessary to seek identities that are deeper than the tissue of the poem to its temper, the essential functional role of the Gita in the epic. Van Buitenen writes: "The Bhagavadgita was conceived and created in the context of the Mahabharata. It was not an independent text that somehow

wandered into the epic, on the contrary, it was conceived developed to bring to a close a narrative the dramatic of a war which was both real and poetic. I would not as tossed off, dispensing with all the botheration of close attention to the text and its careful analysis.

... whether the impressions that will emerge after a careful study of the epic and its inset discourse will tally with the breezy verdicts which a narcissistic admiration of one's own brilliance has tossed off, dispensing with all the botheration of close attention to the text and its careful analysis.

V

Slochow²³ wrote about the function of the myth: "The myth addresses itself to the problem of identity, asking, 'who am I?' And it proceeds to examine three important questions that are organically related, 'where do I come from?' 'Where am I going?' and 'What must I do to get there?' In mythic language, the problems deal with Creation, with Destiny and with the Quest". The thought here is similar to that of Maslow, who said that what one ought to do can be found out only by studying what one is, what the world is; but it specifically refers to the quest begun by the psyche through myth before philosophy merged as an articulate discipline. But myths have been ambiguous and some of them anti-human, and Santayana²⁴ prefers the myth that is creatively rehandled by the poet. "A rational poet's existence would have the same moral functions that myth was asked to fulfil, and fulfilled so treacherously: it would employ accurately the same ideal faculties which myth used confusedly." But such creative rehandling is only very rarely successful. T.S. Eliot tied it, but the myth in *The Waste Land* is a crazy quilt of motifs drawn from the lore of many peoples and epochs, and critics like Herbert Read have referred to the "archaeological" nature of the resulting amalgam, its landscape of broken columns.

That Vyasa was radically reshaping legend into the rational myth of the poet is clear from the analysis of Edgerton²⁵ which establishes that it is in the Gita that Krishna, an obscure chieftain of the Vrishni clan, is for the first time escalated and given the attributes of a full-fledged monotheistic diety, and at the same time, the attributes of the Upanishadic Absolute. This is not the slightest dogmatism about Krishna's pronouncement. Omniscience is the professional qualification of diety and the omniscient does not qualify its assertion with expressions like "in my view"²⁶ or with the statement that it is his "considered best opinion"²⁷. Vyasa's poem was a search for certitude. Krishna in the Gita links certitude, *astikya*, to knowledge, *vijnana*, wisdom, *jnana*²⁸. He tells Arjuna that he will impart to him understanding which does not spurn empirical knowledge, uses it to reach beyond it to wisdom, *savijnana jnanam*²⁹.

Established as it on a seat as unshakable as a rock is the energy is more basic than matter, it is immaterial in the Galilean sense since it lacks inertial mass and propagates itself by a wave motion where the waves are not the undulations of any material medium. Energy brings in the concept of the field; the particle is because science piled up knowledge and did not assimilate it in wisdom that it has failed in getting at two kinds of meaning. Energy is merely a locus where the strength of the energy of the field is both very important, as Huston Smith³¹ points out. "Science is high. The field thus constitutes a system and with systems in the face of all ultimate questions" (Jaspers) and leaves us can begin to think in terms of an inner initiative which Sellars problems of life untouched" (Wittgenstein)". led immanent causality and Dobzhansky termed internal teleo-

"Judging whether life is or is not worth living", says Camus,³² "amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy". This combines the perspective of both Jaspers and Wittgenstein, a perspective which, according to them, was to be unknown to science. Implied here is the assumption of the freedom of the human person and his freedom to direct his life, to do and act, in the manner he judges best. But this freedom has been denied by philosophical positions which are otherwise opposites. Sturt³³ has drawn attention to this. "One advert tells each of us: 'you are a transitory resultant of physical processes'; and the other: 'you are an unreal appearance of the Absolute'. Naturalism and Absolutism, antagonistic as they seem, combine in assuring us that personality is an illusion". Sturt calls Naturalism is science or scientism; and his Absolutism is the transcendentalism which denies reality to the world, the world of evolution, natural history and man's history. A major task of any evaluation of the Mahabharata would be to examine how far Vyasa was able to redeem man, his life and his life, from this double denial.

Sartre³⁴ has contributed a valuable clarification of life by distinguishing between the precise metaphysical concept of freedom and the popular and historical concept developed by it. "The formula 'to be free' does not mean 'to obtain what one has wished' but rather 'by oneself to determine oneself to (in the broad sense of choosing). The technical and philosophical concept of freedom means only the autonomy of choice". In the empirical world, choices are hidden in interiorities and become visible only in action which, again in the precise metaphysical sense, is generating the physical motion of material objects thus causing an event. In the Galilean Newtonian scheme, matter lacks the capacity for self-movement and moves only when pushed or pulled by an extraneous force; man too is made up of matter, hence the various deterministic schemes like behaviourism reduce the seeming initiative of man to behaviour determined by extraneous force, and deny his psyche and its initiative. Lillie³⁵ has affirmed: "The living organism is psychological because it is a development from a nature which is psychophysical". Notably emerged as psychophysical when the discovery of quantum physics has thoroughly demolished the mechanistic determinism of classical physics. Young³⁶ summarises the revolution implicit in the present view that action rather than matter is basic, action being understood as analogous to human decision". Since it lacks inertial mass and propagates itself by a wave motion where the waves are not the undulations of any material medium. Energy brings in the concept of the field; the particle is merely a locus where the strength of the energy of the field is high. The field thus constitutes a system and with systems can begin to think in terms of an inner initiative which Sellars led immanent causality and Dobzhansky termed internal teleology. Though it may need considerable analytical exploration, we feel convinced that it would be possible to establish that Vyasa's field and systematic reconstruction begins with a similar field concept. "Whatever has originated, animate or inanimate, know to have originated through the union of the field and the knower of the field"³⁸. The field constitutes a system and the knower of the field is the focal and hierarchically apical principle which, in all systems, deploys the resources of the system towards its goal. But concepts of teleology and final cause have been very congenial to science and till recently it has managed to derive a marvellous order of the world from utter fortuitousness through arguments which are all variations on the piquant model given by Eddington: given time a batch of monkeys strumming their typewriters would be able to reproduce all the sonnets of Shakespeare. But Elsasser, Lecomte du Nouy, Bertalanffy and others have shown that the time that has elapsed since the formation of our galaxy and the size of the Einsteinian universe are totally inadequate for the fortuitous formation of stable nucleic acid-enzyme systems or protein molecules absolutely essential for life. The Gita distinguishes between two aspects of nature: two levels in her operations: atomistic and holistic; segmental and integral; mechanistically causal and overwhelmingly teleological. Nature at the lower level is *Apara Prakrti* and nature at the higher level is *Para Prakrti*; the latter is designated as the creator and sustainer of life.³⁹ Serious difficulties being repeatedly encountered today in reductionist analysis are prompting the adoption of a similar perspective, for the only solution seems to be to incorporate immediate causes into final causes which latter are really overarching directionalities. Kascier⁴⁰ asserts that science has been led astray by its dogmatic adherence to linear, single- or unidirectional causal lines. Wright⁴¹ points out that "the complexity of possible control mechanisms and their interdependence is so complex that it is difficult to distinguish cause from effect". With feedback, says Urquhart⁴² "causality flows round a circle making ambiguous the distinction between cause and effect". Probably the best summing up of this new perspective comes from Weiss⁴³. He rejects reductionism because, while there is a phenomenon in a living system that is not molecular, there

wandered into the epic. On the contrary, it was conceived and developed to bring to a climax and solution the dharmic dilemma of a war which was both just and pernicious". I would develop this perception. For the understanding of Vyasa's primacy as a poet, it is essential to note that Arjuna's traumatic shock in the battle-field blocks the action of the epic and that, in helping him to recover his resolution, the discourse redeems the poem by unfreezing the episodic movement abruptly frozen by Arjuna's shock. And for understanding Vyasa's ultimacy as a philosopher, it is equally essential to note how he derives the imperative for Arjuna's action which redeems him and redeems the action of the epic. Maslow²¹ can help us to understand this. "The questions that people ask in the search for identity, real self, etc., are very largely 'ought' questions. What ought I to do? What ought I to be? ... Ultimately, the best way for a person to discover what he ought to do is to find out who and what he is, because the path to ethical and value decisions, to wiser choices, to oughtness, is via 'isness', via the discovery of facts, truth, reality ... The more he knows about his own nature ... the more effortless, automatic and epiphenomenal become his value choices". When Arjuna is perplexed as to what he should do, Krishna in his discourse proceeds to show that the answer has to be sought in the nature of reality, and the nature of man. This is an existential crisis of a Kierkegaardian kind. To be redeemed from it, Arjuna has to be instructed in the meaning of existence, which has not commenced only with the advent of man on the earth, but stretches back to the origin and evolution of the world and to the intentionality behind their origination. The origin, if meaningful, will imply an end or goal too and it is in the light of both, which define for man his identity, who he is, that he has to choose his action, what he should do.

The basic teaching of the Gita is that man has to decide on all issues himself and some people have promptly decided that it is a total loss any way you look at it. For instance, these are the views of D.D. Kosambi.²² It is with a great reluctance that he drags himself to consider it at all because, with the book of Marx available, he cannot understand why any one needs the Gita or the Bible. Zooming on the former, he finds that it attempts a synthesis "of many schools of thought which were in many respects mutually incompatible" and "the incompatibility is never brought out". It has been interpreted in widely different ways; "no question remains of its basic validity if the meaning is so flexible". It "seems far more suited to raise doubts and to split a personality than to heal an inner division". Kosambi refers to "the slippery opportunism" of the Gita and asserts that it has created a world of "doublethink". We will now have to

see whether the impressions that will emerge after a careful study of the epic and its inset discourse will tally with the breezy verdicts which a narcissistic admiration of one's own brilliance has tossed off, dispensing with all the botheration of close attention to the text and its careful analysis.

V

Slochow²³ wrote about the function of the myth: "The myth addresses itself to the problem of identity, asking, 'who am I?' And it proceeds to examine three important questions that are organically related, 'where do I come from?' 'Where am I going?' and 'What must I do to get there?' In mythic language, the problems deal with Creation, with Destiny and with the Quest". The thought here is similar to that of Maslow, who also said that what one ought to do can be found out only by studying what one is, what the world is; but it specifically refers to the quest begun by the psyche through myth before philosophy emerged as an articulate discipline. But myths have been ambiguous and some of them anti-human, and Santayana²⁴ prefers the myth that is creatively rehandled by the poet. "A rational poet's vision would have the same moral functions that myth was asked to fulfil, and fulfilled so treacherously; it would employ accurately the same ideal faculties which myth used confusedly." But such creative rehandling is only very rarely successful. T.S. Eliot tried it, but the myth in *The Waste Land* is a crazy quilt of motifs drawn from the lore of many peoples and epochs, and critics like Herbert Read have referred to the "archaeological" nature of the resulting amalgam, its landscape of broken columns.

That Vyasa was radically reshaping legend into the rational myth of the poet is clear from the analysis of Edgerton²⁵ which establishes that it is in the Gita that Krishna, an obscure chieftain of the Vrishni clan, is for the first time escalated and given "the attributes of a full-fledged monotheistic diety, and at the same time, the attributes of the Upanishadic Absolute". This wins for his poem the august resonance of ancient myth. But there is not the slightest dogmatism about Krishna's pronouncements. Omniscience is the professional qualification of diety and the omniscient does not qualify its assertion with expressions like "in my view"²⁶ or with the statement that it is his "considered and best opinion"²⁷. Vyasa's poem was a search for certitude. Krishna in the Gita links certitude, *astikya*, to knowledge, *vijnana*, and wisdom, *jnana*²⁸. He tells Arjuna that he will impart to him the understanding which does not spurn empirical knowledge but uses it to reach beyond it to wisdom, *savijnana jnanam*²⁹.

Established as if on a seat as unshakable as a rock is the man who has arrived at faith through knowledge and wisdom³⁰. It is because science piled up knowledge and did not assimilate it in wisdom that it has failed in getting at two kinds of meanings, both very important, as Huston Smith³¹ points out. "Science 'fails' in the face of all ultimate questions' (Jaspers) and leaves 'the problems of life untouched' (Wittgenstein)".

"Judging whether life is or is not worth living", wrote Camus,³² "amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy". This combines the perspective of both Jaspers and Wittgenstein, a perspective which, according to them, was totally unknown to science. Implied here is the assumption of the reality of the human person and his freedom to direct his life, to decide and act, in the manner he judges best. But this freedom has been denied by philosophical positions which are otherwise polar opposites. Sturt³³ has drawn attention to this. "One adversary tells each of us: 'you are a transitory resultant of physical processes'; and the other: 'you are an unreal appearance of the Absolute'. Naturalism and Absolutism, antagonistic as they seem to be, combine in assuring us that personality is an illusion". What Sturt calls Naturalism is science or scientism; and his Absolutism is the transcendentalism which denies reality to the empirical world, the world of evolution, natural history and man's history. A major task of any evaluation of the *Mahabharata* would be to examine how far Vyasa was able to redeem man, his person and his life, from this double denial.

Sartre³⁴ has contributed a valuable clarification of ideas by distinguishing between the precise metaphysical concept of freedom and the popular and historical concept developed from it. "The formula 'to be free' does not mean 'to obtain what one has wished' but rather 'by oneself to determine oneself to wish' (in the broad sense of choosing). The technical and philosophical concept of freedom means only the autonomy of choice". In the empirical world, choices are hidden in interiorities and become visible only in action which, again in the precise metaphysical sense, is generating the physical motion of material objects and thus causing an event. In the Galilean Newtonian scheme, matter lacks the capacity for self-movement and moves only when pushed or pulled by an extraneous force; man too is made up of matter; hence the various deterministic schemes like behaviourism that reduce the seeming initiative of man to behaviour determined by extraneous force, and deny his psyche and its initiative. But Lillie³⁵ has affirmed: "The living organism is psychological because it is a development from a nature which is psychophysical". Nature emerged as psychophysical when the discovery of quantum physical realities thoroughly demolished the mechanistic determinism of classical physics. Young³⁶ summarises the revolution. "It is implicit in the present findings that action rather than

is basic, action being understood as analogous to human decision". Energy is more basic than matter, it is immaterial in the Galilean sense since it lacks inertial mass and propagates itself by a wave motion where the waves are not the undulations of any material medium. Energy brings in the concept of the field; the particle is merely a locus where the strength of the energy of the field is high. The field thus constitutes a system and with systems one can begin to think in terms of an inner initiative which Sellars called immanent causality and Dobzhansky termed internal teleology. Though it may need considerable analytical exploration, I feel convinced that it would be possible to establish that Vyasa's total and systematic reconstruction begins with a similar field concept. "Whatever has originated, animate or inanimate, know it to have originated through the union of the field and the knower of the field"³⁸. The field constitutes a system and the knower of the field is the focal and hierarchically apical principle which, in all systems, deploys the resources of the system towards its telic goal.

But concepts of teleology and final cause have been very uncongenial to science and till recently it has managed to derive the marvellous order of the world from utter fortuitousness through arguments which are all variations on the piquant model given by Eddington: given time a batch of monkeys strumming on typewriters would be able to reproduce all the sonnets of Shakespeare. But Elsasser, Lecomte du Nouy, Bertalanffy and others have shown that the time that has elapsed since the formation of our galaxy and the size of the Einsteinian universe are totally inadequate for the fortuitous formation of stable nucleic acid-enzyme systems or protein molecules absolutely essential for life. The Gita distinguishes between two aspects of nature or two levels in her operations: atomistic and holistic; segmental and integral; mechanistically causal and overwhelmingly teleological. Nature at the lower level is *Apara Prakrti* and nature at the higher level is *Para Prakrti*; the latter is designated as the creator and sustainer of life.³⁹ Serious difficulties being repeatedly encountered today in reductionist analysis are prompting the adoption of a similar perspective, for the only solution seems to be to incorporate immediate causes into final causes which latter are really overarching directionalities. Kascier⁴⁰ asserts that science has been led astray by its dogmatic adherence to linear, single-tracked, unidirectional causal lines. Wright⁴¹ points out that "the range of possible control mechanisms and their interdependence are so complex that it is difficult to distinguish cause from effect". With feedback, says Urquhart⁴² "causality flows round a circle making ambiguous the distinction between cause and effect". Probably the best summing up of this new perspective comes from Weiss⁴³. He rejects reductionism because, while there is no phenomenon in a living system that is not molecular, there

is none that is *only* molecular. The molecules of the cell, while functioning as parts of the cell, behave in ways which cannot be explained except in terms of the cell as a living system. The 'more' in holistic systems "does not at all refer to any measurable quantity in the systems themselves; it refers solely to the necessity for the observer to supplement the sum of statements that can be made about the separate parts by any such additional statements that will be needed to describe the *collective behaviour* of the parts, when in an organised group. In carrying out this upgrading process, he is in effect doing no more than *restoring information content* that has been lost in the progressive analysis of the unitary universe into abstracted elements. In his triune scheme of a divine prior intentionality, a *Para Prakrti* or nature as integral Logos or total design, and an *Apara Prakrti* as short-term, unilinear and immediate causality, Vyasa was presenting a unitary universe.

Vyasa's biology thus develops from his physics; just as there is knower of the field in every field that is an inanimate or animate system in nature, there is a knower of the unified field that is nature in its entirety, or the universe. It is the direct-*ionality* given by this knower that has guided nature in her evolution till she produced man, in whom the electrical and chemical sensitivity of particle and molecular systems and the sentience of animals develop into consciousness, self-consciousness and the possibility of conscience. Vyasa's psychology also maintains evolutionary continuity with biology and physics. He is fully aware that in her massive thrust towards proliferating speciation, nature has used mechanistic procedures; the modalities (*gunas*) of nature tend to work with an automatism that encroaches into the freedom of man; organisms, including men, often behave as if they are mounted on, worked by, a machine (*yantrarudha*). Scientism froze itself here, read the mechanistic-deterministic pattern as ultimate and evolved theories - reflex automatism, the fixed action pattern of the instincts, the determination of the cerebral by the subcerebral, of the conscious by the unconscious, of the ego by the id. Freud's revelations about the convenient lapses of memory, rationalisations and passive absorption of the commendations and prohibitions of the social ambience as a conventional morality are indeed very revealing. But Vyasa has equally penetrating analyses about the devious manner in which the insatiable id-dominated libido can subvert the higher faculties developed by evolution. The Gita gives the precise theoretical analysis⁴⁴ and it can be shown that many of the characters and episodes in the epic are substantiating case histories. But while Freud accepts this situation as ultimate, post-Freudian psychology (Horney, Sullivan, Maslow, May, Rogers, Frankl, Fromm) sees in it only dangers

that one should be alert to and that can be overcome. MacLean sums up this sober appraisal. "The neocortex with its problem of interpreting the feelings of the old brain might be imagined as being in a position analogous to that of a psychiatrist trying to analyse and explain the emotional feelings of the patient.". This is what Krishna tells Arjuna when the latter asks how one can resist the tremendous pressure exerted by the id-dominated libido.⁴⁶ Man has to act from the level of his higher self which is his highest identity, with that skill in action which can discriminate what is of moment to the self from what is not. The Gita's higher self, thus, is not just a psychiatrist, but a logotherapist.

The concept of Logos essentially means that the world is the Word made flesh or, to use the almost identical Vedic idiom, it is a *Vangmaya*, a meaningful, semantic utterance. Paley saw design in the convergence of myriad causes towards effects that seemed clearly designed. Decried for over a century, this perspective was revived in the early years of this century by Henderson⁴⁸ and systematically developed in recent years by Lovelock and his colleagues in their Gaia Hypothesis⁴⁹ which sees in the ancient Greek reverence for Earth as a divinity an attitude that can be fully endorsed by science if it ceases scoffing and pays attention to the precision with which myriad processes and lines of causality interlock to maintain conditions that sustain life. Vyasa not only stresses the grand, benign ecology of the world-system, as in this rather belated thinking of our times, but proceeds to derive absolute imperatives for man from it. "From food springs all life; food is born from rain; rain emerges from the other-regarding, altruistic action (of the sun that evaporates the sea into clouds)". (Gita, III. 14). Bracket any natural process and one finds that it points towards a teleological goal far beyond its frame. God thunders at Job. "Hath the rain a father" Who has begotten the drops of dew? Declare if thou knowest all". Vyasa wants man to adopt the imperative which deity has freely accepted, which nature too follows. "He who does not work here to help turn the wheel thus revolving leads a sinful life, rioting in the senses; he lives in vain". And he uses a very homely metaphor to clarify the manner in which man should work. "The righteous who eat the remains of the sacrifice (live on what is yielded to all including themselves by their altruistic action for others) are freed from all sin. But sin do they live and feed on who cook only for themselves". The whole philosophy of economic activity which Adam Smith riveted to uninhibited pursuit of self-interest in his *wealth of Nations* (1776) and which seems now to be accepted by the whole world - undeveloped, developing and developed - is challenged and the possibility of a radical reordering of human society affirmed here. A modern

evaluation of the *Mahabharata* should discuss this perspective thoroughly in view of the redemptive promise latent in it and there is a vast contemporary literature, where disenchantment and hope curiously blend, which can be drawn upon for annotation

The plot which is the metaphor of the poet has further subtleties here. The Pandavas would have been fully justified in resignedly accepting the final arbitrament of war when their kingdom was not returned to them after they had completed their terms of exile. But that realm had been enlarged by imperial conquest and it was the show of affluence at the ceremonial of suzerainty (*Rajasuya*) that inflamed Durydhana and led to the dice game and, after a long gestation, to the war. The perceptions of Schumacher -- enough is good; more than enough is evil; small is beautiful can be seen in the epic too. Krishna commits the five Pandavas to accept just a village each in lieu of the realm and it is because even this minimal demand is spurned that war becomes inevitable. Likewise, while Yudhishtira behaves like an absolute monarch during the dice game and regards the state as private property which he can dispose of in any manner he likes, the instruction of Bhishma convinces him that he is only a steward with far more responsibilities than rights and this is the changed political outlook in the reconstruction of the realm after the war. These valuable pointers to the ideal ordering of politics have scarcely ever been noticed by the students of the epic.

VI

Ortega y Gasset⁵⁰ wrote: "We need a comprehensive perspective, foreground and background, not a maimed scenery, a horizon stripped of infinite distances. Without the aid of the cardinal points we are liable to lose our bearings".

This is why Vyasa began with natural history, with inorganic and organic evolution. When we reach the plane of the economic and political ordering of life, we reach the level where evolution heaves itself above natural history to man's history and since man has been given the freedom to renew and enrich his being, endlessly, this is a plane of momentous possibilities. For Buber, "history is the texture of reality, the texture of the divine-human encounter, the texture of revelation and redemption". The contingencies of history are basic to redemption. That is why T.S. Eliot⁵² writes: "A people without history is not redeemed from time, for history is a pattern of timeless moments"; that is,

moments in time endowed with enduring significance by the choice of men in the light of an ultimate concern. The transcendent, though not of time and place, incarnates in moments in time and place. "History is now and England," wrote Eliot: wartime England, with dive-bombers raining death from the sky. This is precisely the lesson that Krishna taught Arjuna: history, action in time that reaches beyond time to realise enduring value, is now and here, in Kurukshetra, the battlefield. Krishna affirms that history is not a casual flux but deity's program and whenever it drifts into anarchy, there is an epiphany of the divine to correct its course.

It is in Berdyaev,⁵³ not in any Indian scholiast or philosopher, that I find perceptions about history that are quite independently arrived at but perfectly echo those of Vyasa. "History in the true sense of the word could neither exist nor be conceived on the isolated basis of divine freedom or divine necessity on the one hand, or again, natural necessity, on the other. The exclusive existence of the divine necessity, the divine principle or the divine freedom would make history begin with the Kingdom of God, and there would therefore be no history. Similarly, the exclusive action of natural necessity would result in a meaningless chain of exterior facts devoid of all inner fulfilment, and all tragic and dramatic design". Vyasa also affirms that man can and should emancipate himself from the automatic modalities of nature which do linger in his biological inheritance. And probably his most important affirmation is that man has been given ontological autonomy, that he is the one responsible for his own redemption or fall; at the end of the discourse, Krishna tells Arjuna that he has to decide by himself his response - whether it be withdrawal or action - to the challenge of history. Berdyaev believes that the historical process has "its origin in the depths of the Absolute, in the divine life itself"; and Vyasa also affirms that there is an epiphany of the divine in the recurring crises of history. If, however, this is the ultimate determinant of events, man's freedom will be illusory or at least pointless. Berdyaev here fully conserves the freedom of man, but it becomes transformed into a great responsibility. "In order to grasp the mystery of the 'historical', I must have a sense of it and history as something that is deeply mine, that is deeply my history, that is deeply my destiny. I must situate myself within historical destiny and it within my own human destiny. The presence of the historical destiny then becomes revealed in the very depths of the human spirit". When Berdyaev affirms that the historical process has "its origins in the depths of the Absolute, in the divine life itself" and also that man should assimilate historical destiny into his own personal destiny, the profound integral meaning

is that history is deity's program which can be fulfilled only by deity and man working together.

Heschel⁵⁴ wrote: "all human history as described in the Bible may be summarised in the phrase: God in search of man". Or better, we should think in terms of a double search, as Rufus Jones⁵⁵ has put it. The Gita⁵⁶ affirms this with a poetic ardour never seen in the philosophies of schoolmen. "I am most dear to the illimined, devoted person and he is dear to me".⁵⁷ And in a passage where every stanza ends with the musical refrain, *me priya*, "dear to me", Krishna describes the characteristics of men who have become the friends of deity by the integrity of their being.

Because man has been given freedom, the fruition of deity's design which is the divinisation of history is possible only with the cooperation of man. This is why Paul regarded himself and his colleagues as "workers together with God".⁵⁸ The last verse of the Gita is not the utterance of either Krishna or Arjuna, but the utterance about them by Sanjaya, the witness and rapporteur of unfolding history. "Wherever there are Krishna, the master of Yoga and Arjuna, the bearer of the bow, there will be prosperity, victory, progress and stabilised justice; such is my conviction". Deity is Yogesvara, master of Yoga which the Gita itself defines as "skill in action [*karmasu kausalam*]" and which traditional commentary has luminously clarified as "skill that discriminates what is of moment to the spirit from what is not [*atmanatma-viveka-kausalam*]" . But deity can only inspire man with the illumination in respect of such action; he does not set right history by direct, intrusive intervention from above. Realising the inspiration on the plane of the incarnate, material world is the responsibility and privilege of man who is *Dhanurdhara*, possessor of the instrumental efficacies of the incarnate world.

History is thus open-ended, Redemption is not going to be a free gift, it has to be earned, it is conditional on man acting with the deepest integrity which is the way of acting as the partner of deity. It is for stressing this momentous conditionality that Vyasa made Krishna refrain from giving any unqualified assurances and made Sanjaya draw the lesson. Further, the final image that abides with us, hauntingly, when we finish the epic, is that of the poet silhouetted against the battlefield where almost the entire chivalric order of Bharata perished. "With uplifted hands I cry aloud, but no one listens to me. 'It is from conduct of ethical integrity that both sustenance and pleasure spring. You who desire them, why is it that you are not devoted to integrity?'"⁶⁰ Vyasa believed in redeemed history, not in an after-life

where compensations would be made for the frustrations of this life. And the message of the epic is that the life of integrity would not be a life of deprivation. It can assure the sustenance for living for everybody and also yield genuine happiness. But, in the Asuric (demoniac) type Vyasa etched in acid the portrait of the man whose idea of the self is essentially that of a self-in-opposition, who embarks on a predatory attack on the whole world. Duryodhana was of that type and his career ended in the blood-sodden sands of Kurukshetra. With the possibility of man himself ending his career on earth cindered in the crater of a nuclear bomb, we have to ask ourselves whether we have turned ourselves into demons.

With the tall, tense figure with upraised arms directly addressing us, Kurukshetra becomes the whole modern world, we, mankind, replace Arjuna, and Krishna steps back to let his creator come forward and fling at us the challenge of a query, a deep-probing, vast-spreading interrogation that takes in all the ends of human existence. Like Arjuna, we have to decide by ourselves how we shall answer that query.

The *Mahabharata* is one of the greatest legacies, not only of India, but also of the world. But it seems to be also the one which is being forgotten with accelerating speed. We need an evaluation that points up its vibrant contemporary reference, brings out clearly its redemptive message. And poor talent has to show the presumption to attempt this since the intellectual elite is preoccupied with the minor poets of other lands.

NOTES

1. E.F. Schumacher, *A Guide to the Perplexed* (Harper & Row, 1977).
2. Theodore Roszak, *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 11, 1977.
3. Krishna Chaitanya, *The Physics and Chemistry of Freedom; The Biology of Freedom; The Psychology of Freedom* (Somaiya, 1972, 1975, 1976); *The Sociology of Freedom; Freedom and Transcendence* (Manohar, 1978, 1982).
4. *Mahabharata*, Adi Parvan, ch. 56.
5. *Mahabharata*, Aswamedhika Parvan, Chs. 16-92.
6. *Mahabharata*, Udyoga Parvan, chs. 42-46.
7. J.A.B. Van Buitenen *The Mahabharata*, Vol. I, pp. xvi, xxiv (Chicago University Press, 1973)
8. Belyi, Cited. Sergei Eisenstein *Film Sense*, pp. 93. Tr. by Jay Leyda (Faber & Faber, n.d.)
9. *Ibid.*

10. Lewis S. Feuer, *New York Times Magazine*, April 24, 1966.
11. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, p. 220 (Chicago University Press, 1951).
12. Robert Bechtold Heilman, *The Great Stage*, p. 11 (Louisiana State University Press, 1948).
13. *Mbh.*, *Stree Parvan*, ch. 12.
14. *Mbh.*, *Vana Parvan*, ch. 313.
15. *Mbh.*, *Sauptika Parvan*, ch. 1.
16. *Gita*, XI. 15-50.
17. K.T. Telang, *The Bhagavadgita with the Sanatsujata and the Arundhati*, p. 13 (Motilal Banarsidas, 1965).
18. B.N. Krishnamurti Sarma "The Grammar of the Gita, A Vindication". *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Vol. XI, No. 3 (1930).
19. S.C. Roy, *The Bhagavadgita and Modern Scholarship*, pp. 80-83 (Luzac, 1941).
20. J.A.B. Van Buitenen, *The Bhagavadgita in the Mahabharata*, Introduction, p. 5 (Chicago University Press, 1981).
21. Abraham H. Maslow, *Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (Viking, 1970).
22. D.D. Kosambi "Social and Economic Aspects of the Bhagavadgita," *Myth and Reality*, pp. 12-37 (Popular Prakashan, 1962).
23. Harry Stochowet, *Mythopoesis* (New York, 1970).
24. George Santayana, *Reason in Art* (New York, 1906).
25. Franklin Edgerton, *The Bhagavad Gita*, Part 2, p. 30 (Harvard University Press, 1952).
26. *Gita*, VI. 47.
27. *Gita*, XVII. 6.
28. *Gita*, XVIII. 42.
29. *Gita*, VII. 2.
30. *Gita*, VI. 8.
31. Huston Smith, "Excluded Knowledge : A Critique of the Modern Western Mind Set". *Teachers College Record*, Columbia University, Feb. 1975.
32. Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*, p. 3 (Vintage Books, 1955).
33. Henry Sturt, *Personal Idealism*, preface (London, 1902).
34. Jean-Paul Sartre, *On Human Freedom*. (Philosophical Library, 1967).
35. R.S. Lillie, *General Physiology and Philosophy of Organism*, p. 76 (Chicago University Press, 1945).
36. Arthur M. Young, *The Reflexive Universe* (Delacorte, 1976).
37. T. Dobzhansky, *Science*, Jan. 7, 1972, p. 49.
38. *Gita*, XIII. 26.
39. *Gita*, VII. 5.
40. R.J.C. Harris (ed), *Biological Organisation at the Cellular and Supracellular level* (Academic Press, 1963).
41. Barbara C. Wright, "The Use of Kinetic Models to analyse Differentiations." *Behavioral Science*, Vol. 15 (1970), p. 44.
42. John Urquhart, "Endocrinology and the System Paradigm." *Ibid*, pp. 57-59.
43. Paul Weiss, "The Living System." A. Koestler and J.R. Smythies (eds). *Beyond Reductionism*, p. 11 (Hutchinson, 1972).

44. *Gita*, III. 34-41.
45. P.D. MacLean, "The Paranoid Streak in Man." A. Koestler and J.R. Smythies op. cit.
46. *Gita*, III. 42-43.
47. William Paley, *Natural Theology* (1802; Library of Liberal Arts, 1963).
48. Lawrence J. Henderson, *The Fitness of the Environment* (New York, 1913).
49. "The Gaia Hypothesis," *The Ecologist*, Vol. 13, Nos. 2 & 3 (1983).
50. Ortega y Gasset, *History as a System* (Norton, 1941).
51. Will Herberg, *The Writings of Martin Buber*, p. 32 (Meridian, 1956).
52. T.S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*: 'Little Gidding', Section V.
53. Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Meaning of History* (Geoffrey Bles, 1936).
54. A.J. Heschel, *God in Search of Man* (Farrar-Strauss, 1955).
55. Rufus Jones, *The Double Search* (Friends United, 1975).
56. *Gita*, VII. 17.
57. *Gita*, XII. 13-20.
58. II Corinthians, 6.1.
59. *Gita*, XVIII. 78.
60. *Mbh.* *Svargarohana Parvan*, Ch. 5.
61. *Gita*, XVI. 7-12.

The World famous Y.M.C.A. hospitality is yours

Y. M. C. A.
INTERNATIONAL HOUSE
(A home away from home)

18, YMCA Road, Bombay Central, Bombay - 400 008.
Gram: "MANHOOD" Phone: 891262/891191/370601
3 Lines

latter's dubious legacy: the Raj with its predatory instincts, its policy of continuous and unabashed aggression against China's frontiers. For the record, it is as old as the birth of the People's Republic in 1949 or more precisely its 'liberation' of Tibet which came within the year. Peking insists that New Delhi's inheritance of ill-gotten gains far outstripped its legitimate rights or claims on the frontier. In other words it must not only live down its somewhat questionable bequest but also disgorge large chunks of territory it now claims so as to come to terms with its powerful neighbour.

Sadly for Peking, the boot is on the other leg. The aggrandisement and resultant expansion of China's Empire to its farthest known territorial limits under its last reigning dynasty, the Ch'ing [1648-1912], is universally acknowledged. In our immediate neighbourhood, Tibet and Sinkiang apart, the Manchu writ was said to run over Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim as well as Burma and the states of Indo-China. For sure, imperialism does not always travel aboard men-of-war across the high seas.

Within the limited perspective of our land frontiers, the story is at once fascinating as well as revealing. Both in the north-east in the case of the much-maligned McMahon Line¹ and the western sector where Ladakh's, and Kashmir's, boundaries were intimately involved, the British bent over backwards to be unusually generous. And for the most part, at India's expense! In Europe, the accepted norm is that the perfidious Albion fights to the last of his Allies' soldiers - and their equipment. In our case, no sacrifice, territorial or otherwise, was considered too great to subserve passing imperial exigencies. The Chinese pocketed most of the gains - at our expense!

II

The evolution of the eastern frontier and the McMahon Line are relatively better known. It would suffice, therefore, to refer to it somewhat briefly. One interesting facet of this frontier has been that as late as 1910-11, there was no Chinese presence here. Later, in 1913-14, when the tri-partite talks were held in Simla-Delhi, the British made signal, and indeed significant, territorial concessions to meet Tibetan religious susceptibilities. Thus Sir Henry McMahon, the British Plenipotentiary, explaining the delineation - *not* demarcation - of the India-Tibet boundary underlined that it followed:

except where it crosses the valleys of the Taron, Lohit, Tsangpo, Subansiri and Njamjang rivers for a short distance near Tsari, the northern watershed of the Irrawaddy and the Brahmaputra rivers.

Near Tsari, it left the watershed so as to include in Tibet the course of the sacred pilgrimage route known as Tsari Nyingpa ['old Tsari'] which is used every year in large numbers by Tibetans ... [also] the village of Migyitun to which the Tibetans attach considerable importance.

As for Tso Karpo and Tsari Sarpa [mentioned in his note to the Lonchen]

it is probable that both places are either on the main watershed which forms the boundary or to the north of it, but should they be found to be within a day's march on our side of the boundary as now shown, it has been agreed that the boundary line will be altered so as to include them in Tibet. No difficulty should be found in doing this because our evidence tends to prove that there is a wide continuous tract of uninhabited country along the south side of the main watershed.²

In the quarter century that elapsed after it had been drawn and for a variety of reasons into which it is not necessary to go here, the McMahon Line remained confined to the archival records in New Delhi. Worse, when 'rediscovered' in 1936, India developed cold feet on the question of making it effective on the ground. Assam's then Governor, Sir Henry Twynam, was less than enthusiastic. Occupying the Tawang tract in the extreme west of what is now Arunachal Pradesh, he argued, would be tantamount to the pursuit of a 'forward' policy which would 'inevitably alienate' Lhasa 'without any particular advantage' to New Delhi. Besides Tawang had 'always been oriented towards Tibet ethnographically, politically and in religion.'³

The interesting point about Twynam's reasoning was not that he made a strong case of it but that New Delhi itself was not unimpressed. Indeed the then Governor General, Lord Linlithgow, confided in the Secretary of State that:

there is much to be said for his [Twynam's] proposal both on general and financial grounds particularly as he thinks that a boundary on the Se La would not only cost about one-fourth of the expenditure estimated to be necessary if we were to decide eventually to go right up to the McMahon Line and include Tawang-
...⁴.

which came into being as a separate political entity in the wake of the first Anglow-Sikh war, that was involved. Its frontiers touched Tibet and China's far flung dominion in Kashgar and Yarkand. The British as suzerains of the Dogra ruler were concerned, a major attraction being the prospect of opening the heart of Asia to their commerce. In the context of our limited purview, a long and fairly complicated story of the evolution of Ladakh's and to an extent Kashmir's northern frontier, needs emphasis on two points alone. One, an initial anxiety to define the limits of the Maharaja's territory [and open it to trade]. Two, in so far as the task turned out to be much more complex than they had imagined, a willingness to barter away such territorial claims as appeared to be inconvenient.

To begin with the beginning, hardly had the ink dried on their treaty with Maharaja Gulab Singh than the British decided to lay down the exact limits of his territory. They appointed Alexander Cunningham and P.A. Vans Agnew as Boundary Commissioners, charged with the task of demarcating a boundary between the British territory of Lahaul and Spiti on the south and Gulab Singh's Ladakh on the north; besides, a boundary between Ladakh in the west and Tibet on the east. In a letter to the 'Vizir of Lhasa - Gartope' as early as August 4, 1846, the Indian Governor General spelt out what he was about:

As it is now deemed expedient to settle definitely the boundaries to the eastward of the countries thus ceded to His Highness Maharajah Goolab Singh, I have now determined to depute two of my confidential officers... in order that they in conjunction with the confidential agents of HH GS should lay down the boundary between the territories of the British Government and those of its dependents and the territories of Mah GS.

As it is understood that the territories belonging to the great Empire of China and which are under Your Excellency's Government adjoin those of the British Government and of the Mah GS and with a due regard to the friendly alliance now subsisting between the British Government and the Emperor of China, I now think it necessary to inform Your Excellency of the deputation of my officers and of the objects they have in view.

I have to express my hope that YE will see fitting (sic) to depute confidential agents to point out to

my officers the exact limits of the Chinese frontiers in order that no interference be exercised with the territories of your high and esteemed government ...

It is not the desire of the British Government to intrude into the China territory, or to ask for admittance except to such marts as are open to general traders of other countries or to secure exclusive privileges for its subjects. ... ¹⁰

Determined that his efforts did not go astray, the GG wrote to sir John Davis, British Imperial Commissioner in Hong Kong, who under the terms of the Treaty of Nanking (1842) was authorised to communicate on matters of state with his Imperial Chinese counterpart stationed at Canton:

As I am led to understand that Thibet is immediately under the authority of the Imperial court at Peking I have to request that YE will be pleased to communicate the contents of the present correspondence to the officers of HIM, and that you will take such measures as to you may appear best calculated for securing the co-operation of the Chinese authorities and more particularly the objects of the Commission so far as they are connected with the countries subject to the Empire of China. ¹¹

Davis was no less explicit in his letter to His Excellency Keying, High Imperial Commissioner:

Since the British territory and also the hilly country of Cashmere belonging to a dependent ally of Great Britain are now conterminous with that of China it becomes extremely desirable to cultivate a friendly and beneficial intercourse in order that troubles and misunderstandings may be effectually prevented. As GB has supreme power in India she can as the friend and ally of China prevent the dependent states of China as well as her own subjects from transgressing the laws of mutual friendship. But in order to do this effectually it becomes necessary to ascertain the exact boundaries which divide the Thibetain territory from that pertaining to GB and from that also which has been conferred on Goolab Singh. This Prince being dependent on GB can be consequently controlled by the British Government provided that the boundaries

are ascertained. But without such precaution, it will be impossible to prevent serious disputes and misunderstandings.

The Right Hon'ble the Governor General perceiving this and desirous to preserve external peace and amity has sent commissioners to the Viceroy of Thibet at Lhasa requesting that HE will appoint proper officer to settle the exact boundaries of the Chinese territory bordering not only at the British possessions but also on those which have been conferred on GS who will thus be obliged to respect the Chinese frontier...¹²

Outlining his strategy in handling the hyper-sensitive Chinese, Davis noted:

I deem it necessary to avoid awakening the Chinese jealousy of encroachment at the same time that I appealed to its prevailing desire for security and peace. The hint to the contingency necessary of communicating directly with Peking is calculated to promote exertions of the Chinese Minister at Canton.

I conceive Your Lordship's objects in the mission to the Viceroy of Tibet to be twofold. First the exact ascertainment and settlement of the mutual frontiers and secondly, the establishment of commercial intercourse with the Chinese territory on an equal footing with the neighbouring states.¹³

The British Envoy's first communication to the Imperial Chinese Commissioner at Canton was sent on November 18 (1846) in which he pleaded inter alia how 'extremely desirable' it was 'to cultivate a friendly and beneficial intercourse' and how 'necessary to ascertain the exact boundaries' that divided Tibet from British as well as GS's dominions.

The Chinese reply of January 13 [received three days later] was argumentative at best. It cited the 1842 Treaty of Maritime Commerce to underline that there was in fact no provision for trade between India and Tibet. As for the frontiers:

I beg to remark that the border of the territories have been sufficiently and distinctly fixed, and that it will be best to adhere to this ancient arrangement and it will prove far more convenient to abstain from additional measures for fixing these.¹⁴

The British Envoy wrote back post-haste to clear up what he perceived now threatened to upset his apple cart:

With regard to the frontiers, it surely was not to affix any new boundaries but merely to ascertain the old ones that commissioners were sent to Lhasa. The Governor General expressly declared his wish that the 'exact limits of the Thibetain frontier may be pointed out with the view of preventing any encroachment'. The Viceroy of Lhasa will doubtless be more willing to make known the ancient limits than to incur the chances of future misunderstanding by leaving the point uncertain. If the British government in India were not to be informed of the ancient boundaries how would it be possible to prevent mistakes and encroachment?¹⁵

In reply, the Chinese Commissioner now perceptibly shifted his ground. He was - was he not? - a little too far away to decide for Lhasa:

It is, however, difficult to find out what was the state of the former commerce and what were the conditions of these regions as well as the nature of their inhabitants.

I... the great minister is not a high officer of Thibet. The country is moreover distant and our commissioner at Thibet therefore who is on the spot may deliberate and manage this affair and then memorialize the Emperor on the subject. I the great Minister will also faithfully transmit to my Sovereign the whole tenor of the last despatch of the Hon'ble Envoy.¹⁶

Meanwhile the GG in India was getting irked by delays which he had not anticipated. As his first two-man mission drew a blank,¹⁷ he decided to despatch another. Davis accordingly wrote to inform his counterpart that the Indian potentate

required me to inform YE again that Cashmere having become a dependent territory of Great Britain, Commissioners three in number have been appointed to proceed to the frontier and determine the old boundaries between that country and Thibet. He therefore desires that commissioners should be appointed by the Sovereign of your Honourable nation in order that a mutual good understanding may for ever be preserved.¹⁸

Keying's rejoinder was brief and to the point. He washed his hands clean off the entire affair:

You [Davis] then stated that it was the 'wish to ascertain the ancient boundaries, and not to fix new ones. Cashmere having always carried on commercial intercourse with Thibet, nothing new is proposed in the continuance of this trade' etc.

I, the Government Minister forwarded a proper statement of these matters to the Throne, and received the Imperial reply that the Resident Government Minister in Thibet having been made acquainted with it, had been commanded to examine into this affair and manage accordingly; as is on record.

Your Honourable country has now deputed officers to proceed to those regions. As to the way in which the objects ought to be carried out, the Resident Great Minister in Thibet will satisfactorily and properly manage everything.¹⁹

On January 3, 1848, Davis reminded his Chinese counterpart of the urgency of the matter:

It is His Lordship's wish to ascertain these boundaries by Commissioners mutually appointed by the two Governments. Having already commissioned officers on the part of the British Government for this purpose and no officers having been deputed by the Chinese government, it will be plain that everything has been done on the part of the Right Hon'ble the Governor General to prevent troubles on the border, and it is desirable that Chinese Commissioners be immediately deputed.²⁰

Keying repudiated the charge of prevarication much less delay on China's part. Writing to the British Envoy four days later:

I subsequently perused a memorial from our Minister in Thibet in which he stated that at the commencement of the summer, he was not yet aware of the arrival of the Commissioners of your Hon'ble country.²¹

Nor were the Chinese the only offenders. Maharaja G.S. too was dragging his feet. Writing from Leh on October 20 (1847) Cunningham confessed to a feeling of considerable disappointment:

In my letter No.3 of the 15th September I mentioned that both of the Agents appointed by Mah G.S. had failed to meet the Commissioner at Hanle although there was ample time for both of them to have been there at the date specified. Coupling their absence on the frontier this year with the non-attendance of any duly appointed Agent last season when Mr. Agnew and myself were in Ladakh, I am persuaded to believe that the absence of the Mah's Commissioners on the frontier is not the result of accident but of a designed plan to delay, as long as possible, if not absolutely to thwart altogether, the final settlement of the boundary...

It was clear beyond words

either that the Maharaja himself is unwilling to have his eastern boundary finally determined or that the Governor of Ladakh [anxious that his proceedings on the frontier should not be too narrowly scrutinised] was designedly absent in defiance of the orders of his master.

Nor was this difficult to understand. For the Governor

may feel confident that his absence might be secretly approved by the Maharaja himself although it might be openly disavowed by him.²²

Their protestations to the contrary notwithstanding, the studied non-cooperation of the Son of Heaven no less than that of Maharaja Gulab Singh was an object lesson. The Chinese, thanks to mounting pressures by western nations on their coastal provinces and the resultant humiliations to which they were now a prey, refused to have any truck with the British on their land frontiers. Gulab Singh had his own reasons to be suspicious of British designs and well he might.

Despite these well-nigh fatal constraints, the two boundary commissions succeeded in doing an excellent job of work. Their learned reports which later took the form of books offered invaluable data for the geographer, the anthropologist, the historian, and even the layman. It was to form the basis of that corpus of first-hand knowledge of the Ladakh frontier which proved most useful in all subsequent explorations and boundary making on this part of the frontier.²³ Thus Lt. Strachey's map [1848] showed

to be included subsequently in the quarter-inch Atlas sheets. Interestingly Aksai Chin, Linqzitang and Changchenmo valleys are shown here as integral parts of Ladakh.

The Kashmir boundary alignment mapped out by Johnson has been dubbed as 'incredibly inaccurate' and 'patently absurd'. Yet Johnson, described as 'the most indefatigable of observers' and 'a brilliant triangulator, impervious to hardship and danger' was not alone.²⁷ His associate, as noticed earlier, was none other than Godwin-Austen. A later surveyor who did yeoman's work in etching out the state's physical contours, Fredric Drew, while bemoaning the fact that the 'the same degree of detail' as characterises other survey maps was missing in Johnson's work and for good reason, conceded without demur that it had 'been the foundation of every map of the region constructed since'.²⁸

V

Meanwhile two dangers appeared on the horizon. At the outset there was the threat, actual, or potential, from Czarist Russia: the Great Game posed problems, both strategic and, even more dangerously, psychologically. Doubts also began to be raised about the bonafides of Kashmir's rulers. Thus Forsyth's 1847 report was eloquent:

On the military question whether Russia would ever think of sending a force down by Khokad, or Kashgar, and the Pamir, and direct to the Indus, I do not offer an opinion; but that the road is far easier than was supposed, and that it presents none of the obstacles which would render the Karakoram route next to impossible. Colonel Gordon's report shows ... The conquest of Khiva and the rapid steady approach of Russia to the Oxus causes the natives of Afghanistan, and of the Punjab too... great anxiety. The general idea is that Russia is the rising power, that she is destined to advance still further, that England is afraid of her, and will do nothing to oppose her progress, or to help those who would preserve themselves from being swallowed up...

An urgent change of stance was called for :

I think we ought to make our influence paramount in the direction of Badakshan and Balkh. I would begin

by establishing an agent at Gilgit: he would be able to gain correct information of countries which at present are a sealed book to us ... Such a movement ... would strengthen the hands of our Agent at Kashgar and would be an indication to people of energy and life ...

Forsyth saw doom writ large, should his advice go unheeded:

If we persist in shutting our eyes to Russia's advances, we must at all events prepare ourselves for internal trouble... and the whole of my experience with people on the frontier and across it forbids my indulging in a feeling of security.²⁹

Meanwhile Ney Elias who, in 1868, had led an expedition to examine the channels of the Hwang-ho in China and four years later traversed the Gobi desert for nearly 5,000 miles joined the Indian government. He now travelled over the Karakoram to Yarkand and suggested 'the definite determination of Ladakh's border with Eastern Turkistan'. Inter alia, he expressed the view that the Maharaja of Kashmir wind up his post of Shahidulla. True that prior to the retreat of the Chinese from Eastern Turkistan [1864], the place

was held by a small body of Kashmiri troops, and that the border was on the main line of road to Yarkand was considered to be marked by the fort itself ...

And even though he had never seen it, he understood

that it was never a position of any strength, and that it is now in such a state of disrepair that it may be considered entirely useless from the point of view of defence.

The conclusion was unmistakable

under these circumstances, I see no advantage in the Maharaja re-occupying Shahidulla either as a defensive post or as a demarcation of the border...

Whatever the merits or otherwise of the sell-away of Shahidulla proposed by Elias, a very interesting point was made regarding the demarcation of Ladakh's boundary with Eastern Turkistan:

In such a region of snowy mountains and glaciers it

would neither be practicable nor necessary to survey the whole boundary line for demarcation, but merely that marks should be set up at a few points such as those where it is crossed by the heads of inhabited valleys ...³⁰

Elias touched on another important aspect, namely the urgency of a regular communication between Ladakh and Kashmir which has a striking contemporary relevance. It must, he wrote, be borne in mind that:

it often happens that the road across the Zogi-la is closed in winter, while the passes from the side of Turkistan are frequently open, and that thus Ladakh is accessible from the side of danger but not from that of succour. It would probably be of advantage therefore to improve the road from Kashmir to Ladakh to such an extent that in all but the depth of winter it should not be entirely closed to traffic ...³¹

The officer on special duty in Kashmir who scrutinized Elias's proposal for transmission to the Supreme Government did not view the matter as 'one of moment'. More, he held that the

region between say the head of the Nubra valley and the post of Shahidulla is a kind of *no man's land*, only frequented by passing traders, peopled by the skeletons of men and horses, and as real a boundary between the Indian Empire and its northern neighbours as would be a vast and waterless desert.

Nor did he see any urgency in marking a boundary

Why should we dispel such innocent imaginings [on the part of the Dogras] and seek to demarcate by pillars or piles of stones a line which nature has already defined? It would be time enough to do so when the first symptom of a tendency to encroach becomes apparent ...³²

The annotation, by the Foreign Secretary [A.C. Lyall] which the Governor General [Lytton] endorsed without qualification makes interesting readings:

These papers refer to the question of demarcating and strengthening the frontier of Kashmir towards

Kashgar, and beyond the Karakoram. I think the matter may stand over - if Kashmir is threatened at all, it will be from the north-west.³³

At the same time the question need not be raised with Peking for

It might be difficult to induce the Chinese to forego any rights there that they have already assumed.

Not long after Elias had ruled out S. for Kashmir, Captain H. Ramsay, then British Joint Commissioner at Leh [Ladakh], in a forceful memorandum pleaded to the contrary:

It was to our interest [he underlined] that this frontier should be now demarcated ... it should if possible be placed as far north as Shahidulla ...³⁴

Commending Ramsay's Memorandum, the Resident in Kashmir strongly urged that the

adjustment of the whole northern and north-western frontier of Kashmir should not be further postponed ... [that it was] undesirable longer to defer the settlement of this boundary.³⁵

Not that it availed. For after due deliberation at the highest levels of governments, Ramsay's proposal, as in an earlier [February, 1888] instance, 'was allowed to drop'.³⁶ Durand recorded the epitaph: "No present orders" and undertook to speak to Col. Nisbet.³⁷

VI

Meanwhile as the war of nerves with the Russians heated up, Francis Younghusband was pressed into service to explore 'what practicable routes' might lead across the main Karakoram or Mustagh range. Additionally, he was to report on the general strategical aspect of this region with a view to possible offensive operations by an enemy advancing from the north.

Briefly, his conclusions were that

from the Karakoram pass to the Shahidulla pass there is an immense glacier region, and though, in former-

times routes led across the range... these are quite impracticable for all military purposes. Was of these glaciers ... three routes lead into the valley of the Hunza river ... [which] may be considered passable between from the middle of May to the middle or end of November. But though the main range is so easy to cross, the country on the southern side is so difficult... that an invading force would find it nearly impossible to force its way through, if opposed.

As to a hostile Russian demonstration towards Ladakh

It is somewhat easier than had been thought to bring a small force down to the Karakoram pass, for a route leads from the Russian frontier ... to the valley of the Yarkand river, up which the road leads straight to the Karakoram pass, and from there Leh may be reached in twelve marches ...

It follows, Y. concluded, that the

two strategical points to be guarded are Gilgit and Leh, of which the former is by far the most important; and between these two points there is no possibility of a force penetrating from the north.

The re-establishment of the Agency at Gilgit coupled with other political-cum-military measures would help secure the position there but Leh presented problems. Nonetheless the

Kirghiz at Shahidulla ... [were] very ready and willing to help us ... their wish to be taken under our control and to have a representative of the British stationed at S. If this could be carried out and the Kirghiz supplied with a hundred Snider rifles ... [it would constitute a] check to the Russians, a protection to our trade and a considerable gain to our prestige ...

Commending Y's reports for favourable consideration Col. Nisbet, the British Resident in Kashmir, underlined that

If the Afghans and Chinese could be prevailed on to define their respective boundaries on that at present debatable ground of the Pamirs below the Tuyuk-su Pass ... any aggressive attempt of Russia would receive a most important check. Again the Kirghiz of those parts would understand whom to pay allegiance to

... whether to Afghans or Chinese ...³⁹

In a detailed memorandum submitted to government Young-husband reverted to Kashmir's frontiers and recalled that in 1888 when the Kanjutis [from Hunza] raided upon S and the Kirghiz asked the Chinese for assistance, the latter refused: for 'so long they lived beyond the frontier post they must not expect protection'. No wonder

The Kirghiz accordingly came to us for aid ... I gave them money to repair the small fort at S. The Chinese at first appeared to raise no objections to this ... subsequently, however, the Russian Captain Gromchevsky appeared upon the scene, and presumably at Russian instigation the Chinese have made arrangements for occupying S. and making it a frontier post.

The crucial issue was 'whether we should assert what claims we have to S. and force the Chinese to retire? And even though Government had 'preferable claims to the locality' there were other constraints.

We have to take into consideration the probability of the Russians eventually occupying ... Chinese Turk-estan [and invading Kashmir].

He was conscious of acute difference of opinion

Captain Ramsay ... has pointed out the advantage of keeping the Russians as far as possible ... Colonel Bell who passed through S on his way from Yarkand in 1887, was of the same opinion... Ney Elias, however, was of the opinion that S. was too far from our base to be held effectively ... it is 240 miles from Leh, and 170 miles from the furthest village in Ladakh ...

Taking 'everything' into consideration

the advantage and disadvantages of pressing our claim upon S. would seem to be evenly balanced. On the one hand by holding the place we should, in the event of a Russian occupation of Eastern Turkestan, keep our enemies well at a distance from Leh in peace time; and the possession of S would afford protection to our trade route. But on the other hand we should not be able to hold the place against a Russian invasion ... we should also by now occupying S give greater

offence to the Chinese than is perhaps justified by the corresponding advantage to be gained.

A considerable gain had already been registered: that of preventing the Russians from staking a claim to S and thereby 'working a wedge' between British territory and Chinese Turkestan:

The question as to whom S should belong is now between us and China, and the Russians can never get a claim to it till they have had a war with China and taken Kashgar and Yarkand.

Important though S. was much more so was 'a strip of country', the western end of Raskam, which lay 'dangerously close' to our northern frontier. It was imperative that the Russians should be prevented from 'getting a footing there'

This could best be done by closing together the Afghan and Chinese boundaries on the Pamirs, and thus shut out Russia from a possibility of pushing down to Raskam, till she has conquered the Chinese Turkestan, in which case the comparative value of Raskam would be lost.

Should this [viz. closing of Afghan-Chinese boundaries on the Pamirs] prove impossible

We must either take our frontier up to the Kuen-Lun mountains to include Raskam or else we must induce the Chinese [to provoke them as we have at Shahidulla] to assume an efficient control over that country.

Between the two, pushing Chinese claims 'would seem to be preferable'

for while it would equally effect the object in view, there would seem to be no disadvantage in such a course; it might be said indeed that Russia will one day occupy Chinese Turkestan, and would therefore, in any case gain the Pamirs, but in such a case that belt of country would have lost its present value.

That eventuality, however, was not likely for a long time to come

In the meanwhile therefore we should use China as a buffer state in these parts with the object of keeping

the Russians off our Northern frontier, and should use every endeavour to make her boundaries meet⁴⁰ with those of our other buffer state Afghanistan.

VII

Government lost no time in giving shape and form to Young-husband's recommendations. The Governor-General, Lord Lansdowne wrote post-haste to the British envoy in Peking:

The neighbourhood of S seems to have been at sometime in the hands of the Maharaja of Kashmir who had built a fort there and occupied it for a while. We have since learnt that the Chinese have occupied the place, and we are quite ready to acquiesce in their so doing. We have no desire ourselves to advance beyond the Karakoram range, but we have on the other hand, a very great objection to allowing this strip of 'no man's land' to remain unclaimed and open to Russian incursions. Under these circumstances we think that the Chinese should be encouraged to assert their authority over the tract in question and up to the limits of Afghan territory we should like to see the frontiers of Chinese Turkestan conterminous with those of Afghanistan and Kashmir, and the Chinese authority asserted upto the northern slopes of the Karakoram range...

As if the above was not plain enough, the G.G. further underscored:

I do not think we can over-estimate the importance of leading the Chinese to regard us as having interests identical with theirs in Central Asia and as liable to danger from the same source ...⁴¹

Dilating on the above theme India's formal despatch to the Secretary of State underlined:

if the Chinese can be induced to definitely assert their authority in these regions ..the Russians will be prevented from encroaching towards our Northern frontiers except at the risk of complications with a neighbour at whose pertinacity in upholding her territorial rights they have already had experience

in the Kuldja dispute.⁴²

Chinese notions of their claims to the Pamirs are well brought out in the British envoy's letter to the Viceroy regarding the issue of a Peking passport for Younghusband required for his [Pamir] explorations:

where that [viz. Chinese] jurisdiction ends is a matter to be dealt with by the Imperial authorities on the spot, and it is on this account that I purposely avoided in my application any allusion to the Pamir regions. I doubt whether there exists a Chinese expression for the Great Pamir, but at all events I should not have felt justified in asserting that this district or any part of it belonged to China... The general term of 'Border Regions to the west and south-west of Kashmir and Yarkand' which I adopted in my note to the Chinese Government will be amply sufficient for all practical purposes ...⁴³

VIII

It is interesting that among the Instructions' given Y on his deputation to Chinese Turkestan in 1890 were:

You should first proceed by Leh to Shahidulla and obtain precise information regarding the reported Chinese occupation of that place.

You should then proceed to the Pamir region, and you should thoroughly examine, in communication as far as possible with the Chinese officials, all the country upto the Afghan and Russian frontier, with a view to ascertaining the exact limits of Chinese authority... you should endeavour to impress upon the Chinese officials the necessity of strengthening and asserting their occupation, so that if possible, there may be no grounds for alleging that any unclaimed strip intervenes between Afghan and Chinese territories.

You should ... take opportunities of explaining to them [viz. the Chinese] our common interests in those regions and the friendly intentions of the Government of India.⁴⁴

— Writing to their Resident in Kashmir on the receipt of Y's letter from Leh, the Foreign Secretary made no secret of his satisfaction that the Chinese

are taking steps in the required direction on the Kashmir border. If the question comes up, please let the Kashmir durbar see that you understand the Indus watershed to be their boundary; and please instruct the Joint Commissioners at Leh in the same sense.⁴⁵

In a letter to Government date-lined Shahidulla, Y. explained what its significance was:

[Situating between the Kuenlun mountains and the Karakoram range, and near the southern foot of the former] it is neither a town, nor a village, nor even a hamlet, but merely a patch of grass and jungle near which a few tents of the Karakash or Sarakiya Kirghiz are usually to be seen, and where caravans travelling between Yarkand and India generally make a halt; and its only importance is due to its position at the northern edge of a barren stretch of mountainous country where for 170 miles grass and fuel are almost unknown.

The Kirghiz who inhabit S. ... number some 40 tents, or about 120 men, besides women and children. They have always paid taxes and, in a loose way, been tributary to the rulers of Yarkand, but the Chinese upto last year had never either in their former or present occupation of Turkistan, shown any decided authority over them or sent any official beyond the Kuenlun mountains...

Albeit Y. noted

No Chinese official is at present stationed at S. and the fort is not occupied by Chinese soldiers, it is clear that the Chinese have now definitely asserted their authority over this place and the valley of the Karakash river ... that they consider all the territory upto the great watershed of the Karakoram mountains to belong to China they built a fort at Suget in account of its being nearest to the point to the Karakoram range at which grass and fuel were obtained.

More

We have now the satisfaction of seeing this tract claimed by a friendly power ... 46

Y's satisfaction at Chinese action was unqualified. It shows, he noted

that, in this quarter at any rate, their views are identical with those of the Government of India; and whereas upto last year we had on our northern frontier a stretch of no man's land, we have now the satisfaction of seeing this tract claimed by a friendly power, and the option is therefore left us of selecting, for the northern frontier of Kashmir, a well defined and easily recognized natural boundary which even in the event of Chinese Turkistan falling into the hands of an unfriendly power, is probably the best that could be chosen, and is one indeed which affords us an almost impregnable line of defence. 47

Before long Y. visited Kashgar and after a formal exchange of visits with the Amban had a long interview with him. In a report to his political superiors he showed himself to be more than satisfied:

The most important point about it is that I got from the Amban a distinct statement of what he considered the southern frontier of this province. This he said was the Indus watershed - the Karakoram range.

Nor was that all

It is quite clear that the Chinese mean to assert their authority effectively in that direction, for soldiers are constantly passing through on their way to Shahidulla, and great preparations are going forward for the construction of a fort at Suget.

On the Pamirs too, the Chinese claim line seemed 'somewhat further west' and

extends at varying distances down the valleys flowing westward into the Panja branch of the Oxus... and very considerably west of where we had considered the boundary to be ... 48

The interview with the Chinese Amban at Yarkand was

quite revealing. Y had shown the Amban a map of Kashmir in which the Karakoram and Kilian passes were marked. He stated the [Indian] Viceroy's opinion that

the best boundary between Kashmir and Yarkand was that formed by the watershed of the Karakoram range.

But last year the G.G.

had been led to believe that the Chinese considered their frontier extending only as far as the Kilian pass ... This being an unsatisfactory state of affairs... His Excellency was contemplating extending the Indian frontier to the Kilian Pass, and annex all the country situated between it and the watershed. He had since, however, learned that the Chinese were undertaking the protection of the trade route, and if he found this to be really the case, he would be unwilling to extend the frontier beyond the Karakoram range.

The Amban fell into the trap so cleverly laid for him:

P' an Ta-jen, in reply, stated the Chinese had ever considered the watershed, which he defined as a natural [or literally in Chinese] a Heaven-made boundary, to be the frontier between Kashmir and Yarkand, and that the Chinese were prepared to protect the trade route as far as that range.

On the Pamirs too, the Amban was forthcoming for Y was informed

that Sarikol [which he said extended upto the Mintaka pass] was under him, and the Pamira under the Taotai of Kashgar. 49

An interesting observation made by Elias on YOUNG's husband's report was

that no part of the proposed Chinese boundary would require demarcation by us. All our policy requires is a one-sided assertion of dominion by China - not an agreed frontier between China and Afghanistan, and the less our Government mix themselves up in any measures of delimitation, the less likely they are to arouse either Russian or Afghan jealousy. 50

Lansdowne heavily underscored what Elias had made out:

I should like to accentuate what has been well said to (sic) Mr. Ney Elias ... we do not want accurate demarcation or a frontier agreement. We do want to encourage Chinese occupation up to Afghan and Russian limits. 51

Even as Younghusband explored hitherto unknown regions and wrote his exhaustive memoranda and reports while his political masters mapped out their strategies on the roof of the world, the youthful Maharaja of Kashmir and his Councillors were, not without reason, getting a little exercised over their frontier with China's "New Dominion". In a memorandum of March 16 [1892], the Maharaja adduced convincing evidence:

In 1947 [1890-91] it was known from the reports submitted ... that by the assistance of Turdikol a fort was constructed at Shahidulla Khaja. But that the Chinese receiving information about it knocked down the fort and arresting Turdikol carried him to Yarkand, where he is still under confinement.

On the other side of the State frontier from S.K.

at a distance of three kms [the Chinese] have erected a small fort, in which some Kirghiz men and two or three Chinese officials remain as a chauki [guard].

Among the evidence adduced was that about 30 years ago a person named Ahmed, accompanied by 38 men, had been sent to SK, who on his arrival 'erected some buildings there as cantonment'. After a stay of six months he had returned. Later when Douglas Forsyth went on his mission to Yarkand, the Kashmir authorities 'made arrangements for the supply of provision etc. up to' SK.

Further, the memorandum underlined, in 1890-91.

a Russian officer had come to visit Kashmir from Russia, via Yarkand, and a Dastedar of the State Military Department with a number of irregular sepoys was sent to SK with a letter from the Resident to disallow the above Russian from coming to this side. And as the Russian Officer had got no passport with him he went back.

In conclusion, the memorandum affirmed

Under the above mentioned circumstances and reasons SK is considered the State frontier. 52

Nothing however, was of avail. The British as should be evident, had already made up their mind and no reasoning to the contrary would help. Peremptorily, the resident informed the State Council

that I do not think I can recommend that the question of the occupation of SK by the Kashmir Darbar should be opened.

As if that were not enough, he made it plain that as he understood it

Both SK and Suget are situated in a district inhabited by Kirghiz, who have for many years paid tribute to China, and the water of which flows into Yarkand territory. 53

Thus were washed out, without much ceremony, the 'Dogras' long-standing claims to their frontier—the posts, and the country being gifted away to the Raj's Chinese neighbours.

NOTES

1. In his letter of January 23, 1959 to Prime Minister Nehru, Chou En-Lai, his Chinese counter-part, referred to the McMahon Line as 'a product of the British Policy of aggression against the Tibet region of China' which had 'aroused the great indignation of the Chinese people'. **White Paper I**, New Delhi, 1959, pp. 52-4. Twenty-four years later at their second round of India-China talks in New Delhi in May 1982, Fu Hao, Leader of the Chinese delegation, referred to the McMahon Line as having been 'delineated by the British Imperialists.'
2. These excerpts are from McMahon's memorandum to the Secretary of State, Proc., 231 (a), in **Foreign Department**, Secret F. October, 1914, Nos. 134-396.
3. Twynham to Linlithgow, March 17, 1939 in **IOR**, L/P&S/12/36/23 Part I.
4. Viceroy to Secretary of State, August 24, 1939, in **IOR**, L/P&S/12/36/29.

Lansdowne heavily underscored what Elias had made

I should like to accentuate what has been well said to (sic) Mr. Ney Elias ... we do not want accurate demarcation or a frontier agreement. We do want to encourage Chinese occupation up to Afghan and Russian limits. 51

Even as Younghusband explored hitherto unknown regions and wrote his exhaustive memoranda and reports while his political masters mapped out their strategies on the roof of the world, the youthful Maharaja of Kashmir and his Councillors were, without reason, getting a little exercised over their frontier with China's "New Dominion". In a memorandum of March 1892 [1892], the Maharaja adduced convincing evidence:

In 1947 [1890-91] it was known from the reports submitted ... that by the assistance of Turdikol a fort was constructed at Shahidulla Khaja. But that the Chinese were receiving information about it knocked down the fort and arresting Turdikol carried him to Yarkand, where he is still under confinement.

On the other side of the State frontier from S.K.

at a distance of three kms [the Chinese] have erected a small fort, in which some Kirghiz men and two or three Chinese officials remain as a chauki [guard].

Among the evidence adduced was that about 30 years ago a person named Ahmed, accompanied by 38 men, had been sent to SK, who on his arrival 'erected some buildings there as cantonment'. After a stay of six months he had returned. Later when Douglas Forsyth went on his mission to Yarkand, the Kashmir authorities 'made arrangements for the supply of provision etc. up to' SK.

Further, the memorandum underlined, in 1890-91.

a Russian officer had come to visit Kashmir from Russia, via Yarkand, and a Dastedar of the State Military Department with a number of irregular sepoys was sent to SK with a letter from the Resident to disallow the above Russian from coming to this side. And as the Russian Officer had got no passport with him he went back.

In conclusion, the memorandum affirmed

Under the above mentioned circumstances and reasons SK is considered the State frontier. 52

Nothing however, was of avail. The British as should be evident, had already made up their mind and no reasoning to the contrary would help. Peremptorily, the resident informed the State Council

that I do not think I can recommend that the question of the occupation of SK by the Kashmir Darbar should be opened.

As if that were not enough, he made it plain that as he understood it

Both SK and Suget are situated in a district inhabited by Kirghiz, who have for many years paid tribute to China, and the water of which flows into Yarkand territory. 53

Thus were washed out, without much ceremony, the 'Dogras' long-standing claims to their frontier—the posts, and the country being gifted away to the Raj's Chinese neighbours.

NOTES

In his letter of January 23, 1959 to Prime Minister Nehru, Chou En-Lai, his Chinese counter-part, referred to the McMahon Line as 'a product of the British Policy of aggression against the Tibet region of China' which had 'aroused the great indignation of the Chinese people'. **White Paper I**, New Delhi, 1959, pp. 52-4. Twenty-four years later at their second round of India-China talks in New Delhi in May 1982, Fu Hao, Leader of the Chinese delegation, referred to the McMahon Line as having been 'delineated by the British Imperialists.'

These excerpts are from McMahon's memorandum to the Secretary of State, Proc., 231 (a), in **Foreign Department**, Secret F. October, 1914, Nos. 134-396.

• Twynam to Linlithgow, March 17, 1939 in **IOR**, L/P&S/12/36/23 Part I.

• Viceroy to Secretary of State, August 24, 1939, in **IOR**, L/P&S/12/36/29.

- Part I. For further details see the author's **McMahon Line and After** Macmillan, 1974, pp. 455-5.
5. Assam to India, August 5, 1940, in **IOR**, L/PAS/12, External Collection 36/23, Part I. For details see the 'McMahon Line', p. 456.
- Apart from the Governor, the officials included B.L. Gould who as Political Officer in Sikkim was in charge of relations with Tibet, Political Officer of the Sadiya and Bahpara Frontier Tracts and Raja Dorji of Bhutan
6. India to Secretary of State, November 4, 1944, in **IOR**, (India Office Records) L/PAS/12/36/23, Part I. Also see **Report of the Officials of Governments of India and the People's Republic of China on the Boundary Question**, New Delhi, 1961, p. 112, 229.
 7. Minute by Peel, February 26, 1943, in **IOR**, L/PAS/12/36/29.
 8. Nari Rustomji, **Enchanted Frontiers**, New Delhi, 1973, p. 126.
 9. C. L. Datta, **Ladakh**, pp. 187-8.
 10. **Foreign Department**, Secret Proceedings, No. 1336, December, 25, 1846. The letter was delivered to the Gartok Garpon by Anant (Anand) Ram of Bashahr. It was never transmitted to Lhasa. What happened to it is spelt out in Lt. H. Strachey to Frederick Currie in his letter of January 25, 1847 in No. 73 **F.D.**, Sect. Consultations, May 27, 1848, Nos. 71-73.
 11. Hardings to Davis, August 29, 1846 in **F.D.**, Sect. Constn. Nos. 1331-43, KW, December 26, 1848.
 12. Davis to Keying, November 18, 1846 **F.D.**, Sect. Procdgs., August 28, 1847, No. 140.
 13. Davis to Hardings dated November 18, 1846. **F.D.**, Sect. Procdgs., August 28, 1847, Nos. 139-49.
 14. Keying to Davis, January 13, 1846 in **Ibid.** **F.D.**, Sect. Procdgs., August 28, 1847, Nos. 139-49.
 15. Davis to Keying, January 21, 1847, in **Ibid.**
 16. Keying to Davis, January 26, 1847, in **Ibid.**
 17. Davis to Keying, August 1, 1847, No. 26 in **F.D.**, S.C., October 30, 1847, Nos. 26-29.
 18. 'I have before gathered from Mr. Agnew and Captain Cunningham that either officer did not actually reach the Chinese frontier last year or come in contact with any of the Chinese authorities'. Lawrence to G.O. May 20, 1847, **F.D.**, Sect. Procdgs., August 28, 1847, No. 153.
 19. Keying to Davis, August 8, 1847, No. 28, in **Ibid.**
 20. Davis to Keying, January 3, 1948, **F.D.**, S.C., Nos. 34-37, March 31, 1848. Keying to Davis, January 7, 1848 in **Ibid.**

22. Excerpts from Cunningham to Lawrence, October 20, 1847, No. 133 in **F.D.**, S.C., December 31, 1847, Nos. 129-136.
23. Four studies may be listed: Alexander Cunningham, **Ladakh: Physical, Statistical and historical**, with notices of surrounding countries, London, 1854, Reprint, New Delhi, 1977 and 'Memorandum on the Boundaries of Cashmir', **Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal**, Vol. XVII, (Part I) 1848; Captain Henry Strachey, **The Physical Geography of Western Tibet**, London, 1853; Thomas Thomson, **Western Himalayas and Tibet: a narrative on Ladakh and mountains of northern India**, London, 1852, Reprint, New Delhi, 1978.
24. From Lt. Col. J.T. Walker, Superintendent, Great Trigonometrical Survey, Dehra Doon to India, May 23, 1866 forwarding 'two copies' of Johnson's report in **Foreign Department**, Political A, Consultations, June, 1866, Nos. 135-39.
25. W.H. Johnson to Lt. Col. J.T. Walker, Dehra Doon, April 22, 1866. Johnson's reports, in close print, spans ten pages (59 paragraph), besides the description (pp. 34-36) of a 'Route Yarkand to Kashgar, derived by Mr. Johnson from Native information', in **Ibid.**
26. Alastair Lamh, **The China-India Border: the origin of the Disputed Boundaries**, London, 1964, p. 43.
27. Kenneth Mason, **Abode of Snow**, London, 1955, pp. 79-80.
28. Frederick Drew, **The Jummoo and Kashmir Territories**, London, 1875, p. 332.
29. Excerpts are from 'Confidential Report' by Sir Douglas Forsyth, dated Simla, September 21, 1874. A 17-page report in print, it comprises 104 paragraphs. Proc. 69 in **Foreign Department**, August 1875, Nos. 68-81.
30. Excerpts from memorandum by Ney Elias dated November 23, 1878 in **Foreign Department**, Secret, February, 1880, Nos. 2-3.
31. **Loc. Cit.**
32. Demi-official by F. Henvey, Officer on Special Duty in Kashmir, forwarding copy of Elias's memorandum to A.C. Lyall, Secretary, Foreign Department, November 23, 1878 in **Foreign Department**, Secret, February 1880, Nos. 2-3.
33. Note by A.C. Lyall, December 3, 1879 in **Ibid.** Lytton's endorsement is dated December 18, 1879.
34. Captain Ramasy's recommendation was made on September 17, 1886. For details see his 'Memorandum on the northern frontier of Kashmir state', Proc. 116 in **Foreign Department**, Sect. F., March, 1889, Nos. 115-16.
35. Colonel R.P. Nisbet, Resident in Kashmir to H.M. Durand, Foreign Secretary, January 8, 1889, Proc. 115 in **Foreign Department**, Sect. F., March, 1889, Nos. 115-116.
36. Office note, initialled E.H.S.C., dated January 18, 1889, in **Ibid.**

37. Office note by Sir H.M. Durand, dated February 1, 1889, in *Ibid.*
38. 'Report by Captain Younghusband on his recent explorations of the main Karakoram or Mustagh mountain range beyond the Kashmir frontier' in Younghusband to Nisbet, December 31, 1889, Proc. 79, in *Foreign Department*, Secret F., February 1890, Nos. 59-84.
39. Nisbet to W.J. Cunningham, officiating secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Dept., December 30, 1889, Proc. 78, in *Ibid.*
40. Excerpts from Younghusband's detailed 'Memorandum on some measures to be taken to check Russian encroachment towards our northern frontier' in K.W.No. 3 in *Foreign Dept.*, Secret F., July 1890, Nos. 225-45. Marked 'confidential' and in close print, the memorandum covers five pages (15-20) and is divided into three parts besides the Introduction. It is date-lined Calcutta, January 31, 1891.
41. Lansdowne to Walsham, July 17, 1890, K.W. No. 4, in *Ibid.*
42. India to Viscount Cross, Secretary of State for India, July 14, 1890, Proc. 243 in *Ibid.*
43. Walsham to Governor General, May 29, 1890, Proc. No. 283 in *Ibid.*
44. W.J. Cunningham to Younghusband June 23, 1890, Proc. 222 in 'Deputation of Captain Younghusband to Chinese Turkestan in 1890', *Foreign Department*, Secret F., July 1890, Nos. 214-224.
45. W.J. Cunningham to Nisbet, August 21, 1890, K.W. No. 2 in *Foreign Department*, Secret F., October 1890, Nos. 141-170.
46. Younghusband to India, August 20, 1890 Proc. 159 in *Ibid.*
47. *Loc. Cit.*
48. Excerpts from Younghusband to Cunningham, September 5, 1890, K.W. No. 3 in *Foreign Department*, Secret F., October 1890, Nos. 141-170, A.D.O. Letter, it is date-lined Yarkand.
49. Excerpts from "Report of an interview between Captain Younghusband and P' an Ta-jen, the Amban at Yarkand, held on September 5, 1890". The report was written by Macartney and formed an encl. to Y's letter to Cunningham in *supra*, No. 25.
50. Note by Ney Elias, February 8, 1891, K.W. No. 3, in *Foreign Department*, Secret F., March 1891, Nos. 123-48.
51. Note by Lansdowne, February 20, 1891, in *Ibid.*
52. Translation of a memorandum No. 176-657 dated the 5th Chet 1848 (16th March 1892) by His Highness the Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir, Proc. 3 in *Foreign Dept.*, Secret F., Sept., 1892, Nos. 1-5.
53. Resident in Kashmir to Vice-President of the Kashmir State Council, July 21, 1892, Proc. 5 in *Ibid.*

CONTRIBUTION OF CUNHA RIVARA TO INDIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY *

GEORGE M MORAES

'Let us now praise famous men'
Men of little showing
For their work continueth,
and their work continueth,
Broad and deep continueth,
Greater than their showing

I wish to signalize my humble tribute to Joaquim Heliodoro da Cunha Rivara in grateful acknowledgement of his abiding service to Indian Historiography with this stanza from Rudyard Kipling, as it aptly sums up the noble character and profound scholarship of this Portuguese polyhistor. It is a happy coincidence that this International Seminar on Indo-Portuguese History should be held during the centenary year (1979-80) of the death of Cunha Rivara, ample testimony that his work 'broad and deep continueth'.

Cunha Rivara's mother, Dona Isabella Castel Branco, belonged to a leading family of Arraiolos, a town in Portugal, where Cunha Rivara was born on 23rd June, 1809.¹ His father, Antonio Francisco, was a medical practitioner much sought after in this town. He wanted the son to inherit his practice, and personally saw to his studies, familiarizing him in the rudiments of Latin, Greek, French and English. He then sent him to Evora for an advanced course in Latin and grounding in philosophy and had him admitted to the medical faculty of the University of Coimbra.²

*Read on 23rd October 1980 at the Second International Seminar on Indo-Portuguese History, held at Lisbon (20th to 24th October), the paper in its present revised form is dedicated to the loving memory of my late wife, Julie, who urged me to attend the seminar. She felt that the invitation had come to me, a person commanding no influence in Portugal, as a reward for looking after her during her illness. The attending physician, the late Dr Simon Fernandes, my friend, was also of the opinion that I should accept the honour. And it is not without significance that Julie, to whose wholehearted encouragement, which I gratefully acknowledge, I owe whatever research I have been able to do, should have breathed her last on the day the paper was read, thus crowning a life of self-abnegation of 48 years.

EARLY CAREER

Cunha Rivara took the medical degree at the paternal behest, but his heart was not in medicine, and so when a chair in philosophy at the Lyceum at Evora fell vacant, he applied for it and was selected. In 1838 he was appointed to a more substantive post at Evora - that of Librarian of the Public Library, an appointment which opened up a new vista to his career. Required to master palaeography to be able to catalogue the precious collection of historical manuscripts, the decipherment of the latter inevitably kindled in him interest in historical research and the perusal of the classical historians left him with the conviction that they had merely skimmed the surface and that there was much leeway to be made for the amazing Portuguese achievement in the East to be adequately estimated. As he himself wrote when he found the opportunity to fulfil this desideratum:

Despite what the eloquent Joao de Barros, the sincere Fernao Lopes de Castanheda, the discrete Diogo do Couto, the effusive Manuel de Faria e Souza and other chroniclers have written, it is certain that the history of the Portuguese in India and other eastern regions is far from being known. Nor is the account interrupted at the point at which the old writers left it; but on the very period on which they wrote is there much to study and discover.⁴

Accordingly when Antonio Caesar de Vasconcellos, Visconde de Torres Novas, was appointed Governor of Portuguese India, he was glad to accept the offer of the Secretaryship and had within a month of his arrival in Goa on 1st November 1855 conceived the grandiloquent plan of publishing on a systematic basis the cream of the myriad documents from its historical archives in a series to be entitled *Arquivo Portuguez-Oriental*.

CHEF D'OEUVRE

During the twenty-three years that followed, Cunha Rivara scorned delight and lived laborious days, ably discharging the onerous duties of his office and selecting and copying the documents with his own hand during his spare time and devoting his entire time to research after his appointment in 1870 as Commissary of Studies. He rightly held that the documents were a more abundant and purer source for imbibing the truth than such writings as reports and memoirs, and he believed that in printing

them, their preservation would be vouchsafed for science and posterity.⁷ The documents were moreover necessary for the work that was uppermost in his mind: to write the history of the Portuguese in the East.

Recalling the unremitting labour all this involved, he wrote in his *Autobiography* at a latter day that it happened to him in India what Alexandre Herculano affirms in connection with his *History of Portugal* from the experience befalling whomsoever would occupy himself with Portuguese history: that he should bury himself in the archives for searching for documents, make their dry bones live, know each repository, and make himself a palaeographer, antiquarian, traveller, bibliographer, all rolled into one.⁸

Deciding to arrange the documents chronologically and topic-wise, he selected for the first volume of what became his masterpiece the letters written by the Kings to the Municipal Council (Camara) from 1529 to 1611 which he found in a letter-book that Mathias de Albuquerque, the Viceroy, had ordered to be kept by his rescript dated 12th December, 1593. Acting on the suggestion of the officers of the Municipal Council that to ensure the safety of these letters they should be entered in a register, the Viceroy ordered that the letters already in the collection as well as those which would be received in the future should be transcribed in a register by the clerk of the Municipal Council word for word, and copies when applied for should be made available from the register and they be given the same credit by officials and judges as the originals themselves.⁹

This volume of 133 pages appeared in 1857, the author adding a second part of 273 pages when he reprinted the volume in 1877. This second part consisted of letters which the Municipal Council wrote to the King, contemporaneous with those he sent to the Council.

A companion volume followed suit the same year, consisting of the privileges of the City of Goa from a book in the record room of the Municipal Corporation of Panjim, entitled *Register (tombo) of the privileges of the City of Goa, Head of the State of India which was seized from the Moors by Affonso d'Albuquerque in the year H D X (1510)*. The register covered the period from 1510 to 1728 and came to 310 pages when printed.

LOCAL AUTONOMY

The question naturally arises why was this correspondence maintained between the Crown and the Municipal Council and why were the privileges conferred on the City? The fact is that Albuquerque wanted to remove the impression that in assisting the Portuguese to liberate Goa from Bijapur rule the Goans had only exchanged one domination for another. He therefore devised a plan under which while the Government would be Portuguese, consisting of the Captain of the Fortress, the Alcaide Mor or Chief Justice and the Factor, the administration would remain entirely in the hands of the people.

SENATE

Accordingly, in the city of Goa where the Portuguese of all classes - military personnel and the clergy, the bureaucrat and the mechanic - had settled, he established a 'Senado da Camara' or Municipal Corporation in 1511. This was an organ of local administration transcending the British Indian concept of local self-government. Modelled on that of Lisbon, it consisted of one 'vereador fidalgo' and two 'Vereadores - nobres' who were councillors or aldermen, two 'Juizes-ordinarios' who were justices of the peace or magistrates, a 'procurador da cidade' or municipal attorney and four 'procuradores dos mestres' who were representatives of the working class. These were elective posts open only to those among the Portuguese who had taken indigenous wives and settled down in Goa for life.¹⁰

In arranging mixed marriages, the object of Albuquerque was not merely to promote the solidarity of the State by ties of blood, but the more important and nobler one, namely, to see to it that there was complete fraternization between the two peoples and no room for arrogance arising from the distinction between the ruled and the rulers. In point of fact in his letter of 1st April 1512 he suggests to the King the employment of natives as a measure of economy and practical politics not only for the city but for all Portuguese establishments and prays that D. Manuel should send a teacher to educate the future employees of the state in the customs and the language of the West.¹¹ Albuquerque thus wished to associate Indians with local self-government in the urban area on a footing of equality with the Portuguese settlers.

By successive concessions made to it over the years the Senate came to possess the same privileges as the Senate of Lisbon, including the privilege of sending procurators to the metropolis to take their seat in the Cortes. One of the most highly cherished privileges of the Senate was that when the Councillors went to see the Viceroy on official business, he was required to treat them as if they were gentlemen of the royal household. And neither he nor the Captain of the City could interfere in the Senate's day-to-day administration.¹²

In its best days the Senate fought the Church and the State when it found that people were mulcted of their rights or suffered in other ways, and it almost always succeeded in getting their grievances redressed by the authorities. But it also came to the support of the Government when it was hard pressed for funds to find the wherewithal to repel invasions. In a letter dated 16th November 1547 appearing in Vol. I, of the *Arquivo Portuguez-Oriental* the King thanks the Senate for succouring with ships and personnel and large contributions in money and goods in the siege of Diu.¹³ This was in 1545 when D. Joao de Castro, the hero of Diu, having exhausted the resources of the State in compelling Rumi Khan to raise the siege, sent a hair of his beard to the Senate as security for the loan he was asking it to make.

The Senate's chief concern, however, was the improvement of the city and its sanitation. And on account of the regular correspondence it maintained with the Crown it was a means of communication, putting the latter *au fait* with what was happening in its eastern dominions.

It is therefore, a distinct service on the part of Cunha Rivara to have published this correspondence and the privileges of the Senate in the first two volumes of his series.

VILLAGE COMMUNITIES

As regards the local people who lived in the village communities, Albuquerque recognized the autonomous character of the latter. The village communities thus became the recognised organs of the local administration in their own right. They received their magna carta, *foral dos usos e costumes* or roll of the practices and customs, on 16th September 1526 at the hands of Affonso Mexia, the finance member of the Governor's cabinet, in the name of D. Joao III. In the incisive words of Cunha Rivara,

the *foral* confirmed to the village community (*gauncaria*) the name of Camara or Council. It considered the functions of 'gauncar' and of the clerk as public duties. It regulated the obligations of these officers and their rights and privileges. It gave directions for better utilisation of the lands, prescribed the regulation for transmitting the assets of the defunct to their heirs being most punctilious in this respect, lest the assets should escheat to the Crown and the royal exchequer. It laid down the norms for the validity of the agreement or otherwise (*nemo*) of the *gauncarial* assembly (*Camara Geral*) as representing all the villages and the individual *gauncarias*, invested the books of the villages with the sacrosanctity of the books of deeds capable of establishing title to property, and above all it constituted the *gauncarias* who were then still Hindus, as assessors to the *Thanadar-mo* in the decision of certain cases and crimes.¹⁴ The *Thanadar-mo* was an officer who controlled the affairs of the island of Goa through the native functionaries. Holding this office in Albuquerque's time were Melrao, brother of the King of Honawar, and Krishna.

For the third fascicle of his Series Cunha Rivara extracted his material from one of the most important classes of documents in the Goa Archives, called in the official language *Livros das Moncoes*. This was the official correspondence between the Central Government and the Portuguese State of India, and was so designated because it was only during the *Moncoes* or favourable winds that the correspondence could be mutually received and dispatched. The *Livros das Moncoes* start from 1584, except for a single incomplete document of 1568 and another of 1583. They run into 409 volumes, coming to 1880. Cunha Rivara included in this fascicle of 960 pages the documents relating only to the sixteenth century, enriching the volume with the *alvaras* or charters of the Viceroys, belonging to the same period. It was a wise decision, because the *alvaras* have the same legislative value as the *Ordens da Corte*. They were issued in execution of the orders of the Central Government and to a large extent complement these orders.

INSTRUCTIONS TO VICEROY

In the very first document (pp. 1-26) - the instructions of the King to the Viceroy designate - the King is seen impressing on the latter the importance of dispensing justice impartially to all alike, be they Christians, Muslims or Hindus. He desires the Viceroy to ascertain whether the judges were discharging

their duties properly, whether they were dedicated to their work, whether they were drawing any additional emoluments, whether they led exemplary lives. If they failed to come up to his expectation, he was free to punish them.

The King desired that the Viceroy designate should do all in his power to attract to Goa and other places where the Portuguese had fortresses and factories merchants dealing in merchandise of whatever kind, and especially Arab steeds. He was required to assure them protection, see that they were well treated, and make their stay in the city comfortable in every way. (XXXVII) In particular he should stop the practice forthwith under which the merchants from Hormuz are taken at a disadvantage when they wish to sell their horses in exchange for merchandise by determining beforehand the price of the latter without proper bargaining. (XXXVI) Merchants should not be compelled to buy and sell through brokers but on payment of general brokerage of one *pardao*. (XXXVIII) Trade should be free and untrammelled, and there should be no interference with the merchants on the part of the captains and other officers. In consequence, the merchants would be encouraged to bring to Goa whatever articles which places other than Goa were in need of, and the city would retain its character of an international market. (XXXVII) Every effort should be made to divert to Goa the trade taken direct from Hormuz to Cochin and Canannore to Vijayanagar which was in dire need of them. For the exchequer would be enriched and friendship would be maintained with other powers who would thus be compelled to keep peace with the Portuguese. This prohibition of the direct import of horses should be made public at Calicut and other places so that when ships carrying them are siezed, there should be no pleading of ignorance. (XXXIV)

The Viceroy designate was required to enforce the monopoly of pepper trade claimed by Portugal. The order had already been notified in Cochin and Calicut and the other ports of Malabar that "if any person whosoever he may be, Christian, Moor or Hindu, dares to load any pepper in small or large quantity for export from Malabar in a large ship or small one, a *parau* or whatever vessel, if found taking more than half a quintal, the carrier would be set on fire and the merchandise would be seized. And if a ship is caught carrying half a quintal, only the pepper would be taken and not the ship, the captain being a Muslim" (XI).

The King wanted utmost diligence to be exercised in care and upkeep of the charitable institutions and hospitals.

The Viceroy should be vigilant regarding the manner in which the income from contributions is used and the way in which the staff discharged their duties. He should take special care to keep the staff contented so that they would be glad to put in hard work and would be an example to the newcomers (V).

A letter from the King of 7th March 1595 gives the curious piece of information that the customs officers at certain forts forcibly seized the servants and slaves of merchants visiting those forts with their goods on the pretence of making them Christians. The King requires the Viceroy to take up this matter with the Archbishop. Measures may be adopted for saving souls but the merchants should not be molested.¹⁵

CHAUTH

In the letter of the King of 27th February 1595 there perhaps the earliest reference to *chauth*, a levy usually associated with the Marathas. This letter says that the King of Sarzeta (Ramnagar) having contracted as of old to levy *chouto* from the lands of the city of Daman at 12 1/2 per cent, the Camara of the city started the practice of paying him much more than what had been stipulated. The letter then goes on to remind the Viceroy of the previous correspondence of the Crown with the King of Sarzeta and Francisco Paes who was then serving as the *Vedor de Fazenda* (comptroller of accounts) on this subject when the latter dissembled, having received five thousand pardaos on this account. The letter asks the Viceroy to make minute inquiries as called for by the importance of the case and have the contract confirmed at 12 1/2 per cent.¹⁶

It is interesting that in his explanation of the *chouto* Diogo do Couto says that four hundred years before the Portuguese occupation of Daman, the Hindus of Gujarat, whom he calls the weakest people of the East, had come to an agreement with the Rajputs that in return for being left alone to follow their avocations undisturbed they would pay the latter a *chauth*, i.e. a quarter of the yield from their lands. When the Muslims conquered Gujarat, an ancestor of Bahadur Shah gave to the Rajah of Sarzeta, his vassal, the territories in the interior of Daman with the right to the *chauth*. And finally when Daman was captured by the Portuguese in 1559, D. Constantino Braganca, the Viceroy, permitted the then Rajah to collect the contribution from Daman as heretofore, giving him safe conduct and acknowledging his right to this revenue. The only condition imposed on

the Rajah was that he should protect the territory under the jurisdiction of Daman from the attacks of robbers.¹⁷ When Shivaji started exacting this levy from people who were not his subjects, but living in the territory adjacent to his kingdom, he may have taken his cue from Gujarat.

A letter from the King dated 27th February 1598 appointing Diogo do Couto keeper of the Archives - *torre do tombo* - orders that he should write the history of the Portuguese in the East from the times at which Joao de Barros and Fernao Lopes de Castanheda left off their narratives.¹⁸

COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH

Fascicle IV of the Series, published in 1862, is of the greatest importance to the history of the Catholic Church in India, containing as it does the proceedings of the first five Councils, held at Goa, respectively in 1567, 1575, 1583, 1592 and 1606 and those of the Synod of Diamper (Udayamperur), celebrated on 30th June 1599 in the church and bishopric of Angamale of the ancient Christians of St Thomas by D. Frey Aleico de Menezes, Archbishop Metropolitan of Goa (who had been authorised by two Briefs of Pope Clement VIII), and at which these Christians were reconciled to the Catholic Church. Apart from their religious significance, the proceedings of the Councils are of importance to the social historian, showing as they do some facets of the Hindu society as it flourished in the 16th century and the emergence of the Christian order in Goa as a result of the fusion of the Hindu elements which the Christian converts carried with them into the new religion with the fresh traits these converts developed under Christian influence.

It would appear that polygamy was not uncommon. A decree of the first Council accounts for its prevalence when it says that "the habit of marrying two or more wives was through sheer boredom or because of some defect in the first wife".¹⁹ Again, it was customary among the high castes for the widow to commit *sati*, or at least have her head shaved as a sign that she would not remarry. Such women were condemned to a life of drudgery. An abomination in Christian eyes, the second Council begged of the King to stop these practices. This was in vain. And the third Council renewed its entreaty to put an end to the burning of widows.²⁰ On the other hand there was a widespread acceptance of the belief in the sacredness of any kind of animal life. The Banyas - a merchant class - firmly held this view, and would

go to any length, even making monetary payments to butchers, fishermen and hunters not to ply their trades.²¹

Morals were loose among certain class of itinerant merchants. They were accompanied by their concubines who travelled with them in their cabins. The third Council protested against this practice, and ordered that the women should be provided with separate lodging in Portuguese ships, and the captains should see to it that their apartments were locked at night.²²

This Council proscribed the employment of force, real or feigned, in conversions to Christianity, but considered the use of inducements such as showing of favours, conferring of gifts and rewards, offering pardon of faults and remission of sentences as just means, and permitted the missionaries to use them, as these means had been declared lawful by the jurists.²³

Many persons came to be baptized of their own accord and to learn the catechism of Christian doctrine. Some of their number, however, would go back on their word before long, and resorting to the territory under Hindu rulers, take to pilgrimages to their temples in reparation for the sin they had committed. In compliance with the instructions of their priests, the Brahmins they would repeat the prayers the latter made them recite and drink what the Council calls in its ignorance 'filth' for being decontaminated after having eaten with the Christians. They called this rite "being received back into their caste".²⁴

Some highly respected persons would come asking for baptism but on condition that there was a show of force, making it appear that they were forced to be baptised. This was intended to hoodwink the relatives into the belief that they themselves were not to blame, considering the circumstances, and thus not lose their caste. When apprised of this, the second Council refused to grant this condition. "The purity of faith", it observed, "does not permit even a shadow of force". And in any case such persons could always dissociate themselves from their relatives and be baptized.^{24a}

The fifth Council held the general baptisms responsible for the leakages. When a large concourse of people were baptised, there was a possibility that quite a number did not understand the significance of the ceremony, changing their religion just as they would change their clothes. At all events it was not possible to teach catechism properly when catechumens were brought in herds. It was therefore laid down that in solemn baptisms the number should not exceed one hundred.²⁵ All the same

the learning of the catechism alone was not enough. The neophytes should also avoid any occasion which may prove an obstacle for reaping the full benefits of conversion to Christianity. The second Council sought to provide against some of these obstacles, requiring for instance that no Christian should "leave his son for the caste, nor marry his children, even though still non-Christian, with non-Christian partners, nor wail over the dead in the manner he did before conversion, nor visit the temples or send them gifts of money or whatever else, nor attend any Hindu feast or wedding, nor consent when ill to be visited by his non-Christian relatives, even if it be his own father, and stop calling himself by the name he bore when he was a Hindu."^{25a}

In Cochin and other places in Kerala, it was customary for the Christians to send their sons and wards to non-Christian institutions for training in fencing and dancing. Since imparting of these skills was preceded in these institutions by the adoration of the Hindu deities, the third Council had perforce to ban the attendance of Christians at such institutions. It also enacted that when Christian teachers were available Christian children should not be sent to Hindu teachers.²⁶ In Goa the heads of families were bidden to discourage their womenfolk from singing the Deccani and other Hindu songs and performing dances.^{26a} In addition the fifth Council prohibited the singing of love-songs called 'munda' (mando) or *cafrinho* and the dancing and signing of *sarabanda*.²⁷

COMPROMISE WITH CASTE

There was one obstacle which the Church found it impossible to surmount - caste. It compromised with it in the belief that pampering of higher castes, especially the Brahmins, would bring the teeming millions of India into its fold. Accordingly, it was decreed in the fifth Council that in order to maintain the dignity of the clergy none belonging to the lower castes should be admitted to the ministry of the Church. It would be open only to the sons of the Brahmins or Prabhus and other castes reputed to be noble in these parts and whose privileged position is acknowledged by both Christians and Hindus. And in order that the decree may be given full effect it was recommended to the Rectors of the seminaries, regular and secular, and to the regents of studies that students be not admitted to the study of Latin who did not fulfil the caste qualification, exception being made in the case of the St Thomas Christians.²⁸

The exclusion of the humbler classes from the priesthood was *plus q'un crime*. It was a mockery of the Christian religion

1581 being the earliest. Since the life and the health of the patients depend, says the regimen, on the efficient treatment of the patients and the way it is carried out, the order of the diet as detailed in the regimen has got to be observed in the Hospital.

Of interest to the economic historian is the provision that the commodities needed in the Hospital be purchased in the due time and season, since those of better quality are then cheaper and plentiful. Thus September and October are the time to meet the needs of the Hospital with things coming from Portugal such as Mass wine and wine for the patients, oil, olives, vinegar, *assafrão* (ginger or *Curcuma longa*, Linn) paper, pens, conserve vases, urinals for the sick; October and November for what comes from Hormuz, namely, raisins, almonds, plums, marmalades and other conserves, *assafrão*, rose water, dates; March and November for things that come from Bengal like rice, sugar, wax; April and May for imports from Malacca, Moluccas and China like the China-root, an antidote against poison, cloves, cinnamon, porcelain, beijoim i.e., incense drawn from *Stirax benzoin* (Dalgado, *Glossario Luso-Asiatico*, vol. 1, p. 112), and the common incense; April and May again for provisions the Hospital should supply itself with for the monsoon: fire-wood, rice for the servants and the patients, butter and oil for domestic use, garlic and onions, all of which can be had dead cheap at this time of the year.³³

MISSIONS

Although the tenor of the documents in this Fascicle is administrative, there are a number which are fraught with interest to the economic historian and the historian of the missions. For instance, an *alvara* of Ruy Lourenco de Tavora, the Viceroy, dated 25th March 1611 refers to a complaint from the Procurator of the Jesuits that the Archbishop of Cranganore (near Cochin) and the fathers attached to the college and seminary in the region of St. Thomas Christians and the Vicar of the church of Santo Andre of Mutorte have not received their salaries for the past two years from the customs of Cochin. The reason is obvious, says the *alvara*: Cochin hasn't sufficient income to make payment for the essential municipal services it has to maintain. Nor can the city of Goa be asked to help, its resources being overstrained to meet other needs. It is only the Casabe and Mandovim of Caranja (near Bombay) that can save the situation which is critical with the famished priests going over to the rebel Archdeacon and reverting to their ancient form of faith.³⁴

A letter of the King dated 1st January 1601 refers to a petition from a Hindu lady, wife of the Rajah of Fayal, who, having given up her state and her husband, was baptized by the Jesuits of Chaul (25 miles to the south of Bombay), and was now asking for a pension for life and the post of the Factor of the fortress of Daman to whomsoever she would marry, she being only twenty-two years of age. The King asks the Viceroy to make close inquiries about her life and conduct so that he may reply to her about her pension, and adds that if a suitable match could be found for her before the date when the post would fall vacant, he would appoint the husband factor for a period of three years.³⁵

ECONOMIC HISTORY

There is an *alvara* of 20th August 1611, mentioning that great distress was occasioned to the poor by the shortage of *bazarucos*. This was a coin of small denomination (just two reis)³⁶ which was struck from any of the base metals like copper, tin, lead or tutenag or zinc. To relieve the distress of the poor no less than prevent loss to the general public the government came out with an ordinance fixing the exchange rate at two new *bazarucos* for three old ones. The ordinance, while it helped the poor, did not prevent loss to the general public. In consequence, the government issued a fresh ordinance, fixing the rate at one new *bazaruco* for two old ones. But no one would part with the *bazarucos*, and the government had to return to the old rate. At this rate of two for three, says the *alvara*, one quintal of old *bazarucos* would respond to 51 *pardaos*³⁷ and one *tanga*³⁸ with the government solely intent on resolving the crisis and not on making money.³⁹

The crisis however could not be resolved with this makeshift arrangement. With the *bazarucos* in short supply for the ordinary transactions there was a rise in the price of the necessities. At long last the government found out that the trouble with the *bazarucos* was because of the fluctuation in the price of the metal used in minting them. For when the price of the metal fell there were persons who brought the *bazarucos* from elsewhere into Portuguese India where they circulated at par with the domestic *bazarucos*, and pocketed the gains yielded by this transaction. And when the price of the metal rose, they gathered the *bazarucos* and sold them for the weight of the metal, thus making profit both ways. By the *alvara* of 17th December 1621 the Government decided that copper should be the metal for coining the *bazarucos*.

as this metal was least subject to fluctuation.⁴⁰

RELIGIOUS POLICY

Shakespeare has truly said: "Evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones". It is sad indeed that this proud record of Portuguese achievement should be smudged by an unimaginative religious policy which they sometimes followed. This was the result of a wicked principle that had found acceptance in Europe at the time of the Reformation: *cujus regio ejus religio*. What afflicted the Hindus most was the law which on the death of a person forced all his children to be Christians. On this account, reported the English Factors at Bombay in 1677, "some of the chieftest who still live in Bassein and other places (in the Portuguese territory) build their houses here, i.e. in Bombay, therein placing their wives and children against a time of danger."⁴¹ Once this dolorous epoch of religious persecution had ended, the Government was generous towards the Hindus, manifesting towards them, as a Goan historian writes, the magnificent nobility of the Portuguese character.

Supplement II, which is all about the religious policy and conversions, brings to a close the *Arquivo Portuguez-Oriental*, the *opus magnum* of Cunha Rivara in ten volumes.

KONKANI LANGUAGE

Speakers of Konkani, the Language of Goa, are particularly indebted to Cunha Rivara for restoring to it the dignity and respectability it had lost what with the Goan elite, both Hindu and Christian, increasingly taking to the cultivation of Marathi and Portuguese to the neglect of the mother tongue. The Hindus took to Marathi as a rallying point against a culture which was threatening to carry all before it, and the Christians to Portuguese because of the opportunities for lucrative posts in the Portuguese civil and military service. In recommending the teaching of the catechism in Portuguese, it would appear that the Church was merely seeking to assist the classes who were in a position to avail themselves of these opportunities - Brahmans and Kshatriyas - in learning the language. But the Archbishop of the times (1745) permitted his eagerness to help to outrun his common sense when he ordered that these classes should learn Portuguese within six months of his ukase.⁴² The order, though mandatory, ceased

to have effect the moment it was issued, as it was impossible to carry it out. There was no question of persecuting the local language. Nor can we blame these classes for neglecting the mother tongue. They were job-oriented and had won golden opinion for their loyalty and hard work. And it should not be forgotten that it was the Goan priest and the Goan doctor that assisted Portugal in its civilising mission in Portuguese Africa.

The classical period of Konkani literature had ended some time in the middle of the 17th century. It is to the credit of Cunha Rivara that, after two centuries, a close view of the wealth of literature, produced during a century of Christian literary effort, was afforded in his celebrated work *Ensaio historico da lingua Konkani* (1857). Both Konkani and Marathi were cultivated in Goa and it needs no reiteration that the *Kristapurana* (1616), a redaction of the Bible in verse by Fr Thomas Stephens, the first Englishman to make his home in India, ranks among the best compositions in Marathi literature. It is the longest Christian epic ever sung in any language.

It is a matter of pride for Goa that it had in Fr. Pascoal Gomes de Faria a poet who could enrich the *Kristapurana*, adding verses of his own composition to the part dealing with the Passion of Christ.

The *Ensaio* is a basic work on the history of the Konkani Language. It was translated into English in the centenary year of its publication (1957) by the late Fr. Theophilus Lobo and published by the late Prof. A.K. Priolkar in his *Printing Press in India*. Included in the volume are precious documents which add to our knowledge of the history of the Catholic Church in India.^{43a}

ONJURACAO DOS PINTOS

There were confusing traditions circulating in Goa of a conspiracy which is commonly known as *Subelevacao dos Pintos*. Cunha Rivara wanted to know the truth of the matter. He examined the documents, and in his *A Conjuração de 1787 e varias cousas desse tempo; Memoria historica* he sets forth the results of his investigation, bringing out the truth of the matter as revealed by the historical sources. Viewing the incidents, as he does, in the context of the political situation of the times, the treatment is masterly. Tipu Sultan was steadily growing in power. He had pushed his conquests to the Portuguese frontier after dispossessing of his dominions the Rajah of Sunda. And he was now threatening to annex part of the kingdom which the latter

had ceded to the Portuguese in return for the asylum they had given him in their territory.

True, the evidence is only circumstantial for the allegation of the collusion of the conspirators, a set of disgruntled Catholic priests and laymen of the Brahman caste, with Tipu Sultan. The latter, having come to terms with the Governor of the French settlement of Pondichery to deliver Goa to France as *quid pro quo* to enable these frustrated priests to achieve their ambition to become bishops with French help, sent an embassy to Paris ostensibly to negotiate a commercial treaty but in reality to conclude an offensive and defensive alliance. As Cunha Rivara has correctly argued, a whole apparatus of an embassy is not needed for a trade pact, and Tipu's further moves, namely his hasty conclusion of peace with the Marathas, going to the extent of paying them an indemnity of Rs.100,000, and his instructions to the French general Lally to march his troops towards Goa all point to one objective, the invasion of Goa which he had timed with the outbreak of the plot.⁴⁴ His plans went awry when the intended outbreak was nipped in the bud, and the Portuguese government was saved.

The conspiracy itself was the work of a few desperate men who could not have enjoyed the support even of their own caste. The other castes would be definitely against the plot because its success would lead to the replacement of the Portuguese with Brahmans which was undesirable to these castes. And as for the principle for which they were fighting, namely the elevation of the indigenous clergy to the episcopacy, being themselves caste-ridden and therefore in agreement with the fifth Council which excluded persons of humbler classes from the priesthood on the pretext that their admission would detract from the respect due to the latter, they had no moral right to protest when this rule was applied against them. As Denis L. Cottineau de Kloguen reports, the Europeans stood the highest in the caste hierarchy of Goa.⁴⁵

BRADOS A FAVOR DAS COMUNIDADES

Then again, to Cunha Rivara belongs the glory of having preserved the ancient institution of the village communities from extinction when in his *Brados a favor das Comunidades*, published in 1870, he repulsed the formidable attack of Bruto da Costa and others by projecting the Municipal role which the village communities could play in modern times. He wrote: "It is not

possible for two local administrations to hold sway in the same region. One of them has to make way for the other. Which has to give way, and which would prevail, it is not difficult to foretell. The Hindu Municipality is indestructible. The Portuguese Municipality, an exotic plant, can never catch or strike root in the territory occupied by its energetic predecessor. The Hindu municipality can yield all that which modern civilisation thinks the Portuguese municipality alone can offer. It not only can offer but will with less bustle and less exertion". In his opinion the village communities should not continue as merely agricultural institutions but must be so reformed that they exercise their old role of true municipalities. Indeed quite an acceptable suggestion only to be expected from a dispassionate mind ready to welcome light wherever it may dawn.⁴⁶

And lastly, it stands to his credit that he produced a corrected and annotated translation from the French of *The Voyage of Francois Pyrard de Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, Moluccas and Brazil*, 1601-11 (2 vols) thirty years before the English translation of this work appeared in 1887-90. The text he used, however, is that of the defective edition of 1679, and the translation accordingly, as Albert Gray, the author of the English translation, observes, reflects the demerits of the original. This translator has availed himself of the annotations of Cunha Rivara. He acknowledges his debt to the latter for the valuable information these annotations contain and expresses his admiration for him for the "eminent candour" with which he admits "the evils of the Portuguese system and the misdeeds of the Portuguese officers without exculpation" (Vol. I, p. xxxii - The Hakluyt Society). Pyrard, who was in Goa for more than two years, pictures the Indo-Portuguese Society of this epoch during which the echos of their heroic past, as Cunha Rivara puts it, so animated the Portuguese forces that they were able to close the portals of the eastern seas to the rival European powers for a few years. (vol. II, p.7 - Porto 1944)

There are other writings of Cunha Rivara which, it is regretted, were not accessible to me in Bombay when I wrote this article, especially those that appeared in his periodical *O Cronista de Tissuary and the Boletim do Governo da India* on the Portuguese patronage of the missions in the East (*Padroado Portugues do Oriente*), championing its cause against the onslaughts of the rival bodies supported by the *Propaganda Fide* (Rome), seeking a monopoly of the missions for itself.⁴⁷

23. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- 25a. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 152-53.
- 26a. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*, p. 266. According to Prof. Antsler X. Lobo, the noted musicologist of Bombay, *mando* is a popular form of Goan song in slow duple-composed time or *Cafrinha*. "*Sarbanda*" is "joyful music and dance with somewhat indecent movements of the body and the back side", *Dicionario Encyclopedico*, Vol. II, p. 952).
28. APO, fasc. IV, pp. 240-41.
29. *Ibid.*, Diapert, Session III, Decrees Nos. 5 & 14.
30. Rene Crousset, *The sum of History*, p. 262.
31. APO, fasc. v, pp. 1121 & 1122.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 1006.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 1015.
34. APO, fasc. VI, p. 1601.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 760. Eydol, I regret, could not be identified.
36. A coin of account equivalent to 1/24 d. Hobson-Jobson (London, 1902), p. 674.
37. *Pardao d'ouro* (360 reis) was equivalent to the *hun* "current in Western India, of which the Madras *pagoda* was till 1818 a living and unchanged representative, a coin which was at the time of its abolition the recognised equivalent of 5 1/2 rupees or 7 shillings. And doubtless this, or a few pence more, was the intrinsic value of the *pardao*". Hobson-Jobson, *loc. cit.*
38. A coin equivalent to 60 reis or about 2 d.
39. APO, fasc. VI, p. 870.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 1227.
41. *English Records on Shivaji* (Poona, Shiva Charitra Karyalaya) 1931, pt. II, p. 10.
42. Pinto, *art. cit.*, p. 158.
43. D. Fr. Lourenco da Santa Maria, *Cunha Rivara, Ensaio historico da Lingua Konkani*, pp. cv-cvi.
- 43a. Cunha Rivara also published a Grammar of the Konkani language by Stephens, another grammar of the same by an Italian missionary, and a Portuguese-Konkani dictionary presumably by the same author, besides a Grammar of the Konkani language in the dialect of the North by a Portuguese missionary.
44. Cunha Rivara, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-103.
45. *Historical Sketch of Goa* (1831), p. 112 (Bombay, 1928).
46. Correia Afonso, *art. cit.*, p. 450.
47. His contributions also appeared in *Revista Universal Lisbonense*, *Annuaire de Lisboa*, *Revista Literaria*, Porto, *Panorama* (edited by the noted Portuguese historian Alexandre Herculano), and *Journal da Farmacia e Ciencias Medicas*, Goa, 1862-1863, *Arquivo da Farmacia*, idem, 1864-1871, *Instituto Vasco da Gama*, 1872-74, and *Imprensa de Ribandar*, 1870-71. Cf. A. Priolkar, *The Printing Press in India*, p. 146.

48. The appeal was strongly supported by Fr Joseph Wicki, among others, and two young scholars, Frs. Mathew and Teotónio de Souza, offered themselves to bring out the centenary edition. It is encouraging that Mr Mariano Jose Dias is now intending to collect and edit Cunha Rivara's writings published in various periodicals of Goa, "*Dispersos da Cunha Rivara - Nota Introdutoria*", *Boletim do Instituto Menezes Braganza*, No. 138 (1983), pp. 47-48. But he will only be producing a truncated compilation, if he excludes, as he proposes to do, Cunha Rivara's writings on the *Padroado* for no other reason than that his thesis of its "immutable rights" is superseded. The property rights which the Portuguese claimed to the sea route to India were also superseded, but that is no reason for ignoring their achievements in the East. The *Padroado Portugues do Oriente* rendered signal service in running model dioceses in India, a fact which on the termination of its jurisdiction could not but be acknowledged by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, passing a resolution commending this service. The history of the *Padroado* has yet to be written, and the contribution of a mind like that of Cunha Rivara may prove pivotal to its study. Attempt should also be made to collect his writings, dispersed in the periodicals of the time in Portugal, and publish them in a supplement to the *Boletim do Instituto Menezes Braganza*.

WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS

from

WOCKHARDT

Poonam Chambers, 5th Floor,
North Wing, Shiv Sagar Estate,
Dr. A.B. Road, Worli,
BOMBAY - 400 018

of the objectives of the present narrative is to draw a distinction between those heroic soldiers who paved the way to freedom with sacrifice, suffering and blood and our arm-chair generals who trod the primrose path of inconsequential discussion and mostly futile negotiation to snatch the fruits of freedom for themselves and their immediate followers". (p. 236)

The first part of his chosen work takes him right back to the beginnings, when dragon's teeth were sown and armed men rising out of them. There were at least a dozen small-scale revolts, sporadic risings and pockets of agrarian unrest - not all against British rule, but forming sociopolitical complexes where sentiments of armed conflict smouldered after the Mutiny had been put down. The capital area for the unrest was Maharashtra, by a sort of historic compulsion. "The memory of its former greatness", wrote Minayer, the Russian traveller in India, contemporaneously with Phadke, "is still fresh in the land of the Marathas". (*Diaries - A journey to India and Burma*).

Three star thinkers were piloting Indian thought off the primrose path of dalliance: Bankim Chandra in Bengal with his Anushilan essays based on Geeta, Bal Gangadhar Tilak in Maharashtra with his Karma Yoga Shashtra, also an exposition of Geeta, and the volcanically dynamic Vivekananda with his Gospel of Vedanta. The Upanishads are the original scriptural (Vedic) version, of which the Vedanta (Brahma Sutras) is the philosophical and Geeta, the popular version. The three are the same.

Bankim Chandra's vision of Mother Invincible, armed cap-a-pie, and the immortal evocation 'Bande Mataram' in his Aranda Math (1882) set the country on fire. It worked in Indian Politics in much the same way in which the vision of the Motherland in "Cathleen ne Houlihan" by W.B. Yeats did in the Celtic Revival twenty years after. It comes just after the departure of the "poor, old woman" (Ireland).

"Did you see an old woman go down the path?

"I did not, but I saw a young girl and she had the walk of a queen.

The outstanding fact in Indian history from 1859, the end of the Mutiny, to 1885, the start of the Indian National Congress, was that it was dominated by two strands of thought. One was the policy of petty progress, carried on jointly by the British Indian bureaucracy and that section of the Indian intelligentsia which had picked up acquaintance with British history, Parliamentary methods and Liberalism. The other was tradition, not unprogressive, but, on the one hand, going back to older, indigenous

history, that of Hindu leadership against Muslim domination and, on the other hand, taking inspiration not only from the American War of Independence, the French Revolution and the West European political movements of 1830 and 1848 and the ideas of Mazzini, but also from the Wahabis (who were at one time held responsible for the murder of justice Norman of Calcutta and Lord Mayo, the Viceroy), the Nihilists of Russia and the Babis of Iran. Certain aspects of this crucible have not yet been adequately researched. Above all, there were the memories of the Indian Mutiny of 1857 to inspire.

Exponents of both these lines of thought and action wanted an end of the British rule. The former wanted the demise to be gradual and constitutional and themselves to be the heirs to it. But the latter preferred the guillotine and 'direct-action'. The difference was much the same as could be observed in China a few years later - between the reformers Kang Yu Wei, Liang Chi-Chiao and others of their way of thinking and the 'Boxers', so called.

The Indian constitutionalists, the Liberals or Moderates, as they came to be called, founded nearly half-a-dozen Indo-British institutions of the same category as the Indian National Congress, though of course with less British support and less far-reaching consequences. The neutral Russian traveller Minayer wrote of the Indian situation in 1880 as follows:

"There is general discontent. But I have not met among the educated people a single revolutionary in the full sense of the word. They want to find a *modus-vivendi* with the English".

Evidently he meant by 'educated people' those who had been to England for education. He could not guess that lethal dramas were being rehearsed elsewhere.

How religion itself among the Hindus became politically oriented and two-pronged is an interesting study. The Brahmo-Samaj, founded in the 19th century on the revival of the Upanishads and the acquired best of Western culture of those days, and the Arya Samaj, also founded in that century on the revival of the Vedas, were both simultaneously traditionalist in some things and progressive in some others. They provided the constitutionalists the national cultural background for mental and intellectual emancipation. The impact of British education on them was the incision to the oyster that formed pearls; the foundation of the philosophy was home-grown.

For the exponents of 'direct-action', a similar back-dro came through the re-assertion of the militant, sanguinary cult of the Tantras, the worship of Durga (Chandi) and Kali. The Indian Police, looking for subversive secret societies, used to seize copies of the Chandi and the Geeta. It was like a battle where the pagan gods Hecate, Ate and the northern gods, 'Redeivus', were taking part.

"Rude from the garth, in regions far
Of old the Volsungs met for war;
Keen to a distant sky
Rang Brynhild's battle-cry".

[Elise Aylmer]

Dr. Sengupta takes the story of the beginnings in his own inimitable way and also much more. For he travels through history, of which much was *terra incongnita*. The story of the Bengal volunteers and of their leader Hem Ghosh, with his Mazzini-like aloofness and anonymity, and that of the Writers' Building Raid have never before been told as authoritatively as here and with so much detail. It is also spacious enough for the resurrection of certain characters from oblivion, who deserved the hero's accolade, but had been until now neglected - Habu Mitri of Rodda's for instance. The narration is vigorous, as it should be.

"A neutral tone is nowadays preferred
And yet it may be better, if we must,
To find the stance impressive and absurd
Than not to see the hero for the dust".

[Donald Davie]

The story of the Chittagong armoury raid is quite well known. So also are the confrontation and clash at Balasore. Echoing through the ringing verses of Bijoylal and Kazi Nazrul, Balasore has become an abiding legend. The little mound off the river where the ringed-in five faced an enemy far too numerous, gallant Chittapriya fell, and Jatin Mukherjee, the leader, half-blind with blood and mortally wounded, formed a death-defying foursome to fight on unto their last bullet, is now a sacred spot. But how few of us know the inside story of the Writer's Building Raid, that sudden clap of doom on the Palladian citadel of British bureaucracy? All that is generally known is that Badal died in action on the spot; Benoy, mortally wounded, very soon after

and Dinesh faced the gallows, almost enjoying the experience. But the brilliant staff-work that brought off all this, the build-up and the coordinations remain largely anonymous, though some of the actual participants still live. When we are all dead, this book would be here to remind.

"Rob India Come Home" used to be the joke for 'Rich' in the 18th and early 19th century, when Western adventurers were shaking the pagoda tree and collecting its fruits. The Ochterlony monument standing in stiff phallic arrogance in the Calcutta maidan might just as well have been a monument to his bribe-taking.

To these young men, also adventurous perhaps, but in the supreme, suicidal adventure of patriotism, India in bondage was just the grand old country to die for. Some difference indeed: In any case, they took their wages and went home. The lines of Chesterton come back.

"Men that are men again; who goes home?
Tocsin and trumpeter! Who goes home?
For there's blood on the field and blood on the foam
And blood on the body when Man goes home.
And a voice valedictory. Who is for Victory?
Who is for Liberty? Who goes home?"

The detail of the narration is of interest also to the student of Political Science as a step-by-step categorization of the uses of violence in methods. They are as follows:-

Defensive: 1) Maintenance of Internal discipline
2) Against attack
3) Reprisals

Offensive: 1) Aggression
2) Raids on Arms Depots and arsenals, the blowing up of public buildings, to create a safe, active base for secret operations.
3) Sporadic acts of violence for mass effect and propaganda; also to raise money,
4) Violence on the racial plane.

Acts themselves non-violent, but calculated to produce or organize violence on a wider scale would include the following items:

- 1) Indoctrination - to be distinguished from propaganda.
- 2) Procurement of arms and ammunition by theft and purchase and
- 3) Negotiations, amounting to alliances, with foreign Powers

The writer lights up the blind alleys and bye-lanes, naturally more than he does the main highways. But nevertheless, he describes the whole vista. The story of constitutional evolution creeps up *pari passu* and links up with the other history, almost in causal nexus.

In part two, the story moves into crescendo with the juxtaposition of the two greatest figures of Indian nationalism, Mahatmaji and Netaji. It is a strange mutual dependence that the concept of non-violence needs and has to presuppose that of violence in order to exist, but the concept of violence equally needs non-violence in order to be effective or to be known.

The story of the Khilafat and the Hindu-Muslim question that of in-fighting among leaders and their invincible gravitation towards the centres of pelf and power, that of Netaji's odyssey and his INA and finally of the British abdication - all this is clearly and sharply delineated.

The story of the Mahatma's entanglement with the Khilafat question - his first considerable experiment with diplomacy in India - is fantastic, if not bizarre. He made it his chief bargaining counter with Indian Muslims; but nobody knew much of it and everybody, almost next to nothing. And the Muslims themselves abolished it where it had been cumbering the earth uselessly. The Cheshire cat disappeared but the grin remained - a veritable Wonderland affair. I know of no better guide to this fragment of history than Dr. Sengupta's book. I would quote the concluding paragraph of his chapter on the Mahatma.

"The Khilafat movement ended in a fiasco, but British officials openly said that Gandhi used it for his purposes and Muslims also became acutely conscious of their bargaining power if they remained a separate entity. Mahatmaji thought that he had made a great effort for the achievement of Hindu-Muslim unity but far from achieving his object, he paved the way for

the emergence of two men - M.A. Jinnah and Nathuram Binayak Godse".

In any case, if solemnity is not to get the better of irony, the Mahatma did an important thing. He allowed the Indian Muslims a Khilafat, though only for a few years, and Indian History to have an exotic, quixotic episode to shine for ever.

One may be curious to know when the perennial Hindu-Muslim question arose. Though research may have ferreted out something or other to contradict it, the fact, by and large, would remain inescapable that the Mahatma and the 'question' appeared on the Indian scene almost together. At least the boil became ready for the lancet then. There could have been no Hindu-Muslim question in terrorism; neither the Hindu nor the Muslim terrorist expected any immediate dividend except death or prison. A common religion of the 'maximum suffering of a minority' inspired them both. Here it was different; it was minimal suffering of the majority and there were loaves and fishes to be had *en passant*.

The foreign rulers were blowing up molehills into mountains in their own divisive interests and the Hindu-Muslim question prospered. But they were very much an integral part of the scenario and could not just be wished away. Did anybody think the Hindus and Muslims could have a bi-partite settlement by themselves, in *vacuo*, and make it operative? Evidently someone did - and that explains why the Mahatma, after the Viceroy refused him the interview he had sought, unless he withdrew the August resolution of 1942, turned to Mr. Jinnah and continued courting anybody gained from the Malabar Hill dialogues, it was the Muslim leader. For he was, at this time, relatively speaking, just a lightweight, but with the world famous apostle of non-violence beating his head against his wall in vain, he got world-wide publicity and importance quite gratis; and he badly needed both. He did not concede an inch, he did not put forward a single constructive suggestion, he just sat back and exploited the Mahatma's humility shamelessly. Muslim intransigence was growing at a galloping pace, indeed.

A fundamental feature of Mahatma's leadership seems to have been his fondness for compromise. It was directly derived from, if not a synonym for, his nonviolence. Even in his most extremist performances, he never gave up his hopes for compromise. He restored to the Indian masses their lost sense of self-respect and manhood and created some sort of mass political

consciousness for the country. But when the masses rose to call, the best he could do was to call off the movement. Caesar's ghost ranging for revenge, the masses rose twice. Bardoli and Chowri Chora ("a la" Sardis and Philippi). They headed revolt, but leadership failed them and blunted its and edge. It is one thing to call up the masses and quite another to persuade them to accept the right kind of leadership and docility. The spectre rising made cowards of them all.

The Mahatma's Dandi march was doubtless high drama but the denouement hardly matched it. It all came with the of a tiger, but disappeared like the tail of a snake. It left appreciable dent on the administration though, as one more movement, it had some rehearsal value.

By 1942, the scenario had changed altogether. The Mahatma was left stranded, without much light to indulge in - not even against windmills. Great Britain was rising to her feet again with the borrowed lion-skin of the U.S.A. and the USSR could afford not to be conciliatory. Netaji, sick of the Tamra Hall methods of the Congress hucksters, had crossed the Rubicon to join the Axis. And Mr. Jinnah was patiently biding his time to dismember India.

Clearly the Mahatma had to do something. And he did it in his own unique way. He adopted two slogans: one for eternal consumption: "Quit India"; the other for internal use: "or Die". And the latter was taken straight out of Netaji's repertoire. All this, all the time, was supposed to be a supreme exercise in non-violence. It must have been with the same passion for 'non-violence' that Bishop Odo of Normandy used to go to battle with a mace, not with a sword, for fear of shedding blood; he was a man of religion! The same enormous difference as between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. When the dust ultimately settled down, the Mahatma was seeking an interview with the Viceroy, which of course was refused. The truth is that the 'Quit India' movement was the great intersecting point of Netaji's violence and the Mahatma's non-violence. And, since then for the few years that he lived, the Mahatma was in spirit a fellow traveller of the Netaji. 'Thou hast conquered', the Mahatma might just as well have told the Netaji if, a good man in bad company, he would not have been a prisoner of his own admirers.

The Rajkot interlude may just be passed over, but it was less a breakdown and bathos. Sengupta has an admirable analysis

of it in his book.

The Mahatma's last and greatest compromise was with the Partition and with Pakistan, the child of the Partition. And this cost him his life.

The tremendous absurdity which knocked out all minor absurdities was that a member of the majority community, a Hindu, killed him in the name of India *Irredenta*. It was the idealism of a group - Godse was only the tip of an iceberg - against that of another. Ethical questions can never be judged volumetrically. Neither the non-violence of the Mahatma, nor the violence of his assassin was for personal gain. The Mahatma had become the State itself, representing both the people and the Government in a uniquely characteristic way and, though by-passed in the all-important matter of the Partition which he had opposed, he was trying to shape the next most important state policy, namely that in regard to Pakistan. The group that killed him felt that he had outlived his usefulness and was becoming a disutility. His epic life demanded martyrdom and Godse gave it.

In stark contrast to the Mahatma in all this, the principle that the Netaji inflexibly followed was: "Aut Caesar, aut nullus" that is, in the present context, "Either full freedom or nothing", and that by any means, violent or non-violent. He never sought an interview with the Viceroy nor attempted negotiations with the Britishers. If palaverings or more meaningful conferences had to be, they should always have to be with the enemy's enemy, never with the primary enemy.

The Congress leaders created an atmosphere all over the country which conspired to make all political idealism and even sincerities seem childish. And these leaders - the 'set', it might be called, or 'clique' - had the Mahatma as its holy mascot. In William Plomer's words:-

"With a firm grasp of half-truths,
With political short-sight,
With a belief (they) could disarm,
But at the same time fight".

They could do nothing against anybody.

Against Mr. Jinnah, they looked foolish; and the British rulers, as soon as they saw through their lion-skin, quickly allied themselves to it. Their own piece of lion-skin, much damaged

in 1940, then again in the Singapore surrender, was taken out of the cupboard, a little moth-eaten, but enough to frighten those who "prate of war but skulk in peace", they donned it again this time, not to overawe, but to patronise and distribute patronage. The arrivistes were appeased, even though their grasp fell short of their reach. For it was still large enough to endure another Partition, their own, twenty-four years after, when, abominably led, they had to do it.

Sengupta's book gives a vivid expose of the turns and twists, the kinks and crochets, and the plots and subplots of the subterranean in-fighting. The Congress set seemed to have only one enemy; and that was the Netaji. But he was stronger than either Nariman or Khare.

The Netaji's vanishing trick is explained in all its implications against this background in detail in the book under review. As far as I am in a position to judge, this is the most competently written account of the Netaji's odyssey that has been published so far. The story of the INA has been told so many times and so well, that there now remains only one omission worth mentioning. It is that the Netaji, with his INA, goes down in history as the only leader so far who re-vitalized an inevitably demoralized crowd of prisoners-of-war, made an army out of them again and led them back to battle - this time against their previous employers; and there they fought with courage and distinction.

A minor though conspicuous feature of the INA was that, though the rank-and-file was multi-religious and multi-racial, there was no Hindu-Muslim question at all to be-devil the course of events expected or desired. It was not due to profit-sharing promises or to actualities of 'loaves and fishes' on percentage-basis, but to the sovereign idealism of one man, the Netaji himself. Even Mr. Nehru admitted the absence of Hindu-Muslim question in the INA quite frankly.

The Vignettes - character-sketches, studies and assessments - in the book make a valued collection. A Shakespearean as he is, Sengupta excels, almost revels, in character-analysis. He 'delights in sharpening his razor on his heel, to "draw it across selected throats"'. And the range of selection is wide from the puny Sitaramayya to the puissant Nehru and Linlithgow. Those who, like Hercule Poirot, prize their 'grey cells', would do well not to forgo the pleasure of enjoying them.

The last chapter entitled 'Finale' is of capital importance

in the matter of interpretation. Here the author discusses at some length the question why Britain left India. In fact, this is the question on which all the pages that went before had been converging. The author discusses it with his usual expositive skill and goes through the post-war economic-financial weaknesses of Great Britain and puts down his conclusion in capsular form in the last sentence:

"Through the ordeal of hunger, thirst, privation forced marches, hair-breadth escapes and 'disastrous chances by flood and field', Subhas Chandra Bose wrested freedom from the British and then left it to others to unfurl the National Flag on the Red Fort"

Nobody who has followed the book closely and critically would fail to acclaim the observation; the division of labour could hardly be more truthfully or pungently put.

But even so, the question remains why the British left India. A second question also occurs; are we justified, on the evidence set forth, in claiming that "India wrests freedom"?

To me at least, the answer this book provides is more patriotic than convincing - despite the acute logical sense that pervades it. There has been freedom all over after the War: in Burma, the Malaya States, Indonesia, Ceylon, not to mention a host of others - in fact, where not? And did they also 'wrest' freedom? As far as I know they did without Nehru, even without Patel, 'the iron man', in some kind of way. They had their own experience of imperialism and struggled against it, also Mahatmajiless and Netaji-less. In their agony perhaps, they never felt their absence. Yet freedom came to all of them. Like 'unearned increment', a socially created value, 'freedom' in the post-war world has been a direct result of the international situation. As Liddel Hart observes: "Although Britain managed to hold out behind her sea-ditch, rescue only came after a prolonged war had become a world-wide struggle. In the end, Hitler was overthrown by the weight of America and Russia, but Europe was left exhausted and under the shadow of communist domination".

An exhausted Britain, having to choose between being an economic if not also a political satellite of the USSR and being just an economic dependency of the USA, preferred the latter. This explains why she put up with FDR'S emissary Louis Johnson in India during the war and also submitted to the persis-

tent pressure against colonialism that FDR was putting on Churchill as the head of the largest colonial Power.

Thus nobody really 'wrested' freedom. It just came. Three factors responsible for it to the largest extent were: Hitler for the start of the War, Tojo for the spread of the War and FDR for his persistence against colonialism and imperialism.

The crowing irony of it all was that, Wavell having been defeated, it was an ex-German hand, the noble Lord Mountbatten, that dealt the blow to the British Imperial purple and fashioned out of it a harlequin's dress. Truly a German revenge for the break-up of their own Empire in 1918!

An historical parallel suggests itself. In the 5th century A.D. imperial Rome after ruling Britain for nearly 500 years had to withdraw for her own preoccupations, military and otherwise, nearer home. The Emperor Honorius was the Attle of that time who announced that Rome would no longer have imperial responsibilities for Britain. Britain no more "wrested" freedom then than India has done now.

Trouble was not however slow incoming. "The barbarians drive us to the sea; and the sea drives us back to the barbarians: we know not what to do" - thus ran one of the despatches that harassed Britain addressed to Rome, when she appealed for help in vain. Some have asserted, some others have denied, that there was an appeal from India for external military help when the Chinese danger assumed serious proportions in 1962. So it is best to leave the parallels open; but one may still bear with a quote from Mommsen who, without the advantages of a world-war winning Churchill, was a Nobel-Laureate in Literature with his History: "History has a Nemesis for every sin: for an impotent craving for freedom, as also for an injudicious generosity".

After all, the book under review is one of the best books for the events that led up to the Independence published since that time and a 'must' for the more thinking classes of people. The only factual error in the book, of course of a very minor nature, is where it is stated that the Viceroy Lord Hardinge "escaped untouched" the bomb that was thrown at him in Delhi in 1912; for he also was wounded.

The documentation of references is excellent.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: THE FINAL YEARS

E.M.S. Namboodiripad

Review of JAWAHARLAL NEHRU : A BIOGRAPHY
Vol.III : 1956-'64 by Sarvepalli Gopal,
Oxford University Press, 1984; Delhi, 336 pp.

This, the third and last volume, narrates the main events of the last 8 years (1956-'64) of Nehru's life. Reading it, one is reminded of the confession made by Mahatma Gandhi on January 26, 1948, - just 4 days before he was murdered:

"This day, 26th January, is Independence Day. This observance was quite appropriate when we were fighting for the independence we had not seen nor handled. Now! we have handled it and we seem to be disillusioned. At least I am, even if you are not". (Tendulkar, Vol. VIII, p. 338)

No such confession was made by the Mahatma's "political heir" Jawaharlal Nehru, in his last days. But his biographer who had the rare opportunity to study all the material on his life during these last days has no hesitation characterising Nehru "as a prophet frustrated and his hopes unfulfilled". The author adds:

"With Nehru ended the first phase of free India and events since his time make it seem increasingly remote. It is as if, when he died, he took a whole epoch with him. The Nehru age, of confident assumptions, high aspirations and considerable achievements, seems today a vanished world. There is a sickening sense of lost ideals and missed opportunities. Public service is no longer a selfless pursuit, politics in India has become dispirited and the objectives which he gave his people, then so challenging, now seem tired and muddled. Even socialism seems to have lost its spirit and become a dead residue, while liberal humanism has a crumpled look. The collective self-confidence of India has received severe jolts, making the people less optimistic and economically self-assured and more fragmented, socially and politically". (p. 301, Emphasis added)

Does this mean that Nehru was as much, if not more, of a failure in his life's mission than Mahatma Gandhi? The last years of Nehru's life as described in this volume have a family resemblance to the last years of the Mahatma as described

by Tendulkar. Both men dominated the political scene in the country for several decades, each giving the impress of his personality to the history not only of this country but of all the countries which were then fighting for freedom. Neither of them, however, had his cherished ideals attained, or even close to attainment, when departing from the world. While Gandhi said in many words that he was disillusioned of the freedom in which he cause he laboured his whole life time and inspired tens of thousands to sacrifice their all, Nehru was not so forthright in admitting the failure of his mission. But those who saw him in the last years could see that he was fast sinking spiritually before he sank physically. How do we explain this similarity between the two men who were dissimilar in most respects?

Nehru's biographer dares not raise this question, nor speak of answering it. His narration however cannot but force this question on the reader's mind. For answering it, one should note that the opening of what is called the "Gandhi era", in which Nehru's life and work was an integral part, coincided with the beginning of the worldwide transition of humanity from capitalism to socialism. The Mahatma in fact came to dominate the political scene in a couple of years after the first state or proletarian dictatorship in the world had its birth. By the time Gandhi left the world a disappointed man, the young proletarian state of the former Russian empire had become the second most powerful country in the world, following the grand victory of the first proletarian state in the world against the mightiest army built by capitalism. A number of countries in Europe and some in Asia, including China, had already embraced, or were in the process of embracing, the socialist system.

These developments in world politics had not left India untouched. The Russian revolution was widely welcomed by our freedom fighters who saw in the victory of the revolutionaries in that country a hope for themselves, the guarantee that the Indian people too can remove all obstacles in their way and attain victory in their own revolutionary struggle. Small groups of militants started trying to follow the Russian Bolsheviks' example and nurtured the hope of carrying the freedom struggle to the point of ending the landlord and bourgeois exploitation. The dream of building in India a socialist society in the future, of which the political freedom from the British was the first step, gripped the minds of tens of thousands of industrial workers, large mass of peasants and rural labourers and other sections of the exploited as well as of the rank and file workers of the national organisation led by the Mahatma. Two significant developments followed

Firstly, a section within national organisation (the Congress) imbibed the ideas of socialism and advocated plans of action which would move the organisation to the left. These may be considered left or radical Congressmen.

Secondly, separate organisations dedicated to the cause of taking India's anti-imperialist democratic revolution to the point of socialist revolution emerged. The formation of the Congress Socialist Party on the one hand and the consolidation of the various scattered communist groups which made all the difference in politics. The two organisations, together with the unorganised left in the Congress, constituted a definite anti-imperialist front opposed to the right-wing leadership of the national organisation, the beginning of the search of the radical anti-imperialist forces here to find an Indian variant of the Russian Revolution.

Without dwelling on how the various strands in the anti-imperialist and radical movements in the country united for a time but later came into conflict with one another, one may sum up as follows the position as it obtained towards the end of the freedom struggle:

(a) There was a clear division between the Communist Party and the rest of the freedom movement. The point at issue was the appreciation of the two on the consequences of the anti-fascist war. Holding that the victory of the Soviet Union in the anti-fascist war was essential for the freedom of all colonial countries including India, the communists had dissociated themselves from the Quit India movement. This created a deep division between the Communists and the rest of the anti-imperialist movement. Following the end of the war however, the bourgeois leaders of the freedom movement started negotiating with, and ended in the agreed transfer of power from, the British rulers to the Indian people. This enabled the Communists to reforge their links with the fighting people and to play positive roles in the strike-wave of the organised working class which swept the country in the post-war years: in the struggles of the states peoples going up to the militant actions in Punnappra Vayalar in Travancore, in Telangana, etc. The result was that, by the time the bourgeois leaders of the freedom movement could transform themselves into the new rulers of free India, the Communist Party of India had become organised and strong enough to pose a challenge to the new rulers, though only in a few areas of the country.

(b) Parallel to this division between the leaders of the National Organisation (the new rulers of free India) and the organised party of the Indian working class, another division came to the surface, i.e. among the leaders of the new classes themselves. Mahatma Gandhi's disciples broke with him in fact, though they paid formal obeisance to him. This revelation may be pardoned for quoting a few sentences from the chapter 'Meaning of Gandhism' in his book entitled *The Mahatma*. The text is:

"Gandhi's role in history as the foremost leader of the bourgeoisie should not be taken to mean that he was always on every issue, at one with the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, it is characteristic of him, and the class of which he was the friend, philosopher and guide, that on several occasions on several issues, his was a minority voice, if not a lone voice. On such occasions, he and they agreed among themselves that they would temporarily go along different paths. This is a phenomenon which manifested itself again and again - first in the post-non-cooperation years (division of labour between the Socialists and the non-changers); then in the years after the second civil disobedience movement; several times during the second world war; and finally, in the months preceding and following the attainment of independence.

"Particularly was this true of the last days of his life when his idealism came into conflict with the 'iron practicalism' of the 'steel minded' Sardar Patel, with the modernism of the radical intellectual Pandit Nehru and several others who had been his colleagues and lieutenants for several years. It was this growing gulf between him and his colleagues that made his life tragic in the post-independence months even before that life came to a tragic end". (1981 edition p. 118)

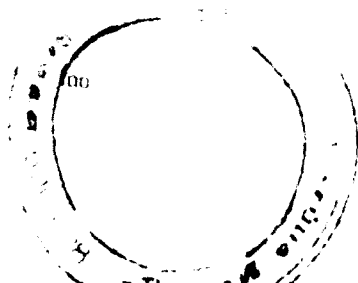
(c) There was a difference also between the schools of Congressmen led by Nehru and Patel respectively. Though they agreed that the Mahatma's advice on the dissolution of the Congress after the country became independent was "impractical", the ideological and temperamental difference between the two men were indeed serious. The two leaders in fact constituted in practice two rival centres of power within the Government of free India. Had it not been for the expiry of the Sardar's term in 1950, his followers would have proved a much more formidable force for Nehru to contend with. However, as Gandhi had correctly estimated earlier, the political approach of Nehru had a more

abiding appeal to India's masses. This in fact was the real reason why, in the period following the expiry of Sardar Patel, Nehru succeeded in overwhelming his ideological opponents in the ruling party and dominating the party and the Government.

(d) This however does not mean that, with the end of the Gandhi era and the expiry of the Sardar, Nehru had the field clear before him. Even in the absence of the Sardar, the forces which he had led were powerful. As early as in the first general elections under the new constitution (1952), the Congress was challenged on the one hand by the rightist and separatist forces in some parts of the country, while the forces of radicalism, democracy and socialism were more powerful in some other parts. The two-fold challenge succeeded in cutting the Congress to size. Nehru however was shrewd enough to mount the counter-offensive aiming his arrows simultaneously at the two targets. A clear "turn to the left" in policies was his answer. New relations of friendship and cooperation were forged with the socialist countries abroad, while the declaration of socialism as the national goal took care of the internal problems. The new shift was expected to "take the wind out of the sails" of the left, while it would "expose the reactionary character" of the right opposition. Nehru thus fulfilled the expectations of the Mahatma that he with his "leftist" image would be able to ride the storm that was bound to sweep over the country after independence. The Sardar Patel variety of Congress leaders would not have been able to do this.

This is the setting in which this the last volume of the biography opens. After a brief honeymoon with the western powers and the subsequent "Hindi-Chini and Hindi-Russy Bhai-Bhai" period, a balance had been struck in which both the western and the socialist powers were anxious to be friends with Nehru's India. Nehru's visit to the United States in December 1956, says Dr. Gopal:

"was more fruitful than the earlier one in 1949. The broad cooperation in the Suez crisis prepared the ground for closer relations in the other matters. It was reported to the Prime Minister, for example, that on problems of atomic energy the United States was far more flexible and understanding than other Western powers. 'It seems clear to me that our direct relations with the United States should be strengthened and that our approach to them should not be made through or with the help of the United Kingdom' (p. 40)



... This positive attitude towards the United States did not mean an attitude of hostility to the Soviet Union. It was in fact trying to impress upon Eisenhower that "Liberal movements in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe should be encouraged so that current fears would at least lessen, opening the door for peaceful solutions of existing problems. Even Dulles, speaking on this subject for the United States Government, agreed that the process of liberalisation, which had opened sooner than he had expected, could not be reversed. This in itself seemed to him to make war more likely, the Soviet Union might prefer this to what she considered humiliation. ... It was clear that, specific issues apart, the talks had entered a new phase in the relations between the two governments to the extent that both Nehru and Eisenhower had gained a synthetic appreciation of each other's position". (p. 41).

There was thus some ground to believe that the policy of non-alignment or "equidistance" between "the two super powers" had made Nehru acceptable to both the western and socialist powers. This was clearly seen when in 1958 Nehru felt the need for being out of office at least for some time. Dr. Gopal told him as saying that he felt he "was not in tune with many of the things sometimes not in tune with the party but this is small matter but not in tune with the country, not in tune with the organisation" (p. 107). This made him announce to the Congress that he needed a spell as a private citizen. He did not resign on resignation but was probably considering only a short break.

Dr. Gopal adds:

The Governments of both the United States and the Soviet Union seemed to regard his presence in office as indispensable. Eisenhower appealed to him not to go too far away or for too long a time. There were faint indications that the conflict between the Soviet Union and the Western countries might be sufficiently moderated to become tolerable; and it also seemed possible that some of the problems between India and Pakistan might be soluble. 'Under these circumstances it would indeed be a misfortune perhaps for all of us if at what may prove to be a critical formative period your own influence was not actively present in any really protractive period'. These sentiments were echoed unknowingly a few days later by Khrushchev. He expressed his delight at Nehru's decision not to resign, for that would have been a great blow not only to India but to all

forces fighting for peace and friendship among the peoples of the world. 'Your name is indissolubly linked with the successes which independent India, playing an ever-growing part in international affairs, has achieved on her difficult but glorious path of development' (p. 107).

The respect and affection which Nehru earned from the leaders of both the Soviet Union and the United States however did not make him the leading figure in world politics, as had been expected by a large number of his friends and followers. In fact, one of his closest friends in the years immediately preceding and following the transfer of power, Lord Mountbatten, is reported by Dr. Gopal to have stated during the course of an interview in 1970 that, "If Nehru had died in 1958, history would have remembered him as the greatest statesman of the twentieth century". Dr. Gopal adds: "Mountbatten saw that year as marking both the peak and the commencement of a down hill trend because it was from then that India's relations with China, already uneasy, began rapidly to deteriorate" (p. 75).

Dr. Gopal's narration of the development of India-China conflict shows that Nehru had not only the solid support of the Indian people who were convinced that the Chinese were in the wrong, but also the sympathy of the two major powers of the world - the United States and USSR, both of them being, for different reasons, opposed to the Chinese. Not that either of them gave full-throated support to India's case against China but they were both sympathetic. Why is it that, despite this overwhelming support inside the country and sympathy abroad, India's conflict with China ended in such a humiliation for the country and for Nehru personally?

"China's deceit and use of force over the years", answers Gopal. But why was Nehru unable to counter the Chinese "deceit" with honest politics? Why did Nehru's mass backing in India and his diplomacy prove unequal to the Chinese use of force? Unable to find rational answers to these questions, the author consoles himself with the thought that the Chinese did not go beyond heaping humiliation on India, that her army withdrew later.

"For China to continue the war against such an India and with growing problems of supplies and logistics and against an army recovering from the initial blows would secure little advantage, especially as the Soviet Union was moving away from neutrality, the United States was ready to provide full support to India and world opinion in general was critical of China. Agreed

as the Chinese leaders were in their personal animosity towards Nehru and much as they might abuse him as a minion of capitalism, they could not have wished to see India wholly dependent on the West for military assistance.... On 19 November therefore Zhou informed the Indian chargé d'affaires that the need of the hour was to settle the dispute in an objective and friendly manner and two days later the Chinese announced a unilateral cease-fire to be followed ten days later by withdrawal north of the McMahon Line in the east and the 'line of actual control' in the other sectors, with police posts in the withdrawn areas" (pp. 230-231).

Ever since this humiliation at the hands of the Chinese army, explanations have been offered by various persons concerned for the tragedy that the conflict with China turned out to be. Dr. Gopal himself refers to many of them, such as the wily and scheming nature of the Chinese leadership, the faith with which Nehru dealt with the Chinese, the mistakes committed by Krishna Menon and others, and so on. None of these however explains why Nehru could not see the obvious fact that, even with the sympathy which he enjoyed abroad and the mass support here, India was a weaker adversary to China than many had thought.

The Chinese leaders who had fought for nearly two decades before they established themselves as the rulers of the country had a far more valuable fund of experience in political as well as military warfare. After they became the ruling party too, they had consolidated the economy and polity in such a way that they had behind them a united people led by a skilful governmental and organisational leadership. This stood in marked contrast to India which had no united political leadership even during the years of freedom struggle and whose people had subsequently started moving away from the ruling party, as was seen in the very first general elections held after the attainment of independence.

The new problems thrown up before the ruling party, and Nehru as its topmost leader, were in fact matters causing worry to Nehru who, the author points out, began a serious introspection reexamining the digits of his life of earlier decades. "Civilisation appeared to him mentally exhausted and unable to cope with the rapid pace of change in human life. Science was advancing far beyond the comprehension of a very great part of mankind and posing problems which most persons were incapable of understanding, much less of solving. The disciplines of religion and social usage were fading away without giving place to other moral or spiritual disciplines. Rationalism too seemed inadequate

appearing to deal with the surface of things without uncovering the inner core. 'Science itself has arrived at a stage when vast new possibilities and mysteries loom ahead. Matter and energy and spirit seem to overlap'. Communism offered some kind of faith and discipline and succeeded, to an extent, in giving a content to man's life. But ultimately it failed" (p. 61).

Gopal continues: "This line of thought was moving towards metaphysics, which normally Nehru shunned but now he was attracted to it and willing to search for something basic underlying the physical world. He was drawn to the Vedantic conception that everything, sentient or insentient, had its place in the organic whole and to the belief that a spark of the divine impulse or the energy or life force which pervades the universe might help to get rid of some of the narrowness of race, caste and class and lead to more tolerance and understanding. Planning for socialism was important, for the barrier of poverty had to be broken by the utilisation of modern techniques and new sources of power. But India had to evolve her own peaceful approach and seek the objective of individual improvement and the lessening of inequalities without forgetting the ethical and spiritual aspects of life which were the basis of culture and civilisation and which gave some meaning to life; 'and perhaps we might also keep in view the old Vedantic ideal of the life force which is the inner base of everything that exists'" (p. 62).

"This was a new Nehru", the author concludes, "or rather a reversion to the earlier Nehru of the 1920s, the conventional Hindu untouched as yet by rationalist ideas and the unquestioning worshipper of Gandhi, seeing in his master's philosophy and methods an ideology far superior to that of Bolshivism and Fascism. He was now a socialist but was seeking to mix his left-wing ideas with a sophisticated form of religious commitment. He had always favoured the method of non-violence; but, whereas in the 1930s and 1940s it had commended itself to him as the technique most suited to India, he was now persuaded of its intrinsic merit and considered it more important than even the objective. It was a curious amalgam of socialism, science and religion which he was now trying to evolve" (p. 62, Emphasis added).

Such a leader, so harassed by the problems he had to solve that he had made a full turn from modernism, rationalism and socialism to mysticism and Gandhism, stood at the head of a people and an army that had gone through the fire of a revolutionary people's war and unified the country. This is an aspect which the author fails to note.

The author however brings out the fact that Nehru transformed himself from the earlier radical to an ordinary politician with no scruples in defending his colleagues who are known to corrupt. The example of his attitude to T.T. Krishnamachari is given: "Feroz Gandhi, son-in-law of the Prime Minister and a backbench conscience of the Congress Party, mentioned to the Minister rumours of dubious investments made by the nationalised Life Insurance Corporation in order to assist a businessman whose record was not clean. Dismissed by Krishnamachari with scornful hauteur, Gandhi raised the matter in Parliament and the Government agreed to order a public enquiry by a judge. The report of the judge implicated the Minister and several officials, Nehru felt that there had been carelessness but malafides, regretted the very fact of an inquiry and later said privately that if he had been present that day in Parliament he would not have allowed it. This was one of the occasions when Nehru's stubborn loyalty to his friends weakened his sense of fairness. He recognised that on the basis of the report Krishnamachari would accept responsibility and resign; but he felt a loss severely". (pp. 106-107 Emphasis added).

Giving examples of "his own unblemished financial probity" the author adds: "His own acquisitive instinct not having developed, he could not recognise the possibility of its dominance in those around him. He thought that charges of irregularity and corruption were often exaggerated. It is also possible that Nehru did not expect in others the standard which came so effortlessly to him and that he did not concern himself as much as he should have done with their lax financial morals. Honesty and integrity of his colleagues Nehru did not seem to regard as absolute values but only as important elements in a general context In fact he put up with even such persons if they were colleagues of long standing or with pretensions to progressive views. His justification for such unbroken loyalty was that every individual had a credit and debit account, and when the credits were bigger than the debits were covered..... A belief that corruption was not endemic and an assumption that private advancement was not always be at the cost of public interest weakened Nehru's moral condemnation of official impropriety and dishonesty" (126, Emphasis added).

Loyalty to those of his colleagues who were known to be corrupt however is only one aspect of Nehru's years as Prime Minister. Equally important is his attitude to the opposition, particularly when one or another non-Congress party gets elected

and forms a Government in one state. The formation of such a Government in Kerala could not be prevented in 1957. But, after it was formed, the Congress organised an agitation against it which culminated in the "Liberation Struggle", following which the Central Government dismissed the Kerala Government. Dr. Gopal explains:

"Nehru knew that dismissal of the State Government could not be justified on principle and that he was being deliberately pushed into it. If he had acted earlier the situation might have been contained; but his strict adherence to correct attitude of non-intervention led by the summer of 1959 to conditions in Kerala from which he could no longer stand aloof. Even then, if the Nambudiripad Ministry had accepted his advice and ordered elections under their own auspices, the situation might have been retrieved. But there was no reason why the Communist Party should help him out of a quandary created by the Congress Party. Nehru, acting as Prime Minister with ultimate responsibility, took what seemed to him an inescapable step. It could be faulted in theory and could be interpreted as inspired by narrow party advantage; but it appeared to him to be required in the public interest. He finally arrived at a decision which he knew to be wrong for what he believed were the right reasons". (p. 73, Emphasis added)

Not only did Nehru try to force on the elected ministry a new election which was not justifiable on any principle and dismissed that Government since it did not oblige, he also came to opportunistic agreements with caste and communal organisations—a pace-setter for subsequent actions by his successors. This latter aspect is omitted in Dr. Gopal's narrative but, even without this analysis, the action, says Gopal "tarnished Nehru's reputation for ethical behaviour in politics and, from a longterm view, weakened his position. For his chief strength, both before and after independence, had been the influence he commanded in left-wing and radical circles and generally among thinking people who often had little interest in immediate political problems — an influence which enabled Nehru to force the Congress machine to move along paths of which it did not approve. Even when, in the early years of free India, the Communist Party had been severely critical of him and hostile to his Government, Nehru had retaliated sharply but had not allowed his measures against Communist resistance to be swamped into general opposition to Communist ideology and objectives. Thereafter the Communist Party had returned to the track of general cooperation with Nehru. But now, in the summer of 1959, Nehru allowed himself to be driven into action alien to his outlook and contrary to

of the "pro-China Communists" as the leading left party country which, together with serious conflicts within the party, led to crushing defeats of the Congress Party in states in 1967 general elections that followed.

The developments that have been narrated in this thus underline the fact that the first Prime Minister of the try was no better than any other bourgeois leader. His in dealing with the Communist Government of Kerala part of it, the alliance with the caste and communal in the state, was only a beginning; the 20 years since his have shown that his successor has been 'ably' carrying forward even improving upon, his performance. The politics of "my is the country", begun in Kerala under Nehru, has developed into "India is Indira, Indira is India", the Indira "loyalists" the "superior" caste in the organisation, the Government the country.

WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS

from

MACKICHA HALL
WILSON COLLEGE
BOMBAY - 400 007

NOTES AND QUERIES

The letter to Sir Mortimer Wheeler, which is published in this column, is the last literary fragment recovered by Miss Mira Roy from among the heap of published and unpublished papers left by her late uncle, Sourindranath Roy. *India Past and Present* is eternally grateful to Miss. Roy for her whole-hearted cooperation in bringing out the present volume in honour of a scholar truly worthy of homage.

Dear Sir Mortimer,

I wonder if you received my earlier letter in which I had sought your advice in relation to an article of mine entitled 'Civic Administration in Ancient India'. I had in that letter called your attention to a rather remarkable design painted on a cemetery H pot described by Vats in his monograph on Harappa and reproduced in Piggott's *Prehistoric India* [p. 234], and had pointed out the possibility of identifying the painting as an illustration of the Sarama legend occurring in the Rig-veda I, 32 and X, 108. Sarama, according to the texts referred to, was the divine bitch of Indra, who pursued and recovered for her heavenly lord the cows which had been stolen by the aboriginal Panis. The design on the cemetery H pot includes two long haired persons each firmly holding a pair of cows, with a dog closely pursuing the pair on the left side. The scene also includes two peacocks which come immediately after the dog. As the peacock, according to the Hindu Myth, is a symbol of Indra, it is quite possible that the two peacocks here were put in with a view to indicating that the dog belonged to the lord of heaven. But the resemblance, though close, may also be quite accidental and I should be glad to have your opinion.

There is one other point on which I should like to have your views. You must have noticed some of the recent articles in *Ancient India* which assign to the painted grey pottery a date before 1000 B.C. The question is whether such a high dating is justified. All that one knows regarding the date of this pottery is that it was older than the N.B.P. ware. But the dating of the latter ware is not also free from doubt. At the BHIR mound the ware is said to have occurred at levels which are believed to be earlier than 300 B.C. How earlier nobody really knows. "That the layer number came from between 7 feet and 13 feet below the surface" [*Ancient India* I. p. 56], hardly supplies any precise clue to their dating. The stratigraphical position of the majority of the finds does not appear to have been precisely recorded.

The statement that 'the occupation level at the average depth of 6 feet below the surface is approximately 300 B.C.' [ibid, I, p.56] is probably intended to be valid only for the area opened up during the 1945 excavation when the stratification of the area excavated was accurately examined. But would the dictum be valid for the areas excavated in previous years? The find from fig. 1 [Anc.Indian, I, p. 28] that the 1945 coin hoard on the basis of which the occupation levels at the average depth of six feet appear to have been assigned the date at 300 B.C. was found deposited above the wall of Phase IA and is contemporaneous with wall Phase II. II, therefore, the coin-hoard can safely be dated in c. 300 B.C., any occupation level underlying wall phase II will have to be assigned a date earlier than 300 B.C. But are we sure about this dating?

The 18 bent bar coins of which the hoard is composed bear no doubt close similarity to those composing the 1924 hoard which has been dated to c. 317 B.C. on the ground of its containing a fresh coin of Philip Aridaeno [ibid, I, p.27]. But there is nothing to indicate either that the bent bars ceased to be struck or that they ceased to circulate soon after 317 B.C. and there is thus absolutely no ground for assuming that bent bar coins are necessarily c. 300 B.C. issues.

Not a single coin of the 1945 hoard, moreover, contains the full impression of the circular die with which these coins were stamped, whereas the 1924 hoard contained at least two coins bearing such an impression, a feature which is characteristic of early issues represented by the Whitehead coins in the British Museum. The 1945 hoard, therefore, reflects a time when the practice of stamping full impressions on the bent bars has already ceased. The hoard thus definitely belongs to a much later date than the 1924 hoard.

Or look again at the evidence afforded by the 1912 hoard which has been dated by a coin of Diodotus [248 B.C.]. This hoard did not contain a single stamped bar, and on this ground it has been argued that the bent bar coins ceased to issue long before 248 B.C. But it is difficult to pin one's faith on the negative evidence of a single find. Secondly, the coin of Diodotus is not a fresh issue and the date on which it came to form part of a hoard is, on any showing, a date later than 248 B.C.

It is moreover extremely doubtful if any Diodotus coin can be given as high a date as 248 B.C. The theory that Diodotus I became an independent sovereign in 250 B.C. has long been discarded. He left no named coins, and all the Diodotus coins

that have been found belong to his son Diodotus II who came to the throne not before 228 B.C. This would rule out the possibility of any coin of Diodotus being dated earlier than 228 B.C. [Tarn, *Greeks in Bactria and India*, 1st edition, p. 73]. This finding is in full agreement with the well-known historical fact that in 248 B.C. the Taxila region formed part of Asoka's well governed empire which would not have tolerated the circulation of the money minted by the rebel provincial Governor of a friendly monarchy. The Diodotus currency could have obtained circulation in India only after the dissolution of the Maurya empire. The 1912 hoard cannot therefore be dated in 248 B.C. Most probably it was created when Taxila was overrun by the phalanx of the Greco-Bactrian Demetrius, i.e. at c. 183 B.C.

Even if we accept for argument's sake the negative evidence, offered by the 1912 hoard, all that we can say is that no bent bar coins were possibly in circulation about 183 B.C. when [as we have seen] the 1912 hoard was created. This might fix a date earlier than 183 B.C. for the 1945 hoard, though there is no cogent objection to the hoard being created about this date or rather during the times of trouble following the collapse of the Maurya empire. In any case the date cannot be fixed earlier than Asoka's death [c. 232 B.C.] which event most probably ushered in an era of chaos all over the empire, particularly in the north-west, the outcome of which was to ruin trade, to contract the state and therefore circulation of money and to encourage hoarding.

It is, therefore, very much doubtful if we can with confidence fix a pre-300 B.C. date for all occupation levels underlying the Wall-Phase II. All that can perhaps be said with certainty is that N.B.P. sherds found below the wall phase II are of a date earlier than c. 183 B.C. and probably earlier than c. 232 B.C. But this certainly does not exist in the case of those sherds which were found outside the area excavated in 1945. It seems therefore time that the question of the dating of NBP Ware was examined afresh, and I should be grateful to you if you would give the problem your attention and favour me with your views.

With apologies for the length of this letter and kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sourindranath Roy.

LATEST RELEASES BY JAICO

How Moscow Sees Kashmir

Hemen Ray

The author reviews the changes in policy adopted towards Kashmir by the Tsars as well as the Soviet Union till the present decade. His analysis is based on exhaustive research into original Chinese and Russian documents, Security Council Official Records, newspapers and periodicals.

Demy Octavo x + 150 pages including fourteen appendices
June 1985 Full cloth binding with four colour jacket
Price Rs 125

Mughal Administration of Deccan Under Nizamul Mulk Asaf Jah

Dr M A Nayeem

This book is a study of the administration of the Mughal suba of the Deccan based on original Persian documents and sigils. It contains maps, photographs of sigils and documents and copies of documents.

Crown Octavo xx + 336 pages including index and five appendices of glossary, maps and photographs June 1985 Full cloth binding with four colour jacket
Price Rs 300

Princely India and Lapse of British Paramountcy

V B Kulkarni

This book discusses the multi-faceted role of monarchy in pre-independence India and unfolds the dramatic events leading to the integration of princely states with independent India.

Demy Octavo viii + 308 pages including index and photographs
June 1985 Full cloth binding with four colour jacket
Price Rs 220



Jaico Publishing House
121 M.G. Road Bombay 400023

WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS

from

ARVIND WELDING WORKS

Speciality: ALL KINDS OF MACHINE PART, DIE,
GEAR & MAINTENANCE WORKS ETC.

Kisan Nagar No.2,
Road No. 16, Wagle Estate,
THANA - 4
Phone: 50 36 70



Helping people in all walks of life

RALLIS

Multi-Technology Group

Fertilisers
Pesticides
Pharmaceuticals
Consumer Durables
Fine Chemicals
Engineering
Export House

WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS OF
THE SIRDAR CARBONIC GAS COMPANY LIMITED
OLDEST MANUFACTURERS OF CARBONDIOXIDE GAS
[SOLID AND LIQUID]

Factories at: DELHI - KAMPTEE - VIJAYAWADA - HOWRAH
and UGAR

HEAD OFFICE:
Sir Vithaldas Chambers,
16, Bombay Samachar Marg, Fort,
BOMBAY-400 023. Telephone: 29 00 46

WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS

from

V. B. BAGKAR
PAINTING CONTRACTOR
VIKHROLI (East), BOMBAY - 400 079

Statement about Ownership and other Particulars about
INDIA PAST AND PRESENT
Form IV [See Rule 8]

Place of Publication
 Periodicity of its Publication
 Printer's Name
 Nationality
 Address
 Publisher's Name
 Nationality
 Address
 Editor's Name
 Nationality
 Address
 Names and Addresses of individuals
 who own the newspaper and partners
 and share-holders holding more than
 one percent of the total capital

9, New Marine Lines,
 Bombay 400 020

Twice a year

George M. Moraes
 Indian

9, New Marine Lines,
 Bombay 400 020

George M. Moraes
 Indian

9, New Marine Lines,
 Bombay 400 020

George M. Moraes
 Indian

9, New Marine Lines,
 Bombay 400 020

George M. Moraes
 Indian

9, New Marine Lines,
 Bombay 400 020

I, George M. Moraes, hereby declare that the particulars
 given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sd./ George M. Moraes
 Signature of the Publisher

Printed by Dr. George M. Moraes at the India Printing House,
 42, Ambedkar Road, Bombay 400 031.



CONTRIBUTORS

GEORGE M MORAES
 Editor

E.M.S. NAMBOODIRIPAD
 Leader who formed the first
 Communist Ministry in Kerala.

HIREN MUKERJEE
 Former member of Parliament

KRISHNA CHAITANYA
 Author and Art Critic

NIRMAL CHANDRA MAITRA
 Litterateur

PARSHOTAM MEHRA
 Former Professor and Head, Department of History,
 Punjab University, Chandigarh

SOURINDRANATH ROY
 Former Director, National Archives of India.
 to whose memory this Vol.I of
 India Past and Present is dedicated

**New
from Oxford**

Jawaharlal Nehru
A Biography, Volume Three 1956-1964
SARVEPALLI GOPAL

SARVEPALLI GOPAL

Modern India
The Origins of an Asian Democracy
JUDITH M. BROWN

JUDITH M. BROWN
This is a first introduction to modern India and covers the last two centuries of its history. It traces the emergence of India as an independent democratic state through a process of interaction between its stable society with a rich cultural heritage and forces emanating from the industrial revolution. The foundations of this rare political phenomenon—Asia or Africa are seen as a society, the ideas and beliefs of her peoples and the attitudes of government and politics which have developed in the subcontinent. New research has re-created a new understanding of political change in India, and this book suggests a more complex but exciting way of understanding that change than a contrast between an emerging nationalist bourgeoisie and a feudal or imperialist class. **Rs 140**

Awadh in Revolt 1857-8
A study of Popular Resistance
 RUDRANGSHU MUKHERJEE

Madhupratap analyses agrarian relations in pre-independence Awadh to show how the intrusion of British administrative policy violated traditional social norms and respect for a free peasantry and gentry. Against the imperious authoritarianism which resulted in the revolt of 1857, he chooses to study the popular character of the 1857 revolt as well as its effort to both comprehend and infer the peasant revolutionary perspective. This book greatly enhances current understanding of one of the most crucial periods in Indian history. Rs 110



**Oxford
University
Press**