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Publication of *Psyche and Society* (PAS) started from May, 2003 as a bi-annual journal of Pavlov Institute, 98, M.G. Road, Kolkata-700 007, Ph. 2241-2935, a Registered Society Under Societies' Registration Act, XXI of 1860 (Vide Reg. No. S/20300). The Journal will be available in the first week of May and December each year. PAS publishes articles in the fields of Biology, Sociology, Psychology and Psychiatry. Manuscripts for publication should be sent to the Editor, *Psyche and Society*, 98, M.G. Road, Kolkata-700 007. Communications, letters to the Editor and book reviews may also be sent to our e-mail address : rl4. @ rediff mail.com

Each issue is priced Rupees twenty five (Rs. 25/-) only, and the annual subscription Rupees fifty (Rs. 50/-) only inclusive of ordinary (Book Post) postal charges. Subscription may be sent by M.O./DD/A/c. Payee Cheque (Kolkata only) in favour of **Pavlov Institute and Hospitals.**

### Appeal to the Parents

Parent-child relationship is perhaps the single most important and extremely delicate of all relationships existing in the arena of human relations. Child is the father of man - this ancient adage is all the more important in this decade of the 21st Century when unpredictable, unthought of changes have taken place already and we think we will not be dismayed as frustrated pessimists, if we say more such changes are in the offing.

Parents directly and indirectly cater nourishment to the body and the mind of the child. Without in any way ignoring the role of genetic endowments, we can assert that parents and the family contribute the stimuli for majority of the psychological traits we find in a pre-adolescent child for his actualisation in future.

The present complex society has given us many facilities and opened the door of immense possibilities with ever increasing horizon of knowledge, aspiration and fulfilment. But at the same time it has created complexities which sometimes surpass the benefits and comforts of modern life. The infinite possibilities of this technological era are submerged in the vortex of complexities of life which inevitably leads to a sense of frustration and purposelessness in a society that has been passing through various crisis ever unknown to mankind.

Our children are growing up within these gruelling complexities and have to face all the unhealthy stimulus operating within the society. Parents are often getting baffled and perplexed by these complexities and find it most difficult to give their children even a minimum healthy happy childhood. In their perplexities they are sometimes vexing their own children who are getting more and more anxiety-prone or suffering from all sorts of stress-disorder, due to unhealthy pressure imposed by competition and insecurity.

Although parents are trying to give their child the best opportunities (as a part of best investment) even beyond their means they may ultimately succumb to unending demands of the children which are mostly purposeless, irrational and sometimes have no considerations for their parent's pocket.

Sometimes a child with a good performance in school suddenly becomes depressed and cannot concentrate in his studies or becomes addicted to TV or cinema or sometimes becomes violent and most unreasonable without any apparent cause. There are innumerable combinations and possibilities of such type of problems developing in the children of present society.

Our attitude to this social problem is to think and find out the faults in the system or trace out the causes for the drift in our children, the future builders of our society, towards frustration and helplessness we therefore, have to help the parents as well as the society to identify the solution. With this we want to build up a manual (general guideline) of and for the future generations of our Country.

We think childcare, specially for the mind, can never remain a set of static rituals when society is under the impact of revolutionary changes of science and technology; and changes are created for new values, new ethos, new morals. Parents in this period of transition should be equipped at least with information on the primary changes which are happening in the world of natural and bio-social, in the realm of sociology, psychology and necessarily of the

philosophy of life. Problems of adolescence, both normal and abnormal are on the increase. Physicians all over the world are at a loss to tackle the various problems, intricacies and abnormalities found in children and adolescents. At least fifty percent of these could have been avoided if the parents could acquire only a basic knowledge about causes and roots of these individualized, self-similar, Gordian knots. Parents and teachers will agree with us when we state that prevention is always better than cure.

Let us confess, we do not have any readymade formula to deal with every aspect of life's problems. However with our rich and long experience we together can substantially help the intrigued parents to find a comprehensive outlook which can form the basic framework so find a way to give back our troubled child, a healthy happy childhood and create a sense of minimum purposefulness of life.

We present this with hope and conviction that it will be able to create a model for the development of a healthy generation. At the same time we seek help and active co-operation and suggestion in writing from every person concerned with this common purpose of creating a socially responsible, self-sufficient and creative future generation.

P A S

### The Macaulay Paradigm

In our country which paradigm, education or culture, has the greater influence (by paradigm we are here referring to broad-based education, culture and life style)? If asked this question anybody will be bound to accept that so far in our Indian society the Macaulay paradigm predominates (it may be in a modified, accepted form). On the other hand many of those who have thought about or worked on the subject say that in our Bengali society two paradigms were in operation or still have an influence. Those were the paradigm of Vidyasagar and the paradigm of Vivekananda. Expressed in simple words the paradigm of Vidyasagar develops in the students an understanding of Bacon's teachings or logical arguments. And according to the paradigm of Vivekananda, it develops thought processes like 'one can only achieve success through abject surrender rather than raising unnecessary debates' etc..

It is true that these two great men of our country have certainly had some influence on all people throughout; but we should also accept that they do not have any influence on our text-book based education system. There is some doubt on the extent of connection between what is publicised as the thoughts of Vidyasagar on education and Vidyasagar himself. This is because Vidyasagar has not left anything in writing on this, hence whatever is said on this is entirely presumptuous. On the other side, there is no record available on the traditional teachings of Vivekananda. Therefore there is no way we can know or realise what he himself understood about education. The respected Macaulay (who is known as the father of our modern education system) is a much truer existence for the crores of students who are going through the portals of schools, colleges and universities year after year throughout the country.

In this paradigm getting an education means preparing the basis and means for a living in the future. This is the only speciality of this paradigm. The normal practice is to stay a hundred yards away from studies as soon as we get a good job. And until we get a job we have to continue with the studies and go on appearing in the competitive examinations. At that time this is exactly what the Macaulay's had wanted for our country ruled by others. Through all these years since then we have been desperately trying to prove as the ultimate truth this educational ideal of Macaulay.

Some may ask, what is wrong in this? Who does not feed himself first and then only find a method of survival? There is a saying, you take your father's name if you survive. Look for your own survival first, after that you can give your big lectures about saving the country. We cannot disagree with this, but wonder whether we can ultimately save ourselves this way. Because with the passage of time this business of survival is becoming increasingly complicated and difficult. It is precisely to find a solution for this problem that we are expressing these words.

It has been seen that having grown up from our childhood days within this narrow paradigm, we face a problem of becoming a prisoner of this paradigm, and as a result we fail to develop a mental ability to enable us to express our independent thoughts and views. Apart from behaving mechanically within our own professional or practical life we move around practically like a fool in other social and domestic matters. Hence matters go on this way until we find some kind of job or employment. But as social people we get transformed into 'mass people'. In a lighter vein we can say we become part of a herd of sheep. That is then the situation is something like, 'If he strikes I strike, if he stops I stop.' In this situation anybody who would have closely observed our behaviour from a distance would probably have been surprised. This is perhaps because the same person when working as a scientist or a professor was making extremely progressive statements or writing books or teaching to his students. But outside the institute or organisation he is a totally different person. It is as if he went out of his laboratory taking off his apron. Thus if such an educated and intelligent person in his domestic and social life becomes a store house of all kinds of superstitions and obscurantist ideas, then there is no reason for us to be surprised. Because being used to seeing such persons for hundreds of years, such questions do not come to our mind - why is it that this educated (at least school and college educated), intelligent person who with his own efforts (successfully completing numerous examinations) has built up his career, who with minimal effort cannot develop a trend of logical arguments like a bright modern person and cannot apply it in his personal life?

Anybody can raise a question on this - But is this situation applicable only in our country, or is it also true in all other countries of the world? Even accepting this it can be easily said such wide ranging differences in the lifestyles of the same person at different times is probably a strange and unprecedented speciality of our social life, unlikely to be seen anywhere else.

Continuing our subject of discussion enquiries will probably show that under our various educational systems the subjects being taught to the students in our schools, colleges or universities have been discontinued some decades ago in Macaulay's own country.

Our children give a lot of effort and waste a lot of time during their valuable developing period studying these, going through examinations and then run around desperately trying to get a job. And when he gets a job he finds that there is no connection between his practical or professional work and what he has covered during his long education. This is acutely seen particularly in the various subjects of science and technology. And those who want to change this situation and think of doing something within the sphere of education consider astrology as appropriate. This is a terrible social situation. We have to give our thanks to Mr. Macaulay. He has planted a seed of education in this country whose roots have grown so deep that even our best efforts will probably take several centuries to uproot them.

P A S

## The Marxian Concept of Man

Dhirendranath Ganguly

Marx, in his time, had not the opportunity of thoroughly studying the bio-social nature of man. But the rudimentary natural science of his time and social science of elementary nature that he could lay hands on, firmly impressed him to form a concept of man does not appear to be outmoded even one hundred years after his death.

Marx and his friend Engels were primarily concerned with the socialization of man. Marx, in the Manuscripts of 1844 (*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*), attempted to present his principal ideas of man's alienation in an industrialised society. He wrote : 'We see how the history of industry and objective existence of industry are open books of man's essential powers, the perceptibly existing human psychology.'<sup>1</sup> Marx even in his early youth had understood that, as Engels put in Ludwig Feuerbach, "the cult of abstract man, which formed the kernel of Feuerbach's new religion, had to be replaced by the science of real men and of their historical development."<sup>2</sup> As far back as in 1844, in the Manuscripts was inscribed the valuable line - 'History is the true natural history of man.' While Marx was busy and fully occupied in collecting materials for his revolutionary treatise Capital, Engels worked hard on documentary books and pamphlets enriching and establishing historical materialism and dialectical materialism. Engels' *Ludwing Feuerbach, Anti-Duhring*, and *The Origin of Family, Private Property and State*, published during the eighties of last century, expressed the Marxian concept of man in Society in more details. *The Holy Family* and *The German Ideology*, the two books written jointly by Marx and Engels, also reveal features that help the readers to understand the historical man from the materialistic view point. I think that I shall not be far from the truth if I venture to say that Marx's concept of man laid the foundation for research works conducted in later periods which consolidated the basis of evaluation of man as a bio-social being. It should not be concluded, however, that I am ascribing all the credit for scientific works on man and society to Marxists only. When one attempts to study scientifically man and his relation to society, and man's development of higher nervous activity, that enables us to understand human psychology without any bias or preconceived notion, he knowingly or unknowingly enriches Marxism. Thus, as Engels pointed out, the American scholar Lewis Henry Morgan "rediscovered in his own way the materialist conception of history that had been discovered by Marx."<sup>3</sup> Again, the great Russian physiologist, I.P. Pavlov, had contributed a lot to dialectical and historical materialism, in other words, to Marxism, when he knew very little about Marx or Marxism. It should be noted, however, that "Marxism was developed as an integral science, in which materialism and dialectics, the materialist understanding of nature and society, the teaching about being and knowledge, theory and practice are fused organically." And "this made it possible to overcome the metaphysic nature of pre-Marxian materialism with its inherent contemplation, anthropologism and the idealistic history of man."<sup>4</sup> It was not possible, therefore, to form a fully correct picture of man and his relation to society before the advent of Marxism.

Present day scientists in their study of man with the help of new discoveries and

knowledge in the realm of anthropology, genetics, sociology, biology and higher nervous activities, have re-affirmed the truth and correctness of the Marxist conception of man from various aspects. Marxism can now throw light on the various problems of the study of man. The emergence of *Homo sapiens* was associated with problems of survival and mastery over the rest of the species on this planet. Now scientists confirm that primitive man's consciousness 'gradually developed and modified according to the socio-economic conditions of life' and man began to know himself and gradually acquired the knowledge to change himself as well as the surrounding natural and socio-economic conditions for his survival and progress. Man began to grow and society progressed. A thorough and fruitful study of the problems associated with this growth and progress could not have been carried on without the theory of dialectical materialism. But it must be clearly stated that one must have to be conversant with the data derived from continuously progressing natural science in order to cross the hurdles placed on the road to progress and freedom due to his bio-social nature.

Some fundamental facts are now known and accepted by Marxism. The facts definitely illumine the path for further study for constructing and clarifying a Marxian model of man, setting aside and replacing the idealistic models like psychoanalytic model, behaviouristic model, humanistic model, and existential model. These models constructed by Western scholars are at variance with one another and these models, having no scientific basis, are incapable of giving a true and correct picture of man. A true picture can only be drawn with the help of the data derived from natural and social sciences systematised and integrated by the knowledge of Marxism - dialectical and historical materialism.

I think, it is necessary to get ourselves acquainted with advances made in the knowledge of the science of man and his environment for understanding the concept of man, as influenced and envisaged by the theory of alienation propagated by Marx in the *Manuscripts* of 1844, and for resolving the dispute among the Marxists regarding this concept. With that end in view I am presenting below some quotations from the writings of a few Marxist scholars on the subject. "Everybody will agree that man is a product of evolution of life on our planet and as such is endowed with all vital attributes, namely, self-regulation, metabolism, variability and heredity." We know that ontogenetic development follows and adheres to a genetic programme coded in the 46 chromosomes irrespective of race, nationality or class. And further, it is accepted on all hands that the transmission of hereditary information from generation to generation is governed by the chromosomal laws of heredity." "The genetic affinity between man and his animal ancestors is quite evident. It should also be noted that gene-exchange is continuously increasing within the species to create a common gene-pool constituting the species' principal wealth and natural base for further progress and prosperity."

It is now admitted by all Marxists that 'at a certain stage of biological evolution some specifically human forms of social organisation (work, production and production relations) emerged.' This determined the future course of history and paved the path for progress and development. From this stage man ceased to be a simple biological being. Since then 'Man as an individual began to develop under the combined control of the biological programme emerging out of evolution and the social programme - both mutually influencing and interacting with each other.' The social programme was undoubtedly formed on a 'definitely biologically prepared foundation', but once formed, it began to exert gradually increasing force in changing the development and man became bio-social in nature, the social life becoming more pronounced and forceful. The biological being gradually became modified and existed as a bio-social force.

The emphasis laid by Marx on the social nature of man is expressed clearly in the following words: "the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations."<sup>5</sup> What Marx wrote long ago from a philosophical-methodological viewpoint has now been found to be true from the viewpoint of modern science. As Belyaev puts it, "The idea that human essence is an abstraction of a genus is erroneous, since it proceeds from a typological concept in characterising "genus". This concept, inherent in the natural science of the last century and the beginning of this century, is rejected by modern biology, which has developed a typological-statistical criterion for characterising any feature of every species of organism."<sup>6</sup> Marxism does not reject the natural biological individuality and the subjective intrinsic world of a man living within a social system. Marxism does not envisage man's alienation from his natural environment. Belyaev states this with confidence in the same article and quotes Marx in this connection: "Man is directly a natural being. As a natural being and as a living natural being, he is on the one hand furnished with natural powers of life – he is an active natural being. These forces exist in him as tendencies and abilities – as impulses. On the other hand, as a natural, corporeal, sensuous objective being he is a suffering, conditioned and limited creature, like animals and plants. That is to say, the object of his impulses exist outside him; yet these objects are objects of his need – essential objects, indispensable to the manifestation and confirmation of his essential powers."<sup>7</sup> Man, since he developed his bio-social nature, has been retaining it, though he is developing as a social being.

The contention of the Soviet scholar Belyaev may not be fully accepted by everybody but it should not be assumed that the author is laying more stress on the biological side of man and attempting to revive Freudism. What he wants to do is to warn his fellow Marxists and to remind them indirectly that a section of their predecessors committed blunders by completely ignoring the genetic aspects and laying importance only on environmental aspects. Belyaev is concerned primarily with genetic polymorphism. He has admitted that "the forming of a highly flexible and trainable brain and nervous processes, including an optimum level of stressfulness and stress-resistance as the biological foundation of learning, i.e. perceiving the effect of speech as a means of transmitting experience, was an event of great importance in mankind's development."<sup>8</sup> Here the author comes nearer to Pavlov and admits the importance of the second signalling system in the human brain as the important agency and pathway for forming human behaviour. In the words 'bio-social', 'social', of course, preponderates, and the Marxian concept of man is upheld. Belyaev says that Davidenkev<sup>9</sup> is perfectly right when, comparing the influence between heredity and continuity (knowledge transmitted by training-environmental learning), he comes to the conclusion that continuity (knowledge transmitted by training environmental learning), he comes to the conclusion that continuity must be assigned the more important role in the development of social man. Belyaev makes his point further clear when he says that "Since the time when man took the path of social life – the realisation of man's genetic programme has fallen under the rigid control of the social environment determining the cultural and labour traditions and behavioural standards in society."<sup>10</sup>

I think any discussion of the Marxian concept of man, however brief, attracted my attention during the last thirty five years of my practice as a Pavlovian psychiatrist. Among Marxists there is a major point of discord and dissension on the problem of alienation. Since the publication of the *Manuscripts of 1844* in 1932, debates and discussions started on the problem in all countries where Marxism was known. We all know that the main topic of the

*Manuscripts of 1844* is alienation and the ways and means of disalienation. Marx stated that in this industrialised society man is found to be alienated from nature, from himself, from other man and from his species. The cause lies in his estrangement from his own labour. Anti-Marxists seized this opportunity and tried to establish that in the *Manuscripts of 1844*, lay the essence of all the teachings of Marx and Marxian concepts of man, nature, society and the universe. Of course, some Marxists also, of European countries began to lay too much emphasis on the problem of alienation, transcendence and other aspects of humanism with scrappy quotations from this book. It should be remembered that thirties was a crucial period of history. Fascism and Nazism had raised their heads and conspiracy and preparations for demolishing civilisation based on democracy and socialism (in one country) were going on. Marxists in European countries were naturally scared and they did not like this diversion, which, it was apprehended, might weaken the traditional concepts in Marxism, e.g. class contradictions, class-war, dictatorship of the proletariat and the continuation of the party structure.

So, the *Manuscripts of 1844*, was regarded by them as a piece of immature writing. Debates raged on by dissecting Marx into two pieces – the old and the new or the mature and the immature. Only a few tried to assert that Marx is not to be divided and the *Manuscripts of 1884* did not contain anything which has been negated by facts or by Marx and Engels in their later writings. Meszaros was one of them. He tried to establish that by stating that "The positive transcendence of private property as the appropriation of human life is the positive transcendence of all estrangement – that is to say, the return of man to his human, i.e. social, mode of existence".<sup>11</sup> Marx in the *Manuscripts* has not in any way blocked the road to socialism and communism by the well-known revolutionary Marxist methods. Marx of *Capital* is the Marx of *Manuscripts* – and Meszaros has found and established links between the concepts of alienation and transcendence and Marx's later writings. The humanist Marx cannot be distinguished from the scientist Marx.

Passages from *The German Ideology* and the *Communist Manifesto* are often quoted to demonstrate that the ideas expressed by Marx in them are in contrast with the ideas embodied in the *Manuscripts*. The translator and editor of *The German Ideology*, Roy Pascal, for example, contends that in the *German Ideology* Marx makes his final reckoning with the concept of self-estrangement, and that this final reckoning is supposed to be in sharp contrast to the earlier *Manuscripts of 1844* in which Marx still wrestles with this concept and charges it with a new content. "This contraposition is highly misleading," points out Meszaros, and adds", 'Final Reckoning' following the previous wrestling sounds pretty dramatic ... Yet the simple undramatic truth is that there is neither a final reckoning nor some kind of wrestling in the *Paris Manuscripts*."

It is also contended that in the *Communist Manifesto* Marx himself has criticised the concept of alienation in a passage. The passage in question is: "And, since it ceased in the hand of the German to express the struggle of one class with other, he felt conscious having overcome 'French one-sidedness' and of representing not true requirements, but the requirements of truth, not the interests of the proletariat, but the interests of Human Nature, of man in general, who belongs to no class, has no reality, who exists only in the misty realm of phantasy".<sup>12</sup> Meszaros thinks that "here the criticism is not directed against the concept of alienation, but the idealist use of it, because such a use completely emasculates it ... Equally, what is attacked here is not the notion of man defined by Marx in 1844 as the social individual,

but the abstraction 'Human Nature' and 'Man in general' as used by his opponents, because these only exist in the misty realm of philosophical phantasies."<sup>13</sup>

On the topic of alienation I have referred to only Meszaros for the reason that other prominent and well known Marxists and intellectuals involved in the controversy on 'humanist Marx' and 'scientist Marx' (Men like – Adam Schaff, Earnest Block, Kaulkauskys, Tucker, Sartre, Garaudy) were, in my opinion, influenced either by Freudism or by Existentialism and deviated from the Marxist path, and a few of them were in fact known anti-Marxists. The Hungarian, Meszaros, I think, took the correct path.

Before concluding, I would like to mention the name of Lucian Seve and of his book *Man in Marxist Theory*. Seve has written the scholarly treatise of more than 500 pages not only to attempt a construction of a truly Marxian psychology of personality but also to plead for discarding the concept of man in the *Manuscripts of 1844*. In this attempt, he has disassociated himself from the Pavlovian concept of psychology based on his experimental works on higher nervous activity. A few lines from his book, which has attracted the attention of Marxists, may be of interest to my readers. After quoting a few lines from *Grundrisse* where Marx criticises Adam Smith for considering labour psychologically, he states that "Here we have precisely the line of rupture between the ideological humanism of bourgeois economy and the Marxist conception which proceeds not from the concrete individual, but from social relations." He laments that "the psychology of work has not found its Freud" and then states, "And this also explains why psychological theorising which claims to be Marxist nearly always relies in fact on those texts in which Marx shows the connections between human abilities and the development of productive forces – such as the 1844 texts on the open book of man's essential powers which constitutes industry".<sup>14</sup>

At present, there is a temporary lull in the controversy. The controversy, however, is not over. Further discussions and debates would certainly throw more light on the subject, and help the Marxists to know more about man as a bio-social being. And that may ultimately put an end to the divergence in the interpretations of the Marxian concept of man and pave the path for a consensus.

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## Serum Hepatitis Profile of Prisoners' and staff of Alipore Central Jail, Kolkata

Basudev Mukherjee

*[In collaboration with Fulford (India) Ltd. and Gastroenterology department of P.G.(S.S.K.M.) Hospital, Kolkata, we have conducted a random blood sample screening of 514 persons for serum hepatitis profile of prisoners and staff of Alipore Central Jail, Kolkata, in November 2002. As we know, chronic serum hepatitis is a silent killer disease of the liver, which is lurking underneath and nevertheless it is a formidable social disease. So considering the importance of this seminal work, perhaps taken up for the first time in India, excerpts of the report have been given here. Ed., PAS]*

In this report, we have shown the results of 514 random blood sample screening of prisoners and staff of Alipore Central Jail in November, 2002. The population of this sample comprises long term & short term convicts, drug addicts & other undertrial prisoners, uniformed, executive & other staff. There was an announcement and notification for this blood screening test to the prisoners & staff and then blood samples collected on a 'first come first serve' basis. This sample size was developed out of 3000 population of this Institution

We know, liver is the largest digestive gland of the body and hepatitis is a type of chronic and or acute illness of the liver. In the digestive process, after absorption of food materials from stomach and small intestine, it is carried to the liver by portal vein. With all these food ingredients the liver makes crores of complex biochemical reactions and produces more or less all the body's various intricate metabolic demand as per requirement. Even the important and highly noxious waste product, ammonia, is eventually accumulated in the liver in this process for formation of urea and afterwards cleared by the blood through kidney. So we can say, liver is more than an essential organ of the body and controls some of its vital metabolic functions.

According to the physiologists, body's one eighth liver tissue is sufficient for the total metabolic requirement of the body. So we can imagine when a disease process run lead to a total failure of liver function, then even this one eighth part of the liver is eventually consumed by that disease. Exactly this happens in chronic serum hepatitis, where a group of viruses (B C D E G) gradually and silently destructure the most important, vital architecture of the liver tissue. This viral disease is extremely contagious and chronic in nature, so it is formidable and has various social implications.

It is chronic because its disease process i.e. inflammatory process runs chronically, gradually within the liver tissue. It can however reside in our body without creating any disease, thus very often becoming an apparently healthy carrier. These healthy carriers are dangerous so far as disease contaminations are concerned. In a rough robust estimate, one healthy carrier has the potential to infect at least five persons in a year. Apart from that, in some unknown unfavorable circumstances within the body of the host, this virus may become active, virulent and can offer the host with a chronic disease process. So one can imagine,

why we are so seriously concerned with this type of silent killer disease.

With this background we can safely say the body's immunological system plays a very important role to combat and contain the disease process or to make at least a healthy carrier state. So it can be postulated, the part of the population who are immunologically compromised due to bad socio-economic living conditions with an unhealthy quality of life - such as drug addict, TB patients, jail inmates, are very much susceptible to contract this disease. Actually they are the social reservoir of the disease. They are the high risk population group of this disease. So one can say, there is a special importance of such type of epidemiological study among jail inmates.

Why it is called a social disease? Because the person contaminated with this disease is not the only sufferer, he has tremendous potentiality to spread the disease continuously in his community gradually and silently uptill his last breath through unnoticed exchange of his body fluid such as semen, blood, serum etc.. Like HIV virus( causal agent of AIDS), it is also communicated through blood, blood products and body fluids from person to person. Here we can cite an example.

One of our psychiatrist colleagues, while returning home on a Sunday afternoon on his two wheeler, met with a road traffic accident in front of R.G.Kar Medical College Hospital (Kolkata) overbridge, resulting in a scalp injury. He had been given first aid at the emergency department of the said hospital. One month later, after full recovery from his injury, suddenly there was high bilirubin level in his blood (jaundice). Later it was found that he was HBsAg positive i.e. his jaundice was due to hepatitis B virus. In all possibility he had contracted that virus from the unhygienic dressing at the emergency department of the said hospital, as he could not recollect any previous incidence or possibility of contamination of his body fluid with others except this. It is most likely that an HBsAg positive patient contaminated the dressing materials, which were later used on my colleague. From this incident we can imagine how much we are at risk for contracting this disease. Regarding potentiality of contamination it has been roughly estimated that hepatitis B virus is ten times more virulent than HIV virus.

So some of the situations such as blood or serum transfusion, tissue transplantation, ordinary surgery, any sort of serum dialysis, drug abuses through injections - all have tremendous potentiality to transmit the disease from a contaminated person to an innocent healthy person. Even the new born baby of HBsAg positive mothers are at hundred percent risk to contract the disease. Such type of risk are there with the thalassemia and haemophilic patients, who are regular recipients of blood for their survival. Another important personal behaviour which poses continuous threat for contamination of the disease is promiscuity. Many of the jail inmates are habituated to this behaviour of sharing needle in drug injections and having multiple sex partners.

#### **What happens in hepatitis**

Put simply, in chronic hepatitis, there is a gradual loss of beautiful architecture of the hepatic tissue while this architecture is essential for body's metabolic function. It has been detected that sporadically the liver tissues are contaminated by these viruses which are followed by gradual low graded inflammation. Afterwards the body immune mechanism repairs these assaults by chronic inflammation by fibrosis. But in this process of fibrosis the liver tissues, which can be called one of the executives of our body, lose its most valuable architecture. Gradually and silently over many years, this process of inflammation spreads to the adjacent

areas and eventually engulfs the whole liver in chronic serum hepatitis. Meanwhile the liver struggles hard to maintain the body's essential function of metabolism. For this reason in case of many of the infected persons we could not actually find any overt disease or any sign of illness, though the virus silently eats up the liver tissues. Sometimes the disease may be overt with low grade temperature, anorexia and mild jaundice. For this reason, in cases where fever persists for a long duration, the physician now prescribes the patient for investigation of HBsAg. Generally it is found that a person showing overt disease process is actually suffering from the disease for at least six months.

There are six viruses, namely A B C D E G which are responsible for hepatitis, of which hepatitis caused by A virus is a most common water-borne disease and generally it is self limiting i.e., it is cleared by body immune mechanism satisfactorily. Apart from this, there are also other causes where we find hepatitis, namely chronic alcoholism, various drug intoxication etc.. But here we are only concerned with chronic serum hepatitis caused by B and C viruses.

In serum hepatitis specially caused by B and C viruses the ultimate result is cirrhosis or cancer of liver, and we remain very cautious if we detect any of these viruses in a patient. But there are variations regarding the overt manifestations of disease process by these viruses. For example, in most cases of B virus infection of an adult, though the patient may suffer from an acute infection generally he is ultimately cured from the illness. It has been documented that of these B virus infected population 5 to 10% of adults and almost 90% of the new born actually suffer from chronic hepatitis after acute inflammation. Of the chronic hepatitis population 15 to 20 % eventually developed cirrhosis. Whereas in case of C virus infection, 85% suffered from chronic hepatitis, of which 20% subsequently developed cirrhosis.

#### **In search of chronic hepatitis**

Detecting any hepatitis virus in the general population is like searching for the proverbial needle in a haystack. Moreover the investigation procedures are very expensive, even for the well affluent groups. Yet for public health interest we have to make a design for this study. It has to be remembered that of the 514 blood samples collected for our study, none of the persons are detected clinically as a case of chronic hepatitis and a small percentage of the sample have marginal rise of blood bilirubin level. We have completed examinations of these blood samples in two phases. In the first phase one serum enzyme SGOT and search for B virus antigen have been investigated in a private laboratory of Kolkata. Out of these samples, 28 cases have been found HBsAg positive and their blood samples have been sent to the Ranbaxy Laboratory, Mumbai for DNA study.

Now we can thematically depict the investigation design and suggested diagnostic algorithm for hepatitis B and C viruses, which we have followed here.

Experiment	Result	Explanation	Inference
HBs Ag	-	Risk of infection but never	Better to take vaccine
Anti HBc	-	infected with the virus	
HBs Ag	+	Infected with acute or	More investigations necessary
Anti HBc	+ or -	chronic illness	

HBs Ag	-	Many explanations possible	Better to take vaccine
Anti HBc	+		
HBs Ag	+	Carrier due to chronic infection and he has heavy potentiality for virus transmission	Better to take interferon therapy under proper observation
Anti HBc	+		
Anti HBs	-		
HBc Ag	+		
HBs Ag	+	Carrier for chronic infection (six months or more), heavy potential for disease transmission	Better to take interferon therapy at least one course
Anti HBc	+		
Anti HBs	-		
HBe Ag	-		

**Full form of some abbreviations**

HBs Ag : Surface Antigen of B virus, HBe Ag : Nuclear Antigen of B virus, HBc Ag : Core Antigen of B virus, Anti HBc : Antibody of B virus core Antigen, Anti HBe : Antibody of B virus Nuclear Antigen, Anti HBs : Antibody of B virus Surface Antigen, HBV DNA : Gene complex of B virus, In search of Hepatitis C investigations necessary, Anti HCV : Antibody of C virus Antigen, HCV RNA : Gene Complex of C virus.

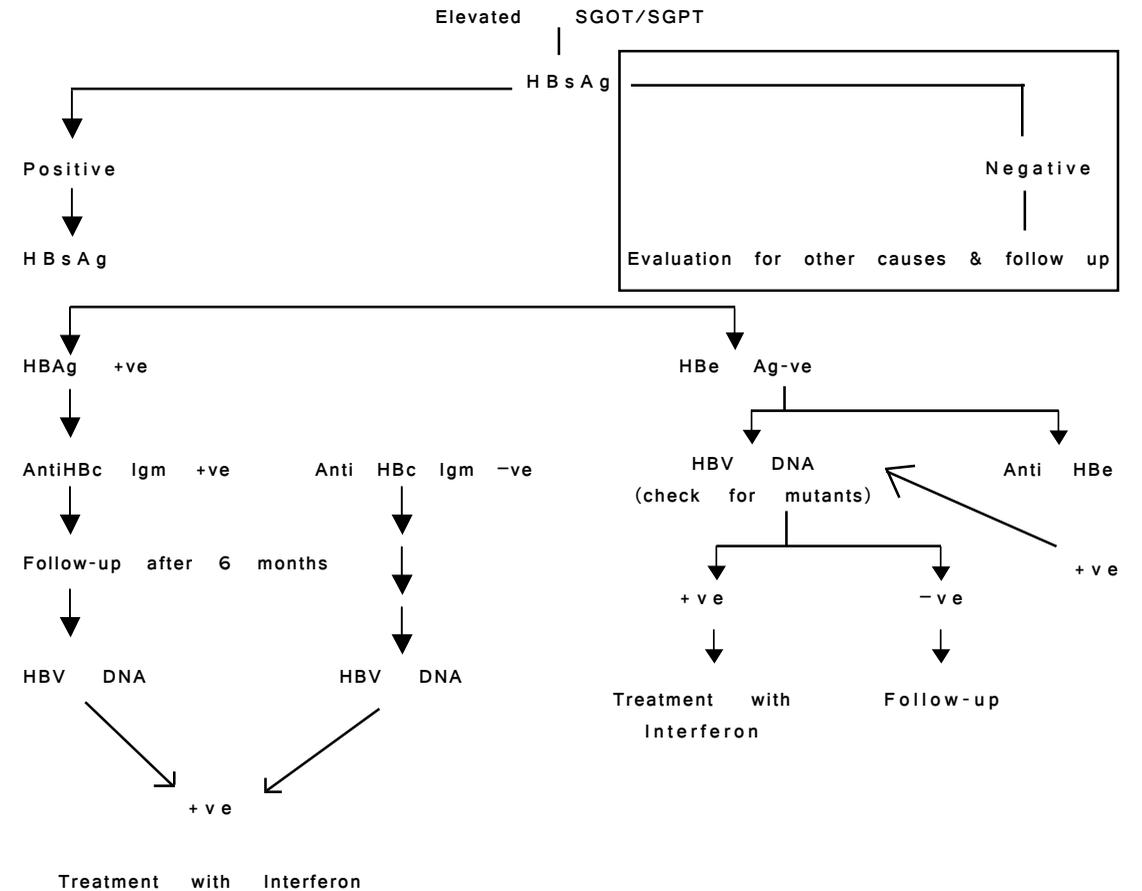
**Result**

Among the blood samples of 514 persons that we have examined for SGPT and HBsAg, 268 are undertrial prisoners of which 37 are drug addicts and of them 5 are needle-sharers. There are 201 long term and short term convicts in this sample, of which 5 are drug addicts but no body is needle-sharer. Among the staff 15 are of executive class, 77 are uniformed staff and 3 are sweepers. On examination we have found that 28 cases have B virus positive antigen in their blood. Either they are carriers or they are suffering silently from the actual disease. These 28 blood samples had been sent for DNA study to detect any active disease process and it is found that 7 of them are actually suffering from the active disease. So the remaining 21 are healthy carriers. Of these 7 persons 3 are drug addicts. So possibly others have contracted the disease either through unsafe sex or contaminated serum. Out of these 7 persons 3 are undertrial ( of which 1 is drug addict), 2 are convicts, 1 is uniformed staff and 1 is sweeper. These 7 persons have been examined clinically and 3 of them found suffering from various chronic illnesses. The rest 4 persons are apparently healthy.

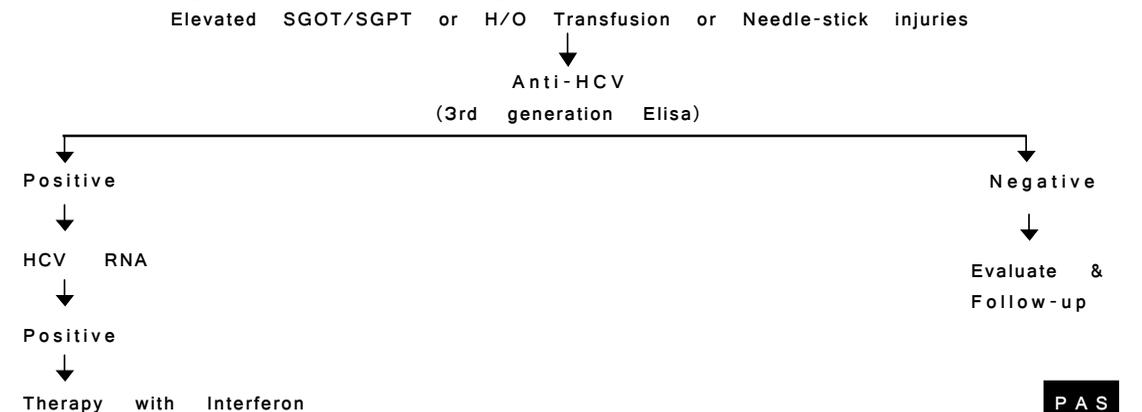
Here statistically we have detected almost 5% population as HBsAg positive cases, while in S.S.K.M. hospital for general population the corresponding figure is 0.5%. This is not an abnormal figure in our case as we have studied this sample among a high risk population group. But the most important information is that we could detect only a single C virus case.

We also tested Anti HCV for Hepatitis C for 62 persons for those with elevated ALT and HBsAg negative ( total number 102), but all came negative. Then, we sent 10 such samples also for HCV RNA for further evaluation among which we found one patient positive for HCV RNA. What we have concluded from this result is that, a good many number of this population group are chronic alcoholics and it is possible some of them are suffering from some chronic disease like pulmonary tuberculosis, etc..

**Suggested Diagnostic Algorithm for Chronic Hepatitis 'B'**



**Suggested Diagnostic Algorithm for Chronic Hepatitis 'C'**



## Information on Music Therapy

*[We do not practice Music Therapy in our regular day to day services for our patients. But it is in regular use in the West. Musicologist **Sutapa Thakur** has collected the following information for the benefit our readers. Ed., PAS]*

### What is Music Therapy

Music Therapy is the prescribed use of music and musical interventions for the purpose of restoring, maintaining and improving emotional, physical, physiological and spiritual health and well-being.

Music therapy treatment is administered by a board-certified music therapist to persons of all ages who require special services because of behavioral, social learning, or physical disabilities.

Music therapy services can be conducted in hospitals, health clinics, day care facilities, schools, mental health centers, substance abuse facilities, nursing homes, hospices, rehabilitation centers, correctional facilities, and private homes.

Music therapy treatment addresses non-musical goals. Therefore, no musical ability is needed in order for the client to benefit from Music Therapy treatment.

### Therapeutic Uses of Music

- 🎵 Music in an effective motivator.
- 🎵 Music provides a safe, structured setting for verbal and non-verbal communication.
- 🎵 Music uses sounds and silences to structure time in an understandable way.
- 🎵 Music provides both structure and freedom through the use of form and improvisation.
- 🎵 Music Provides a meaningful, enjoyable context for repetition.
- 🎵 Music activities encourage social interactions.
- 🎵 Music is an effective memory aid.
- 🎵 Music supports and encourages movement.
- 🎵 Music taps into memories and emotions.
- 🎵 Music provides nonverbal, immediate feedback.
- 🎵 Music activities are easily adapted to each person's abilities.
- 🎵 Music interventions can be designed to be success-oriented.
- 🎵 Music uses concrete concepts that are easily demonstrated and understood-fast & slow, up & loud, hard & soft, long & short, etc..
- 🎵 Music activities utilize many senses at the same time to enhance the learning experience hearing, seeing and feeling

### Music Therapist Qualifications

A qualified music therapist will have current credentials, indicated by the letters "MT-BC" (Music Therapist-Board Certified). These credentials indicate that the therapist has ...

- 🎵 Graduated with a bachelor's degree (or equivalent education) from a university program approved by the American Music Therapy Association (Amta).

- 🎵 Completed 1,040 hours of an approved music therapy internship.
- 🎵 Passed the national competency exam given by the Certification Board for Music Therapists (Cbmt) (Board certification is renewed every five years through retaking the national exam, or by accumulating 100 continuing education credits approved by the CBMT) When rendering music therapy services, a qualified music therapist will ...
- 🎵 Review all pertinent client information, interview appropriate persons involved with the client's current care, and plan and conduct a music therapy assessment session (s).
- 🎵 Provide a written, individualized assessment for each client or group of clients.
- 🎵 Furnish recommendations for or against music therapy treatment based on the assessment.
- 🎵 Provide a written treatment plan stating specific music therapy strategies and techniques that will be used to address the stated goals and objectives.
- 🎵 Plan and lead regular music therapy sessions using strategies and techniques chosen on the basis of the assessment and goals.
- 🎵 Provide regular re-evaluation of the effectiveness of the music interventions being used.
- 🎵 Provide written progress notes on a regular basis documenting each client's progress toward stated goals and objectives.
- 🎵 Dismiss the client from music therapy when the services are no longer necessary or appropriate.

### People Who Can Benefit from Music Therapy

People with the following health issues have benefited from music therapy services :

- 🎵 AIDS
- 🎵 Alzheimer's/Dementia
- 🎵 Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders
- 🎵 Eating Disorders
- 🎵 Emotional Trauma
- 🎵 Hearing Impairments
- 🎵 Learning Disabilities
- 🎵 Mental Illness
- 🎵 Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
- 🎵 Oncology
- 🎵 Pain Control
- 🎵 Palliative/Hospice Care
- 🎵 Physical Disabilities
- 🎵 Speech and Language Impairments
- 🎵 Substance Abuse
- 🎵 Traumatic Brain Injuries
- 🎵 Visual Impairments

### Examples of Music Therapy Goals

Music Therapists work with people of all ages to address limitations in non-musical areas. Below are some examples of music therapy goals listed by skill areas.

#### Communication Skills

- 🎵 to improve expressive language (i.e., ability to communicate thoughts/feelings)
- 🎵 to improve receptive language (i.e., ability to understand)

- 🍰 to improve speech and verbal communication
  - 🍰 to promote effective use of non-verbal communication
- Academic/Behaviour Skills**
- 🍰 to encourage ability to imitate
  - 🍰 to improve ability to comprehend written language
  - 🍰 to improve ability to count and associate numbers with concepts
  - 🍰 to improve ability to discriminate colors
  - 🍰 to promote reality orientation
  - 🍰 to improve memory skills
  - 🍰 to increase on-task behaviour
  - 🍰 to improve ability to follow directions
  - 🍰 to increases participation
  - 🍰 to decrease interfering behaviours
  - 🍰 to promote ability to complete activities of daily living
- Motor Skills**
- 🍰 to maintain/improve fine motor functioning
  - 🍰 to maintain/improve gross motor functioning
  - 🍰 to promote identification of body parts
  - 🍰 to improve reach/grasp/release skills
  - 🍰 to maintain/improve range of motion
  - 🍰 to improve eye/hand coordination
  - 🍰 to improve auditory and visual perception
- Emotional Skills**
- 🍰 to increase verbal/non-verbal expression of feeling
  - 🍰 to improve self-esteem
  - 🍰 to improve impulse control
  - 🍰 to increase attention span
  - 🍰 to develop coping skills
  - 🍰 to decrease stress and anxiety
  - 🍰 to facilitate the grieving process
  - 🍰 to teach relaxation techniques
  - 🍰 to facilitate exploration of spiritual concerns
- Social Skills**
- 🍰 to improve social interaction with others
  - 🍰 to improve appropriate eye contact
  - 🍰 to increase ability to touch others appropriately
  - 🍰 to increase willingness to be touched by others
  - 🍰 to increase ability to share materials and equipment with others
  - 🍰 to improve ability to accept constructive criticism from others
  - 🍰 to improve ability to make choices and initiate responses
  - 🍰 to improve ability to accept praise and give praise to others
  - 🍰 to decrease isolation
  - 🍰 to improve ability to participate in appropriate play activities
  - 🍰 to improve interpersonal skills
  - 🍰 to build relationships
- Leisure Skills**

- 🍰 to develop skill to participate in appropriate leisure time activities
  - 🍰 to develop knowledge of available leisure time activities
- Other Skills**
- 🍰 to decrease pain
  - 🍰 to teach pain management skills
  - 🍰 to promote independence
  - 🍰 to facilitate reminiscence and life review
  - 🍰 to develop creativity and sense of identify

### **Other Music Therapy Links**

American Music Therapy Association (AMTA)

The mission of the American Music Therapy Association is to advance public awareness of the benefits of music therapy and increase access to quality music therapy services in a rapidly changing world.

The Certification Board for Music Therapists (Cbmt)

The credential, Music Therapist-Board Certified (MT-BC), is granted by the Certification Board for Music Therapists (Cbmt) to identify music therapists who have demonstrated the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to practice at the current level of the profession. The purpose of board certification in music therapy is to provide an objective national standard that can be used as a measure of professionalism by interested agencies, groups and individuals.

Prelude Music Therapy

Additional information on music therapy in the schools, a good site to learn about how to get music therapy included on the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) of a special education student.

P A S

## **Challenges of Urbanisation**

**Padip Sen**

*[This article is sourced from an issue of Population Reports published by The Johns Hopkins Bloomsbergh School of Public Health, USA.*

*Population in urban areas grow one million people every week, and at this rate half of worlds population will within four years live in urban areas. The challenges for governments to meet this rapid urbanisation, poverty, development and protection of natural environment will be major and critical. The report deals with issues in developing countries throughout the world. For reason of relevance, however, statistics quoted here have emphasised on Asia and our neighbourhood.* – Editor, PAS]

### **An Urban Future**

Recent studies indicate that the world is approaching a turning point with half of its population becoming urban within 4 years. At that time urban population is projected to reach 3.2 billion, which will be larger than the global population of 1967, only 40 years earlier. By 2030 about 5 billion people will be in urban areas, equivalent to 60% of the projected global population of 8.8 billion.

Over the next 30 years urban population of developing countries is projected to grow annually at 2.4% average rate which is twice the over all population growth in the developed world. As a result it will double to nearly 4 billion by 2030. In contrast the increase in urban population of developed countries is insignificant from 900 million in 2000 to 1 billion in 2030.

### **Developing World Urbanizing**

As in the case of total population, most of the world's urban population lives in developing countries. In 2000, for example, China had total 464 million urban residents, India 279 million and Brazil 138 million, together almost equal to the entire developed world.

Except in Latin America, the developing world is much less urban than the developed world. On the whole in developing countries 40% of the population now live in urban areas, projected to rise to 56% by 2030. By then every developing nation is projected to have an urban majority. However the level and pace of urbanization will widely vary between developing regions and countries. By 2030 Latin America, which is already urbanized, will gain 217 million, Asia 1.3 billion of which India will account for 297 million, Pakistan 86 million and Bangladesh 64 million.

Settlements expand and become urban for different reasons. In developing countries it reflects three basic factors (i) migration from rural and other areas, (ii) natural population increase (iii) reclassification of rural as urban areas. As a result, population growth in rural areas is at a virtual standstill. Asia's rural population in certain countries will however continue to grow including Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan.

People will continue to leave rural areas to escape adverse rural conditions and to take advantage of the opportunities in urban areas. Examples of such factors are deteriorating quantity and quality of agricultural lands, poor market infrastructures and lack of supporting institutions like agricultural credit for small scale farmers. In comparison urban areas offer better job opportunities, education, health care and higher living standards. Big cities are economic centres like Bangkok has only 12% of Thailand population but contributes 38% of its GDP.

One of the main challenges of urbanization will be to spread the benefits of development from big cities to smaller urban centres principally through effective decentralisation and transfer of resources and authority from central to local levels.

### **The Urban Poor**

Although most poor people in developing countries live in rural areas, urban poverty is also widespread and growing.

In 1988 World Bank had estimated that around 300 million urban poor in the developing world were living on \$1 (ca Rs 45) per day. This increased to 495 million in 2000. In over half of the developing countries at least one urban resident out of every five lives below the national poverty line.

While Sub-Sahara Africa has the highest levels of urban poverty, in Asia the highest percentages are 30% in India and 38% in Mongolia. By contrast in Latin America it varies from 8% of the urban population in Colombia to 57% in Honduras.

These income based statistics have to be cautiously interpreted and the true extent of urban poverty is greater than they suggest, as these do not reflect the effects of inadequate housing, lack of clean water and sanitation. Further, urban poverty may be more debilitating

than rural poverty, since access to nearly all goods and services depend on cash income. Also, services normally provided free in rural areas by government like education including fees, books and transportation usually carry costs in urban areas. Urban residents have to buy most of their food which is substantially grown by their rural counterparts – it is also more expensive. Urban households spend 60% to 80% of their income on food and pay upto 30% more for it than rural households.

### **Insufficient Incomes**

Economic crises during the 1990s in developing countries have resulted in rising poverty, with falling wages and rising prices of goods and services. Lower buying power from slipping wages and the resultant fall in demand for goods and services results in further unemployment. Urban Managers and government officials in several Asian countries have reported urban economics being affected, with loss in jobs and income due to reduced demand for manufactured goods, transport and other services and increase in price of food and utilities due to inflation.

Most urban poverty result from lack of well paying steady jobs. As economic conditions worsen, a growing percentage of people shift from employment in the formal economy to the informal labour market. Employment in the informal sector is less secure and with lower income, characterised by incorporated business and small scale enterprises, based on casual employment rather than contractual arrangements. Within the informal sector the urban poor work in a variety of jobs, like street vendors, petty traders, taxi drivers, security services like night watchmen or car park attendants, janitorial services, and even begging and commercial sex—all these have low status, low wages, long hours and perhaps insecure conditions.

### **Inadequate Housing and Services**

Around the world over 1 billion urban residents live in inadequate housing, mostly in slums and squatter settlements with poor living conditions and insufficient services. Urban slums include high density dwellings and squatter settlements, in many cases land poorly suited to housing, e.g. on floodplains or steep hillsides, and prone to damages from natural disasters. Slum residents usually lack security of tenure and several million urban dwellers are forcibly evicted each year. About 20 million to 40 million urban families are estimated to be homeless, either having been evicted or cannot afford housing even illegally.

Security of tenure is difficult because of inefficient, complicated and expensive property registration processes. Many governments also hesitate to legalise for fear of encouraging more illegal settlement. However legal housing is expensive for the urban poor, and also scarce. In fact, most urban poor earn too little to save for a legal house and also do not have access to any credit from formal institution.

People in slums often have to pay more than other urban residents for services, and that too of a lower quality. For example, due to scarcity of public water supplies low income urban residents often have to buy water from vendors at higher than rates charged to the public. In Istanbul, Turkey vendors charge 10 times the public rate, while in Mumbai, India, they charge 20 times. Poor households often spend 5% to 10% of their income to buy water.

### **Health Burdens**

Urban residents in developing countries generally have better health than the rural dwellers,

due to availability of better health care and living conditions. Infant and child mortality rates are lower in urban areas than in the countryside. Within urban areas however, the urban poor face many more health risks than the average urban resident. Infant mortality is generally higher in the less developed urban areas, and health conditions sometimes even worse than that for the rural poor. The extent of childhood illnesses is closely related to poverty levels and to the quality and extent of health care, clean water supply and sanitation.

Basic services needed for good health often do not reach the urban poor because municipal authorities do not recognise many informal settlements for political and administrative reasons.

Although UN and World Bank agree that on average 20% of national budgets in developing countries and 20% of international aid should be allocated to extending these basic services, primary health care, basic education, family planning, water and sanitation and nutrition, to all people both urban and rural, in the vast majority of countries average expenditure was only 12% of total government spending—from 8% in Lebanon to 17% in Nepal.

In urban areas, the poor usually suffer most from a lack of basic services but are the last to be included in urban planning and infrastructure improvements, reflecting their lack of political power and influence.

#### **Pollution and Health**

Pollution causes many deaths and much illness among urban residents. In developing countries wastes often foul urban water supplies and clean water is scarce. Atmosphere pollution and indoor air pollution affect both developed and developing countries.

#### **Water and Sanitation**

Urbanisation substantially increases per capita use of fresh water. As a result of fast population growth from urbanisation, scarce water supplies and poor sanitation water supply by governments often fall short of demand. At least one third of urban water supplies in Africa and Latin America and one half in Asia operate only intermittently. As a result people turn to other sources of water which are more expensive and / or unsafe.

Urban water supplies are often contaminated for various reasons, like discharge of untreated industrial waste, leaching from waste dumps, inadequate treatment of sewage and poor solid waste management. Few cities in developing countries have adequate sewerage systems, and these are often limited to more advantaged areas. Purification and recycling of waste water in sewage treatment plants is rare. In Asia for example treatment plants process only about 35% of waste water and in Latin America about 14%. Worldwide two thirds of the sewage from urban areas is pumped untreated into lakes, rivers and coastal waters. Access to improved sanitation, meaning a flush toilet, a sanitary latrine or a pit that can be covered is even worse with nearly two thirds of the urban population in developing countries being the sufferers.

#### **Water Related Diseases**

Worldwide 2.3 billion people suffer from diseases linked to water related problems. Nearly half of urban residents in Africa Asia and Latin America suffer from one or more of the diseases related to water quality and sanitation, such as diarrhea, schistosomiasis, trachoma, ascariasis, trichuriasis and hookworm. Diarrheal diseases alone account for nearly 90% of such health problems relating to water supply and sanitation. Poor food hygiene, lack of

sanitation or unsafe drinking water also cause cholera in endemic form.

#### **Outdoor Air Pollution**

The air in large cities is often unhealthy. WHO guidelines call for levels of suspended particulate matter in air not higher than 60 to 90 micrograms per cubic metre. Many cities in Latin America have recorded levels between 100 to 400 micrograms. Levels recorded in 1991 in some cities in Asia exceeded the guidelines, e.g. Beijing for 272 days, Jakarta 173 days, Mumbai 100 days and New Delhi 294 days. The situation has worsened since due to growing population, with more industry, more household and more motor vehicles. According to a 2000 estimate vehicle exhausts account for 70% of air pollution in New Delhi.

In the developed world environmental standards are generally stricter than in developing countries, but energy consumption is greater and levels of air pollution often exceed the standards.

Outdoor air pollution is usually a problem of developed countries, with their high industrial activity and vehicle use. However, more than 70% of deaths from outdoor air pollution in developing countries occur due to their larger population and less strict pollution standards. In Asia with half of world's urban population more than 1.5 million people die annually due to air pollution related diseases, India alone accounting for 40,000 premature deaths.

Worldwide the health costs of urban air pollution approaches US\$ 1 billion per year. In developed countries it is about 2% of GDP and in developing countries between 5% and 20% of GDP.

#### **Indoor Air Pollution**

Although indoor air pollution affects health mainly in rural areas, the urban poor also suffer from its effects. Some estimates suggest that urban indoor air pollution kills about 600,000 people annually worldwide.

Worldwide almost 3 billion people rely on biomass fuels—wood, charcoal and animal dung—for cooking and heating, resulting in indoor air pollution. These fuels do not burn cleanly, causing smoke, often directly inside dwellings without proper ventilation. This is true in China, India and parts of Africa where 80% of households use biomass fuels for cooking.

While rural areas do not have modern stoves and clean fuel, urban poor cannot afford cleaner fuels like kerosene, gas or electricity. Women and children who spend a large part of their time in their homes are the worst sufferers.

Most urban air pollution initiatives focus on cutting outdoor pollution, but cleaning up indoor air is also a compelling public health need. Actions which can help include technical approaches like attaching chimneys to stoves to remove smoke, increase combustion in stoves to reduce emissions, increase ventilation in kitchens and promote use of kerosene, gas and electricity. This can be encouraged through appropriate fuel pricing and subsidies for clean burning appliances and clean fuels.

#### **Impact on the Environment**

Rapid urbanisation can create enormous stresses on the natural environment. For example urban areas occupy just 2% of the earth's surface but account for around 75% of industrial wood use. Similarly, about 60% of water withdrawn goes to urban areas, for irrigation, for industrial use and for drinking and sanitation.

#### **The Urban Environment**

Alongwith increase in city population of developing countries, there is also increase in per capita resource consumption, water and air pollution, and soil degradation and contamination. Another reason for pressure on environment is number of households has grown faster than population, reflecting a trend towards smaller families and the average number of people in a household.

A range of economic, political and social factors also have effects on environment. For example unplanned, unregulated and haphazard development can affect surrounding environment through unsanitary disposal of wastes and air and water pollution.

Absence of regulatory controls shows lack of control for environment and can contribute to tragic industrial accidents, like the accident in 1984 at the Union Carbide plant in Bhopal, India where toxic gas clouds caused 3330 deaths and 150,000 injuries.

Economic growth can provide jobs and better living standards for some, but also contributes to urban environmental problems. For example in many developing countries, waste is dumped in open sites and wetlands or is incinerated without proper air pollution controls.

The burden of urban environmental problems falls disproportionately on the poor. For example if municipalities do not collect solid waste, the poor have to dispose their garbage through uncontrolled dumping, or without access to suitable land for housing, many families settle on wetlands or steep hillsides, facing great risk from natural and human induced hazards.

#### **Making Urban Areas Work**

With the fast growth of urban areas in developing countries, the problem will soon be : how to make urban areas work. Today, few urban areas are equipped to meet the challenge. In fact, many are growing in population so fast that their economics, services and infrastructure cannot keep up. Most developing countries lack the resources and ability to deal with the complex and massive problems. However, steps can be taken to address urban problems better, improve urban governance, upgrade slums and provide alternatives to new slums, curb pollution and manage waste disposal better.

#### **Improving Urban Governance**

Governance is more than government. It includes not only organisation of and relationships between political and administrative institutions but also relationships among government, private institutions and civil society.

How can urban governance improve? A new consensus is emerging that national government should not retain direct control over the planning and management of urban areas, but instead act as enablers, creating legislative and administrative environments for local governments, private sector firms and community organisations to provide infrastructure and services. Decentralising power, authority and responsibility to local governments will enhance local participation and encourage democratic practices. It will improve effectiveness of public policy implementation and produce more efficient and responsive policies and programmes to meet local preferences and needs.

Three main conditions in a decentralised situation are first, budget authority to devolve to the municipal level. Main sources of municipal revenue are local taxes and transfers from central to local governments and without this crucial revenue, municipal governments will have little ability to operate. Second, the administrative capacity of local governments must

grow, with proper training in areas like accounting, public administration, financial management, public communication and community relations. Third decentralisation should be inclusive—that is authorities ask about and respond to community needs and community members participate in decision making. This helps ensure responsiveness and accountability in public decision-making, and can be through elections and referenda, opinion surveys, open meetings and by setting up advisory groups of community committees.

#### **Improving the Lives of Urban Poor**

In 2000, the UN General Assembly reaffirmed its commitment to eliminate poverty. Specifically, the immediate goal was to improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020, focussing on upgrading the squalid and unserved urban slums and squatter settlements. This is a modest goal with slum dwellers projected to reach 1.5 billion by then.

Poverty will worsen if economic growth falls short of population growth. On the other hand, if governments institute sound social and economic policies, slower population growth encourages economic growth.

Social and economic policies of local governments can include relaxing restrictions on informal labour market to increase income opportunities, support small scale enterprises with access to credit and land, provide alternative jobs to people affected by automation, invest in education and health and reduce gender in-equality. At the community level, improve housing conditions and provide affordable and adequate basic services like water and sanitation.

Upgrading slums, at a minimum involves assuring basic infrastructure and services like clean water supply and proper sewage disposal, and constructing community facilities like health clinics. Fundamental to the success of a slum upgrading programme is providing security of housing.

Improving living conditions in slums need not cost enormous sums to government. According to World Bank estimates, when spread over a 20 year period, programme for improving slums in developing countries could be implemented at a total cost of 0.2% to 0.5% of GDP.

It is essential for community members to participate in slum improvement programmes to provide "ownership" and also more most effective solutions.

The help of donor agencies to support better governance and to provide funding for implementation of projects cannot be overlooked.

#### **Improving Water Supplies and Sanitation**

Municipal governments can improve water supplies and sanitation with community participation. Providing an adequate water supply and improving public sanitation are two steps most needed to prevent majority of water related diseases and deaths in urban areas. For better sanitation, constructing sanitary latrines, building sewers and treating waste water to biodegrade human wastes help curb diseases. Simple technologies as handpumps and improved latrines have helped millions of people across the world.

From both economic and environment considerations, saving water is more effective than trying to find or develop new sources of water. Managing demand helps more efficient and equitable provision of clean water supplies. For example portable water is often used where lower quality of water would be acceptable, like flushing toilets, wash vehicles and

clean streets.

Sanitation can be improved with on-site, like latrines, and off-site, like conventional sewage treatment, technologies. Better on-site sanitation can be achieved with dry non-flush latrines which are cheap, easy to operate and inexpensive to maintain; these are also better suited where water supply is limited and land available to dig new latrines and cover up old ones. Off-site technologies however are more expensive, require skilled labour for construction and need constant maintenance. With planning they can however be implemented at low cost in urban areas like the Orangi Pilot Project in Karachi, Pakistan. It is one of the world's best known community efforts to provide affordable sanitation and waste water management.

### Carbing Air Pollution

WHO estimates that 360,000 to 700,000 lives could be saved annually by bringing suspended particulates to safe levels in the cities of developing countries. High levels of air pollution make controlling vehicle emissions a top priority in some urban areas in Asia and Latin America. Reducing the dependence on private vehicles is a fundamental step for all urban areas. Santiago, Brazil is currently overhauling its transport system to encourage greater use of public transport and also shifting to clean and alternative fuels.

Setting aside more land for parks and green areas also helps curb air pollution and reduce urban temperatures. Trees and other vegetation act as natural air conditioners, cooling the air while absorbing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen. Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority in India, for example, developed and maintains a nature park to help clean up Mumbai and decrease pollution levels.

#### Mahim Nature Park

Mumbai is one of most populous cities in the world, and also one of the most polluted cities. It reports average levels of total suspended particles at nearly 240 micrograms against the WHO standard of 60 to 90 micrograms per cubic metre.

Mahim Nature Park project highlights importance of green spaces to cleaning up Mumbai and decreasing pollution levels. Twenty years ago the 37 acre Park was a city garbage dump with slums on one side and the polluted Mahim Creek on the other. Today it is an ecologically developed nature park maintained by Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority. It provides residents a green and unpolluted area, and serves as an educational resource, offering instruction in ecology and nature conservation, particularly for children. It is home to a wide variety of birds, trees and plants.

### Recycling Wastes

Recycling urban wastes into new resources helps environmentally and economically. It saves natural resources, reduces trash being burnt, buried in landfills or dumped into rivers, lakes and coastal waters and also creates jobs in both developing and developed countries.

Some industrialised countries now require plastic bottle and other throw-away items to be recycled. A few pioneering countries are promoting industrial symbiosis. Where one company's waste becomes the raw material for another. Denmark formed the first integrated industrial park almost two decades ago where companies have developed a sophisticated symbiotic process. A local power plant, for example, burns waste gases from an oil refinery,

and in turn its waste heat warms commercial fishponds.

In poor countries which cannot afford high-tech solutions, armies of rag pickers sort through garbage for items that can be sold or recycled. This informal system provides a public service, and also provides employment and income. In Mumbai, for instance, an association of 2000 women collects and recycles wastes from households and municipal dumps around the city.

### A Way Forward

No single set of policies can meet the challenges of an urban future. Rather, a sensible approach is necessary to manage urban governance. Better governance is essential to improve urban living condition. National governments should move towards being the enabler and local governments have more direct control over planning and management. For this national governments need to devolve authority and responsibility to local governments who need stronger capability. Public participation is also essential.

Urban settlements can meet the challenges of population growth if planning and action considers inter-related factors like land use, slum upgrading, improved water supply, sanitation and waste management.

PAS

## The Path Itself will show me the Way

Gopal Halder

[ This article has been written as an Introduction of Dr. Dhirendranath Ganguly's book '*Bichhinnatar Bhabisyat*' 2nd vol. in the year 1973. Ed. PAS.]

Dr. Dhirendranath Ganguly is today not merely a well-known name in Bengali literature. Through his scientific mind he has not only initiated but is also a pioneer of a special trend in writing and drama. A specific section of Bengali readers have become attracted to and are keen for the ease and qualities of his writings. I consider this to be much more valuable to an author than any commercial successes. I sincerely hope and pray for a healthy and long life for him, and that his efforts continue uninterrupted and unopposed. He has honoured me with this request to introduce his book.

Mental illness affects not only the individual but also society. As far as I am aware its origin and the best way for its prevention and management has not yet been found in any country. Only after the cause is established can a proper programme be drawn up for any action. Where the cause is not well controlled, complex, it is nearly impossible to see the success or benefits of any action plan. Compared to other countries where this problem has a high incidence, we are much more limited by poverty, illiteracy, immorality, malnutrition, superstitions and a form of social structure (like caste, creed etc.). I cannot see an early freedom from this limitations. I am now nearly eighty six years old, I have not yet seen any indications of freedom of intelligence or intelligence for freedom. ( I'll be happy if I am proved wrong). From this tragedy and its foolish and unrestricted naive self satisfaction and self-conceit we find the birth and growth of another individualistic social illness - known as alienation. The first part of this book is on this subject. Man today has somehow become a prey to this alienation. It is not always possible to consciously understand this alienation. The author has discussed this from various angles in the first part. It has also been said that the

only way to freedom from alienation is self-analysis, insight and conscious application.

The author himself is a psychiatrist. I am not capable of going into his field of specialisation, neither is it called for. There is absolutely no doubt on the great service he is giving to the social life today with his Pavlov Institute, the related magazine *Manabmon* and his professional colleagues. In this his articles have on many occasions been published and discussed in *Manabmon*. Here he has also published his editorial contributions on writings by other authors. From the point of social discrimination there are discussions on how society is dealing with the acceptance or rejection of caste related problems, efforts of national unity, religious differences, the problems of the aborigines (and the widespread political conflicts which are much more deep-rooted problems). Even though being aware of the value of these compositions it seems less than one percent is being put into practice. Notwithstanding this and being an optimist I feel that the manner in which the author through his work and vision has considered and analysed all the data and information these will, may be not immediately but certainly ultimately, have an influence on our divided and limited middle class lives. Personally speaking it is my belief that the author of this collection will be one of the main pioneers of achieving this. All others who help with their interest and responsibility also deserve our appreciation.

'The path will show me the way' - even in the world of science this saying has an undisputed significance. The middle class life is an alienated truth - 'middle class' is an alienated entity. It is given its own characteristics for its thoughts, aims, way of living, etc. We may see some variations at different levels. This problem is seen more in the upper class of society in Western Countries. Although we should try and avoid following them, it is unfortunate that a similar kind of education, and social behaviour is influencing some of the social levels of our poor country, and as a result the problems of this middle class, which is fast approaching destruction, is not reducing but only increasing. From this point of view I feel our experiences remains incomplete. This is completed only when all the functions and faults (and here we must remember the term organic) of all its internal parts remains in the forefront and within our control. Neither of these two have as yet been possible for people like us or our official, unofficial, semi-official efforts. There also the manner in which the author of this collection has expressed his views as a healthy optimist deserves our grateful thanks and felicitation. With all sincerity I wish that this work will not only remain a part of history, his information and data will be further analysed and verified and future generations will also continue to use these as a basis for their own efforts. In today's world I have no alternative except to hope for this. I also firmly believe that for Dr. Ganguly with his healthy and learned mind of a scientific minded psychiatrist, he had no other way to dedicate the fruits of his thoughts and ideas. I am also extremely pleased that I have been associated at least as a sectator to this ultimate conversion of his efforts.

Finally I will say only one thing. No data or information is ever lasting. This great world from time immemorial has a history of trying to find the right direction from amongst the many battered by trials and tribulations and this is getting increasingly complex and complicated everyday.

Has anybody come to the end of science and knowledge ? But even that incomplete knowledge is within the grasp of our life and mind. This is where we see the pride and glory of the human mind. While writing the introduction to this collection of writings by Dr. Ganguly and realising the pride he must have felt in his dedicated life I am indeed proud of him, the readers during his and my period and certainly myself also.

P A S

## Bhudeb Mukhopadhyay's Critique of Colonial Science

Ashish Lahiri

A member of the Bengal Educational Service (First Class), eventually retiring as a member of the famous Hunter Commission, Bhudeb Mukhopadhyay (1827-1894), a contemporary of Vidyasagar, had been a brilliant student at the Hindu College, where Madhusudan Dutt was his friend and class mate. Apart from his highly successful professional career as an educationist, he is well-known as an incisive social commentator. His *Samajik Prabandha* (Social Essays) is easily one of the fine specimens of early sociological research in Bengali. It is on this book that we shall concentrate in order to examine his observations in relation to modern science, colonialism and Hinduism.

Bhudeb identifies seven attributes as typically 'Western'. 1) Selfishness, 2) Progress, 3) Equality, 4) This-worldliness, 5) Individualism, 6) Scientific attitude and 7) Socially representative character of the rulers. He goes into a detailed analysis of these attributes and in each case shows that either the attribute was already there in ancient Indian society or that it is absurd. Overall, the ancient Hindu society was a competent organisation, save and except its relative neglect for 'material science' - this in a nutshell sums up Bhudeb's thesis. For example, discarding the concept of Equality as absurd, he goes on to show the greatness of *varnashram-dharma* (caste system) in these terms :

It is because of the caste system that the glory of money is curbed to some extent. Caste is unattainable by wealth. Thus in a society based on caste, wealth cannot stand for all honour and glory.

It is thanks to the caste system that India's arts and craft have attained such great heights.

According to Manu, except for the Brahmin caste, who are the teachers of the society, all others can take up any profession of their choice. And indeed, that is what they had done.

None of the Hindu castes think they are much inferior to the other castes, except, of course, to the Brahmins.

By maintaining the exclusiveness of each caste, the caste system also preserves the self-esteem of each caste to an extent. So this system is particularly laudable in the context of a dependent country. (104-105)\*

I quote this merely to show the typically retrograde character of Bhudeb's nationalism. No wonder a contemporary of Bhudeb's wrote : 'Bhudev with his C.I.E. and 1500 a month is still anti-British.'

**Science : The clue to Western Superiority**

But that is not my main contention here. My aim would be to analyse in some detail Bhudeb's

*\*The numbers in parentheses indicate the page numbers of Samajik Prabandha (1907 edition). Translation mine. - A.L.*

ideas on what he calls 'Scientific Attitude' (*Vaigyanikata*). To this I will proceed now.

Bhudeb writes :

Science is the vital thing. Europeans have grown much more formidable than any other people on earth by increasing their wealth and power through the cultivation of science. (118)

Let us see what this science is and then we shall see whether we are getting it. (120)

With this he embarks on a every cogent discussion on the difference between the Indian and the Western methods of scientific proof. He says :

Generally speaking, the Europeans ... do not accept as valid any kind of proof other than the positive. (123)

On the vitally important question of experimentation and falsification, Bhudeb writes with remarkable clarity :

European scientists ... take great pains to examine witnesses other than the major positive one and to question them in very many ways. This method is called experimentation. It is because of this that the right answers are available every time. And it is this that breeds the Scientific Attitude. (123)

Scientific Attitude, then, is something which comprises, among others, the following principles :

1. Empirical observation is the agreed basis of all proof.
2. Other kinds of proof may be acceptable, but only when they agree with main empirical observation.
3. Experimentation is a must before accepting the complete validity of empirically observed proof.

Having said so much, Bhudeb concludes :

The learned of India had lost this attitude, hence the progress of almost all the material sciences here had been stalled long ago. It is because of the indulgence of this Scientific Attitude that the new Europeans are excelling in the material sciences. (123)

Talking of modern India, he admits that the failure to differentiate between 'positively known substances' and the 'psychology generated by those substances' has given rise to a 'fault - there has been a confusion between what is an idea and what is a substance' (125).

Having established the essential nature of modern science and the fact that India has lost touch with this science, Bhudeb next proceeds to examine the situation that prevailed in Bengal in the mid-19th century in relation to science teaching as practised in the official educational institutions. The literate section of India, he says, consisted of three segments: 1. Brahmin pundits (i.e., Sanskrit scholars), 2. the learned Moulavis (i.e., Arabic and Persian scholars) and 3. the English educated moderns. Leaving aside the first two, he examines the depth and extent of the scientific attitude of the last group. Castigating the teaching of science in English language, he firmly asserts that unless the new facts and ideas are presented to the students in a language and manner familiar to them, assimilation cannot be satisfactory.

Learning science by rote has led to a ridiculous situation, of which he gave numerous examples.

Next he draws attention to a curious fact regarding the teaching of science in the

colleges.

Those who teach science in the colleges here come from Cambridge and other universities. Most of them are not well read in the science subjects. Some of them, it is true, are good at mathematic, but almost none are skilful in conducting experiments. Science education without experiments is a farce. The level of education being such as it is, the laws of European science learnt by a student may remain in his memory till the coming yearly test, but that does not generate a scientific insight. (129)

This is one aspect. The other is :

Here there is practically no science-based industry. So whether at college or outside it, our students never have a chance to observe or implement scientific facts. (130)

He also rues the fact that Indians returning from Europe with a degree in Agricultural Chemistry find 'coveted' employment as Deputy Magistrates! (One has only to remember the case of the poet Dwijendralal Roy) It is interesting to note that many decades later Prafulla Chandra Ray, the doyen of Indian inorganic chemistry, was to lament that in the early stages of science teaching in India, science was treated merely as a 'metaphysical curiosity' and not as a factor responsible for either intellectual or industrial development.

### The All-Hindu Paradigm

It is plain that Bhudeb not only diagnosed the characteristics of modern 'ecumenical' science rightly, he clearly demarcated its differences with ancient Indian methodology too. He also expressed himself as a firm advocate of ecumenical science. Logically one would expect the next step to be a condemnation of the factors that have hindered its development in India. This is precisely what Vidyasagar and Akshoy Kumar Datta were doing. Without denying the value of the *shastras* as literature, they unambiguously pointed at their uselessness in terms of scientific epistemology and methodology. The paradigm they were trying to posit was somewhat like this. Modern science is the sine qua non for progress => Baconian inductive methodology is at the root of scientific advancement => The major Hindu philosophies did not allow for the development of this methodology => Hindu *shastras* have not anticipated modern scientific theories => Science should be studied independently of metaphysics and religion. But not so with Bhudeb! He establishes himself as a staunch mouthpiece of all that was anti-science and socially despicable in ancient Indian thought, including the abominable caste system - as we have already seen. He would have both the worlds. Far from criticising most of the Hindu scriptures for their anti-scientific vision, he affirmed that if Indians were sufficiently well-read in modern science, it would have resulted in their

conscious deification of the ancient scriptural doctrines and rituals. They would then have understood that ... unlike the religious scriptures of other countries, the Arya scriptures are not at variance with science. In fact, many of the facts newly discovered by European science have been foreshadowed in the Arya *shastras*. Science has to travel a very long distance before it can approximate the full import of the facts related in the *shastras*.' (296)

Although ancient Indians did not do much experimentation about the 'external and material world,' This is proved by the development of such systems as *Hathayoga* and *Rajyoga*. 'Those who belittle these systems as imaginary things only betray the narrowness

of their experience. The pursuit of yoga is an exercise in the system of positive proof only.' (124)

Here then we find a clear formulation of another paradigm : Modern Europe has prospered by pursuing science => So science is 'the vital thing' => Science has developed at the cost of religion, particularly Christianity => Hindu *shastras* have anticipated modern science => Hence, the study of science and the observance of Hinduism were mutually complementary. Later, Swami Vivekananda was to build up a superb edifice on this very basis.

P A S

## Religion As Surrogate : Case Study of a Bengali Patriot (Continued)

Ramkrishna                      Bhattacharya

[What follows is the second part of a monograph on Brahmabandhab Upadhyay (1861-1907), one of the prime movers of the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal (1905-08). *Sandhya*, the Bengali evening daily he edited, brought anti-imperialist politics to the masses. But most of his life he was engaged in religious quest – from traditional Hinduism to Brahmoism, and from Brahmoism to Christianity, at first as a Protestant and then as a Catholic. Only a few weeks before his death he volunteered to perform a penance (*prayaschitta*) and wore the sacred thread again.

What made this man tick? How was religion related to his strong nationalist feelings? The case study seeks to find answers to these questions.]

The life of Brahmabandhab Upadhyay, as noted above, was one of constant oscillation, not only between quietude and restlessness but also between patriotism and piety. Of the two pairs of opposites, it was restlessness and patriotism that dominated Upadhyay's life. His patriotism was evident even in his early youth. He believed that India could not be liberated without the use of force. He said as much ("Not through pen but through sword") to Ananda Mohan Bose (1847-1906), a Brahma reformer, Moderate in politics.<sup>30</sup> When Bose tried to dissuade him, Upadhyay felt rather discouraged but did not give up the idea. He fled from home to learn the art of warfare. Before he and his friends could reach Gwalior, they were brought back to their home. Upadhyay (then Bhabanicharan) was made to join the Metropolitan Institution (now Vidyasager College) Kolkata, but his heart was not in his studies. He took to drugs – Siddhi (leaves of the cannabis plant used as sedative). However, when Prof. Surendra Nath Banerjea in the English class asked, "Who among you would be Mazzini and Garibaldi? Upadhyay would join others in clapping and replying, "All, all".<sup>31</sup>

He ran away from home to Gwalior again, this time all alone. Nothing however came out of his meeting with the General of Sindhia's army. The old man pleaded his inability to enrol Upadhyay in the army.

This is how the first chapter of Upadhyay's life came to a close. As an adolescent of fourteen or fifteen he had started attending the political lectures of Surendra Nath Banerjea and Kalicharan Banurji (who happened to be Upadhyay's uncle). But he instinctively felt that speeches would not suffice, India must resort to arms to free herself from foreign rule.<sup>32</sup>

Disappointed with the Moderates, Upadhyay opted for the obvious surrogate, namely,

religion. As expected, he could not find what he had sought for. So as alternatives he drifted from Ramkrishna Paramhansa to Keshuv Chandra Sen, then to the Church of England and finally the Universal Catholic Church.

I have used the word "finally", but there was no full stop in the life of this restless man. And the fighter in him could never be suppressed. Although the Catholics in India did not directly belong to the English ruling class, proselytizing was done mostly by European missionaries, whether Protestant or Catholic. Upadhyay opted for Catholicism and waged war against European imperialism within the fold of the Catholic Church itself. The quiet life of a pedagogue or of a Christian Journalist could never satisfy his inner urge to find some antagonist or other to contend with. So we find him dogging the footsteps of Annie Besant, the theosophist, Swami Vivekananda, the neo-Vedantin and the Arya Samaji preachers. After 1900 however Upadhyay forgot all animosity against Swami Vivekananda and even accepted him as the leader of the "Vedanta Vijnana".<sup>33</sup>

However, this is not the whole story. While continuing his crusade against theosophy and neo-Vedanta and Arya Samaji doctrines, he was also at loggerheads with the superiors of his own chosen Faith. And let it be noted here that there was no dearth of provocation on either side. Upadhyay revelled in controversy: it was the very bread and butter of his existence. And his superiors also retaliated, almost blow for blow. So at the end of the nineteenth century, there was no love lost between Upadhyay and the ecclesiastical authorities.

The clash began when Upadhyay decided to Indianize (or rather Hinduize) Catholicism. Everything that Upadhyay tried to do was thwarted by the Catholic establishment. It led to acrimonious debates and ultimately to Upadhyay's alienation from the Church.

Two months before Upadhyay renamed himself and "adopted the life of a Bhikshu (mendicant) Sannyasi" (December 1894), he wrote.

Indian Bishops should combine together and establish a central mission ...  
the itinerant missionaries should be thoroughly Hindu in their mode of life.  
They should if necessary be strict vegetarians and teetotalers and put on  
the yellow Sannyasi garb.<sup>34</sup>

Upadhyay himself began to practise what he preached in two ways; he donned saffron clothes (1894-96), and then (1897-99) proposed to preach the Catholic faith through Hindu philosophy (July 1897) and more decisively through the Advaita Vedanta as propounded by Sankaracharya (1899-1900). Previously he had been thoroughly opposed to Advaitavada. Even at the end of 1897 in an article entitled "The Finale of the Vedanta", he said that the Hindus were unable to solve the problem of the one and many.<sup>35</sup> But most unexpectedly in 1899 he reversed his position and by a philosophical sleight of hand, equated the Vedantic concept of maya with St. Thomas Aquinas's *creatio passiva*, Passive Creation.<sup>36</sup> Upadhyay was now convinced that Sankara had no need to be baptized, he (like Aristotle) was only to be understood. Two articles by Upadhyay, "Sat" and "The True Doctrine of Maya", show how he decided to throw this weight in support of this new idea. The articles were written in the convent, Kasthalika or Catholic Matha founded by him on the banks of the Narmada near the Marble Rocks in Jabbalpur. It was during his sojourn here that the idea of combining Vedanta and Catholicism came to Upadhyay. And this was the beginning of his ultimate rupture with the Catholic establishment.

As to the wearing of saffron clothes the attitude of the Catholic Church was at first uncertain. The Bishop of Lahore had allowed Upadhyay to wear saffron. But when Upadhyay appeared in

saffron in the Church of Hyderabad, Sindh, Fr. Sallinger, the parish priest, objected and bade him leave the Church. Upadhyay submitted to Fr. Sallinger, went back to the Presbytery and doffed the saffron garb. But he did not leave the matter to rest there. He appealed to the Archbishop of Bombay who, too, agreed with Fr. Sallinger. Upadhyay continued to press; the opinion of the Bishop of Lahore should carry more weight than that of a mere parish priest's and ultimately he won his way.

The inhabitants of Sindh, particularly the Hindus, however did not react favourably : a Christian wearing saffron made them think that it was merely a ruse "to catch the unwary among the Hindus."<sup>37</sup> Upadhyay, on his part, would not wear anything but saffron. At last he made a compromise : he started wearing an ebony cross.

As to the second means he proposed, namely, the wedding of Advaita Vedanta to Catholicism, it found no taker at all, except perhaps his own disciples who presumably knew little about Sankaracharya. But before going into the polemics on this issue, it is necessary to mention the fate of the Kasthalika Matha that Upadhyay had dreamt of.

In February 1897 Upadhyay came out with an appeal for establishing a missionary centre in India to counteract rationalism, neo-Hinduism and atheism. "Swami Vivekananda and Mrs. Besant are both plunging the country into error. The Protestants are no match to them. The Catholic Church alone can stem the tide of error and agnosticism".<sup>38</sup> What was needed, Upadhyay felt, was "[a] score of learned zealous missionary holy men of ascetic habits and a metaphysical turn of mind, issuing from a common centre of operation established in India, subject to a common central authority, travelling all over India, giving lectures and holding public disputations with learned Pandits."<sup>39</sup> With this aim in view Upadhyay visited and lectured in Trichinopoly, and the whole of the then Southern Presidency of India. He visited Kolkata also. It was quite a sight to see Upadhyay and his Sindhi disciple Rewachand, cymbals in hand, singing Christian hymns in Bengali and Sanskrit and begging for alms.

Upadhyay went on developing plans for a Catholic monastery in India, conducted on strictly Hindu lines with two classes of monks, contemplative and itinerant (*parivrajaka*). The latter should be well versed both in Vedanta and *Summa Theologica*, the great work of St. Thomas Aquinas.

In a flight of etymological fancy, Upadhyay explained the word, *Kasthalika* as follows. 'The Sanskrit words *ka* and *sthala* mean "time" and "land" respectively. If you join two words and form an adjective you get the compound *Kasthalika* which means "pertaining to all times and lands".<sup>40</sup>

At first Upadhyay received encouragement from some quarters. In January 1899 he chose a site in Jabbalpur, "romantically situated in the very heart of India and [commanding] almost equally the great cities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras."<sup>41</sup> The Matha was to be placed under the protection and guidance of the Bishop of Nagpur. Upadhyay went to stay there himself along with his disciples.

But there was not enough response from the Indian Catholics and the necessary ecclesiastical approval was lacking. The Bishop of Nagpur was sympathetic but Mgr. Zaleski, the Delegate Apostolic, did not favour the idea. Nor did the Archbishop of Bombay. The Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda of Rome endorsed the stand taken by the Delegate Apostolic and Upadhyay at last had no option but to wind up his project.

Khemchand, another Sindhi disciple of Upadhyay, squarely blamed his master for this fiasco: "His troubles and failures were due to his impatient impetuosity and his fickleness more

than anything else."<sup>42</sup> This cannot be the whole truth. Upadhyay's attempts to indigenize Catholicism in India was being thwarted by the European missionaries and the Delegate Apostolic. The more Upadhyay resisted the more stubborn he became. Subsequent years saw more conflicts occurring between Upadhyay and Mgr. Zaleski. One may even think that it was the Delegate Apostolic who led Upadhyay to rediscover new virtues in the Hindu *varna* and *asrama* systems as well as in Advaita Vedanta.

But Mgr. Zaleski should not be taken as the villain of the piece. The Kasthalika Matha project was abandoned simply because Upadhyay himself had lost interest in it. His plan to lead a quiet life of meditation at the banks of Narmada had to be given up for a totally different reason. As he wrote in 1907, while he was in Jabbalpur, he had a kind of inspiration that India would be free again, so it was not the time for meditation in a lonely place, he must get involved in struggle. This made him come back to the world of men and he found that two or four vagrants (*bhabaghure*) like him had also heard the same oracle.<sup>43</sup> It is therefore proper to conclude that the patriotic self of Upadhyay had re-asserted itself in Jabbalpur. Even if the Church authorities had sanctioned his Kasthalika Matha project, he would not have been able to devote himself heart and soul to it any longer. It can be conjectured, however, that the Delegate Apostolic's opposition to his idea was instrumental to the revival of his patriotic self.

Upadhyay did not become a radical anti-imperialist overnight in 1900 or thereabouts. The tone of *The Twentieth Century* (1901) and even of *Sandhya*, the Bengali evening daily he started in 1904, was initially quite moderate. But with the passage of time the tone grew more and more militant. However, before going into the last stage of Upadhyay's political life, it is necessary to follow the course of his conflict with the Catholic Church during the years 1900-01.

A few examples will provide a glimpse of the tension prevailing between Upadhyay and his opponents within the Catholic Church itself.

Once Upadhyay started publishing *The Sophia* (weekly) from Calcutta in 1900, a notification appeared in the *Indo-European Correspondence (IEC)* (Vol. 35 No. 38, 26 September 1900 p. 914). It runs as follows :

Since the transfer of that paper (scil. *The Sophia*) to Calcutta it has notably altered its tone. In consequence its Catholic Founder and other Catholic Collaborators have severed their connection with it. *The Sophia* can therefore no longer be considered as Catholic publication.<sup>44</sup>

Barely a month after this a copy of the letter from the same Delegate Apostolic to the editor of *IEC* (dt. Candy, 20.10.1900) appeared in the Catholic Journals. The tone was even more hostile.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding with regard to Our letter to His Grace the Archbishop of Madras, of the 20th September last [1900], which has been published in the Catholic papers, we do hereby declare that no Catholic of our Delegation is allowed to subscribe to, or read the periodical "Sophia", without a special permission of his Bishop or Ordinary :

Ladislaus Michael  
Archbishop of Thebes  
Delegate Apostolic to East India.<sup>45</sup>

When Upadhyay brought out a new journal, *The Twentieth Century* (1901), a bishop from India again complained to the Delegate Apostolic who was then in Rome. Mgr. Zaleski

immediately issued another fiat :

The late periodical *Sophia* having reappeared under the name of *The Twentieth Century*, we hereby notify that prohibition regarding the periodical *Sophia* is extended to *The Twentieth Century*, and therefore all Catholics residing in the limits of our Delegation are forbidden to read, to subscribe to, and have any connection with the above said monthly review, *The Twentieth Century*.

Given in Rome, outside the Flaminian Gate, the 20th of June 1901.<sup>46</sup>

Animananda has tried his best to mitigate the gravity of these actions taken by the Delegate Apostolic. He points out "No Encyclical was issued as the Press suggested; no action was taken by the Pope. Neither the doctrine nor the person of Upadhyay were [sic] condemned by the Delegate Apostolic".<sup>47</sup> Notwithstanding such a charitable explanation of the events, one can hardly overlook the clear spite that marks Mgr. Zaleski's action against Upadhyay. The bone of contention of course, was theology, or to be more exact, Upadhyay's proposal to wed Sankara Vedanta to Catholicism. But a letter from Upadhyay to the editor of *Bombay Catholic Examiner* (*BCE*) (dt. ? August 1901) points to another area of dispute. Upadhyay wrote :

Next to my faith I hold my country dearest to my heart. I cannot give up my attitude of a constitutional oppositionist to the British Government which must be moved to give us the right of self-government, consistent of course with the integrity and supremacy of the British Empire in India. I shall deeply resent any interference in this matter, on the part of the Ecclesiastical authorities, provided the interference be not on the grounds of faith.<sup>48</sup>

The last line makes it crystal clear that the conflict was not due to theological issues alone; politics were as important as theology, if not more. Apparently, the Catholic Church in India was not prepared to tolerate the stand that Upadhyay had taken in those days.

The letter of Upadhyay in its turn was provoked by what *BCE* had written on 3.8.1901. With unconcealed banter it had said :

Is it too much to hope that Mr. B. Upadhya (sic) will submit to ecclesiastical authority and employ his talents in a sphere which is removed from the pitfalls of intricate philosophical and theological speculation?<sup>49</sup>

The editor had also stated in a more derisive tone :

To remodel Christian Philosophy on Hindu lines, and to introduce Sanskrit terms, is an attempt which is premature and on account of its great difficulty altogether beyond the strength of Mr. Upadhya (sic).<sup>50</sup>

Upadhyay was not a man to let go such a personal affront without reacting to it. Hence his rejoinder to *BCE*. The journal continued to scoff at Upadhyay. The editorial comment preceding the publication of Upadhyay's letter noted: "It is not without reluctance that we publish this letter of Mr. Upadhyay. We think it is little to his credit."<sup>51</sup> The note firmly asserted that "what he (sc. Upadhyay) says as to begin with about his patriotism (in. No.9) has no reference to our remarks in the B.C.E. xminer of Aug. 3." It went on pontificating in the same vein as before :

We will only say that "India for Indians" is quite a sensible programme, but we think Mr. Upadhyay's method will not help much towards the end. First must be social and religious reform, without which political reform in a true sense is impossible. Mr. Upadhyay must not imagine that only those are true patriots who fall in like himself with the National Congress Movement

and he must especially beware of blaming missionaries for want of accomodation to the peculiarities of India.

*BCE* also found fault with Upadhyay's view on personality which he (Upadhyay) had earlier defended as quite orthodox and quite in conformity with the views of "some of the ablest Catholic theologians of the day." *BCE* said :

We also absolutely deny, what Mr. Upadhyay says about his definition of Personality ... Mr. Upadhyay thinks the term "rational being" would be a riddle, if it did not imply a reflexive knowledge of self. But *pace* Mr. Upadhyay an infant child is a "rational being," it is a "person" and yet "has no reflexive knowledge of self." This is the common human language and there is no riddle at all about it.<sup>52</sup>

Instead of writing back to *BCE* Upadhyay issued a printed post card, entitled "An Appeal to Indian Catholics." The title is significant. Upadhyay again deliberately excluded all non-Indian (i.e., European) Catholics working in India, His open letter ran as follows :

Fathers and Bretheren in Christ – The B.C. Examiner can not [sic] tolerate my advocacy of indigenou missions. The journal is woefully barren : hence its rage at the prospect of native fruitfulness. Its remarks would be beneath notice had they not prejudiced higher authorities against me. It has wrongly accused me of disobedience. The first interdict against "Sophia" was issued on the ground of my having had nothing to do with it. But as soon as I resumed its editorship the faithful were allowed to read it, though not without episcopal permission. And now be it known that since the interdict against the "Twentieth Century," which is plainly directed against my writings, I have not penned a single line on theological questions, nor shall I pen any until the interdict be revoked. The *Examiner* finding fault with my theology is only manufacturing a cloak for uncharitable motives. Persons who cannot distinguish between an actual personality and a child (potential personality) are indeed unsound persons. I am sure my submission will create chafing and fretting in Bombay and this anger without a cause will prove the righteousness of my cause.

B. Upadhyay<sup>53</sup>

One cannot but feel that Upadhyay was up in arms against the European Catholics who had brought all Western habits and customs (for instance, wearing cassocks and hats, etc.) in India. What vexed him further was the charge brought against him, namely, his lack of obedience and submission. *BCE* cautioned him in so many words :

There are no free lancers in the Catholic Church, fighting of their own account. "He that is not with the Church is against her." – Mr. Upadhyay, no doubt, has the right to appeal to the Holy Father, but in the meantime he must submit.<sup>54</sup>

The editor advised Upadhyay to be humble.

The Catholic Church is militant Church. We are all soldiers of Christ. A General cannot have success in war if every private soldier has the right to question his orders.

*BCE* also disapproved of the methods of the Chicago "Parliament of Religions" since they have not been approved by the highest ecclesiastical authority.<sup>55</sup>

Without mincing matters *BCE* stated : "The Truth is that all other religions are false, lead men into error, and that the Catholic religion alone is the true way of salvation."

The objection that Fr. Hegglin, s.j. raised against Upadhyay's project of amalgamating Sankara with St. Thomas Aquinas will be of interest to the theologians alone. I do not intend to get into the matter, since it contributes little to the understanding of Upadhyay. However, what *The Blade* tells about the debate throws welcome light on Upadhyay's mindset.

The controversy [between Fr. A. Hegglin, s.j. and Upadhyay] dragged on for months and as generally happens led nowhere. Hegglin, a Swiss Jesuit, not unsympathetic to Indian thought but trained in German workshops scores by scholarship and erudition, his metaphysical powers are like dormant or extinct. Upadhyay's apparatus scientific seems slender but he scores by sheer intuition. (...) Who of the two is right? That is an old story. Metaphysicians and mystics have never fared well at the hands of philologists and lawyers.<sup>56</sup>

Upadhyay did not pursue the matter further. But his conflict with the Catholic establishment remained unresolved.

After his return to and settlement in Kolkata (1900), Upadhyay came into contact with Rabindranath Tagore. Upadhyay praised his book of poems, *Naibedya* and eventually got more and more involved in the Santiniketan school (then called Brahmacharyasram) jointly established by him and Rabindranath Tagore.<sup>58</sup>

Then came the news of Vivekananda's death (4.7.1902). Upadhyay acknowledges in writing that the news seemed to pierce his heart and he decided then and there to visit England and continue the unfinished task of conquering the Pheringees.<sup>59</sup> His self-appointed mission was to establish Vedanta in England.

We need not enter into the details of Upadhyay's journey and stay in England. Fortunately he has left the account in a series of open letters published in *Bangabasi (Vangavasi)*,<sup>60</sup> the then organ of orthodox Hindus of Bengal. Anyone who reads those letters will gather the impression that a true Hindu Vedantin was writing them. He records his visit to the St. Peter's Church in Rome, but does not reveal that he also prayed at the tomb of St. Peter. He writes about it only to a Christian friend.<sup>61</sup>

One cannot but feel that Upadhyay was leading a dual life throughout his stay in England. He was a devout Catholic to the Catholics but to the rest, and especially to his Bengali readers, he was nothing but an orthodox Hindu. Even when he describes the Catholic rituals to his Bengali readers he never associates himself with Catholicism. On the other hand, he continually asserts his Hindu identity. In his letters to Rabindranath Tagore (written in English) he waxes eloquent on his success in spreading the message of Vedanta and his plan to establish a Chair of Vedanta in Oxford.<sup>62</sup> Yet before setting out for England, he procured a letter of recommendation from the Archbishop of Calcutta. It reads : "We declare that Brahmabandhav Upadhyay, a Brahmin of Calcutta is a true Catholic of good character, burning with zeal for the conversion of his countrymen".<sup>63</sup> In an article published in *The Tablet*, journal of the Roman Catholics in England (3.1.1903), Upadhyay expresses his mind in the following way :

Since my conversion to the Catholic Faith my mind has been occupied with the one soul thought of winning over India to the holy Catholic Church. I have worked as a layman towards that end, and we are now a small band of converts ready to work in the vineyard of the Lord.<sup>64</sup>

He then tries to make his Catholic readers understand that Hinduism is not a religion "with a definite code of doctrines", but "a social organisation with a well defined hierarchy of caste divisions. ... Hinduism allows endless variations in religious beliefs but checks the slightest rebellion against its social constitution."<sup>65</sup>

This is vintage Upadhyay. He speaks of the conversion of India to the Catholic faith explaining why proselytizing is not thriving in India. The answer he suggests is rather simple : Christianity in India is appearing in a foreign garb. At the same time he tells of his endeavours to preach Vedanta in England – but he speaks of this in detail only to his Bengali readers. He never lets them know of his zeal for proselytizing. One may very well think of two different Upadhyays, one writing in *Bangabasi* and the other in *The Tablet*.<sup>66</sup>

Lest I be misunderstood, let me add that Upadhyay himself must have been unaware of any contradiction in his stand. He belonged to the synthetic (and syncretic) school of thought represented by Keshuv Chandra Sen with whom he had been associated in his youth. Before his conversion, when he was studying the Gospels and was being attracted by Jesus he insisted that he had not ceased to be a Brahmo : "Have we then abjured Brahmoism? Never, we believe that God raised up Keshava Chandra Sen to preach ... harmony all religions in spirit and truth."<sup>67</sup> The journal in which this passage appeared was very appropriately called *The Harmony*. In 1900 he declared that "we are essentially Hindu in the strictest sense of the word," "although in the matters of faith we are above time and space, neither Indian nor European."<sup>68</sup> He preferred to be called a Hindu Catholic. Agnes, the little daughter of Khemchand, used to say : Who says Upadhyay is a Christian, he is a Brahmin Christian.<sup>69</sup>

The way Upadhyay used to justify his yoking of discordant ideas defies all logic. In his polemics against Rev. Farquhar in 1904, he upheld the glory of Krishna sky-high. B. Nag, a Protestant missionary, took exception to it. Upadhyay "challenged him there and then – in the street – to quote one single sentence, to prove his assertion" that Upadhyay had lost the Christian faith and spoken like a Hindu.<sup>70</sup> He said that Krishna was indeed an Avatar but Christ was not; He was the Incarnation of God. Upadhyay "held that the Hindu conception of Avatar was very different from the Christian conception of Incarnation."<sup>71</sup> But this he did not say in his lecture; he spoke of Krishna alone. He explained his view further in a letter to Khemchand.<sup>71</sup> But one wonders if anyone except Upadhyay himself was convinced by all this, He would willingly amalgamate Advaita Vedanta and the Catholic faith, but would not allow the *Gita* to be in any way related to the Bible.

The rest of Upadhyay's life shows his growing alienation from the Catholic Church. The plan for establishing a Chair of Vedanta in Oxford did not materialize. Animananda left him because he allowed idolatry in his school. His contact with the Catholic community in Kolkata and elsewhere became all the more tenuous.

But nothing deterred Upadhyay. Leaving religion aside, he was slowly but steadily getting involved in the political turmoil. Lord Curzon and his nefarious plan to partition Bengal called for resistance. And, at long last, Upadhyay found his true vocation. He started a Bengali evening daily, *Sandhya* (1904) and appeared as a totally different person. As Tagore was to state many years later : "It was inconceivable for me that the Vedantin *Sannyasi* could have undergone such a sea change."<sup>73</sup>

This brings us back to the matter of surrogate. Upadhyay was basically a freedom fighter in the literal sense of the term. When his adolescent attempt to learn military science yielded no tangible result, he turned to religion. But the fighter in him could never rest. Even if there were

no opponents he had to create one. First, it was theosophy, then Vedanta *a la* Vivekananda and the doctrines of the Arya Samaj. But ironically the Catholic authorities themselves turned out to be his ultimate opponent in this phase. Upadhyay's patriotism then found its proper outlet: an Indian layman pitted against European missionaries. It was re-enacting the old drama, the battle he wished to fight against the foreign rulers. However, instead of the British imperialists it was the Delegate Apostolic and his followers in the Church. Such a battle could not and did not last long. Upadhyay tried his best to be humble and submissive to his superiors, but he also understood that nothing was to be expected from them. Having led a dual life both in Kolkata and England for at least four years (1900-03), he got the opportunity to bury all matters connected with theology. There was no longer any need to fight a shadow battle against the European missionaries in defence of his plea for Hinduising Christianity. He could now fight face to face against his true enemy, British imperialism, against which he had felt an uncompromising hatred from his very adolescence. More often than not, this hatred took the form of racial intolerance. This excess was more a symptom of his reaction to the blatant racialism demonstrated by the Britishers in India. If the West boasted of its material prosperity and technological inventions, Upadhyay's way of countering such claims was to glorify the idea of *maya*, dismissing the material world as mere illusion.

All this may now appear to be altogether arcane and utterly irrational. But it should be kept in mind that Upadhyay was truly instrumental in rousing anti-imperialist feeling in the country even in the remotest villages, not excluding the women, shut up in their household. The language of *Sandhya* could be comprehended even by barely literate people. The message of independence, not mere "colonial self-government", was proclaimed by him first<sup>74</sup> and it reached the heart of the Bengali people throughout the length and breadth of the country. In spite of their lofty rhetoric and political sharpness Aurobindo's *Bande Mataram* and Bepin Chandra Pal's *New India* – not to speak of Surendra Nath Banerjee's *The Bengalee* – could never lead to the mass upheaval that followed the dismemberment of Bengal in 1905.

Upadhyay's career, in this respect, reveals the crisis of a convert who was also an ardent nationalist in the colony. It was impossible to reconcile patriotism with Christianity. If the convert had been totally non-political or had no care for independence or been satisfied with the existing state of affairs, he could have avoided this crisis. If he had been a loyalist, there would have been no need of any heart-searching. But if he felt the ignominy of living under imperialism, he would have no option but to fight against the European missionaries as also against the Empire. Kalicharan Banurji (1847-1907) joined the Protestant Church in 1864 when he was a student. He decided to dedicate himself to the service of Jesus. He was appointed deacon in the Duff Church, Kolkata. But he, too, had to give up his eldership and become one of the founders of the Indian National Congress. Totally unlike Upadhyay in many ways (not the least in his desire to follow the Moderate line to the end), Kalicharan Banurji's life and works also tell the same story: the unresolved crisis of a pious Christian convert who was, at the same time, a patriot.<sup>75</sup>

But more of this hereafter.

#### Notes & References

30. *Rachanasamgraha*, p. 193.  
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 198.  
 32. *Ibid.*, p. 193.  
 33. Swami Vivekananda (Narendranath Datta) was a classmate of Upadhyay when he was a student of F. A. classes in the General Assembly's Institution (now the Scottish Church College). Kolkata, See Basu,

Vol.1, pp.336-52.

34. Quoted by Animananda, *The Blade*, p.59. Note the word 'Indian'. Upadhyay was already thinking in terms of an indigenous Church, though Catholic in spirit. His desire to Indianize Christianity grew stronger over the years that followed. During 1900-01, Agnes Khemchand recalls,  
 He (sc. Upadhyay) used to sit on a tiger skin on the floor and seldom sat on a chair or at table: I vividly remember the tiger skin. He even then would talk of his intense desire to make Christ known and loved by India, and wished all Western forms to be replaced by Eastern forms. He chafed at the Westernisation of Christianity and the adopting of Western ways by Indian Christians. He used to say that there would be Indian Catholic Priests and Brothers, not wearing hats and cassocks, but the saffron robe of renunciation of the Indian Sadhu. (Quoted in *The Blade*, p.86).
35. *The Blade*, p. 82.  
 36. *Ibid.*, p. 83.  
 37. *Ibid.*, p. 59.  
 38. *Ibid.*, p. 65.  
 39. *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66.  
 40. *Ibid.*, p. 73.  
 41. *Ibid.*, p. 78.  
 42. *Ibid.*, p. 81.  
 43. *Rachanasamgraha*, p. 55.  
 44. This is the summary of a letter of Mgr. Zaleski, Archbishop of Thebes and Delegate Apostolic to East Indies (dt. 20.9.1900) addressed to the Most Rev. J. Colgan, Archbishop of Madras. The full text of the letter is printed in *The Blade*, p.91. It was originally published in the *Bombay Catholic Examiner (BCE)*, Vol. 51, No. 40, 6.10.1900, p.785. See also *Varia* 1.p.121.  
 45. *BCE*, Vol. 51, No. 43, 27.10.1900, p.843; *Indo European Correspondence (IEC)*, Vol.35, No.43, 31.10.1900, p.1034.  
 46. Cited in *The Blade*, p.103. As usual, this letter was published in *BCE*, Vol.59, 20.7.1901, p.567.  
 47. *The Blade*, p.104. Bhupendranath Datta is wrong when he says that Upadhyay was excommunicated from the Church by the Catholic superiors of Karachi because of his "strong inclination" to found Christianity on Vedanta (Preface to Mukhopadhyay-Mukhopadhyay (1961), p.xiii and Preface to Balai Debsharma (1368 BS), p.xi). Upadhyay had never been excommunicated. But such a rumour was rife in Kolkata. There was also a rumour that he was a Jesuit which he was not.  
 48. Quoted in *The Blade*, p.106. The letter appeared in *BCE*, Vol.57, No. 33, 17.08.1901. It may be noted that before coming to Kolkata Upadhyay was editor of a Karachi-based Congress newspaper. *Varia*, I, p.120.  
 49. *BCE*, Vol. 52, No. 31, 3.8. 1901, p.609.  
 50. *Ibid.*, p.608. The comments of the *BCE* was made in reply to a Lahore correspondent inquiring why *The Twentieth Century* had been forbidden, "while the editor of *Sophia* had some time ago stopped the paper in obedience to the Ecclesiastical authorities." (*The Blade*, p.104).  
 51. *BCE*, Vol. 52, No.33, 17.8.1901, p.648. The extract that follows also occurs on the same page.  
 52. *Ibid.*, p.649.  
 53. A copy of the postcard is preserved in *Varia* 3, p.285. See also n34.  
 54. See *BCE*, Vol. 51, No. 21.7.1900. The Catholic journal obliquely refers to *Sophia* and draws attention to The Apostolic Constitution, "Officiorum et Munerum", January, 1896 issued by Pope Leo XIII (pp.561-63).  
 55. Apparently Upadhyay had mentioned the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893. The *BCE* further stated that "the Catholic ecclesiastics will not take part another time in the meeting of such a motley crowd of false prophets. No Catholic may institute or take part in a comparison of religions, where the Truth is to be kept down" (*ibid.*, 17.8.1901, p.649. Emphasis in the original). It may be recalled that Swami Vivekananda became a hero to the Hindus by delivering a speech in the Chicago Parliament. This event proved to be the turning point in the spread of the Ramkrishna-Vivekananda cult, both in India and the USA. See also n59 below.  
 56. *The Blade*, p.208-09.  
 57. The very adulatory review was published in *The Twentieth Century*, July, 1901. An earlier article

published in the weekly *Sophia* (1.9.1900) entitled "The World Poet of Bengal" is also worth mentioning. Very few people remember that the eponym, "Biswakabi" (Visvakavi) had been given to Tagore by Upadhyay long before Tagore won the Nobel Prize (1913).

58. Tagore himself acknowledged this fact in a long article, "Asram-bidyalayer Suchana" (Beginnings of the Asrama school) in *Prabasi*, Aswin 1340 BS. The article was prompted by a controversy around *Renascent India* by Dr. Zacharias (London 1933), published in the *Modern Review*, August 1933 and *Prabasi*, Sravan 1340 BS. Ramananda Chattopadhyay challenged some of Zacharias's comments on the origin of the Santiniketan School. For further details, see Mukhopadhyay-Mukhopadhyay (1961), pp.149-65 and Pal, Vol.5, pp.61-64.
59. *Rachanasamgraha*, p.60 Swami Vivekananda's exposition of Hinduism in the Chicago Parliament of Religions, as said above (n55), was considered by the Hindus as a booster to the Nationalist cause. See Basu, Vol.1, pp.41-56. When the Moderate leaders proposed to hold a Congress session in London, Aurobindo Ghosh called it a 'reactionary step' and added: "[T]he visit of Swami Vivekananda to America and the subsequent works of those who followed him did more for Indians than a hundred London Congresses could effect" [*Karmoyogin*, Vol.1, No. 10, 28.8.1909. Sri Aurobindo (1972), p.171].
60. *Rachanasamgraha*, pp.127-32. As to the role of the *Bangabasi* group and its agents in thwarting the incipient revolutionary movement in Bengal in and around 1904, see Dutta, in Ghosh (ed.), p.72. It is rather curious that the arch Hindus of *Bangabasi* accommodated Upadhyay, a well-known Christian, in their paper. Upadhyay, of course, was then a firm *varnasramin*, observing all Hindu social rites regarding caste, food, etc..
61. Letter from Rome, dt. 1.11.1902, quoted in *The Blade*, p.109. Unfortunately Animananda does not reveal the identity of the addressee. Could he be Animananda himself?
62. Only one such letter seems to have survived, though there must have been a few more (see Pal, Vol.5, p.122).
63. The original letter of recommendation was in Latin. The English translation is taken from Animananda (1908), Part II, p. (11). The letter was first printed in *The Tablet*, 31.1.1903. See also *Varia* 2, p.176. Mgr. B. Meuleman, the then Archbishop of Calcutta, was apparently better disposed towards Upadhyay than the other Archbishops in India. After Upadhyay's return to Calcutta, he arranged a meeting (1904) between Fr. Dahiman, famous Indologist, and Upadhyay. Following a ninety-minute talk Fr. Dahimann declared: "He (sc. Upadhyay) does not use our terminology but he is quite orthodox!" Turmes, pp.70-71.
64. Quoted in *The Blade*, p.113.
65. Upadhyay, of course, never denied that he had spoken on Hindu Theism at Oxford but he hastened to add that he spoke "merely as an interpreter and not as an apologist." He added that "the learned Catholic Fathers present were of opinion that the philosophy [Vedanta] was Catholic in every way." Quoted from *The Tablet*, January 1903 in *The Blade*, p.208.
66. Quoted in *The Blade*, p.38 from *The Harmony*, December 1890.
67. Quoted in *The Blade*, pp.97-98 from the weekly *Sophia*, 17.11.1900.
68. *Ibid.*, p.196.
69. *The Blade*, p.(vi).
70. *Ibid.*, p.185.
71. *Ibid.*, p.130.
72. Preface to *Char Adhyay*, "Abhas", *Rabindra-Rachanabali*, Vol.8, p.514. This prefatory note was withdrawn from the second edition of the book by Tagore himself.
73. An article in *Basumati* (22.9.1927), pointed out that Upadhyay "gave the message of freedom even before Aravinda Ghose" (cited in *The Blade*, p.195). Muzaffar Ahmad's claim that Kazi Nazrul Islam was the first to demand complete independence for India in *Dhumketu* (13.10.1922) is misconceived (see Ahmad, pp.155-56 and Bhattacharya 1996, pp. 99-108). Nalinikanta Sarkar states that Bipin Chandra Pal also raised the demand for complete independence in the Swadeshi days (p.85). See also Upadhyay's "Swaraj Gad" (*Rachanasamgraha*, pp.55-57).
74. Upadhyay's role in organizing and managing *Bande Materam* in its initial stage is seldom mentioned. But Hemendra Prasad Ghose, the veteran journalist, says: "[T]ruth demands that the services of

Upadhyay Brahmabandhab during the early days of its existence should be frankly acknowledge" (*The Bengalee*, 26.10.1924, cited in *The Blade*, p.172).

75. For Kali Charan Banurji's life and works, See Sihna, pp.459-61 and Ray, pp.188-200.

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## Book Review

### A Psychiatrist Reviews Indian Religion, D. N. Ganguly, Pavlov Institute Rs. 50/-

The book under review is a collection of the author's Rai Bahadur G.C. Ghose Memorial Lectures for the year 1983-84 at the University of Calcutta. We congratulate the publishers for the publication of the 3rd edition after the death of the author in 1998. We fully agree with the valuable comment of the publishers in their Note that, "... given the obscurantism infested scenerio prevailing in this country at the moment, this book will have its role in bringing back sense to the educated section of the society."

The major strength of the book is its bold, and surely novel, attempt of the author at a critical assessment of Indian religion from the standpoint of Pavlovian psychiatry, necessarily involving a socio-psychological analysis of the history of the religious of Indian origin. The major part of the book is naturally devoted to the study of Hinduism (in the broad sense). Of course, Buddhism, Shikhism and the Brahmocult have received their proper share. There are occasional relevant remarks also on Christianity and Islam mainly in the context of Indian social situation.

Dr. Dharendra Nath Ganguly was a practising psychiatrist about two decades ago, and in that sphere he was quite an institution by himself. But he is still more renowned as a Pavlovian psychologist and a Marxian thinker in the domain of sociology and social psychology with commendable contribution on the problem of alienation.

With the help of his associates he established the Pavlov Institute in the year 1951, and the *Manab Mon* (Human mind) started appearing mainly as a Bengali quarterly organ of the

said Institute from 1961. It is a great pleasure to mention that his students and associates are still carrying on his ideal through the regular publication of the journal containing thought provoking ideas about the umbilical relation between Marxian dialectics and the Pavlovian theory of conditioned reflex including the valuable concept of the second signalling system as the neurological basis of human language.

Dr. Ganguly has utilized these very ideas in this book while analysing the nature of human consciousness in general and especially the role of societal tradition and social language in the formation of religious consciousness. With this socio-psycho-linguistic paradigm he is naturally very much critical about religion as such, and more so about those aspects of Indian religion which are specially detrimental to the cause of social progress and scientific culture.

The book is divided into three chapters and an Introduction. In the introductory chapter Dr. Ganguly tries to "define mainly religion, and present short definitions of science, psychology and psychiatry" (p.10) to establish the relevance of a specially psychiatric review of Indian religions. He endorses the dialectico-materialist characterization that, "Religion is a phantastic reflection in peoples minds of external forces dominating over them in everyday life, a reflection in which earthly forces assume non-earthly forms" (p.12). It is from this scientific standpoint that he successfully utilises his erudition in the domain of Pavlovian psychiatry and tries to show the psycho-social link between religious mysticism and obscurantism which, under the garb of holiness, is carrying on its unholy war against science and social progress (pp.12-24). But he does not stop at unveiling the mischievous trickeries of religious obscurantism, in league with all sorts of parapsychological humbug. As a psychiatrist who is also a scientifically minded humanist- he notes with regret "the rapid spread of mental disorders in all countries, specially in ours" and is led to believe that "man is not being able to assimilate two contradictory types of stimuli : the traditional beliefs and associated 'kritys' (i.e. activities) and the scientific beliefs and activities (p.23-24). He thinks that "Psychiatry ... may throw light on the nature of (the) contradictions and may also in some cases, where necessary, evolve some ways and means in mitigating the contradictions and sufferings of the people" (p.24). But here, he is not "thinking of therapeutic help to those. Who are already sick", rather he is "thinking of eradicating the harmful religious obsessions that are damaging to individual mental hygiene and the social fabric." Though Dr. Ganguly differs on many points with the American psychiatrist Ahasan Ali he has suggestively quoted from his book, *Religion May be Hazardous to Your Health* in the first part of this book (p.14). Now (at p.24) he states clearly that he is also "thinking of ways and means of helping those who, under the alienating effects of abstract religion are in search of an anchor of security, seeking help from a highly sophisticated yogi—who almost always in these days moves after selfish motives for transcendental upliftment". This surely is an interesting point of suggestive therapy for some members of the intellectual elites, whom he calls schizoids (p.30).

To substantiate the foregoing analysis and relevant diagnoses, he necessarily gives a "bird's eye view" of the history of Indian religions in the second chapter. Within the limits of a few pages he has to run through the vast span from the pre-dravidian period to the period of Ramkrishna extended to the Indian religious of this atomic age, where the god-men, subtle and adroit as they are sell their merchandise wrapped with labels of pseudoscience. Through this short, but rigorous, analysis he adheres basically to the dialectico-materialist interpretation of history and naturally he refuses to fall in line with the traditional depiction of the religio-social history of India supplied by the victims of reverential obsession for Hindu religion. Hence, in this chapter and practically throughout the book the major attack is concentrated upon the twin cult of *Karmabada and Janmantarabada* (i.e. the pet theory of the Hindus about reaping the harvest

of one's own activities through a process of successive punarjanma or rebirth until the so-called liberation of the soul by dint of pious living according to the scriptures!)

Already in the first chapter the author has clearly stated that he is "interested mainly in *Karma and Punarjanmabada* which have been influencing us (i.e. Indians or rather Hindus DJM) from ancient times. This twin cult is already connected with a definite mental make-up and is connected with astrology and various cult-sciences which make Indians (i.e. Hindus DJM) staunch believers in destiny, pre-determinism and fatalism, more than like-minded people of other religions (p.23). He has then asserted with utmost boldness that "this (twin) cult of *Karma and Punarjanmabada* is the greatest impediment to the development of a scientific and rational attitude, without which material and moral upliftment, in the truest sense of the term, is not possible.

Perhaps on account of the topical limits of the lecture and may be also due to space-time limitations, Dr. Ganguly has not been able to go into any detailed analysis of the complicated socio-economic history of the Hindu Caste System. But he has correctly linked it up with class exploitation (p.44); and logically he has connected the twin cult of *Karma* and rebirth with the most evil system of *Varnashrama*. Hence as a true believer in social equality he has quite reasonably posed these ideas as the major target of attack. But, unlike many timorous 'Scientific' and pragmatically oriented (and *power-hunting*) Marxists, he is not afraid of pointing to the real ideological enemy of science and secularism. At the beginning of the 2nd chapter, he has posed the question himself and has given a clear-cut answer : "If I am asked whether religious spirit and scientific temper are really incompatible and if it is not possible to have some sort of a synthesis, my answer would be 'yes' to the first and 'no' to the second" (p.25).

Now he declares categorically : "*Our task should be a tough fight against all religious dogmas and prejudices and obscurantist ideas that deliberately or unknowingly attempt to make people accept their miserable condition as predetermined and predestined from their birth*" (p.28).

This unhesitating assertion naturally leads him to the question of fundamentalism and revivalism. Hence, pointing to the task mentioned above he says later : "I deem it my bounden duty when I notice attempts at revivalism ... (p.31). After exposing the mischievous trickeries of parapsychological magicians in the garb of 'psychics' or yogis and analysing the fundamental fallacy of the pseudo-scientific white washing of ancient and ludicrous magic beliefs, in the third and last chapter, he reiterates : "This is a dangerous trait, this religioscientific revival. We must fight against this, otherwise we shall be submerged in the myst of mysticism with a pseudo-scientific label. We must also stand united against religio-political revival which is sure to give birth to fascism" (p.90). These are the concluding lines of the book, and they are surely praiseworthy.

But the foregoing socio-historical analysis and consequent militancy against current religious obscurantism are not unique. Dr. Ganguly has frankly admitted himself that he very much indebted to scientific thinkers like Bhupendra Nath Datta, M.N. Roy, D.D. Kosambi and Deviprosad Chattopadhyaya. What gives uniqueness to his analysis and endows a special charm to the book is the psychiatric characterisation of various mental abnormalities necessarily related to Indian religious experience and practice, along with socio-psychological explanations of their etiology.

The whole of the third chapter (Psychiatry and Religion) has been devoted to that purpose. With a passing reference to the current controversy centering round the concept of Asiatic Mode of Production, Dr. Ganguly basically supports Marx's statement the "history of the orient

is the history of its religion." He is of the opinion that "religious belief of the people was the main moral force on which the autocratic monarchs stood" (p.61).

He has already analysed in the second chapter how the twin cult of *Karma* and rebirth engendered belief and has explained briefly why this fantastic cult was never seriously challenged by any *religious* movement. Past or present. He has also pointed out that only the clearly anti-religious and scientifically oriented Carvakas had the gut, to declare a total war against the whole spiritualist tradition of Hinduism. Now in the third chapter – with prior acceptance of the Marxist conception of the historically developed hiatus between mental and manual labour – he proposes a two-order psychopathological situation from the times of the Upanisads (p.62) – "The scholars belonging to the higher caste were engaged in developing the higher order of religion to meet the adversaries ... By the method of auto-suggestions through generation after generation, they made themselves believe that the four Varnas and the Karma allotted to each Varna was formulated by the Almighty himself." About this higher order he comments : "As a psychiatrist I am inclined to believe that the high class intellectuals built a world of delusion in which they lived, and left it as a valuable legacy to their successors. On the other hand, within the strait-jacket of caste ridden static society. "The individuals in the lower-order ... were restricted from free thinking ... They were always to guard themselves from committing anything ... whereby they would be further degraded in their next birth (p.62). Then follows a telling psychiatric depiction of the morbid psychological situation of the down-trodden masses : "Fear and anxiety therefore haunted these people always. These belief became almost innate and their 'kritys' became compulsive. So they developed inferiority complex and gradually evolved a melancholy type of mentality. Moreover by performing a set of repetitive 'kritys,' they became easily vulnerable to repetitive compulsive neurosis. They lacked the power of expressing themselves freely and the power to assert themselves bravely. The cells of certain regions of the brain became and remained inert. Counter-suggestions for a long time could produce hardly any effect on them." (loc. cit).

In order to substantiate his psychiatric review of Indian religious situation, Dr. Ganguly puts forward a short, but extremely important, analysis of the relation between religion and medicine. Quoting from George Thomson's famous book, *Aeschylus and Athens*, anthropological and ethnological proofs of psychoneurotic and psychotic tendencies among the priestly magician class belonging to different ancient tribes, he justifiably compares the Indian Rishis with these people. Then follows the courageous comment: "This similarity cannot but point to the fact that religion and psychiatry are twin brothers and that anthropological researches if earnestly taken up may also reveal neurotic and psychotic traits in our 'rishis' and other men of religion" (pp. 67-68). In support of this quite reasonable, though uncommon, surmise, he also refers to modern psychiatric finding to the effect that "austerity and seclusion may produce delusions and hallucinations though these traits have been regarded to be paranormal by religious-minded people all over the world" (loc. cit.) It is also pointed out that in the sphere of so-called revelations "The faculty of 'possession' was and is regarded as a sign of free intercourse with the spirit world." Thus, religious irrationality is so queerly strong that even when "The possessed may be a hysteric, an epileptic, or a demented person; ... or even if the person is declared as psychotic, still he may be worshipped as an 'Avatara' or a 'Mahapurusha,'" (p.68).

Carrying on his analysis of later religious development in India, Dr. Ganguly naturally commences his dissection of the interesting phenomenon known as trance. "To the man of religion it is a state of high-order spiritualism." But, as a materialist, Dr. Ganguly refuses to swallow any such nonsense, and "without any reference to any dignified personality and without

malice towards anybody", he straightaway explains the whole mechanism of trance-phenomenon with the help of Pavlovian experiments (pp.78-79). He assures us that "there is no magic or supernatural in these experimental facts. But when somebody by various processes ... obtains the power of self-hypnosis and goes down into the trance state and in a hallucinatory state talks to his favorite deity and describes the deity's appearance in details, people think the man is an exceptional one possessing supernatural and paranormal powers. Some others may sneer at him as if he were a fake ... In fact, this trance is a reality. It is often not a hoax and at the same time it is by no means paranormal or supernatural", (p.79). If this scientific explanation could have been hammered into the brains of the believers, many a god-man, past and present could be sent to mental hospitals for both sympathetic and scientific treatment, instead of being worshipped as avatars and messiahs!

But everybody knows that the matter is not so easy. While rejecting all spiritualistic theories about bestowing of religion on man by a supernatural Being or the revelation of the divine within the human mind, the actual process of the origin and development of religion from tribal magic beliefs and various types of collective rituals to the creation of institutional religions in class society is an extremely complicated affair through social history. As a Pavlovian psychotherapist Dr. Ganguly has reiterated the basically scientific proposition that religion is a socially conditioned and a historically evolved phenomenon.

And, hence, it is not very easy to do away with the effects of social conditioning through several thousands of years, especially when the socio-psychological grounds of religious fantasy mostly remain intact. Hence, while discussing briefly the Marxist conception of religion, Dr. Ganguly justifiably reminds his readers about the genuinely Marxist contention that unless technical revolution reached the stage to be able to supply firstly the biological needs and then the psychological needs as well, religion could not be rooted out.

But it is amply clear from the total content of the book that Dr. Ganguly does not propose sitting idle. Notwithstanding some controversial statements here and there which might be criticised by sterner critics of religion or appreciated by more liberal ones, Dr. Ganguly does not seem to have any real soft corner for any religion in his heart. On the contrary, he is extremely disturbed by the "dangerous aspects" of religion. Not only is he worried about current religious fanaticism, but he is also very much concerned about the uncanny attraction of Indian mysticism for those who have lost faith in their own religion. Hence the note of warning : "Alienation has become the order of the day. Christianity has failed, Islam is also in the defensive taking shelter under the umbrella of fundamentalism. Sanatanist revival in our secular state may pose a great danger to the democratic way of life gradually developing in this country." (p.89)

Hence, inspite of some minor disagreements with the author on some technical points, the present reviewer is in complete agreement with him regarding the words of caution meant for the progressive section of society : "If, after a quarter of a century of Marxist teachings, a section of the working class of a socialist state can be a prey to religio-political revival, a psychiatrist is apt to believe that religious dogmas are as powerful or even more powerful than they have been in the pre-renaissance period. The situation is far worse in India. Here the novel ways of propaganda and the support, direct or indirect by internationally renowned scientists are strengthening the nerves and sinews of the worst aspects of Hindu religion.

The democrats and Marxists of our secular state are still underestimating the influence of religious ideology that takes us away from reality." (p.65).

Regarding the development of parapsychology with all its absurd claims, he again warns us at the end of the book : "This is a dangerous trait, this religio-scientific revival. We must fight against this, otherwise we shall be submerged in the myst of mysticism with a pseudo-scientific

label. We also must stand united against a religio-political revival which is sure to give birth to fascism." (p.90)

This book is expected to rouse, at least, the younger generation of scientific thinkers. Through the proper assessment of Religion as a basically reactionary power, they may be led to a keener appreciation of, and a firmer grasp over the real dialectics of social development and revolutionary change.

Dhruba Jyoti Majumdar

P A S

## Question and Answer

This is in answer to your letter. Instead of replying to you directly we are sending it through the pages of our magazine. We hope you will see it, and if though limited it will at least give you some idea. According to current statistics, during the last two years 20 ladies like you have approached us for assistance on varying problems. While the problems are all different, there is a remarkable similarity on some aspects. Such as, their ages range between 32 and 45 years and of the 14 are housewives and 6 are working. Further, 4 are widows, 2 divorcees, 2 spinsters and 12 living with their husbands. Other than the spinsters, each has one or two children. The areas of similarity are strange and need further consideration. Physically, all of you have had to take medication for hypothyroidism at some time or are still continuing at present. You regularly suffer from problems relating to allergy, problems of indigestion ( in many cases gastroendoscopy has shown presence of *Helicobacter pylori*), insomnia, migraine, anaemia, arthritis, tiredness, etc. and mentally, all of you suffer from what is commonly known as depression - some more than others. Meaning thereby psychologically you do not feel well, you cannot get over a feeling of loneliness and practically nothing makes you feel happy. Unfortunately we psychiatrists fear that in time we will have to deal with many more patients like you. In fact other physicians will also get similar patients and will diagnose them as chronic fatigue syndrome or something similar. But this will not solve the main problem.

I used to treat as gospel truth the first words in Tolstoy's *Anna Karanina*. He said, all the happy families are alike, but unhappy families are unhappy in its own ways. Now having dabbled with it in the practical life, I feel these words are not correct, in fact it is the reverse which happens in practice. Such as, those of you who consider yourselves as unhappy are nearly all of one type. And those who see themselves as happy are happy in their own ways. Of course, there are a lot of differences in the reason for your unhappiness compared to the others. But the similarities are not few. While working with science it is this quantitative similarity which comes to our notice first.

You have started your letter with something you hesitated to talk about last time - you had a romantic friend or confidante who has left you and gone away. It is more or less since then that your illness have increased in sharpness. You have admitted that you have felt the pain of this separation much more than when your husband died. This admission is not incorrect, since many others have also said the same thing. It is true that ladies like you will not talk lightly about interpersonal matters. And about your hesitation, I can give you one incident to show that we do not stand in judgement about the principles and ideals, the good and bad etc. about people. My professor had pulled me up and taught me that these are not to be judged by us. He had said, 'Are you a judge? There are judges in our society and

administrative machinery to decide on good and bad. People will come to you to reduce their pains and illnesses. You will try to do this with your utmost sincerity.' After hearing this I am certain you will not have any further hesitation.

As a doctor, I have to consider the reason for all these problems you are experiencing. You are aware of some simple matters, but I am still repeating them. When children grow up, their own world forms around them, and they no longer want to be too dependant. You can then feel you have taken all the trouble to help them grow up and now they are neglecting you. The professional world of your husband has expanded and he is always busy - and you are probably thinking he has lost his attraction towards you and he is enamoured by somebody else, etc.. And for those who do not have a husband then your constant companion is loneliness. Then what is the reason for your living ! With all these complications and confusions you do not find a justification for living, but thinking of the attractions of the children and domestic life you do not want to die either. With deep breaths you console yourself that this is how you will have to spend the rest of your life. We have only one life, and therefore really feel depressed thinking about this.

You will perhaps agree that in the earlier days ladies like you would somehow have been able to spend your days as a part of joint families or being involved in religious practices. But these days nearly secular ladies like you are practically confined within your own limits, and are not able to come out like butterfly or a moth. One can imagine that the situation will be the worst for ladies and men of our generation. This is because we are going through a state of transition. We have come up from the remains of joint families and feudalistic society. The children of comparatively newer generations probably will not suffer so much. Let me give you some statistics of this transition. The population of China comprises 21 percent of the world population; but post 1980, 40 percent of the total suicides in the world take place in that country. And the suicides there are committed by women in the age group 15-26 years in the rural areas. It is also seen that there is no real connection between most of these suicides and psychiatric problems.

I therefore would like to give you some comfort with a few words. I would like to explain that your situation is a serious problem of our period. Here the tragedy is that in this the biggest pressure is on the womenfolk. But they have the primary responsibility for preservation of the species. You can therefore well easily imagine how much this species preservation will be affected if you are unhappy. We are also therefore deeply concerned about this illness of yours. But just at this time we do not see a quick solution. But sometimes we feel unnecessary despondency will not help to retrieve the situation. Just as when there is loadshedding we do not blame anybody but try to quickly light a candle, we will have to think of something similar here also.

Reply given by Dr. Basudev Mukherjee

P A S

Next Issue of *Psyche and Society* coming on April 2004

Expected Articles :

\* Religion As Surrogate \* Psychiatrist Dhirendranath  
\* Reflections of thoughts on Artists' mind \* In defence of Dialectical  
Materialism \* Hypnotism \* War, Imperialism & Science