

# PSYCHE AND SOCIETY

May - 2012

## CONTENTS

### Editorial

<b>Alienation, Revolution and Madness</b>	3
Dhirendranath Ganguly	
<b>Darwin</b>	11
JBS Haldane	
<b>The Inter-relation of Man and Woman in the Writings of Rajsekhar</b>	15
Basudeb Mukhopadhyay	
<b>Water Crisis and Human Rights</b>	24
Sayan Bhattacharya	
<b>Poetry of a Committed Individual</b>	32
Alo Bhattacharya	
<b>Tsunami Disaster &amp; The Survivors of PTSD</b>	39
Sanjoy Ghosh	
<b>Rationalism in Bengal : An Overview</b>	43
Ramkrishna Bhattacharya	
<b>Letters from John Somerville to Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya</b>	52
<b>From the desk of the Mind-Painter</b>	61

Cover : Monoj Dey

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 : basudev98@gmail.com.

Each issue is priced Rupees forty (Rs. 40/-) only, and the annual subscription Rupees eighty (Rs. 80/-) 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.**

### Editorial

#### A tribute to the memory of Hemanga Biswas

Hemanga Biswas, the doyen of leftist cultural movement of Bengal was the 'Bards of passion and of mirth', completing his centenary this year. He was a sincere worker engaged in cultural front of undivided Bengal and India for at least five decades. Though Marxist intellectual confusion and moral chaos of his native land and abroad and unexpected development had confounded him. Yet he had infused life into the moribund current of cultural movement with his creative and Marxist ideology in the struggle for emancipation of peasantry and working class. He should be remembered for his creative and leadership qualities in the cultural front. The sarcastic and bitter opposition must be taken as a tribute to the power of art. Though like all human beings he was strongly influenced by cultural inheritance. Marxist ideology was congruous with the rising analytical spirit. He was a folk artist and he metamorphosed the Indian folk music with World folk specially that of China and South-East Asia. He spent a considerable amount of time in China to visualise the experiences of Socialist construction. We have immensely benefited with his versatile working capacity as an organiser as an artist and as a propagandist. He was a man of exceptional intelligence and unusual political sagacity. He was born a humanist, but the ascetic temper mastered him. In his age of humanity cannot but cry out against such monstrosity of feudalism of his society. Though our Communist Parties are planned not evolved so it is inherently frail in character. This is the chief reason why such type of excellent worker like Hemanga Biswas could not be accommodated in any stream of political movement. In some period of his life he transformed into an individual artist or at best leader of a cultural troupe. The rebel leader massed many soldiers! In spite of all this shortcomings we should remember him for his rich documentation and performing arts. He should be evaluated in the proper perspective. Though mastering the perspective is one of the basic skill of a mass-singer. However he should be remembered for his love of his country and of its poor, destitute peasantry and working class. **P A S**

## Alienation, Revolution and Madness

Dhirendranath Gangopadhyay

A person can be involved in antisocial activities for various reasons. Suppose if he is not satisfied with his expectation from society, if he does not satisfy the excessive demands of the society, if the society does not demand anything from him then a person learns to neglect his society. When the social environment becomes poisonous with injustice, corruption, unlawful activities naturally man becomes antagonistic against society. When the old society stands as a hindrance like stumbling block to resist the arrival pathway of the new society then some persons of this existing society become alienated from the old society and protest against this old system of the society.

Sometimes the protest may be mild, sometimes it is acute, sometimes it becomes silent, sometimes it is vocal, sometimes it is reformistic and sometimes destructive. When either production or distribution system or both of them need radical treatment then a large section of population leaves the society. There are among them the forerunner of the future model of society, supporters of past golden days and somebody who searches for some mystique world.

The first group is supporters of revolution. They want to build a new developed society destroying this old society. The second group is counter-revolutionary. They are determined to resist the revolution by the name of past fantasies. Their romantic appeal attracts many youths and eventually they struggle for it. They become apparently successful to thwart the revolutionary process and they infuse to the old society with some new energy on it. The third group does not consider the all material worldly affair as insignificant, worthless but they are reluctant to actively participate in the struggle. They engage themselves with the popular form of welfare activities, creating missionaries, spreading mysticism in art and literature and creating various absurd materials.

Indirectly their activities help the counter-revolutions. All of them are alienated. Again the number of antisocials without any ideology are not less in number. Those who are involved in unlawful antisocial activities in search of livelihood or other reasons or say some quick-tempered youths who want to destroy the society without any reason all have lost the mooring of society and they are also alienated. The first group is idealist and they are voluntarily choose the path of antisocial activities and those who are without any ideology are compelled to become an antisocial. It is of same result when a person leaves a society considering it sick or somebody dislodged himself from the society. All of them are influenced by the same kind of alienation problem. Neurotics are also to some extent alienated from their society, schizophrenics are totally alienated even they become alienated from their essence also.

What is alienation? Is it a social evil or is it a natural protest-reaction of the idealist youth? Is this discussion of alienation essential considering the revolutionary perspective of our country?

In this article we have tried utmost to give answer to this two questions. It is difficult to determine the definition of alienation. It has different usage. There are different alienation-

related words in English such as estrangement, apathy, non-involvement, indifference, detachment etc.. Though sometimes some writers<sup>1</sup> have used the different words as substitute of alienation but they intend to use the same condition of alienation. We have some constraints in our vernacular yet we have some exchangeable words to analyse the situation of alienation.

Sometimes these words are used in some narrow sense and sometimes it is used in some flexible wider sense. Generally there is no limit of its meaning. On the other hand they have not tried to determine its exact definition. As a result the descriptions of alienations are in most cases radarless and sometimes meaningless. Some years ago in the discussion and seminars arranged on behalf of Pavlov Institute specially we have noticed this sort of tendency. I think the audience there have not been much benefited to develop a concrete conception from this loose, unplanful current of discussion flowing in different directions. If we want to know the relationship of revolution and alienation then we have to be acquainted with the various streams of alienation.

To determine the cause of alienation the psychologists put excessive emphasis on the personal relationship of childhood and adolescents and mental stress and strain. It has been decided that when a child cannot integrate with the family or society due to unhealthy family environment, insoluble Oedipus complex, personal libidinal crisis. Our past or childhood days determine our adult mindset and behaviour. American Freudian psychologists chiefly support this theory and practice.

On the other hand the social thinkers opine that alienation is a reaction of tension and stress and strain of this highly technological mechanical society. Alienation is the curse of this society based on exploitation. The individual is helpless, inactive and victim of alienation. The industrialists have robbed his labour, the state administrators have snatched his freedom, the leaders of this society have tactfully created him like an automaton depriving his spontaneous initiative and judgement. According to the social theorists individualism and individual initiative have been neglected. Gradually propaganda of this theory has spread from the Universities of Europe to the Universities of America. There was much more turmoil of post war economic restlessness, doldrum of European states than America specially at the first half. So it seems that anarchism against any type of organisation, institution, distrust against old values were not so much prevalent in the first half in American society like Europe.

After a gap of few years specially when America was heavily involved in Vietnam war then only the crisis developed and a section of people were very much vocal against the social injustice. In the discussion of alienation there were severe criticisms regarding social injustice, chaos, discrimination, oppression etc.. Much more emphasis was given on the practice of social traumas than on the organic instinctual drives. It was considered that catastrophe of the individual's alienation was much more caused by the mechanisation of the production system. It was well accepted a theory that the chief cause of social alienation and social negativism were due to consumption of abundant commodity and commodity fetishism.

It is needless to say, these two opinions are extreme. So they have failed to determine the exact definition of alienation. The first group considers individual as an instinctual driven animal that has devoid of any social connection. And the second group, the social theorist considers individual as Frankenstein who has no control over his activities, is totally driven by the society. Psychologists give negligible emphasis regarding social influences in the formation of psyche. On the other hand the social theorists give negligible influence of indi-

vidual and individualism to change this society. They actually denies the individualism.

Seeman<sup>2</sup> has discussed five characteristics of psyche created by alienation. The alienated man thinks that he has no role to play regarding change of the sociopolitical system. He is powerless, his root of faith is jeopardised, he does not believe anybody. He believes that no objective can be attained by socially sanctioned pathway, it is impossible to build anything in the template of this ideology. He is disgusted of any ideology. Its social values are meaningless so he is without any relation with the society and the persons of society. He is alone. He is not guided by his inspired inner essence. External social and state power are the controlling force of this individual. So he is alienated from his essence, he lost his integrity.

One research-scholar<sup>3</sup> has found three types of mindset among this alienated youth. Firstly they are not influenced by others. Secondly they cannot influence others. Thirdly they are alienated from their soul. One of them has discovered a special virtue regarding conflict of opinion of father and son of this era. Youth of this era are reluctant to build this old society of the elders more beautifully with a new design. They want to be completely detached from this society. They do not think to follow their predecessors. They want to be free denying their predecessors and social reformers and for this independence and alienation they have launched a struggle. They have developed their own cultural environment. This can be considered a new sub-culture. They lost their ability to communicate with the elders and they do not feel any urge to communicate.

Another researcher has seen expression of two contradictory attitudes among this alienated youths. The non-violent Hippy attitude and violent destructive attitude. The first group is inactive. They do not want to destroy or construct anything. They want the taste of new life without any effort. The second group is active. They want to destroy the old society and rebuild it. They do not want to wait for it. The Hippy's want to be outsider, they do not want to be an insider. So the researcher thinks that it is their healthy and just protest-behaviour against this suffocating social system. On the otherhand the violent extremist youths not only want to capture the state power of this downtrodden society but they are power-monger though they do not want any change.

Another researcher has discovered a basic difference regarding alienation between a poor black American youth and a rich white youth. The poor black is alienated as he is detached from the affluent. He wants recognition from the society. He does not want to detach from the society as like white youth. The blacks do not want to remain at the fringe of the society voluntarily. It is due to social oppression that they have no other option.

In this reference Keniston<sup>6</sup> opines that few writers are eager to determine the definition of alienation. We have been informed from the resarcher-essayist that there is fault in this society and we have lost something valuable. It is not the same thing like 'emancipation'. There is something absent on the contrary that we have not received anything.

So Keniston has raised four questions regarding alienation. If we get answer of this four questions we can realize the exact picture of alienation otherwise it would be possible to determne the definition of alienation. From where it is alienated, from which special relationship? Is there any possibilty to develop any new relationship instead of the old relationship? How the alienation has been expressed? What or who is responsible for this alienation? Actually he wants to mean the word 'alienation' a special kind of estrangement.<sup>7</sup>

In the discussion of alienation Keniston primarily referred the philosopher-nihilist as exis-

tentialist and cosmic philosopher. This human life is short-lived, objectless and meaningless. Those days are gone when it was thought that an omnipotent God is controlling this world with some rules and regulations that has been created for mankind. Today we do not think that there is existence of any subjective truth. We cannot say that we can express to others what we do feel or think. As we are alienated from the great soul so we are alienated from each other. This mindset has the root in the philosophy of Judo-Christian thinking of the story of banishment from heaven due to original sin and then followed by alienation. Though we do not share this original sin in our religion yet we inculcate this existential thinking. Perhaps no person is free from this idea.

Keniston has given some name of this type of alienation as 'cosmic outcastness'. Then he has discussed regarding crisis of human growth and development. During the process of growth and development we are being alienated and we are forming new relationship. The author is hearing the lament of alienation from the cry of newborn babe. As the child grows he cut all relationship with their parents and that is a painful affair as described by Keniston. From childhood to adolescent, from adolescent to youth, from youth to elderly, from elderly to old age – this is the way that the life history of alienation of an individual proceed gradually. Although the alienated person does not always feel this deep tragedy of this alienation due to formation of new relationship. Though we are definitely overwhelmed within our consciousness due to painful affair of this alienation for breakage of relationship.

Do not we shed tears or deep sigh for our lost past in our mature age? Do not we feel the old reminiscences of our childhood days as secured and not burdened with responsibility that we feel as being amnestic of our alienated current situation? The author has given name of this alienation as 'developmental estrangement'. In this reference he has also imported Oedipus complex. He opined that the school days of a child is 'go as you like' affair, a kind of deviation from independence. Apart from maturity of growth and development of sex hormonal glands the child faces a new form of alienation. Family relationship specially relationship with mother has to be build up newly. He has to determine new social relationship. We have discussed the relation of alienation historically with production relation and social restructuring.

Society of hunter-gatherers transformed into society of animal husbandry. Society of slavery transformed into feudal state and the feudal state developed into capitalism. In all this change every chapter of history exhibited and still exhibiting its own form of crisis of alienation. One class tried to establish the old order, the another group tried to extinguish the old form due to alienation. This type of alienations are 'Historicals'. According to the author, the analysis of young Marx's alienation theory is primarily this historical ups and downs. Loss of labour relation is the basis of alienation from others and from self. In Marx's analysis alienation is imposed not voluntarily created. Man is not alienated voluntarily. Alienation has been imposed on him. Proletariat does not know that his labour has been robbed, that he is alienated from his labour. The greatest tragic victims of this historical alienation are the destitute workers. The feeling of alienation is the starting point to extinguish the alienation.<sup>9</sup>

According to Marx due to alienation from labour, worker is alienated from his self. On the otherhand according to neo-Freudians the alienation from self is the primary, it is not due to alienation from labour. In this context Karen Horney said, when the 'conscious self' of the individual lost control from 'real self' or 'primal self' then only comes the question of alienation.

Alienation from labour is associative. Alienation is chiefly a mental state, not social. Though society can augment or accelerate the depth and breadth of alienation by igniting it. Neo-Freudian Fromm and others are on the same opinion. They say, alienation from self<sup>10</sup> split the self so the individual feels the social alienation.

When conscious self dissociate from the creative self then only one can feel alienation from self labour. He feels in him an object within many objects and feels himself a commodity like others. Karen Horney, Eric Fromm are idealist. Just Freudian unconscious has been transformed to them in new name as 'real self', 'productive potential'. Fromm has tried to oxidise and reduce Marx's theory with Freudian hypothesis. They are confused like many Marxists as well as our inexperienced readers.

Keniston has used the term 'alienation' to use individual's voluntary alienation. In this situation individual has willingly banished himself. Individual is fully conscious of this alienation. He knows that he has left the society, society has not left him. He is not an outsider. He wants change either of society or of himself. Here interhuman relationship is not the chief matter. On the other hand to cut off relationship is the main point. He is very much vocal about protest. His protest is against all social values of culture. In all types of alienation the individual is detached from one relationship and attached with another. But what Keniston described it is impossible to attach with any relationship in this form of alienation. The root of this alienation rest on various causes like psychology, sociology, culture, history etc..

In this alienation there is total detachment of relationship yet it is not the split of the essence in two distinct parts. Though they are outside of the society yet this alienated individuals are interested regarding other individuals of this society. The will and desire to strike against this society is the result of this interest. The old social relationship is established by this form of protest-agitation. We can say this protest behaviour as a revolutionary mindset. The reaction of alienation or protest against society reveals as his compassion for this society. This is an expanding ideas of which one side is loaded with antagonism, alienation and the otherside is filled with the commitment of fusion that binds with a compulsive loyalty. The extreme expression of this alienation is in acute psychotic condition, various destructive antagonistic activities and various revolutionary activities.

Disloyalty, psychopathic attitude, social reformative motive and something in between this two extreme are expandable mindset. The result of the activities of one extreme is highly reactionary and conservative psychologically and they are the stumbling block against any sort of revolutionary activities or social change. If we earmarked this two extremes as right and left then in the middle point there will reside the saintly people and good individuals and the persons who conserve and propagate the classical culture of the society.

Only the intensity or the quantity of alienation would not be the criteria to complete the classification of alienation. From where the person is alienated and in which way or form the alienation has been expressed – answer of this two questions are most important to complete the classification of individual's alienation. If a person is alienated from the socially sanctioned rules and regulations then one can find in him behaviour disorder and then only antagonism with the society will be inevitable. In every society there is more or less some rules and regulations. It is expected that each and every citizen will abide by it.

It is unlawful activity to violate this rules. There are police and court to prosecute the law-breakers. It is needless to say that to protect the interest of the higher class of this society,

chiefly this discipline, rules, regulations have been enacted. If anybody deviates from the cultural rules and values of the society it will not create much uproar. Because the cultural rules and values are not well demarcated. Over and above flouting the cultural norms are not punishable offence under the criminal justice system.

According to this person as far as expression is concern this alienation are of two types. One is alloplastic where the individual is determine to change the society and the other is autoplatic where the person is much involved in self-purification.

If we do not define alienation then this fact-riched discussion of alienation will certainly help to highlight the various facets and streams of alienation. Alienation is not always an ailment, it is not always a derogatory remark in every field. We cannot abandon the discussion of alienation. On the other hand we should encourage it. The revolutionaries are inspired in alienation. This is not a stigma of revolution. We cannot deny that the revolutionary thinking and activities are all in many ways influenced by the brain type of the individuals. But we cannot say it as a joyous play of an individual. Again we should keep in mind that the revolutionary ideas and pathways will not be so strife-ridden if the subjective factors of the revolutionaries are so intensely dominant. There should not be necessity of any cultural revolution after state and economic revolution. So if we do not give excessive emphasis to this individual-psychology and subjective factors yet we can progress in this discussion of alienation problems and revolutionary consciousness and that would be much helpful.

Alienation is not something new in our Indian society.

Though we described the Indian society as conservative instituton yet here in different ages alienation has been exhibited. It has challenged the social values. Though fewer in number yet there was social state revolution and cultural revolution. Though the neurotics, psychotics, criminals had disturbed the social reformers yet there were as well Carvaka, Mahavir, Buddha and they had relentlessly attacked the traditional religion and clerks who wanted status co. In the Kuruskhetra there was 'Musal parba'. In self defense the traditional culture and religion has been resurrected through *Bhagabadgita*. The *Varnashram* theory was being established on solid *Karmafal* theory. Stalwarts like Kabir, Nanak, Srichaitanya had emerged. Though there is no reference of original sin in our religion yet in the music of Sufis and Bauls, the existentialism have expressed. Not far away in those days of Nineteenth Century we have seen the cultural revolution associating alienation among the disciples of Derozio.

In West Bengal and in India various signs of alienation are obvious. Though its forms and characters are different, it is distinct in its own character. The problems of industrialised country and India are not the same. So problems of alienation of this two areas will not be same. Though there are some common features of alienation present in all the countries. Lonliness, expression of primal instinct in literature; abstract expressionism in art; existential nihilism and absurdity in drama all this have been cropped up from the last decade in our country. For the last three decades Indian idealism and traditional culture are being attacked by the Marxist revolutionaries and trying to defend itself desparately. There is no doubt that the aggressors are alienated from the mainstream Indian culture. The counter revolutionary ideology is currently now a fierce attacking force.

The counter revolutionaries are very active to form a line of battle in the two war-fields of culture and politics. One part of the Indian youths are specially influenced for many years

with ideas of terrorism of the past. The follower of this ideas are comparatively well organised than this rightist cunteracting forces. In comparison to that the present leftist camp is in disarray and divided in many parts. The two powers of alienation and protest-agitations are concentrated in two opposite poles. There is no middle point even no mutual area seen near by. So there is rapid changes. One group is dividing in at least three groups and new group is being organised in disturbing regularity. Everywhere the process of shifting of this two extremes left and right are obvious.

The current social and state system are in no way can attract the adolescent and youths. So there is increasing feeling of alienation among them. The number of psychotics, neurotics and delinquents are increasing as well as the number of student-youths ultra-revolutionary and counter revolutionaries are also increasing. Driven by the centrifugal force the youths of our country are being concentrated in two opposite poles. The other character of this concentration is noticeable. The two antagonistic forces are rarely come across face to face. In East and Southern part of India specially in West Bengal the ultralefts are very much strong. The other parts of the country are bastion of ultrarightist reactionaries. To some extent for this reason and for some other reasons of centrifugal forces the classes between right and left are so common. On the other hand there are classes among themselves. Day by day we are experiencing intraclass civil war than class wars.

The ultralefts think each and every person residing at the middle point as reformist or camouflaged counter revolutionaries. And the ultrarights think the middle roaders as the agents of leftist. The persons residing at the two poles are blind with rage. Not only they cannot trust their own comrades even they cannot see their own body parts. So out of furious rage they are expressing self-mutilating behaviour. Are Kuruskhetra and 'Musalparba' not far behind? Is it possible to channelled this suicidal fighting among brothers in the pathway of revolutionary activities?

If we want to make some enquiry than we have to make survey at school colleges. We have to know the past history of this youths. We have to do research in social science, economics, psychology in all this three areas. With the help of some earnest collective effort of survey and research in length and depth of all spheres by many persons we may be able to know the actual cause of this all pervading state of alienation.

We find healthy and solid expression of alienation in revolution and its healthy expression seen in psychotic and destructive behaviour. It become more harmful in counter revolutionary activities. The revolutionaries are also destructive but their destruction have some meaning. They want destruction for creating something. They want a surgical operation of the malignant ulcer of the society with some experienced hand. Though he sometimes cannot remember his objective when he is engaged in fierce struggle with counter revolutionaries. He does not create any opportunity for building something new. Why the alienated individual wants destruction? Previously I comment that society has not fulfill his expectation so he is alienated. Society is unable to give him security, society is unable to solve his problems, society is enmeshed with unjust and unlawful activities. So he is antisocial, so he is alienated.

In the deep corner of his mind perhaps there is embeded history of his childhood experiences of traumatised memory of pity, cruelty, deprivation. So he dislikes his society. He has huge expectation so he has intense feeling of failure. Sometimes the child out of intense feeling of failure strike his most precious object. In search of security he mutilates himself

out of anger. The alienated man behave almost like a child if he cannot channelled his sense of alienation inspired by some scientific ideology of revolution. Though we should admit that due to lack of well control process unnecessary destruction are seen in scientific revolution.

It is not necessary to depend on inherent innate eternal instinctual theory to explain the rage reaction and hatred of an alienated individual. The child since birth experiences in society violence and hatred of adults and he also learns to express his failure in this way. This explanation is sufficient. Failure begets rage reaction and rage reaction create destructive attitude. While discussing regarding rage reaction of a child leading to delinquent behaviour Marwell<sup>12</sup> has some explanation.

He has to know with some preplanned program in which area of the society is frail that has been infested by weeds and it is possible to gain much, striking this region. He does not exhibit his blind rage reaction to destroy everything. If the rage of alienation is not channelled in right way or if it is engaged in destructive works than at least revolution would not be possible. The preplanned will to build an idealistic society would be incomplete. It is the primary duty of all revolutionaries to practice the science of revolution and to study the ideology of revolution. Without it there will be possibility of series of failures. Failure of revolution helps the counter revolution.

Those who accept the call of revolution are not at all scientifically conscious or idealist. If they are good in number they can jeopardise the path of revolution. To fulfill sadistic or destructive attitude of the individual may be hidden when the person is in revolutionary activities. If some neurotic persons get the responsibility to lead the revolution then it would be only a history of blood bath and senseless killings. Though destruction, violence, killing, blood bath are unavoidable in revolution yet no actual revolutionary does believe in sheer violence or destruction. During excitement of revolution any weakminded person may turns into a hysteric or paranoid. This derailed revolutionary leaders may perpetuate unnecessary cruelty and violence. In that case the healthy expression of alienation may transform into unhealthy psychotic behaviour.

If the revolutionary energy can be channelled in today's youths mind to burn the waste products and germ of the society then we can expect emergence of a healthy purified environment. Otherwise everything can be destroyed by this fire. If this youth force is channelled in proper scientific way then we can expect that it would purify washed out all the filthy matters or we would be deluge in this power of tornado. To make revolution success is not the sole responsibility of some leaders, it is the responsibility of the entire masses. They should know the difference between the alienation of a revolutionary and a psychotic person.

#### Notes

1. Keniston Kenneth : *The Uncommitted* : Harcourt Brace (1965).
2. Seeman Melvin : *On the Meaning of Alienation*. American Sociological Review, December, 1959.
3. Gold Martin : *Juvenile Delinquency : Social Issues* : Spring 1969.
4. Friedenberg Edgar Z : *Current Patterns of Generation Conflict : Social Issues* : Spring 1969.
5. Gottlieb Daird : *Poor Youth : A Study in Forced alienation : Social Issues* : Spring 1969.
6. Keniston Kenneth : *The Uncommitted* : p. 452.

Writers like Fromm, Kahler and Pappenheim use "Alienation" to describe a variety of conditions ranging from the separation of man from nature to the loss of pre-capitalist

relationship, from man's defensive use of language to his estrangement from his own creative potential and from the worker's loss of control over the productive process to the individual's feeling of social or political powerlessness.

7. Ibid p. 455.
8. Marx, K : *Economic & Philosophical Manuscript*, 1844 (1959).
9. Keniston Kenneth : *The Uncommitted* : p. 463, "Paradoxically, for Marx as for most neo-Marxists, alienation begins to end with the awareness of alienation : only by awareness of alienation can a worker gain the 'class consciousness' which will enable him to struggle to create classless society when men will no longer be alienated from their labour."
10. Fromm Eric : *Marx, Concept of Man* (1941).
11. Martindale Don : *Social Life & Cultural Change* (1962), p. 233.
12. Marwell G : Adolescent Powerlessness and Delinquent Behaviour, "Social Problems" 1966, 64, 35-47 (quoted in *Social Issue* : Spring 1969) "Adolescents are specially powerless, having lost their childhood prerogatives of having others to do for them and not yet having gained the adult power to do for themselves. Classic delinquent acts are part of active responses to this situation."

January 1971. P A S

## Darwin\*

JBS Haldane

"You care for nothing but shooting, dogs and rat-catching, and you will be a disgrace to yourself and your family," said Dr. Robert Darwin, of Shrewsbury, to his son Charles, about 110 years ago. Certainly Charles showed little interest in Latin and Greek, the only subjects taught him at school. He did not do much better as a medical student at Edinburgh. His lectures bored him, but he began to find things out for himself. His first scientific paper, read when he was 16 years old, contained the discovery that what had previously been called the eggs of *Flustra*, an animal which forms incrustations on seaweed, could swim about, and were really larvae.

He had no liking for a medical career, and when 19 years old was sent to Cambridge to become a clergyman. Once again he did not care for lectures, but showed great zeal in collecting beetles. At 22 he left with a pass degree, and soon afterwards accepted an unpaid post as naturalist on H.M.S. Beagle, whose voyage round the world lasted for five years. He was, however, able to get ashore for weeks at a time especially in South America. He interested himself in geology and in collecting and describing hitherto unknown animals.

And what he was started him thinking. He visited islands whose geological structure showed that their rocks had once formed part of the sea bottom, and yet were inhabited by animals found nowhere else, though resembling those on the neighbouring continent. On the prevailing theories these animals must have been specially created. At that time most biolo-

gists thought that every species of animal had been created by God in its existing form, and many believed that all animals were descended from ancestors in Noah's ark. Darwin found these ideas difficult.

"It is strange," he wrote from St. Helena in 1836, "that this little centre of a distinct creation should, as is asserted, bear marks of recent elevation." He did not yet see how to explain such facts. But on some human affairs he had certainly made up his mind. His letters are full of attacks on slavery, which was only abolished in the British Empire in 1838.

I was told before leaving England [he wrote from South America] that after living in slave countries all my opinions would be altered; the only alteration I am aware of is forming a much higher opinion of the negro character. It is impossible to see a negro and not feel kindly towards him.

On the other hand, he did not take to the savages of Tierra del Fuego. But he seems to have liked every other human race.

I must suspect [he wrote from Sydney] that those who have abused or sneered at the missionaries, have generally been such as were not very anxious to find the natives moral and intelligent beings.

He returned to England in 1836, and never left it again, partly because of persistent bad health. In 1837 he started his first notebook on the transformation of species, that is to say, the theory that existing species of plants and animals, including men, were descended from ancestors very unlike themselves and that the change, or evolution, had been mainly due to the survival of the fittest in each generation. His great book, *The Origin of Species*, was published twenty-two years later. During the whole interval he went on collecting facts for and against the theory which he gradually built up. In doing so, he says:

I followed a golden rule, namely that whenever a published fact, a new observation or thought came across me, which was opposed to my general results, to make a memorandum of it without fail and at once; for I had found by experience that such facts and thoughts were far more apt to escape from the memory than favourable ones.

In other words Darwin was about as intellectually honest as it is possible for a man to be.

What other good qualities had he? Again to quote from his own words, "I think that I am superior to the common run of men in noticing things which easily escape attention, and in observing them carefully." We are apt to forget that if Darwin had never written a word on evolution, he would still have been among the world's great biologists.

He wrote a number of books on the fertilization of flowers. They describe both observation and experiment. It is characteristic of Darwin that his experiments were always very simple. When one reads them one is inclined not so much to say "how clever Darwin was to think of that," but "how stupid that rest of humanity was not to think of that before." For example, he noticed that there are two kinds of primrose and cowslip, one with long styles, and the other with short. He fertilized numbers of flowers with the pollen of others, and found that pollen from long-styled plants produced plenty of seed on short-styled plants, and similarly pollen from short on long-styled plants. But when he crossed long with long, or short with short, he got very few seeds.

Next spring have a look at a few primroses and cowslips to see the two forms, and in August try to pick some purple loosestrife, which has three different forms of flower whose peculiar marriage system Darwin studied. Then you may care to read Darwin's books, *The*

\* Broadcast on the British radio.

*Different Forms of Flowers on Plants of the Same Species.* In this book he nearly discovered what are now called Mendel's laws of heredity. His own experiments on the inheritance of the flower forms in the primrose agree with these laws. Unfortunately his modesty led him to include with his own some experiments by a German botanist called Hildebrand, which had certainly been carried out carelessly, and do not agree with Mendel's laws.

His last book, published when he was 72 years old, was devoted to earthworms, but he had been studying them for at least 42 years. He points out that they are constantly raising earth from below the surface, and may bring up a layer a foot deep in 60 years. This process serves to bury large stones and even buildings in the course of time. Among other experiments he did a large number of intelligence tests on worms, finding, for example, that they pulled triangular pieces of paper into their burrows by the sharpest angle, but pairs of pine needles by the blunt end. He was convinced that worms had intelligence.

Here he may have been biased by his genuine love of animals. He was fond of shooting when young, but soon gave it up for observation, which demands as much skill, and a lot more patience. His son described an occasion when he stood so still that some young squirrels apparently took him for a new kind of tree, and ran up his legs and back, while their anguished mother barked at them from a real tree.

In his scientific work he was guided by two principles. He never forgot that everything has a history. For example, the soil of England has been made by earthworms, and men have been evolved from animals. And he was always trying to break down barriers between groups of living beings which in our ordinary thought we regard as totally distinct. He devoted two books to the movements of climbing plants, and the even quicker movement of those which catch insects. In these he points out that many plants have properties which are usually thought to be peculiar to animals. In consequence he was not ashamed of making what he called "fool's experiments," as when, after noticing that a plant responded to vibrations of the table, he made his son play a bassoon to it!

But if most of his work was unorthodox he was fully conversant with the ordinary theory and practice of zoology and botany. He was out to show that the existing classification was artificial, in the sense that there were no unchangeable lines between species, and indeed that varieties, such as the bulldog or the Manx cat, were species in the making. But as a preliminary to this attack on accepted ideas, he devoted much of eight years to describing and classifying, in six volumes, all the known species of living and fossil barnacles. It is no use attacking a theory till you really understand it, and your attack is most successful if you appreciate its good points from actual experience, and so far as possible preserve them when framing a new theory.

In 1837 Darwin began to make notes on the transmutation of species. By 1844 he had written a sketch of his views, shown it to colleagues, and asked for it to be published if he died. In 1858, fourteen years later, Alfred Russel Wallace sent Darwin an essay containing many of the same views. Darwin proposed to publish it, and suppress his own book. However, Hooker, who had read Darwin's sketch, insisted that this would be a serious loss to science, and finally Wallace's essay was read to the Linnaean Society in 1858 with extracts from Darwin's unpublished book, and from a letter written in 1857. Wallace, who was as magnanimous as Darwin, entirely agreed to this course, and there were none of the petty squabbles about priority which have occasionally disgraced scientists.

In 1859 *The Origin of Species* was published. Its argument falls into two parts. On the one hand evidence is brought forward from the study of fossils, of geographical distribution, of embryology, and of vestigial organs (such as man's ear muscles or the remains of a dog's thumb) that existing animals and plants are descended from very different forms in the past. On the other hand, the theory is put forward that the change has been mainly due to natural selection, or the preservation of favoured races in the struggle for life. For example, within a species some animals have thicker hair than others. Such differences are inherited. The thick-haired animals will survive better in a cold climate, so the species as a whole will tend to have thicker hair. The opposite will happen in a warm climate. Similarly, plants with an inherited tendency to produce flowers whose colour and smell attract bees will be more often fertilized by them than plants with unattractive flowers, and therefore flowers of many species have gradually developed so that they now attract bees.

To-day ninety-nine biologists in a hundred believe in evolution, but a good many doubt whether it can be entirely explained by natural selection, though natural selection is pretty universally admitted to have been one of its causes.

Of course, Darwin's theory was violently attacked by many people. Bishop Wilberforce described it as an "utterly rotten fabric of guess and speculation," and others used still harsher language. But the majority of biologists, even when critical, could not cope with the incredible mass of facts which Darwin had collected in favour of his theory, and the detail in which he dealt with objections to it, especially in later editions of the book. Hence he carried conviction where earlier evolutionists such as Lamarck had failed to do so. Darwin himself objected to controversy, but he found a number of very vigorous champions, especially T.H. Huxley. He contented himself with bringing forward further evidence in his book on *The Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication*, and in developing his theories, especially on sexual selection, further in *The Descent of Man*.

It was not till the end of the nineteenth century that the weakest points in the theory of natural selection were discovered. Particularly Darwin's theory of heredity was wrong. The germ-cells do not collect contributions from the various organs of the body, as he believed. And variation is not so continuous as he often suggested. Evolution has not always taken place in small steps. Thus the step from a coloured to a white flower may be taken in a single jump without intermediates. However, these criticisms do not disprove either evolution, or the importance of natural selection. To-day a good many of the other objections to Darwin's views have been met. Darwin's theories must, I think, be modified in many details, like those of Newton or Dalton, but I, at least, am one of those who regard them as one of the foundations on which biology must be built. As a result of accepting Darwinism, I think most biologists are now materialists, in the sense that they believe that matter existed before mind. Darwin, who was very cautious, did not go so far. He described himself as an agnostic.

As a result of Darwin's work many people have come to believe that our descendants will be much more perfect than ourselves, with less animal characteristics. Others, because they accepted Darwinism, have been much more ready to apply evolutionary theories to society, and to believe that the kind of organization which is best fitted for a people, for example, that of England, changes with time. At one time, feudalism was the best possible system, later on capitalism, while to-day socialism would be better than capitalism. Still others have used Darwinism (mistakenly, I think) to justify war and other brutal kinds of competition. Darwin did

not discuss the evolution of societies. But he made it easier for others to do so. In fact, he has had a very unsettling effect on thought, and made it much harder to take a great many current ideas for granted, or to believe a number of doctrines which were thought to be essential to religion.

To sum up, Darwin speculated in the most daring manner. He was extremely cautious in publishing his speculations and extremely honest in weighing the arguments against them. But his mind was dominated by an immense respect for facts, and it is this respect more than any other characteristic which has given him his lasting influence on human thought.

P A S

## The Inter-relation of Man and Woman in the Writings of Rajsekhar

Basudev Mukhopadhyay

"Hence my proper self is my entire life. Not only my body pervaded through place and time, my psyche and works are also incorporated in this self. If I live for seventy years, then all my physical and psychological changes, all the joys, sorrows, affections and aversions I would experience, all the good and bad deeds I would accomplish would all together constitute myself. It would be humiliating to name me as a matter; I am a sequence of events going on for seventy years. Apart if any other self is ascribed for me then that would be transitory, partial or uncorroborated."

— 'Ihaka Paraka'  
(Life Here and Here after)

Appraising Rajsekhar by segregating any component of his creation would be an injustice to him. Hence we should remember that whichever of the elements of his creation come to our critical focus that is a part of a sequence. This sequence has its own ups and downs, diverse shifts: but we must say that somehow he constantly holds on to the key tone. He has explained it in his stories, articles and letters. What is this key tone actually?

Though he never denied his body pervaded through place and time and while going through his writings it can be deciphered as equally important. Keeping in mind the place and time related position according to the philosophical treatise of logic he states that our relation to the outer world is sometimes analogous with time. As a result of the interactions with this factor his writings become a sort of 'epiphenomena'. So it is difficult to provide evidence of a particular complete and immaculate ideal from his writings. Even then a key tone, which everywhere appears to be immensely significant in connection to the romantic psyche of every great artist, also exists here intensely; it's the profound humanist perception. He wants to learn, he also wants to teach others since he is a scientist, he is methodical, wise and scholar, and his sense of reasoning and limits are really amazing. Whenever some idea came to him he expressed that in language, in articles or in stories. And in order to do this he created a humorous situation. And everywhere he implicitly retained some amazing but bold views.

He explained which element is the leitmotif of literary arts.

"...narration of those themes which seem to be decent to both types of sense organs used to gather information and perform action, adherence to stock notions and practices, effort to oblige the latent passion in man, demolition of unwanted impediments, expression of dormant feelings, enhancement of knowledge, assertion of self-respect etc. ..."

Sahityabichar, 1934  
(literary criticism)

As if knowledge based creation should be deliberately constructed! A certain amount of oil and spices should be mixed into it and then only literature would become nice emulsion like yummy dishes.

The critics think that romanticism fades away if lots of serious and grave aspects are discussed. Rajsekhar stands out to be the concrete and definite protest against it. There are more of such instances in Bengali literature. But it really amazes when we consider how such a knowledgeable grammarian and somber personality like Rajsekhar could feel 'Kishnakali', how he could realize that by making faces or saying 'sh' the heroine expresses all that she wants to tell.

In order to write a narrative exact knowledge comes to be the first requirement. But he confessed that he lacked that exact knowledge.

"My experience is very limited since have mixed with very few people in my life. I did not see much of the rural society. At my workplace I mixed with people who are mostly business-man or shop owners."

— Sushil Roy, Manishi Jibankatha  
(lives of great men), page 166

Apart he also confessed,

"He is just an ordinary trader who satisfies only one type of customers or serves only the usual provisions to the public. He is the supreme creator who got a unique taste and who can make many customers follow his own taste."

— Sahityer Paridhi  
(periphery of literature), Chalachchinta

### His times

He has seen many changes in his days. (During the First World War Bakul Lal 'arranged to deliver the same lot for five times, thus a handful of dust turned gold.') He witnessed several socio-economic upheavals like two world wars, riot, partition and famine. He was the technocrat-cum-bureaucrat-cum-manager of a big business house for almost thirty years. But what a sensible man he was! Such a great transformation could change him very little. Because he was a calm, quiet and wise architect of the society who concentrated on social reforms, perceiving the changes.

"Each of the matters transforms relentlessly. It would not be the same as it is today. But in most of the cases this transformation is very slow. That's why it remains inconspicuous."

What type of transformation he observed ...

1. Just like *Jhantu* watches the changes in his aunts. '*Shibamukhi Chime*' (tongs with head shaped like a fox head). *Jhantu's* friend *Jitu's* aunt tells her beads, prepares 'borhi' (small sun dried conical balls made from pigeon-pea paste), prepares 'narhu' (round shaped



sweets made of coconut powder and jaggery), 'aamsatta' (thin sun dried mango cakes made from ripe mango juice), and pickles berries. On the contrary, *Jhintu's* auntie dresses up and leaves for her office in the midday and spends the morning, afternoons and evenings by reading novels. Those are also only love stories.

2. Unmarried *Sarasi* auntie reluctantly selects widower *Jogin Barujje*, the head Assistant of her office since she failed to pick any husband of her choice though this one is not cultured, quite old and a heavy smoker. But finding faults is not passable any longer. All the men are more or less dirty.

In this connection it may be mentioned that according to our previous notion the women in the family have to handle the filth mostly and they have to spend more time with that filth while nursing the kids so it is expected that their bodies would smell of dirt. But time has changed and so an unmarried working woman says that all the men are more or less dirty. But in his story '*Jabali*', *Hindralini* has been ostracized for being dirty ("*Hindralini got used to unholy practices as she lived in the evil company of her husband. The religious women of Ayodhyay twist their lips like sows on seeing her. Hindralini cannot bear it any more, today, after the lunch she must be talking to her husband.*")

3. The main aspect of this transformation is the evolution in human character, the development of complexity. But Rajsekhar did not show much concern about that. For him both male and female characters seem to be type characters. For instance, the guy develops a fascination for more than one woman even though he got a wife and later he can realize his mistake. Rajsekhar could not accept the latest changes of contemporary times, all the time he sneered at those. As in '*Jashomati*' the old, lonely, depressed bachelor Puranjoy could not or did not want to befriend Jashomati.
4. A change seems imminent as we find in '*Dhusturimaya*', '*this is not acceptable ... this hackneyed concept of negotiation marriage ... now only the age of consent has increased and credentials like dancing, singing, M.A. and B.A. have been added to it.*
5. Gradually In course of time *Rajsekhar* confessed that ... "*then the background of Bengali society changed gradually consequently the backdrop of the stories also changed. Use of bombs, home rule movement, boycott movement helped to expand the work periphery of men and women both, interactions became easier. At last there came the invocation from farmers and workers, comradeship business, Japanese terror, famine, riot, homicide, slaughtering the country, freedom, displacement, abduction of women, Kaliyaga(the last stage of creation) approaching annihilation, abolition of the fear of public disgrace, unrestricted crime.*"

(Ramdhaner Bairagya, 1951)

### **Rajsekhar as an Individual**

*Rajsekhar* was forty two when he started writing. Though not many in number, he kept writing regularly afterward. For a few years he stopped writing stories and wrote essays. He created 'type' characters or representative characters. These are no new creations, we find these everyday around us. But there is a problem with these type characters. For example, in '*Bhushundir Mathe*', *Shibu* became a ghost after death and his wife *Nriyakali* too was reborn in subsequent times and to retain the traditional conjugal relationship with him she became a female ghost, "she bit her tongue in shame on seeing him". It is also there in the story

'*Kashinather Janmantar*' (rebirth of Kashinath). It gives as certain idea about type character. But when in '*Chikitsa Sankat*' we find Miss Bipula Mallick could diagnose Nandababu's disease, in order to cure him she married him and became *Mrs. Bipula Mitra*. Since then *Mrs. Mitra* does not treat any other patient except her husband' and here we feel like knowing a few more things since we get puzzled.

1. Is it so that a person like Rajsekhar, a man with scientific outlook, actively engaged in the practice of science, could not cast off racism and his belief in caste system ultimately? Or he wished to ignore it since he hated it at his heart? Or the statement made by Kedar Chatterjee towards the end of '*Swyambar*' was on his mind ... '*Brahmin caste is the superior caste among all castes, be it philosophy poetry or theory of love, all come from the Brahmin's head.*'
2. Towards the end of his story writing phase Gokul Goswami in '*Shashthir Kripa*' feels proud to be known as Brahmin and he considers the inter-caste marriage as drowning of one's birth as a human being. But towards the end of the story as soon as Gokul declares his pride as a Brahmin, *Meni* remarks, '*What a Brahmin, my fool!*' with his hands on his behind Gokulbabu feels a quite big tail there!
3. Seems he had such a blind spot that he found in '*Gita*', '*here the all time best austere ascetic practice has been described*'. But on several occasions in his stories he made fun of the explanations of Gita. Such an example follows here ...  
In the story '*Tilottama*', Ramdas Chanchu tells Siddhinath,  
"*I am also the Brahma. Tilottama, your classmates, your Vice Chancellor ... everyone is the Brahma. All are the same, but all appear to be different only by illusive tricks.*  
- *You want to say that Tilottama and the old humpback maid of our house are same?*  
- *Certainly! A saint and a dishonest man are equal, the same ultimate soul lives in all.*"
4. The letter by Somnath Lahiri on reading his '*Jati Charitra*' in *Desh* magazine is really touching. In fact, this Rajsekhar is quite unfamiliar to us. Here he is the representative of the elite society who can even write, '*Infidelity is an inseparable part of woman's freedom.*'  
On the contrary in his article '*Sahityikar Brata*' he wrote, '*Irrespective of his individual political views, all the writers among us can take the effort to discard the illusion, laziness and evil intentions with the help of their writings. Now no other vow seems greater than it. Let a few fight on political issues, but humanity and social virtues are greater than politics. The writers of our country should try to revoke the sense of social duties. We need many powerful writers like Harriet Beecher Stowe and Dinabandhu Mitra who would succeed to motivate the people against social vices.*'

Did the apolitical Rajsekhar not realize that it is impossible to inspire the people act against social vices without active participation in politics? Because those who want to keep in force the social evils earned this power by using a certain brand of politics and by politics only that could be encountered.

5. On the other hand, a perfectly urban person like Rajsekhar realized that Nature has been abandoned from the intellectual practices of the Bengali and psychology took the reign instead. He could not obey this feature of modernity and that is why he could write such a nice article like '*Nisargacharcha*'. Though this quotation is quite length, we should tolerate it judging its significance.

... *the Bengalis are quite indifferent to topics regarding the Nature, the love for Nature as*

seen in ancient Indian and Western writings are not found in our writings. Many prefer the natural color, smell and taste of food but the sweetmeat maker does not realize that. Similarly, many storywriters do not think it necessary to notice the natural healthy taste of general readers. It's not wholly true that people hanker after pervert love, greed and romance and so our narratives stock up on those items. If the story writer guides his pen according to his own taste and he possesses that power of pen, then his taste is bound to get infused in all. The reader does not place any order for anything, he accepts it as the latest trend what he gets from the author ... the reader cannot be satisfied only with discussions on problems and theories, he expects a variety of emotions. Bengali literature is progressing. The scope and periphery of people's work has expanded since the country got freedom. Now the male characters are not only sons of land owners, clerks, writers or painters, the female characters are not only homely, not-so-literate daughters or housewives. The Bengalis are learning different sciences, they are traveling to near and far, even a few are going to explore the facts behind the Nature. Still we find that the principal factor of our literature is love. Here the change is thus revealed that the love is no more in its natural form, it has been added with foreign color and smelin order to enhance its 'appeal'. Most of the foreign stories are also love oriented but there are also many stories without the issue of love and entertaining story-like light literary pieces and the reader enjoy those profoundly. But in our literature still we do not find such varieties as in Western literature.'

He agreed that the main constituent of literature is love and in a larger sphere it is a narrative centered on the inter-relation of man and woman. But it is not the old story of love; it got a new coat of modernity. Parashuram too accepted it. Here the main purpose is pleasure, the pleasure of enjoying literature.

But this type of pleasure should not harm the mental health, if it does so then it will spoil the fun, the purpose would not be served.

6. Sometimes his writings cause our embarrassment. In 'Jaihari's Zebra' he wrote. ...

*'Actually your dog is at fault, why did he go to the stray bitch? He seems to have no taste though he is a high pedigree dog. Many fools get enticed on seeing painted faced girls. Like them Prince got charmed on seeing the pink color of the bitch.'* ...

It is a bit embarrassing. Who are the women who stand on the road with painted faces to seduce the men? Is it so that Rajsekhar did not know how all human qualities can be spoilt by fiery hunger?

Nevertheless, Rajsekhar believes that leading a life by conforming to the regular norms of this society is only valid. In compliance to it he considers taking resort to the golden mean of life is better. In an essay called 'Prarthana' he writes...

*"The majority depend more on divine forces whenever they get into a crisis. The illiterate people take resort to amulets, lucky charms, oblations of fire, the literate ones pray to the God. No need is felt to consider if the purpose is right or wrong before performing the chanting or prayers to serve it. In olden days the dacoits used to offer prayers to the goddess Kali before hitting the road. Occult rites performed to hypnotize one or cause one's death are still taking place. Those who file false case against their opponent too pray to the God. The student who wants to come first at the examination, the candidate who wants to manage a job by disappointing two thousand candidates, the girl who wants to seduce the new ICS by defeating her competitors, many of them pray to the God or take resort to the divine*

*powers. None of them are really bad; the prayers, 'make me beautiful, successful and famous' seem to be quite natural for the ordinary people."*

So we are expected to do everything calculatingly. The Bengalis do not know how to hold on to their religion, how to make money or how to earn divine blessings but they know how to love and they love calculatingly. As it is there in 'Gamanush Jatir Katha'...

*"Jagai babu said, 'No more talks, marry Priyotosh'. Hindol said, 'It was he whom I loved but he is so stupid! Jagai babu said, 'See, why should he want to marry you otherwise? One who got the philosopher's stone in his stomach can marry the most beautiful woman in this world.'"*

#### **The subtle use of words.**

Is 'Kajjali' any alchemy? In Chalantika dictionary the meaning of Kajjali is given as black powder of mercury and sulphur. We get a more detailed description of Kajjali in 'Nabyarasyani Vidya' by Acharya Prafulla Chandra Roy. 'According to Chakradutta by grinding equal portions of mercury and sulphur in a grindstone a blackish dust like new matter comes out at first. In Ayurveda it is called 'Kajjali'. The stories of Parashuram, remind of 'kalyashya' or 'kalmash' or 'kilwish' or gloomy image. But not only showing the image of darkness, Parashuram thought of the remedy to darkness also. 'Kajjali' is that medication which will perhaps act as the preventive of social evils. Here it seems that Parashuram wants to alchemize the relation between man and woman. He wants to color the pale streams with heavenly splendor. (Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy—Shakespeare).

The History of alchemy is as old as the history of civilization. In all ages in all civilizations the renowned people worked on alchemy sometimes urged by the greed of getting philosopher's stone, sometimes for gold or the panacea. Might be it is not like that at all. Might be taking the name 'Kajjali' is another insignificant issue like his taking the name 'Parashuram'. But what's the harm there in accepting it as meaningful? Use of any favored word also has many implications.

The alchemy of Parashuram is based on a very concrete foundation. Irrespective of the no-nonsense and unaffected attitude, it is vibrant and pulsating. Here is no space for bogus fantasy and illusion. This realization is direct, straight and there is no ambiguity in it. In some places he showed that our expectations are strange. What we can get or what we get is much more valuable instead. As for example, Neri is much more accomplished than the better half whom 'Kartik' wanted (Ratarati). Similarly, 'Padmamadhu' is much more attractive and accomplished than the wife whom 'Keshto' wanted to marry. That is why urged by the instinct for preserving one's own species 'Keshto' ran with 'Padmamadhu' leaving behind his 'new culture' formulated by him (Kachi Samsad). Rajsekhar taught us that life is much more meaningful and substantial than these childish cultures. This life accommodates instincts for self-defense and preservation of species. Our show off business is based on these instincts only. That's why the heroes in most of the cases return to their old flames (Anandabai).

There are many statements in Rajsekhar's writings which are likely to offend the women. This is quite natural! What more could be expected from the feudal backward society of the time! Once Kedar Chattu je even said that falling in the trap of a beautiful woman and a tigress are the same! Yet a few narrations really amaze us. For example, 'Krishnakali's finding out nice mother-in-law and husband, 'Jabali' suggesting dancer 'Ghritachi' so that she does not break her waist while dancing on muddy places. Many such examples are there scattered in

his stories.

Rajsekhar, observed and pondered over his surroundings from an intellectual and unbiased point of view. In the words of Rabindranath, *"I don't know if he got an axe in his hands but there is a fire inside him which destroys all the wastes of mind and brain. He knows all easily and can narrate all simply."* (A letter to Amol Hom in 1926.) Parashuram thought how to eliminate the sorrows and distresses of the poor and oppressed of his society. He had no other Kajjali or magic potion near him except his knowledge. That's why by handling a page of his own poetry to his grieving granddaughter he can tell her, *'Keep yourself engaged in studies, there is nothing superior than knowledge.'* Parashuram is our Kajjali, his knowledge is our Kajjali.

### Jabali

The writings of scientist Rajsekhar are classical and full of allusions. There might be many reasons behind expressing and representing one's own ideas through mythological tales. But here it should be noticed how skillfully he presented a perfect story keeping the human relations alive.

The obstinate old saint Jabali now lives in utter economic crisis. He was rather comfortable in Ayodhya as he was favored by Ram but now Ram has gone to live in the jungle and Ayodhya is in a chaotic condition, so he suffers from insecurity. He could not convince Ram to come back. He has been insulted by Ram. At last he decided that he would leave Ayodhya and travel to the Himalayas. Jabali professes that he is an opportunist, he acts as the situation demands and he is neither a believer nor a non-believer but in reality he is not like that. He does not bow his head even amidst crises; he does not surrender his ideals.

Similar characters can also be found in our contemporary society. Rajsekhar himself wrote about Buno Ramnath in *'Jiban Yatra'*. However, when the insults, accusations and slurs from his immediate social circles crossed tolerable limits he advised his wife that staying in the solitude of the Himalayas is better than living in this society. The docile wife Hindralini accepted the decision. But there also nobody spared them. Even *'the boys who are doomed to die early, the underage impertinent good-for-nothing creatures'* (balkhilyagan) hurriedly came to criticize him. Since he does not obey the Vedas, he does not arrange ritualistic oblations and does not respect the God, he should be punished. Still Jabali remains rigid, he won't move an inch.

A new crisis cropped up on another side. A rumor reached the ears of Devraj Indra, that by doing some sacrificial rituals Jabali would win such a blessing that Indra would possibly lose his throne. So he sent dancer Ghrithachi and many palatable food to disturb the rituals of Jabali. Jabali could understand all, he thanked Indra for the food, asked Ghrithachi not to take any more trouble and sent her back to convey Indra that he won't do the ritual. But all these failed to save him. Jabali, such an unyielding person, had been forced to consume poison. But to the last he returned from hell and Brahma blessed him since he strictly adhered to his moral principles.

Such a person who never knew self-deception really impresses us. We find the indomitable Rajsekhar in this Jabali. We never suspect if there was any character like Jabali in reality. Because we know, that's the truth what you create'. We are familiar with such poverty-stricken, tortured Jabali in our society and his simple and human behaviour with Ghrithachi, the

dancer of the heaven, demands respect. We find that childless Hindralini intensely loves this weird husband let it be out of prejudice, respect or love. Such a Jabali was the ideal of Rajsekhar. Parashuram showed how the hungry stomach shapes our life style and influences the human relations. Amidst all that man keeps alive a flame of idealism.

How indomitable was Rajsekhar himself? In the introduction to 'Balmiki Ramayan' he wrote... .

*"The poet's composition ends on a happy note. But his description of the judgment at fire disturbs our taste. After killing the Ravana, Ram summoned Sita and refused her with haughty words. He focuses on protecting the honor of Ikhhaku clan and salvaging his lost image, he never thought what would happen to Sita. He did not hear anything against Sita till date but he wants to forsake her before anything happens. He suspects that Sita has lost her character. We feel that this eccentricity of Ram is quite unlike of Ram."*

### Freudian Psychology

The younger brother Girindrasekhar was in contact with Freud through letters. Girindrasekhar took an important role in introducing Freud to the intellectuals of this country. Rajsekhar knew all these. Apart from that Freud was an internationally famous personality, so Rajsekhar would have a respect for him obviously. But we do not find such overwhelming reverence in the writings of Parashuram.

In the stories of Parashuram the men frequently refer to Freud while defending their extra-marital affairs as if it results from their repressed desires of the subconscious which creates havoc rarely surfacing up on the conscious level. How is the individual responsible for it? And that is why the wives protest, 'Damn Freud'.

The somber, conscientious, dutiful person is taking help of different symbols where strangeness and amusement predominate. But why and how would he express these issues? He has let pieces of his mind float perched sometimes on hobgoblin stories, mythological stories or a story within a story as he fancied at the time of writing. And it seemed as if he was standing apart with a suppressed smile suggesting 'Well, you see, I have made it!'

Freud has maintained that the repressed desires tend to come out defying the censor. In case of deficiency in growth and development of the mouth, anus and genitals of the child the personality may suffer from neurosis centered on these regions when it comes of age. Sexual urge is the driving force in the conduction of life, the libido. In his story, 'Rajbhog' we find the repulsive greediness of an old man centered on hunger-thirst and sexual urge. Yet we would like to know whether Rajsekhar accepted this psychology. Of course he did not otherwise he would not have written...

A. *"Whatever the disciples of Freud may hold, the primary urge of living being is hunger and thirst."* ('Niramishashi Bagh', 1953)

B. *"Nevertheless nothing is impossible for disciples of Freud, they can surely come up with an explanation based on analysis."*

('Nikashita Hem', 1954)

Now let us see what the characters of Parashuram's stories say in this matter.

1. In 'Kochisamsad' the writer speaks in the first person...

*"Tomtom and cymbals are ringing from all parts of the carriage made of iron and wood, thrusts of the wheels and clattering of the piston rods... I am shaking vehemently in the*

*Tandava posture lying on my back, Hamin Ast, Wa Hamin Ast (It is here, oh, it is here!) Is there any wicked serpent hidden behind this beastly imagination (alternatively, poetic imagination), this unjustified craze for the railways! I do not dare to ask Girin Bose."*

Why is the boldness to ask Girin Bose lacking? That is because Girin Bose has put forward precisely the explanation of 'mind' in his essay '*Achal O Sachal Mon*'. The Body is as if the machinery of the engine and mind is the motion of the engine. Girin Bose is the direct disciple of Freud hence it would not be prudent to challenge him directly.

2. In the very piece Keshto says '*According to Freud love is the plaster of civilization on bestiality*'.
3. In the same piece when the wife of the professional wanted to eavesdrop while Keshto and Padmamadhu Bose talked to the narrator told his wife, '*Your curiosity in the matter between others is not good. Do you know what is the interpretation of Freud of this tendency ...*' As soon as the name of Freud was uttered his wife burst out saying '*Don't mention the wicked man's name*'. Is that possible? The wife of a middle class family revealing her wrath on Freud having learnt his theory on sexual urge and related efforts in 1929 in Calcutta?
4. In the same piece of writing the professional narrator appears in the role of the psycho-analyst having approved Freud's theory and says, '*I have shown precedent from psychology to affirm that he has no reason to be ashamed of. There was another mind concealed behind Keshto's mind so long which and a quake therein made him play the ape.*'
5. In that case what would be the Freudian explanation of platonic love? Intensive arguments took place on the matter in '*Nikashita hem*'. '*Pinaki Sarbangya said, 'Do you know what platonic love is like? It is the extremely close mutual attachment between two hearts with no trace of grossness ... as Chandidas has said, 'Love with the washer-woman is tested gold with no trace of sexual passion.'* Jatish said, '*That is the statement of Chandidas himself, there is no tangible evidence of how the relation actually was. Generally the mention of love refers to the primal desire for sexual intercourse. Platonic love or love for the washer-woman is nothing but a type of the same just as the giant chilli from the hills has no hotness but has slight smell of chilli.* Lalit said, '*I understand. Just as no feeding of the poor or the Bengalis is complete without a slight smell of fish, no love, common or Platonic, can be there without a trace of lust. The tested gold of Chandidas is not pure gold; there is at least one sixteenth part of alloy in it.*
6. In numerous stories woman seek to become men and men seek to become women and Parashuram experiments with them purposely but strangely enough he has not accepted the onus of judging over the matter or arriving at some conclusion.

Bernard Shaw held two things to be the contribution of bourgeoisie civilization ... one of them is gun powder and the other is romantic love. This is why no form of modern love can be found in our classical Sanskrit literature. Rajeskhari too admitted this. So he wrote in the preface of his translation of Meghdoot. "*Tastes of the present will not be in harmony of the days of yore. Ancient poets did not usually distinguish between love and lust and that is why their compositions seemed to be affected with obscenity. But there is not much difference*

*between ancient and modern writers in the appreciation of sentiment expressed in writings, only the modes of expression are different.'*

In fact Rajeskhari knows it well that the entire matter is a fashion. Whenever a trend or fashion emerges its impact would reach this country and the young people would dance and caper with the same. He has admitted that love is the mainstay of literary works written in prose or the inter-relation between man and woman in a more extensive sphere. But this is not the hackneyed tale of love of the olden times, 'the married and lived happily' stuff of the days bygone, tint of modernity is clearly manifested here. Parashuram too has accepted this and having the fun of it, tasting the joy of it, is the main objective. Having the pleasure is the basic goal of literature but these should be nothing that causes impairment of health, it would then spoil the fun and act against the objective, against the very appreciation.

In his words '*Modern Bengali writers have come to realize that sex appeal is the essence of good story. This is actually the eternal emotion of love, sex passion. But formula is very much trite, without variety and the strong pungent aroma has faded out. So appropriate changes have been made and it is now known as sex appeal. Till now no Bengali writer has been able to utilize it fully.*'

(Ramdhaner Bairagya)

P A S

## Water Crisis and Human Rights : Changing Interactions and Dimensions in the Third World

Sayan Bhattacharya<sup>1\*</sup>, Amit Kumar<sup>2</sup>, Dhruvajyoti Chattopadhyay<sup>3</sup> and  
Aniruddha Mukhopadhyay<sup>1</sup>

1. Department of Environmental Science, University of Calcutta. 51/2, Hazra Road, Kolkata-700019, India.

2. Department of Mining Engineering, Bengal Engineering and Science University (BESU), Shibpur, India.

3. B. C. Guha Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, University of Calcutta, India. Address: 35, Ballygunge Circular Road, Kolkata-700019, India.

\*. Corresponding author : Sayan Bhattacharya

Keywords : water, dams, privatization, food security, human rights.

### Abstract

*Water resources are absolutely essential for sustaining all forms of life, food production, economic development, and for general well-being. The access to water is a basic human right, as because water is a social and cultural goods, not merely an economic commodity. Global consumption of water is doubling every 20 years, more than twice the rate of human population growth. India has the highest volume of annual groundwater extraction in the world,*

*and in most parts of it, groundwater extraction is twice the rate of the annual recharge. The growth in water consumption is highest in the agricultural and industrial areas, where the resources to buy water are readily available with rich farmers and industrialists. Potential human right issues can arise from lack of safe water. Construction of dams can lead to imbalances in the ecosystems and degradation of the quality of human life, specially the livelihood of the local tribal populations. To solve the growing water crisis, one of the possible solutions that has been proposed and has been implemented is privatization of water, which in effect leads to treatment of water as a commodity. Increase in water consumption will be satisfied through the market dynamics often at the cost of the poor who cannot afford the increased water tariffs. Privatization can also favour bulk water exports, which will have disastrous ecological and environmental consequences. Water pricing and privatization will inevitably increase the price of the major crops and vegetables all around the world, which, in turn, can adversely affect food security, which is another important human right issue in the third world. Community based water management policies such as rainwater harvesting, check dam construction, sustainable watershed management, integrated river basin management and irrigation efficiency can be sustainable solutions of water crisis, which also can respect the human right issues as well.*

#### 1. Introduction

There are three phases of human civilization, namely, agricultural, industrial and information technology based globalized civilization. In all the above mentioned phases man has become an agent that has modified his immediate environment which gives him physical sustenance and affords him the opportunity for intellectual, moral, social and spiritual growth. Since ancient age, man has developed the capacity to modify the face of the earth. During the course of evolution of the human race, civilization has transformed the environment in countless ways and on an unprecedented scale. Use of fire, domestication of animals and early agricultural practices are the major steps to modify the already existing conditions. During last two centuries, the human society has tremendously used energy, raw materials, marginalized people and transport commodities over huge distances and generated enormous amount of wastes— mostly hazardous, culminating in the destruction of the equilibrium of the environment. Environmental degradation has raised the uncomfortable questions about the concept of development itself. So far as the protection of nature is concerned, there is always a philosophical conflict between the developed and developing nations. The developed world stresses more on the protection of nature, while the developing world emphasizes more on social justice. Development has increased consumerism in a small section of the society, but as expected, it has degraded and depleted natural resources.

Water is a compound whose material constitution becomes secondary to its symbolic value because of its reflection in our mind as a symbol of life. The access to water is a basic human right, as because water is a social and cultural good, not merely an economic commodity. The hydrological cycle of the globe can be referred to as water democracy, because it is a system of distributing water for all the living beings. Providing water is absolutely essential for a country's development objectives with job creation, food security, GDP growth and social goals including poverty reduction (UNESCO, 2009). Despite significant progress of human society, water related problems are continuously affecting the social infrastructures and

jeopardizing the productivity of the society. A substantial proportion of ill health in India can be attributed to lack of safe drinking water, poor sanitation and hygiene practices. In 2002, the World Health Organization estimated that 1.1 billion people (17% of the global population) lacked access to safe water resources, and 2.6 billion people (42% of the global population) lacked access to improved sanitation, which is the primary cause of water contamination and waterborne diseases (WHO, 2004). Changed consumption patterns and unsustainable management policies of our society are continuously leading us towards a polluted and water stressed world.

#### 2. Global water stress, consumption patterns and human rights

Global consumption of water is doubling every 20 years, more than twice the rate of human population growth. At present more than one billion people on earth lack access to fresh drinking water. By the year 2025 the demand for freshwater is expected to rise to 56% above what currently available water can deliver, if current trends persist (Barlow, 2003). Many of the world's major industries are highly water intensive. In many areas, agriculture is also irrigation intensive. Such irrigations need a huge amount of water. India has the highest volume of annual groundwater extraction in the world, and in most parts of it, groundwater extraction is twice the rate of annual recharge (Barlow, 2003). Interestingly, the annual average rainfall in India is 4000 billion cubic meters, but the annual water requirement of India is only 450 billion cubic meters (Rao, 1995). Still the country is plagued by environmental issues such as water pollution from raw sewage and runoff of agricultural pesticides, water crisis and unequal distribution problems, which, in turn, is making the whole situation paradoxical (Sharma, 2005).

The concept of basic water requirement (BWR) was proposed by the governments of different countries, water agencies and community organizations, which can reflect the human rights issues centered on this important resource. The concept refers to the amount of water that an individual would need daily to fulfill their four basic domestic needs: drinking, sanitation, bathing and cooking. Various levels of BWR have been suggested by the World Bank, WHO, USAID, the UN based on the objectives of betterment for the fundamental health conditions of individuals and assumptions of technology choices made at modest levels of economic development. Estimates of the BWR range from 20 - 50 litres per day, independent of climate, technology and culture (Gleick, 1999).

A region where renewable fresh water availability is below 1700 cubic meters/capita/annum is a 'water stress' region, and one where availability falls below 1000 cubic meters/capita/annum is termed as water scarce region (Falkenmark 1992). The annual per capita availability of renewable freshwater in India has reduced from around 5,277 cubic meters in 1955 to 2,464 cubic meters in 1990. Considering the projected increase in population by the year 2025, the per capita availability is likely to drop to below 1,000 cubic meters and India will face severe water scarcity (The Energy and Resources Institute, 1993).

Potential human right issues can arise from lack of safe water. For example, environmental refugees often can't get proper access to safe water and sanitation. Lack of access to safe water in the vicinity of the home can affect the health and education of women and children (WHO, 2000). Many children usually carry water from distant sources rather than going to school, which impairs their right to an education. Most of the women and girl children in Rajasthan, India spend a considerable amount of time of their life for collecting water. On

an average, a rural woman walks more than 14000 km./year for searching and collecting water (Shiva, 2005). In the remote rural areas of Rajasthan, men generally migrate to urban areas in search of work because the chances of agricultural prosperity are minimum in those water scarce regions. Women spend most of their time in collecting water, and little time is generally left for other productive works (Shiva, 2005). On the other hand, the story is just the reverse for the developed areas of the world. The richest parts of the world, mainly the industrialized nations, accounts for 86% of consumption of all goods including water. North Americans use 1,280 cubic meters of water/person/year; Europeans use 694; south Americans use 311; whereas in Asia and Africa, the figures are 535 and 186 respectively (UNESCO, 2009).

### 3. Water economy and human rights

Civilization is becoming more and more dependent on irrigated land for growing food. Scarcity of fresh water affects the food security issues. In water stressed areas, particularly in the tropics, the FAO estimated that temperature rise because of global warming can increase evapotranspiration which can increase salinity in the soil and water. The reduction of the overall availability of water for irrigation would limit the possibility to extend irrigated areas for agriculture in future. In addition to the water scarcity on arid lands, salinity will also affect soil productivity adversely (Parry et.al. 2007). The intensity of groundwater use, partly encouraged by subsidized rural electrification, has led to the emergence of many groundwater-dependent economies, which are currently facing serious threats from aquifer depletion and pollution related problems (UNESCO, 2009).

The concepts of water footprints and virtual water are often used to describe the relations between water management, international trade and policies. Water footprint is defined as the total volume of fresh water used for production of goods and services consumed by the individual or community. On the other hand, virtual water is referred to the amount of water used for the production of goods or services, and is a tool for determining the movement of water through international trade. Water mainly a local issue, although it becomes a regional issue where rivers or lakes cross national boundaries. It is the virtual water that actually makes it a global issue in terms of production and consumption. Countries with water shortages can import water-intensive goods and services, while water-abundant countries can increase the economic strength by using the crisis (UNESCO, 2009).

The diminishing quality of water supplies, water tax, privatization and strict environmental effluent standards are compelling industries to increase their water efficiency. Industrial water productivity is a general indicator of efficiency and performance in water use. In emerging market economies industrial demand for water is rising with rapid growth in manufacturing output, so water use efficiency should be increased accordingly to maintain the equilibrium (UNESCO, 2009).

### 4. Water pollution and human rights

Vulnerability to pollution is generally linked to an aquifer's accessibility. Shallow aquifers generally suffer from agrochemicals, domestic and industrial waste pollution. Major water pollutants include microbes (like intestinal pathogens and viruses), nutrients (like phosphates and nitrates), heavy metals and metalloids (like arsenic, lead, mercury), organic chemicals (like DDT, lubricants, industrial solvents), oil, sediments and heat. Virtually all industrial and

goods-producing activities generate pollutants as unwanted by-products. Heavy metals can contaminate the aquifer and subsequently can bioaccumulate in the tissues of humans and other organisms. For example, more than 100 million people are living in the arsenic affected districts of India and Bangladesh. 9 districts out of 19 in West Bengal, 78 blocks and around 3150 villages are affected with arsenic-contaminated groundwater (Chakraborti et. al. 2002). The use of arsenic contaminated groundwater for irrigation purpose in crop fields subsequently transmits arsenic in the food chains (Meharg and Rahman, 2003).

Mercury and lead from industrial activities, mining and landfill leachates also affect human health. In Japan, mercury toxicity caused minamata disease which killed and impaired several thousand people. Minamata disease is a poisoning disease of central nervous system developed among the inhabitants who routinely had large quantities of fishes and shellfishes in which methylmercury compound had been absorbed directly through the gills or through the intestinal tracts or been accumulated at high concentrations by food chains after discharge from chemical plant to the sea and rivers (Ministry of Environment, Govt. of Japan, 2006).

Groundwater systems are very vulnerable freshwater resources and prone to contamination. Pollutants can take years to reach the aquifers, but, once it reaches the water source, it is very difficult and costly to remove the pollutants. More than 80% of sewage in developing countries is discharged without proper treatment which can pollute the river systems, lakes and coastal water bodies (UNESCO, 2009).

These examples can reflect that human rights issues concerning safe water access rights are continuously affected in modern developmental scenario. A small section of the society is violating the rules and the whole civilization is paying the cost.

### 5. Dams construction and human rights

The displacement caused by large scale irrigation and hydro-projects has drawn considerable attention in recent years. Numerous studies have also been conducted on resettlement and rehabilitation of displaced persons and of the impacts of displacement on income, standards of living and physical and emotional health (e.g., Thukral 1992, McCully 1997). It emerges that large dams are the single largest cause of displacement in India since independence.

Large scale deforestation for dams and canals can lead to imbalances in the ecosystems. Following the construction of dams, the aquatic life is generally severely affected. Changes in water velocity, water chemistry, temperature and turbidity disturb the free passage of fishes. Weeds often spread in irrigation reservoirs. These, in turn, can spread diseases among human beings and cattles. Constructions of dams on many rivers make them lifeless; can reduce the flow as well (Shiva, 2003). Thus, the rivers become incapable of withstanding the increasing pollution load. As most of the civilizations depend on the rivers for their social, biological and economic benefits, it can lead to degradation of the quality of human life. Soil erosion and degradation is another significant effect caused by dam construction, mainly because of water logging and salinity. Dams are usually constructed in remote forest and hill areas where most of the indigenous and tribal people live. These activities can eminently affect the livelihood of the tribal population. The sudden influx of modern technologies, destruction and modification of the natural systems and the ultimate displacement and resettlement can cause social, cultural and economic collapse in the indigenous communities (Shiva, 2003).

Another shortcoming of estimating dam-related displacement is that only reservoir dis-

placement is generally taken into account by the government officials. Large dam projects can displace people in a number of ways including due to associated canal construction, downstream impacts, treatment of catchment area, compensatory afforestation, secondary displacement strategies and due to related conservation schemes like sanctuaries and national parks establishment. When all the factors are considered for evaluation, it can lead to much larger figures of displacement. Estimates of displacement also fail to consider the effect of the rise in water level as the reservoir begins to silt up. As a result of the submergence are being larger than originally estimated, larger numbers of people are displaced than previous estimations. Further, people resettled on the edges of the reservoir may be forced to move repeatedly as the water rises to submerge the new settlements. A review by the World Bank published that on an average, 13,000 people is displaced for each new dam construction in modern scenario (Cernea, 1996). By this estimate, more than 39 million people have been displaced so far due to construction of over 3000 large dams. So, the estimates of only 2 million people in India till 1990 have been displaced by all dams shown by the official reports are vastly inaccurate (Gleick, 1999). Even when such surveys are conducted, many characteristics of these surveys lead us to question government figures. It has been noted that project authorities often provide lower displacement figures than might actually be the case in proposal documents, so as to show a favourable cost benefit ratio to the funding authority and thus ensure clearance for the project (McCully, 1997; Cernea, 1996).

#### **6. Water privatization and Human rights**

In India, changes in the economy have been made with the liberalization, privatization and globalization of almost every aspect. While this process began in 1991 in sectors like power, it has gradually expanded in the water sector in recent times. To solve the growing water crisis, one of the possible solutions that has been proposed and has been implemented is privatization of water, which in effect leads to treatment of water as a commodity. The ideological choice of treating water as an economic goods or a 'cashable resource' is based on the assertion that market is the principal mechanism to regulate the flow of goods. But, it should be remembered that under fundamental rights in the Constitution of India, Article 21 entitled 'protection of life and personal liberty' states: 'no person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law' (Gol, 1986: 7). In view of the scope of this right, environmental and ecological damage of water resources are regarded as amounting to violation of Article 21. Further, 'the entitlement of citizens to receive safe drinking water (potable water) is part of the right to life under Article 21' (Sinha, 2001).

The administrations are consciously overlooking the complexities of the water management systems that are deeply integrated in the social, political and economical structures. On the other hand, water has become big business for global corporations. It has limitless markets in the changing scenario of growing water demand and water scarcity. Numerous case studies around the world highlight the other ills of water privatization such as poor quality of water, unsustainable water mining and lack of transparency and accountability (UNESCO, 2009). The privatization of water has already happened in several developed countries and is being pushed in many developing countries through structural adjustment policies (Barlow, 2003). Water privatization will invariably increase the price of this common property resource because there are hidden costs involved in water collection, purification and distribution. The

corporations will recover their costs by exploiting the consumers. It has been argued that privatization will help to reduce unsustainable water use and will promote water conservation. But the market dynamics will inevitably affect the economically weaker class of the society who cannot afford the increased water tariffs (Barlow, 2003).

Another possible threat of water privatization is the unsustainable water extraction by the water corporations for maximizing profits and subsequent destruction of water bodies and aquifers. Corporations in search of profits can compromise on water quality in order to reduce costs. This is especially relevant in India, where the water quality regulatory boards do not have the efficiency to enforce their standards. There have been numerous examples of outbreak of epidemics because of poor water quality management and regulations (WHO, 2004).

Indiscriminate mining of groundwater by a multinational soft drink giant in Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu and Kerala has resulted severe threats to the local water resources. They are extracting 1 million liter of groundwater per day which is destroying the balance of the local ecosystems and human societies. Many wells are dried up and also become contaminated (with excessive calcium and magnesium) in the adjoining areas of the soft drink bottling factory in Kerala. The company's usage of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes is also questionable. A study of World Wildlife Federation in 2001 showed that the bottled water industries use 1.5 million tons of plastic every year, and after disposal, these bottles release toxic chemicals in the environment (Barlow, 2003). In India, the drinking water and soft drink industries have been shown to have high pesticide levels in their products. In 2003, the New Delhi, India based Centre for Science and Environment showed that some of the soft drinks that were being sold in India contained lindane, DDT, malathion and other deadly pesticides which can cause cancer and can affect the immune systems (Criticism of Coca Cola, Wikipedia). Privatization can also favour bulk water exports as control over water is transferred from local communities to global corporations, which will have disastrous ecological and environmental consequences. Many crops and vegetables need huge amount of water for their growth and production. For example, in India, production of 1 kg. of Basmati rice requires 4200 liters of water, for long duration coarse rice it is 2500 liters and for wheat the amount is 700 liters (Shiva, 2003). Water pricing and privatization will inevitably increase the price of the major crops and vegetables all around the world, which, in turn, can adversely affect another human right issue of food security. While government management of water resources is partly responsible for the water crisis we face today, privatization will at best compound the problem.

#### **7. Conclusion**

The water footprint of humanity has exceeded sustainable levels at several places and is unequally distributed among people. Good information about water footprints of communities and businesses will help to understand how we can achieve a more sustainable and equitable use of fresh water. Reducing the water footprint is the need of the hour, just like reducing the carbon footprint, to ensure our environmental, economic and social security.

Community based water management policies such as rainwater harvesting, check dam construction, sustainable watershed management, integrated river basin management and irrigation efficiency are far better and sustainable alternatives to water privatization. These actions also can respect the human rights as well and should be implemented in large scales

(Agarwal and Narain, 1997).

The meaningful implementation of sustainable development can now be further advanced to help link social development and human rights aspects of sustainable development with the environment, as well as ensuring economic well being through the benefits that adequate supplies of water can provide. It is absolutely essential for us to secure the right for saving water resources and environment in general. Though a lot of regulations, acts and laws have been enacted here and there, but it is more important to raise the general awareness of the common people about their basic rights. Then only the people will come to understand how their rights are being violated. Knowledge about development and environment is not enough, rather the upsurge of the common people and pushing the principles of human rights are extremely important.

#### References

1. Agarwal A., & Narain S. (1997). *Dying wisdom. Rise, fall and potential of India's traditional water harvesting systems*. Centre for Science & Environment (CSE), New Delhi, India.
2. Barlow, M. (2003). *Blue Gold & The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World's Water*. Leftword Books, New Delhi, India.
3. Cernea, M.M. (1996). Public Policy Responses to Development Induced Population Displacement. *Economic and Political Weekly*, June 15, 1515-1523.
4. Chakraborti, D., Rahman, M.M., Paul, K., Chowdhury, U.K., Sengupta, M.K., Lodh, D., Chanda, C.R., Saha, K.C., & Mukherjee S.C. (2002). Arsenic calamity in the Indian subcontinent: what lessons have been learned?. *Talanta* 58(4), 3 & 22. doi:10.1016/S0039-9140(02)00270-9.
5. Falkenmark, M., Widstrand, C. (1992). Population and Water Resources: A Delicate Balance. *Population Bulletin* 47, Population Reference Bureau (PRB). Washington, DC.
6. Gleick, P.H. (1999). *The World's Water: The Biennial Report on Freshwater Resources*. Island Press, Washington D.C.
7. Goi (1986) *Constitution of India*. New Delhi: Government of India.
8. McCully, P. (1997). *Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams*. Orient Longman. Hyderabad, India.
9. Meharg A.A., & Rahman, M.M. (2003). Arsenic contamination in Bangladesh paddy field soils: implication for rice contribution to arsenic consumption. *Environmental Science and Technology* 37 (2), 229-234. doi: 10.1021/es0259842.
10. Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan (2006). *Annual Report on the Environment in Japan*. Retrieved May 3, 2011, from: <http://www.env.go.jp/en/wpaper/2006/index.html>
11. Parry, M.L., Canziani, O.F., Palutikof, J.P., Hanson, C.E. (eds.) (2007). *IPCC Fourth Assessment Report: Climate Change 2007*. Cambridge University Press, New York. Retrieved April 23, 2011, from: [http://www.ipcc.ch/publications\\_and\\_data/ar4/wg2/en/contents.html](http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/ar4/wg2/en/contents.html)
12. Rao, K.L. (1995). *India's Water Wealth*. Orient Longman, India.
13. Sharma, S. (2005). *Background and perspective: Infochange water resources*. Retrieved April 7, 2011, from: <http://www.infochangeindia.org/WaterResourceIbp.jsp>
14. Shiva, V., & Jalees, K. (2003). *The Impact of the River Linking Project*. Navdanya, New Delhi.
15. Shiva, V., & Jalees, K. (2005). *Water and women: A Report by Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology for National Commission for Women*. Navdanya, India.
16. Sinha, S. (2001). 'Environmental Protection: Role of Constitutional Courts', in: Contribution of the Andhra Pradesh High Court in the Development of Constitutional Law, High Court of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.
17. The Energy and Resources Institute (1996). *State of India's Environment* (A Quantitative Analysis). Report No. 1995EE52.

18. Thukral E.G. (1992). *Big Dams, Displaced People: Rivers of Sorrow, Rivers of Change*. Sage Publications, New Delhi.
19. UNESCO (2009). World Water Assessment Programme. The United Nations World Water Development Report 3: *Water in a changing world*. Retrieved April 5, 2011, from: [http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/wwdr/wwdr3/pdf/WWDR3\\_Water\\_in\\_a\\_Changing\\_World.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/wwdr/wwdr3/pdf/WWDR3_Water_in_a_Changing_World.pdf)
20. World Health Organization (2000). *Global Water Supply and Sanitation Assessment 2000 Report*. Retrieved from: [http://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/monitoring/jmp2000.pdf](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/monitoring/jmp2000.pdf)
21. World Health Organization (2004). *Water sanitation and hygiene linked to health*. Retrieved March 7, 2011, from: [http://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/publications/facts2004/en/](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/facts2004/en/)
22. Wikipedia: Criticism of Coca cola. Retrieved April 7, 2011, from: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criticism\\_of\\_Coca-Cola](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criticism_of_Coca-Cola). **P A S**

## Poetry of a Committed Individual : Manibhushan Bhattacharya in 1960's

Alo Bhattacharya

A poet is a poet throughout his life. He may continue his writing upto his end or may decide on a sudden that he will write no more as he has nothing new to say. There may be quantitative or qualitative changes in his writing. His poems may gain new life, new dimensions or may not as he may go on repeating himself. It depends. But if a poet turns himself into a different individual according to the need of time and began to respond and react to the social happenings through his poetry then he becomes a committed individual and a poet also. Now we have to determine his place he deserves in the history of literature as a changed artist. Thus he demands special attention. Manibhushan Bhattacharya is this type of poet.

His first book was published in 1962, May with the poems written in late 1950s. He is marked as a poet of 1960s. So like the poets of his time and age he had the national and international events and political happenings in his background. About 50 years ago before his time the Marxist theory of dialectical materialism reached its culminating point in the Bolshevik Revolution and after that the Stalin-era, the de-Stalinization programme, Rise of Communist China and later Vietnam war; all were indicating towards a new trend. In India as its reaction a Communist Party was formed and the young generation of Bengal of that time was influenced more or less by the Student Federation of the undivided Communist Party. But the fascism mainly in Germany and Italy before the II World war and the influence of Capitalist America were almost parallel trends. All these worked in making a modern Indian mind in that decade but reaction varied according to temperament. Manibhushan was attached to the Student Federation so far his left orientation permitted him from his college life. It was the progressive organization influenced by the Soviet Russia which assured a dream of equality, a class-less society where each individual will be awarded with their just dues. Those who believed in the basic human rights Manibhushan was among them. Keeping this in mind he was then trying only to be a good poet, was concerned with the unique technique and was experimenting with the novelties in diction. His poems were being published from '58-'59 in the



journals like *Parichaya*, *Desh* or *Kabita Patrika* of Buddhadev Basu and others. His proficiency promised him the most cherished fame and prosperity in future. His connections with Kolkata was only to attend classes in the Calcutta University yet he was a renowned poet by this time. A poet who had a long way to go and to choose which way to go! Particularly the artists of the 60's in Bengal were still going through the burning sensation of the Partition of their homeland; being uprooted and thrown into uncertainty as refugees, it sense of insecurity with a bleeding wound of cutmark within their heart, the creative personalities were more sensitive at that time than common man because they who could and still can only feel the agony and ecstasy of creation and thus were disturbed what will be their stand! 'Art for Art's Sake' is a very alluring theme at the same time confusing phrase for an artist who thought themselves deprived of the desired recognition. With the rise of Soviet Union and the success of Marxist theory in its first phase naturally the American bloc was active and silently spreading its spell of illusion in various enchanting ways which was apparently innocent, all over the world. The third world countries like India who was dissatisfied from many sides was it's easy target.

The cultural front was how much perturbed became clear when with the coming of the American poet Allen Ginsberg in 1962 Kolkata became frothed up with him. The theory of complete freedom of an artist created incitement that an artist is only an artist to create art; no obligation or commitment to anybody and he is entitled to lead an extravagant life. A few lines from the diary of Ginsberg will clear the theory : 'November '62- "Night at the burning ghat-25 np. two triangle paper packets of ganja at Nimtala St. pipe shop. ... - A body burning in the first ash pit-pile of wood and the head slowly bubbling up around mouth and nose-cheeks blackened with sheets of flame clasping the volume of the face-splitting, and pink underskin sizzling open — Sat on the bench and watched five minutes, — staring at the head-feet painted red sticking out the other end of the wood structure bed."

This philosophy of life, this type of living will end your soul in a decomposed rubbish, useless for the welfare of mankind; that Manibhushan realised after talking with Ginsberg in the Coffee House in Kolkata in '62. Till then he was not sure of his exact role in a society as an individual but like some others he was never thought of himself to be the hero of Albert Camus's 'Outsider'. The philosophy of Ginsberg may suit a capitalist country but not a developing country like India which had already become a dried refuse being exploited as a colony for years. Now Manibhushan realised that this self-willed Bohemian life style will throw him towards nothingness; it will not suit his temperament and will not assure him that perfection in creation which he is searching for. He cut off his relations with the urban intellectuals of his time centred round Kolkata and this exile gave him the repose to prepare himself by extensive reading and thinking. In 1963 during the Indo-China war the commercial magazine. 'Desh' was publishing a series of articles on the 'Freedom of an artist'. Manibhushan disagreed with them on certain points and stopped writing in 'Desh' for ever since then and decided to write only in little magazines. He never clamoured for publishing his writings or make them a source of earning. He took a long gap before publishing his next book 'ë×ÀÈßÂF úõÇõpĪ' in May 1971.

During the Naxalite Movement in India which had started in '67-68 had a class character which made many to rethink about their social existences and duties. It had perturbed Manibhushan and thus from the last eleven poems mainly of this book he began to change himself. He is now not only a promising poet with new dimension in his work but a committed

individual also. This exception singled him out.

The political situation in India and that of Bengal in the '70s was unprecedented in its history and Manibhushan who is going to take a turn in his forms and techniques became a representative of that phase in Indian history. Politics reflected in his poems as he dealt with the raw reality and current affairs mingled with poetic flavour but he was not going to be a partisan poet. He wrote from his conscience taking full liberty of being a free human being committed to his motherland and to his oppressed country men. There is always a risk that aesthetic appeal of poetry may suffer if it becomes a political poem. Let us see how far he was trying to be a politically conscious at a time a sensitive and susceptible poet from his book 'ë×ÀÈßÂF úõÇõpĪ' of which only few poems are selected here for discussion.

'úSnÁóË•Âõp >¶Ĵiâ' if it is the name of a poem it indicates that the poet is referring to his enemies but the theme of the poem clarify that his enemies are class-enemies. Earlier in his poem 'Ī|íĪüëääĀîÂðîĀ±' of this book his class consciousness and the exploitation that happens in a class-divided society is clearly referred :

'yēōĪ BāqōēōpōpōSōē,  
ū:¶ĴĀū āōp ĩōēōp ĪĀĀp ōp  
¶ĀSĀōpō Bēā Yēā'

The poem ends with the line describing a teen-age boy with a broken slate and in rags

'ĀōĪpō :ĴĀŪ ĪēēĀy× ŪĀ: Sāō  
:Āōp ōpōLŌĀ'

Now in his writings the poet declares that he is fully aware that who are the exploiters and in any case he is not going to make any social compromise with them.

'ĴĀĀō yēōp ōĀyūēĀ :qñ  
ōĀĀĀĀūy× ¶Ācōpō āōēĀ'

He will go on writing poems like thousand flowers and if his opponents cause him death for this he will never surrender. He is as if in the battlefield of Mahamaya and Mahisasur and is alert to resist the asur at any time with arms may the asur be the American imperialism. He dares to announce 'ōõÇĒõpõp ñ±ūÇ BĀĒõp Āóð±ā±ĪĀ BĀĴõp' bold and arrogant but lyrical and emotional in the next lines

'ŪĪĀ ūōp yēū ūāōp ūōōp  
āū ĪĪĀ ĪĪĀ ōĀ ĪĪĀō ŌōēĀ'

The reader has to admit after a jolt that he is after all a poet. His uncompromising poems will certainly have their effect on them as he is dealing with truth and also with leave everlasting tranquility on readers.

In his poem 'Ĵ±ñĪðîĀ±' Manibhushan starts with the line

'ōōĀ ōĀ ĪĀ ĴĀĀō: ĪyēĪ: Ū× ōĀō  
Ūōp ¶ĀĀ ōĀ: ¶Āp, ±ō ōĀōōō ōĀ  
ōĀĀĀĀūy× BĀĀ, āĀōū

ōĀū ōĀōō





**P T S D**  
**Tsunami Disaster of the Survivors**  
 Sanjoy Ghosh

'Tsunami' is a Japanese word, which means 'Harbor Wave'. Of late, this term has created a terrible horror among the people of eleven countries of South-East Asia and even in Somalia and Tanzania in Africa. It was 6.29 A.M. of Indian Standard Time on 26th of December, 2004, when a heavy earthquake took place in 30 K.M. deep seas in Sumatra Islands, which shook the World. The earthquake occurred in the deep layers of earth plates and the less strong Burma Plate was destroyed and a heavy hollow space was created. Seawater moved almost two and half K.M. back to the middle of the sea to fulfill the gap and after forty-five minutes it bounced back to the sea-shore with a speed of 700 K.M. per hour and a height of 40 feet. This heavy waves are known as 'Tsunami'. Tsunami destroyed the lives of more than 3 lakhs of people; it produced thousands of orphans, damaged houses, agricultural lands and the source of drinking water (UNICEF Report On Tsunami, 2004). On 9th of January, 2005, Times of India reported, 'In this difficult hours in South Asia after deadly Tsunami, there is very little to be proud of for India'. United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan said, 'The largest disaster we have had to deal with'.

Disaster Scenario of India was like this :- ( ABC NEWS-JAN-01-2005)

Andhra Pradesh	- 105 people died	- 211 people have no trace
Kerala	- 198 people died	- No report of untraced
Tamil Nadu	- 7,921 people died	- No report of untraced
Pondicherry	- 579 people died	- 86 people have no trace
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	- 2000 people died	- 3000 people have no trace.

Other Disaster Scenario of India was as follows:-

55,000 people have lost their homes.

5, 00,000 houses were severely damaged.

10,000 farmers lost their lands.

More than 30,000 fishermen lost their boats and other accessories.

Seawater flooded over the agriculture lands of 13,000 farmers; those stopped producing crops for three years.

**Devastating Tsunami**

This Tsunami disaster has been the worst of all the natural disasters took place over 100 years. Entire communities have cried for existence. They have been shaken from their foundation. They were uprooted from nowhere to return. There is no one to blame here, here it is the nature that turned against humans.

Disaster stroke at an unexpected hour: thus people were totally unprepared. It was a Sunday just after the Christmas and the people all over the world were enjoying. In every

coastal area, a huge gathering of people was observed for recreation. Just after the earthquake, when the seawater moved back, the people felt this event as a great surprise and they ran down the sea to collect the pebbles and crabs. When Tsunami came, they felt helpless and rolled over the sea waves for more than 20 times and thrown away 80 to 100 meters away from the sea shore. Further waves again took them back to the sea and rolled. The trains were uprooted, cars were rolled like toys, they all were moving along with the Tsunami waves. When Tsunami ceased, we saw the unending rows of dead bodies. People who survived were often seem to be in a state of shock and showed decreased life activities. Initially they felt as if it is happening in a dream, they could not imagine that this is a fact of life. They became panic-stricken and tried to get out of it. People were hyper-alert responding to each and every sea waves and even subsequently they were constantly on the vigil, apprehending the occurrence of any such disaster in future. They felt helpless, abandoned and looked forward to some form of rescue. Even in the crowd, they felt lonely. The survivors lost their near and dear ones, property, homes everything. Children were so traumatized that most of them became emotionally numb and could not express their thoughts. They had a feeling of repeatedly blaming themselves for having survived. They were in a feeling of psychic numbness or emptiness (Schawswald, 2005); such a psychic state is often reported by the individual who became the victims of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

**POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)**

This was first named in 1980 in DSM-III (APA-1980) which describes as exposure to a traumatic event during which one feels fear, helplessness or horror. Afterwards, victims re-experience the event through memories and nightmares. When memories occur very suddenly and the victims find themselves relieving the event, they are having a flashback. Victims avoid anything that reminds them to trauma. They display a characteristics restriction or numbing of emotional responsiveness, which may be very disruptive to interpersonal relationships. They are sometimes unable to remember certain aspects of the event. It is possible that the victims unconsciously attempt to avoid the experience of emotion itself, like people with panic disorder, because intense emotion could bring back memories of the trauma. Finally, victims typically or chronically over-aroused, easily startled and quick to anger (Barlow, 1988).

PTSD includes a variety of symptoms ranging from hyperarousal, anxiety, depressive mood, low frustration tolerance, insomnia, headache, emotional instability, low self-esteem etc.. To meet a diagnosis of Acute PTSD, symptoms must occur between two and four weeks after the traumatic experience. If symptoms persist after six months it is regarded as Chronic PTSD (Tsabary, 2005).

**Tsunami Flashback**

S is a 25 years old Nicobari woman who had three children and she used to stay with her husband in Car Nicobar before Tsunami. Her husband was a fisherman. He used to catch fishes from the sea and she brought those to the market for selling. They were spending their lives very happily. On the Tsunami day they were enjoying themselves in the beach of Car Nicobar. Tsunami waves splashed over them. She hugged tightly with her three children with a tree but the waves snatched her husband a long way from where he would never come back.

After the water has gone down, she was searching for her husband for the whole day. She was then crying and asking God what is her sin that He picked her husband from her life. After two days of haunting in bushes a military ship came and rescued them to the Nicobari Home in Port Blair. She was crying all the time in such thoughts what she will do in future with these three children. Her house was broken, her fishing boat was lost. She did not know who will help her?

30 year old M lived happily with her husband. She had two daughters. She was pregnant when Tsunami struck. Both her children and her father-in-law were washed away in the surging waves. She saw her husband was rolling on the waves and after few seconds he was disappeared and never returned. She sat alone wondering what happened to her family. She also lost her house. She refused to work in Cash for Work of the Government. She does not know how she will take care of herself and her unborn child?

24 years old Tamil Brahmin lost both of his parents in the terrible waves of Tsunami. He was a B.Com. student and came to the sea-shore with his parents with the first light of that Sunday morning to spend some merry time with them. He had no other person in his family. He was severely depressed and helpless about his future.

One 8 years old boy came to the sea-shore with his parents in that Tsunami Day. The demon waves snatched his parents and he rolled many times in waves and then stick to a branch of a tree, N found him crying and took him to his home. He became emotionally numb and did not say anything.

#### **Management Of PTSD**

It is really a challenge for the caregivers to deal with these situations. Always we have to remember that the path of healing is a long one. One should be brave to offer himself as a 'helper' in this journey towards healing.

It is very important to educate the survivors about the nature of trauma and the common reactions to it. Secondly it is very essential to make them learn the new ways of coping with the traumatic stress. Spiritual and religious beliefs can bring new meaning to the trauma. Identification of feelings of Anger, Guilt, Shame and Despair can make them accepted and honored as a natural reaction to the trauma. This leads to their Cognitive Restructuring for their misconceptions and beliefs. Group Therapy is an effective use of resources if the individuals can be matched with others who are in the same situation; this allows them to feel a sense of belonging and community. Exposure therapy is also used as the survivors do not have a language by which they can understand their horrific experiences. These people need to describe their traumatic experiences in detail, again and again, as this will help reduce the arousal and distress that accompanies their painful memories. Creative therapies like theater performances, sculptures and paintings help them to express themselves to other group members. Social activism is the most challenging one by which they can set up local support networks, participating in rebuilding efforts, care for children, injured etc..

Children can be assured with their normal life activity and proper nurturing. Safety and security needs should be strengthened to them. Adults have to spend more time and be a good role model for them.

#### **Importance Of Tsunami**

This devastating grace of nature will perpetuate in our mind for so many years. Any kind of natural disaster will bring the similar kind of loss and pain to us. Every disaster leaves behind the survivors of PTSD. They need our extensive help. It is our conscious effort which gives them mental strength to cope up with the death and bereavement they experience. We have to prepare ourselves that anyone may be the victim of this calamity.

Tsunami gave us a good lesson about disaster preparedness. The alarming system was so poor that we could not give warning to those who breathe their last after few minutes. Tsunami waves repeatedly flashed on the sea-coast. First Tsunami came at 6.29 A.M., it ceased within 20 minutes, and next Tsunami came after 45 minutes. In this manner people experienced 3 Tsunami splashed on that day. After the first one, when the waves ceased down many people gathered on the sea-shore to experience this event. We did not have any idea that Tsunami can come back at any moment. As a result we became the witness of more death and casualties on the successive Tsunami waves.

Another important lesson we have got from the tribal community of the coastal region. Not a single person died among them in this deadly Tsunami. Most of them are illiterate and very primitive in cultural development. They followed the warning of their ancestors that when sea moves back, always climb up at the top of the hills or take a boat and quickly move to the middle of the sea. We saw the Tsunami waves increased its height and speed as it approached to the sea shore after clashing with other returning waves. So those people who were in the middle of the sea did not experience the vigor of Tsunami. Similarly the sea waves did not overflow the hills with its height. The opposite feature was observed among the educated and civilized section of our society. When sea moved back, we ran down to the sea to collect stones, pebbles and crabs. We became helpless when Tsunami waves came back with a speed of a jet plane and rolled huge number of people and tumbled them down to death.

This innocence also left behind millions of PTSD survivors who became orphans, developed psychiatric symptoms, lost their belongings and living with uncertainty. It should be our coherent effort to move them out from stress and share their feelings with us.

#### **References**

- 1 .Banerjee, T-*Tsunami*. 2004
2. Schwarzwald, A.et.al.- *Journal of Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention*.Vol.06(4) 316-325.1993
3. Tsabery, S.- *Guide for Understanding and Treating Symptoms of Trauma in Survivors of the Tsunami Disaster*. A Report.2005
4. UNICEF- *Report on Tsunami-2004*. **P A S**

## Rationalism in Bengal : An Overview

Ramkrishna Bhattacharya

*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (on CD-Rom, 11th ed. 2004) defines rationalism as “the practice or principle of basing opinions and actions on reason and knowledge rather than on religious belief or emotional response.” This is not the only meaning of the word. In philosophy the same term suggests “the theory that reason rather than experience is the foundation of certainty in knowledge” (ibid.). But we are not concerned with such technical meanings here. It is the first meaning that is generally known today and that is how I am going to use the word in this paper.

Rationalism is not a property exclusively of the West. Every civilization, at one point of time or another, witnessed a struggle between faith and reason, instinctive or emotional response and knowledge. Even during the darkest period of the history of any people, the lamp of reason could not be totally extinguished. It is as much true of Europe during the Middle Ages as of India during the long stretch between the twelfth century and the nineteenth century. There were sceptics, agnostics and atheists even during the Vedic age. The Charvaka / Lokayatas had absorbed all such previous traits and finally produced a system of philosophy that was uncompromisingly rational and opposed to all dictums that were not founded on sense perception. Inference drawn from unverifiable premises and word or verbal testimony, even though coming from the works of Manu and others, according to Madhavacharya (Sayana)'s *Sarva-darsana-samgraha*, were unacceptable to them (249, 251).

The Charvaka / Lokayata, however, seems to have completely disappeared before the fourteenth century. Blind faith in the authorities, secular or religious, was the guiding principle of Indian social life, both of the Hindus and the Muslims, throughout the pre-modern period. Only in the nineteenth century reason made its presence strongly felt, particularly in Kolkata (then Calcutta in English), thanks to Rammohun Roy, H. L. V. Derozio and the Derozians (the Young Bengal), Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, Akshaykumar Datta and, last but not least, the Positivists.

2 Rammohun Roy in his *First Conference between an Advocate for and an Opponent of, the Practice of Burning Widows Alive* (1818) upheld reason in the following way: “the Sastras, and the reasonings connected with them enable us to discriminate right and wrong. In those Sastras such female murder is altogether forbidden. And reason also declares, that to bind down a woman for her destruction, holding out to her the inducement of heavenly rewards, is a most sinful act” (*English Works* 3 : 95-96). The English translation of the *Second Conference* (1820) was dedicated to the Marchioness of Hastings, Countess of Loudoun, etc. with these words: “The following tract, being a translation of a Bengalee Essay, published some time ago [1819], as *an appeal to reason in behalf of humanity...*” (3 :101. Emphasis added). The Bangla original had no such dedication.

This is for the first time in the history of Bengal, perhaps of India, that reason was harnessed along with humanity in the service of social reform. Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, on the other hand, knew full well that the Bengali people would never agree to listen to reason;

to them religious texts and local customs were the final arbiter (II : 21-22). Hence before launching the movement demanding the enactment of widow remarriage, he relied exclusively on the interpretation of the Smriti texts rather than appealing to reason. In an earlier tract on the evils of child marriage (II : 3-9) Vidyasagar, however, had based himself on reason rather than religious texts, presumably because all major Dharmasastras were in favour of early marriage, the earlier the better. So any pre-emptive move by way of harnessing Sastric adages was out of the question.

One sure way of judging the radical role of Vidyasagar in the field of education is to look at the reaction of John Murdoch, an arch bigot whom even Gandhi could not tolerate (104). This is how the Christian missionaries found fault with Vidyasagar who had based his school primer, *Bodhodaya* on Chambers's *The Rudiments of Knowledge*. John Murdoch in his *Education as a Missionary Agency in India* (Madras, 1872) quoted a passage from *Bodhodaya* in translation:

The senses:- The above five senses are the avenues of our knowledge, by which we can get all sorts of knowledge, and without which we should be ignorant of every thing. By the exercise of those senses we gain experience, and experience produces the power of judgment of what is right and wrong, of what is good and bad. Therefore the senses are very advantageous to us. 3 (extracted in Indramitra, Appendix 30, 720-21. All italics in the original)

On this materialist theory of knowledge Murdoch remarks in annoyance:

The above... seems to teach *rank Materialism*. (italics in the original)

It has been asserted that it is “misleading” to characterize such books as “Secularist.” The autour (*sic*, meaning Vidyasagar) is described as “the well known Hindu reformer.” But this is no proof to the contrary. His reforms are purely social. So far as the writer (*sc.* Murdoch) is aware, he has kept himself entirely aloof from the Brahmo Somaj (*sic*) movement. Robert Owen, the Secularist, was also a reformer in his way.

The writer described the above books, not simply as *prepared* by a Secularist, but as *Secularist*. He did so because the author deliberately *stuck out the injunction to worship God; because his moral teaching has no reference to God's will, but simply to what people around would think or do; because he omitted all passages* [in *The Rudiments of Knowledge* published by Messrs. Chambers'] *teaching the immortality of the Soul, the responsibility of man and the difference between him and the brutes that perish*. If it is “misleading” to describe such books as “Secularist”, the writer confesses that he does not know the meaning of the term.

Murdoch concludes his condemnation of Vidyasagar as following :

It is very lamentable that such books should have been prepared by the most distinguished writer in Bengali, formerly Principal of a Government College, and that they should be those which have by far the largest circulation throughout the country.

It is earnestly hoped that soon such books will be excluded from Mission Schools....”

Let us go back to Rammohun Roy. He made his debut in religious controversy in a tract written in Persian (1804) called *Tuhfat-ul Muwahhidin* ( *A Gift to the Monotheists*). After going through the small book one feels that it could be named with equal justice *A Gift to the Atheists*. The aim of life, Rammohun declares, is to live in peace without doing harm to anybody. He speaks neither of liberation (*mukti*) nor of realizing God as the end of life. He does not believe in the virtue of prayer as a means of getting rid of troubles (*durgati*) or cure from diseases. He has no faith in any revealed text. Nor does he feel any need of a Paigambar

to mediate between God and humans (*Racbanavali* 717-29). In short, by rejecting both Brahminical creeds and Islam, Rammohun tacitly rejects all established religions. Everything being eliminated, only two entities remain – God Himself and Rammohun Roy (or someone who is a theist but has no faith in any institutionalized, established religion). The 4 position is akin to that of the European deists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, although Rammohun himself in later days had no respect for deism (Sastri 2:284). Some Europeans, however, used to consider Rammohun as a deist (Pauthier 697).

Another small dialogue, *Dialogue between a Missionary and Three Chinese Converts* (*English Works* 4:77-79), is worth noting. The original Bangla version was written in the same year, 1823. Rammohun expanded some of the points in the English version (or the Bangla version was an abridgement of the English). The setting of the dialogue is as follows: A European Missionary, intending to examine his converts, said to them, "How many Gods are there, my brethren?" The first convert answered, "Three", the second, "Two", and the third, "None". The Missionary was astonished. But the converts struck to their own grounds. The third convert, for example, replied: 'Our minds are not like yours in the West, or you would not have asked me [why I say there is no God]. You told me again and again that there never was but one God, that Christ was the true God, and that a nation of merchants living at the head of Arabian gulf [the Bangla version specifically names the Jews], put him to death upon a tree [that is, crucified him], about eighteen hundred years ago. Believing you, what other answer could I give than "None"?' (4: 77-78) The Missionary lost his composure and declared that all the three would without doubt perish everlastingly. The first convert gently rebuked him, "Cong-foo-tse [Confucius], our revered master says, that bad temper always turns reason out of doors, and that when men begin to curse, the good Spirit of the universe abandoned their hearts" (4:78-79).<sup>1</sup>

Brajendranath Seal suggests that Rammohun read David Hume and John Locke. Yet it seems that Rammohun had learned more from the works of Persian and Arabic writers of the Middle Ages than from any modern Western thinker. Regarding the "formative influence" of Rammohun, Seal has mentioned "Islamic culture" first, "the culture of Baghdad and Bassora (Basra), filtered through an Indian Madrassa" (3). Several years after this Rammohun learnt Sanskrit and got to know the Jain and Buddhist traditions as well as the views of the North-Indian *sants* such as Kabir, Dadu, Nanak and the Ramayets. It was only during his sojourn in North Bengal, in the early years of the nineteenth century that Rammohun acquired the elements of English. At Rangpur he 'cultivated the literature of empirical philosophy and scientific thought from Bacon to Locke and Newton, as well as the propaganda of free thinking and "Illumination" in Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Volney, Tom Paine and others...' (6). As Seal writes: "He (sc. Rammohun) drank eagerly from the fountainhead of modern freedom and was inspired by the spirit of the Age of Illumination" (6). Yet, Seal asserts, these studies did not cause a sea-change in Rammohun's outlook. They 'only confirmed him in his rejection of miracle, dogma and ritual to which he had already been led by his own reflections on the religions and scriptures of his country as well as by the teachings of the Mutazilas, the Sufis, and the *Uttara Mimamsa*. In fact, he became sceptically minded as to the claims of all "Sastras" and all historical religions' (6-7).

Even though Rammohun never lost faith in the existence of God and never condoned polytheism, his faith was grounded on logic; he would like to adduce reasons for his mono-

theistic conviction rather than declare that devotion was enough and arguments vitiate the mind. His polemics against the Christian missionaries on the one hand and the Hindu polytheists on the other, remain permanent sources of both entertainment and edification.

It needs to be re-emphasized, as D. Biswas has rightly done (59), that Rammohun's rationalism was *not* derived from the West. When he wrote his first Persian tract in 1804 (or 1805), he did not know English or any Western language well enough to read the works of the European sceptics or the Enlightenment thinkers. His mindset apparently had already been made up before he learnt English. What Western education (learnt privately, not in any academic institution) taught him only reinforced his conviction in the power of reason.

If Rammohun Roy the monotheist found his worthy successor in his friend's son (and also his son's friend) Debendranath Tagore, Rammohun Roy the rationalist had his successor — and a very able one at that — in Akshaykumar Datta. Akshaykumar was a self-taught polymath. He began his career as an Adi Brahma Samaj activist (he was one of the editors of the *Tattvabodhini Patrika*) but proceeded slowly but steadily first towards agnosticism and then to uncompromising atheism. His stand did not endear him to the Adi Brahmos. Debendranath felt that there was a gulf of difference between him and Akshaykumar. It was Akshaykumar who had convinced Debendranath that no sacred book can be *apaurusheya*, that is, not composed by any being, human or otherwise. Akshaykumar's terse equation:

Labour = Crops

Labour + Prayer = Crops

∴ Prayer = 0 (qtd. A. Chakraborty 411)<sup>2</sup>

created quite a sensation among the students in the then Kolkata. Besides writing two bulky volumes on the Indian devotional communities, he also produced a large number of primers on basic sciences such as astronomy, geography, geology, physics, etc. He coined new Bengali terms for modern science and many of his terminology are still current in Bangla. He was a Baconian through and through and considered the works of Bacon and Comte to be "our *sastra*", as much as the works of "Bhaskara and Aryabhata as well as Newton and Laplace" were (M. Roy 95). Akshaykumar had the greatest reverence for Rammohun and criticized the Brahmos who were antipathetic and antagonistic to science (2: 30-33). His study of the ancient Indian philosophical systems is a marvel of scholarship.<sup>3</sup> His sole intention was to prove that most of the philosophical schools, such as Samkhya, Old Nyaya, Mimamsa and even Vedanta, not to speak of the Charvaka, were atheistic (2: 1, 23, 29, 54).

The impact of Western education is to be found in the next generation of youths who had H. L. V. Derozio (1809-31) as their teacher at Hindu College. Ramgopaul Ghose, his pupil and one of the august members of the so-called Young Bengal (Peary Chand Mitra even narrowed it down to Young Calcutta) declared the motto of his master in this way: "He who will not reason is a bigot; he who cannot is a fool; he who does not is a slave" (qtd. in S. Sarkar 101). Words like these should be inscribed in every school and college in letters of radium. Then there was Madhub Chunder Mullick who wrote in the college magazine, "If there is anything that we hate from the bottom of our heart, it is Hinduism" (Sastri 2:290). Russic Krishna Mullick, while attending the court of law as a witness, refused to take oath by touching a copper vessel, Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*) leaf and holy water (as was customary), because, he

said, "I do not believe in the sacredness of the Ganges" (Sastri 2:315).

Needless to say, Derozio and his worthy pupils drew inspiration from British thinkers like David Hume, not from any Oriental strand of rationalism as Rammohun had done. Derozio in his letter to H. H. Wilson declared: "Entrusted as I was for sometime with the education of youth, peculiarly circumstanced was it for me to have made them pert and ignorant dogmatists.... I therefore thought it my duty to acquaint 7 several of the college students with the substance of Hume's celebrated dialogue between Cleanthes and Philo [*Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, posthumously and anonymously published in 1779] in which the most subtle and refined arguments against theism are adduced" (qtd. in Mittra, 26).

Yet Derozio was not trying to substitute one set of faith by another, that of atheism, both based on verbal testimony (*aptabakya*). It was not a case of brainwashing to be replaced by counter-brainwashing (what some ultra-rationalists in present-day Bengal have tried to do, with no perceptible result at all). In the same letter Derozio added that side by side with Hume he had also furnished his students with "Dr Reid's and Dugald Stewart's more acute replies to Hume, — replies which to this day continue unrefuted. This is the head and front of my offending" (Mittra 26). He further stated: "That I should be called a sceptic and an infidel is not surprising, as these names are always given to persons who think for themselves in religion..." (Mittra 29 ).

The seeds that Derozio had sown continued to bear fruits even after his death in 1831. "The stormy petrel of our renaissance" (as Susobhan Sarkar (104) has called him) had set a trend that was not to wither away with his death. His students were active in social and intellectual life. They read Tom Paine's *Age of Reason* even by paying black-market price of Rs. 8 per copy. One publisher sold one hundred copies of this book at Rs. 5 each. *The Englishman* complained that the students of Hindu college were "all radicals, and the followers of Benthamite principles." Their shortlived journal, *The Enquirer* and a bilingual periodical, *Gyananaeshun*, in which remarriage of Hindu widows had been strongly advocated before Vidyasagar did it, reflect the spirit of revolt as well as keen intellect.

After Derozio, David Hare became the president of the Academic Association. He was a philanthropist also known as an atheist. Then there was the Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge and the Epistolary Association for exchanging opinions among themselves. The contribution of Peary Chand Mittra and Radhanath Sickdar to Bangla prose is universally recognized. The former in particular is to be commended for introducing the low or plain style in his novel and sketches. In short, the Young Bengal were both path-breakers and path-makers at the same time.

I have already mentioned two distinct sources of rationalism in Bengal: the first, indigenous or Indian, the second, exogenous or foreign. Rammohun and Vidyasagar first learned their rationalism from indigenous sources, which can be traced back right from the sceptical and agnostic hymns in the *Rigveda* down to the medieval authors of astronomy, civil law and philosophy. Many scholars have mentioned such works and noticed the similarity between Rammohun and medieval Arab thinkers (D. Biswas 47- 48, 56,72, 84 n141). Let me here digress a little and adduce several more instances of rationalism in practice in the ancient and medieval Indian tradition. These would, I hope, suffice to refute the misinformed postmodernist view that rationalism is a Western phenomenon that appeared only during the eighteenth-

century Enlightenment in Europe and came to India in the wake of British colonialism and was embraced by the babus [as Kabiraj (35-58) would have us believe].

Now to the examples. The Anusasana Parvan of the *Mahabharata* speaks of rationalists (*hetukas*) who claimed that there was no truth beyond what can be directly perceived (logically inferred) , but they admitted the possibility of doubt in respect of perception (and inference) as well (147.5). The same source also states that truth transcends formal logic (147.7). Three and only three instruments of cognition (*pramanas*) are mentioned, namely, direct perception, doctrines proposed by the scriptures, and the practice of the *sishta-s* (eminent people) (147. 9, cf. 147. 17-20). Inference is not accepted as a separate instrument presumably because all inferences need to be preceded by perception.

The *Charaka Samhita* states, "Everything falls into one or the other of the two categories — true and untrue. The method of investigation is fourfold: authoritative testimony, direct observation, inference and reason (*yukti*)" (1.11.17).

Bhaskaracharya (born 1036 Saka = 1114 CE) continues the same rational tradition by rejecting *agama* (scripture) and declaring : "In the astronomical department scripture is authoritative only when it is supported by demonstration" (qtd. in Muir 2:161 n183).

Jimutavahana of Bengal (between eleventh century and fourteenth century CE) in his digest on the law of inheritance categorically declares that those who know nothing but the authority of old teachers (*acharyas*) would not be able to appreciate his work, which is meant for those whose intelligence is guided by logical proofs (15.1; 232-33).

Similarly, Suryadeva Yajvana in his commentary on the *Aryabhatiya*, the seminal work of Aryabhata, rejects the innovation of one *acharya* called Prasastidhara, for, he says, "We rationalists (*yauktikah*) cannot approve of it" (qtd. 9 in *Aryabhatiya* III: xlv). He further declares that when several works (*Sastras*) on astronomy disagree or vary, he has resorted to (astronomical) instruments for testing which view is right (Commentary on *Laghumanasa* of Munjala, 3. 6-7, quoted in *ibid.* xlvi).

Such open minds, though rare, were not altogether absent in India at any point of time. They had no need for modern European science or logic to arrive at their conclusions, irrespective of and indifferent to what the religious authorities might have prescribed. The appearance of Rammohun and Vidyasagar does not signify a total break in the tradition but a continuity of a barely noticeable (and hence largely ignored) trend. The intellectual ambience in nineteenth-century Bengal was of course a little more congenial for them than it had been for their predecessors.

Nevertheless it cannot be denied that rationalism came to Bengal, nay India, in a totally new garb with Derozio and the Derozians. They drew their inspiration from the Renaissance and Enlightenment thinkers of Europe and burst vigorously upon the stagnant pool of Bengal. In spite of the serious reservations on the part of some of them, some others held Rammohun in great esteem (D. Biswas 416-96). It is therefore in the fitness of things that they would lend their support, not merely verbally but actually, to the widow remarriage agitation initiated by Vidyasagar.

One distinction, however, is to be made between the impacts of the two strands of rationalism: the first, represented by Rammohun and Vidyasagar, proved to be more powerful and long-lived than the second. The Young Bengal petered out after the 1850s without leaving any



successors. The move for social reforms led by Rammohun and Vidyasagar was continued by both enlightened Hindus and Brahmos (first by Keshub Chandra Sen and his followers, and then by the Sadharan Brahma Samaj). The social reformers were not rationalists in the absolute sense of the term. They did not preach or practise a totally secular attitude to life. But the positive aspect is that they dared to swim against the current and through words and deeds challenged the *status quo ante*, which the religious fanatics, conservatives and no-changers of both Hindu and Muslim communities persisted in upholding. The Young Bengal formed an elite group of their own, hopelessly alienated from the masses of the people. Our social reformers, on the contrary, succeeded in reaching the village as much as the town. Admittedly, their work was confined to the so-called upper castes of the Hindu society. In spite of this limitation, commoners of Bengal could take sides either for or against the proposed reforms. The campaign of Young Bengal simply went over the head of the generally educated people. Hence, somewhat frustrated to see the zero effect of their attempts, most of the Derozians ultimately turned dipsomaniacs, alcohol being the only refuge left. Aurobindo Ghose (later Sri Aurobindo) later described them as follows: "They were giants and did everything gigantically. They read hugely, wrote hugely, thought hugely, and drunk hugely"(8). An unkind judgment, but how true! Compare with this his eulogy of Vidyasagar, Akshaykumar Datta and others (6-7), and the soundness of his observation will be crystal clear. Consider also how Michael Madhusudan Dutt portrayed the Young Bengal in his brilliant farce, *Buro Saliker Ghare Ro* (1860).

Another, exogenous source for rationalism is to be found in the introduction of positivism in Bengal. We need not go here into the details of its formation and its impact on the Bengali society. Suffice it to say that, unlike the youthful Derozians, the positivists in Bengal were a sober lot, seldom going against the customs of the Hindu society.<sup>4</sup> Most of them were well-established lawyers, landlords and teachers. Interestingly enough, in a list of contributors to the Indian Positivist Society we find, besides the expected names of Jogendra Chandra Ghosh, Nagendra Nath Ghosh and Krishna Kamal Bhattacharya, the names of Janakinath Ghoshal, brother-in-law of Rabindranath Tagore and a moderate Congressman, Hemchandra Banerjee, presumably the well-known poet, and W. C. Bonnerjee, first president of the Indian National Congress. There is another name, Iswar Chunder Bannerjee, who contributed only once in 1887 (Forbes 113-14). Could this be our very own Iswarchandra Vidyasagar (or Eshwar Chandra Shurma, as he used to sign his letters)? Most probably he is. He was a friend of Dwarika Nath Mitra, a famous lawyer who learned French in order to read Auguste Comte in the original. Shibnath Sastri records how Vidyasagar used to discuss the doctrines of positivism with Mitra and once gave a thorough exposition of this philosophy to the great admiration of Mitra and other listeners (Sastri in Biman Basu (ed.) 22). There is still a copy of Comte's *The Catechism of Positivism* in Vidyasagar's much depleted private collection now housed in the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat, Kolkata. It may also be noted that Akshaykumar Datta considered Bacon and Comte as the two suns in two regions [England and France] (2: 53).

Another name to be remembered in connection with positivism in Bengal is Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya. Before turning a devotee of Krishna in or around 1874, he had been, as

Dwijendranath Tagore once branded him, "a pucca positivist" (Gupta 290). There are references to Comte, with approval, in Bankim's early writings. Even in his later works Comte seems to cast his shadow. Benoy Kumar Sarkar once offered an equation:

$$\text{"Dharmatattva"} \text{ ("Krishnacharitra")} = \text{Gita} \times \text{Comte} \text{ (48)}$$

which is quite appropriate.

So great indeed was the influence of positivism on the English-educated Bengalis that Kenneth M. Macdonald, the Rev. professor, had to write against Girish Chandra Ghosh whose journal, *The Bengalee*, promoted the cause of Comte. Macdonald made use of Nabagopal Mitra's *National Magazine* in his polemics against *The Bengalee*. He also delivered a speech, "Comte the Positivist" at Canning Institute, Howrah. The speech was translated into Bangla as *Dhrubabadi Agast Komt* and published from Calcutta in 1281 BS (1874 CE). The positivists all over the world, including those of Bengal, were called atheists, as Comte himself had set out "to examine, on rational principles," the form of catechism for the exposition of his homespun "religion of humanity".

I propose to end this brief survey by pointing out that although the positivists, like the Young Bengal, were no better than a small elite group, having little or no connection with the masses, they contributed a most spectacular character to Bangla literature – Jethamasai in Rabindranath's enigmatic novel, *Chaturanga* (Four Sections).

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> The Bangla version, "Padri o Sishya Sambad" (*Rachanabali* 262-63), does not contain the name of Confucius; the last speech is allotted to all the three disciples.

<sup>2</sup> The equation is reproduced somewhat differently in N. Biswas ( qtd. B. Bandyopadhyay 30), A. K. Bhattacharya (27) and D. Chattopadhyaya (112).

<sup>3</sup> For a detailed analysis see R. Bhattacharya (2003) 158-71.

<sup>4</sup> A comparison of Jogendranath Bhattacharyya's *Hindu Castes and Sects* (1896) with Akshaykumar's *Bharatbarshiya Upasak Sampraday* will reveal that Bhattacharyya was not prompted by any desire to study "the mental disease" of the people who founded the sects. Datta on the other hand clearly states that he considered these religious sects to be work of mental aberrations (2: 316; Lahiri 140-42).

#### Works Cited

- Aryabhata. *Aryabhatiya*. Part 3. Ed. K. V. Sarma. New Delhi: Indian National Science Academy, 1976.
- Sri Aurobindo. *Bankim Chandra Chatterji*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1964 (first published in *Indu Prakash*, Bombay in 1894).
- Bhattacharyya, A. K. "Akshay Dutt: Pioneer of Indian Rationalism", *The Rationalist Annual*, 1962.
- Chattopadhyay, Debiprasad and Mrinal Kanti Gangopadhyaya ( eds.). *Carvaka/Lokayata*. Eds. New Delhi : Indian Council of Philosophical Research, 1990.
- Chattopadhyay, Debiprasad. "Four Calcuttans in Defence of Scientific Temper", *Indian Journal of History of Science*, 29 : 1, 1994, pp. 11-19.
- Forbes, Geraldine Hancock. *Positivism in Bengal : A Case Study in the Transmission and Assimilation of an Ideology*. Calcutta: Minerva Associates, 1975.
- Gandhi, M. K. *Christian Missions: Their Place in India*. Ed. B. Kumarappa Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1957.
- Jimutavahana. *Dayabhaga*. Calcutta, 1893.

Kaviraj, Sudipta. *The Unhappy Consciousness*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Mahabharata, *The*. Critically edited by V. S. Sukthankar and others. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1933-66.

Mitra, Peary Chand. *Biographical Sketch of David Hare*. Calcutta: Basumati Sahitya Mandir, 1949 (first published 1877).

Muir, J. *Original Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. II. New Delhi: Oriental Publishers and Distributors, 1976 (first published 1871).

Pauthier, G. Review of Rammohun Roy's *Translation of Several Principal Books*, etc. (1832) in *Revue Encyclopédique*. Tome LVI, December, 1832, 694-706.

Roy, Raja Rammohun. *The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy*. Eds. Kalidas Nag and Debajyoti Burman. Kolkata: Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 1995 (first published 1945-1952, in seven volumes).

Sarkar, Susobhan. *On the Bengal Renaissance*. Calcutta: Papyrus, 2002.

Urwin, Kenneth. *A Century for Freedom: A Survey of the French "Philosophers"*. London: Watts & Co, 1946.

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମମୁଖରାୟ ଓ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1994

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1936-41 ଓ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1936-41 ଓ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1936-41

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1962

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 2007

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1992

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1972

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1983

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1294

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1982

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1373

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1991

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1305, 10-11, 311-22-ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1318

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 129 ଓ 134

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1973, 5-6

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 2003

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1401, 30-63

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1973

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟରେ ଡାକ୍ତର ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣର ସ୍ଥାନ, 1976

PAS

Letters from John Somerville to Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya

[John Somerville (13.03.1905-08.01.1994) is not very well-known in India. But his position as a radical philosopher and peace activist in the USA will always be remembered by all Marxists all over the world. He was born in New York City and earned three degrees from Columbia University. From 1935 to 1937 he and his wife, Rose Maurer had been in the then USSR and studied Soviet philosophy, both theory and practice. This resulted in the publication of *Soviet Philosophy : A Study of Theory and Practice* in 1946. He received his Ph. D in 1938 and published his first book, *Methodology in Social Science* in the same year. After returning to USA he joined Hunter College (City University of New York) first as Instructor and became a professor emeritus and stayed there from 1939 to 1967. In 1949 he published *The Philosophy of Peace*, which Albert Einstein called "a sign of remarkable independence and courage." *The Way of Science, Its Growth and Method* (1953) exhibits Somerville's interest in philosophy of science. In 1958 he published a reader called *Social and Political Philosophy : Readings from Plato to Gandhi*, which he edited with Ronald Santoni. His *The Philosophy of Marxism* came out in 1967. He edited *Radical Currents In Contemporary Philosophy* in 1971. His next work, *The Peace Revolution : Ethos and Social Process* (1975) was acclaimed as "one of the most important books of our time". Another work, *Soviet Marxism and Nuclear War* (1981) examined Soviet nuclear warfare policy. Five of his ten books on peace and philosophy were translated into Swedish, Danish, German, Russian and Japanese. He was the founding editor and editor in chief of translation quarterly, *Soviet Studies in Philosophy* (now *Russian Studies in Philosophy*) from 1962-1972.

When the US federal government brought charges against communist teachers for un-American activities under the Smith Act Somerville appeared as a witness and exposed the role of the government in 1950's. This is documented in his book, *The Communist Trial and the American Tradition* (1956).

Somerville and other members of American Philosophical Association (APA) founded the Society for the Philosophical Study of Dialectical Materialism (later, the Society for the Philosophical Study of Marxism) in 1962 and Somerville became its first president. They organized the first open dialogue between American and Soviet philosophers on US soil on December 27, 1963.

Somerville founded several peace organizations, including International Philosophers for Prevention of Nuclear Omnicide (the word omnicide was coined by him to mean total annihilation due to nuclear holocaust) on January 8 in San Diego. He was active in the movement for peace and nuclear disarmament through out the period of cold war. His was the voice of sanity and good will. One fellow activist describes him as : "an extremely sensitive and kind fellow-very human, very dear, with a wonderful sense of humor. He is what he believes. More than any man I know, he is a man of peace." He was awarded Gandhi Peace Prize in 1987 and Bertrand Russell Peace Award before that.

Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya first met Somerville in Varna (Bulgaria) during the fifteenth World Philosophical Congress in 1973. Their acquaintance soon matured into deep friendship. Chattopadhyaya was drawn to the fight against the threat of omnicide and actively cooperated with Somerville in promoting studies and research in Marxist philosophy, not only in the West but also in countries like Vietnam. Somerville had written a play, *The Crisis* dealing the Missile crisis in Cuba prompted by US president J. F. Kennedy's blockade in 1962. Some of the letters exchanged between Somerville and Chattopadhyaya refer to this play.

**SOCIETY FOR THE PHILOSOPHICAL  
STUDY OF MARXISM**

MEMBER, INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SOCIETIES OF PHILOSOPHY

1426 Merritt Drive  
El Cajon, California 92020

May 6, 1980

President, John Somerville  
Vice President, Howard L. Parsons  
Secretary-Treas., Donald Clark Hodges  
Publications Sec. Y., Dale Riepe

Dear Debiprasad,

I am glad to report that the Greenwood Press of Westport, Connecticut will publish an English language edition of selected articles relating to the Proceedings of the Colloquium on Technology Peace and Contemporary Marxism of the XVth World Congress of Philosophy. Your Paper on "Nuclear Weapons, World Peace and Contemporary Marxism" has been selected for inclusion in the volume which is being published as an educational contribution to the strengthening of world peace and peaceful coexistence through responsible scholarship and mutual understanding.

You will receive a letter and release form from Greenwood Press which is undertaking to send to each author twenty-five reprints of his paper together with one copy of the volume as a whole. Your signature on the release form is requested in order to assure prompt publication of the volume which is urgently needed at this time.

The growing atmosphere bordering on war hysteria which multiplies distortions and exaggerations must be counteracted by responsible knowledge. Your paper will be a very valuable addition to the kind of knowledge that can contribute to the fulfillment of this educational task which is now more necessary than ever.

For the listing of "Notes About the Authors" please send me as soon as possible a brief statement of your curriculum vita including academic posts, titles of principal works, research projects and activities. The statement should not exceed one hundred words.

With best wishes and cordial regards.

Sincerely yours,

John Somerville

Greetings dear friend! I hope all has been going well with you and your splendid work. You will see from the enclosed "My accident", I suffered a temporary set-back, but I am now almost fully recovered. As you doubtless know, our political atmosphere has grown much worse and because of that I am all the more happy to send you the letter above. The enclosed materials will also interest you looking forward to your news, with best wishes from all of us here.

John

**SOCIETY FOR THE PHILOSOPHICAL  
STUDY OF DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM**

MEMBER, INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SOCIETIES OF PHILOSOPHY

1426 Merritt Drive  
El Cajon, California 92020

May 26, 1974

President, John Somerville  
Vice President, Howard Parsons  
Secretary-Treas., Donald Clark Hodges

Dear Debiprasad,

That is splendid news you sent me May 2 that your *What Is Living and What Is Dead in Indian Philosophy* is in press. I must congratulate you very warmly on a work of this immense scope combined with sharp social relevance. I look forward to reading it. We can arrange reviews for it in different periodicals, in addition to reviews that would be done in any case, and facilitate orders for it through the members of our Society.

Your interest in our work is a source of great encouragement to us. I have asked the publisher of *Dialogues on the Philosophy of Marxism* to send you a review copy, which he is delighted to do. Under separate cover I am also sending you two books of mine, *The Philosophy of Marxism* and *The Communist Trials and the American Tradition*, which may also interest you in this connection. I'm very glad you are going to review Parsons' *Humanism and Marx's Thought*. I did so here for *Science and Society* shortly after it came out. Just recently he told me of your kind willingness to support a proposal of our Society to organize something for the 1975 Congress in India. We appreciate this very much, and are eager to do whatever would be most useful. I would greatly appreciate any information you could give me about this Congress (I have received none so far), and the best way to go about presenting a proposal from our Society.

The focus of my work continues to be the peace problem — specifically to try to make the American public and the scholarly community face the facts which now constitute this problem. In relation to the "crazy decision," as you rightly put it, I am in process of writing to the surviving members (the majority are still living) of the Executive Committee which advised and assisted President Kennedy to make this decision, asking each of them how he justified it, in light of the circumstances as since revealed by Robert Kennedy. It will be significant to see what they say — or don't say.

With cordial regards and all best wishes,

Sincerely,  
John Somerville

1426 Merritt Drive  
 El Cajon, California 92020  
 Telephone (714) 447-1641  
 May 31, 1974

Dear Debiprasad,

I trust you received the cablegram I just sent you: "Do not use script. Copyright problem. Letter following."

Let me explain the situation. Perhaps there is no great difficulty involved, but it is well to be on the safe side in any event. As you may know, there is a copyright regulation in this country that, for any publication use (including radio and TV) quoted material should not exceed a few hundred words without the permission of the copyright owner. I was under the impression that the fact that my German publisher owns the German copyright would be sufficient for lengthy quotations in other foreign countries, but it appears that this is not the case. Therefore, please let me know if or when you have found a journal or other medium (name and address) that is prepared to use the script, and I will immediately take the necessary steps here and send you the official permission of the English language copyright owner in advance of publication in India.

I must apologize for any trouble this may cause you and your colleagues, and I hope it will only mean a temporary delay.

With great regret and all best wishes,

Sincerely,  
 John

P.S. I trust you have also received my letter of May 26..

1426 Merritt Drive  
 El Cajon, California 92020  
 July 31, 1974

Dear Debiprasad,

This is just a quick word to say & need to know as soon as possible whether or not "How the World almost Ended" was printed. I am still in process of negotiations about the copyright. The printing should be delayed until copyright permission has been obtained. In Raste, and with all best wishes and kindest regards,

Sincerely  
 John

1426 Merritt Drive  
 El Cajon, California 92020  
 Telephone (714) 447-1641  
 September 29, 1974

Dear Debiprasad,

I hope you are now fully recovered from the injuries you suffered in the accident about which you wrote me in yours of Aug. 8. I had been hoping every week to be able to send you news of some development in the copyright situation here, but I have unable, in spite of several more letters, to obtain the permission of the publishers of Kennedy's book to use the extensive quotations from it in my script. Yet they do not explicitly refuse.

Meanwhile, as this subject seems to haunt me, and will not let me turn away from it, I conceived of an approach more dramatic than the script, and which would not involve the copyright problem at all — namely, a play. I only hope I'm equal to its challenge. At any rate I've written a four-act play about it, *The Crisis*, a copy of which I am airmailing you under separate cover. It is designed both for publication and for performance, and for documenting the truth of what it presents about the main problem. As the Preface states: "The numbers appearing in the left hand margins of our text refer to the pages of Kennedy's book which substantiate the historical accuracy of the statements being made at that point in the play." After you've had a chance to read it please give me your frank criticism of it and of its possible usefulness as a substitute for the script.

I hope you have by now received the copy of our Society's Proceedings volume which I instructed Greenwood Press to send you, *Dialogues on the Philosophy of Marxism*. My Introduction to that also gives some of the background and history of our Society. I must also hold you to your promise to send me a copy of the work you are doing that you referred to in your letter of July 3. I would be glad to give you my thoughts about it for whatever value they may have.

We have had no word whatever about the forthcoming Congress that Pandaya is organizing. Is it possible he is refraining from sending us communications because he considers us too radical? I do not know him personally. I put this only as a speculative possibility. I haven't heard from Kaviraj, who I also do not know, nor has there been any new word from either Vietnam or China.

I have started to write to the living survivors of the group of American government officials who made the incredible decisions during the Cuban missile crisis, as described by Robert Kennedy in his book. I have some very interesting replied so far. Did I tell you that an American publisher has at last been found for my book, *The Peace Revolution : Ethos and Social Process* which has already been out in German since early summer and will appear in Japanese in December? The American edition is scheduled for February, 1975, and I'll be glad to send you a copy of it.

With all best wishes to you and cordial greetings to your colleagues,

Sincerely,  
 John

1426 Merritt Drive  
 El Cajon, California 92020  
 Telephone (714) 447-1641  
 December 28, 1974

Dear Debiprasad,

I was very sorry to learn about your intestinal trouble. But of course you must follow the medical advice. I too have had many health problems, mainly respiratory. I always felt so aggravated and frustrated by the need to spend time in the hospital or in bed that I would rebel and disregard good advice. But I found from long experience that more time is lost that way. The best way is to resign yourself to whatever is necessary for your health, no matter how long it takes. While you're in bed or hospital, if you can't write then catch up on your reading, and if you can't read, listen to radio or TV. In any case, consider it time well spent.

I myself was prevented from going to the Berlin Congress, though I had an invitation. I arranged with our mutual friend Dale Riepe that he should go, but at the last minute he could not obtain the necessary money, and also had trouble with his back, so he too missed it.

Thank you very much for your good words about *The Crisis*. There is no copyright problem

about the play at all. I alone have the original copyright, and no permission is necessary from any American publisher. I realize that an American edition would probably be too costly in India. Therefore, I would welcome separate arrangements for India. Please feel free, when your health permits, to make whatever arrangements you think would be good for an Indian edition of the play in English or translated into any Indian Language, also for any stage production of the play. If there are any royalties, I want you to have them to assist your own work. Please accept this as a matter of course. I am not taking royalties in Japan, either.

With all best wishes to you and your family from us here for a New Year of happiness and peace,

Sincerely,  
John Somerville

1426 Merritt Drive  
El Cajon, California 92020  
Telephone (714) 447-1641

January 29, 1975

Dear Debiprasad,

I was very glad to learn from your letter that your operation is over, and that you are looking forward to being up and about in the beginning of February. I am most grateful to you for taking the play in hand even while you are confined to bed recovering from the operation. You are setting an example for all of us, but I must insist that you be careful not to tax your strength unduly.

The splendid results of your efforts in relation to publication of the play made me very happy. Enclosed is the letter you suggested I write. If there is anything further needed, please let me know. I could not ask anything better than that you should write an Introduction for it, and if you wish, I shall be glad to look it over for the factual references.

Please take good care of yourself, and husband your strength in this period of convalescence.

All best wishes and gratitude,

Sincerely,  
John Somerville

1426 Merritt Drive  
El Cajon, California 92020  
Telephone (714) 447-1641

June 8, 1975

Dear Debiprasad,

How are you, dear friend? I hope things have gone well with your health since last I heard from you. I don't know whether you have a copy of Robert Kennedy's book, enclosed. I recently obtained a few; it is good for you to have the original documentation it contains.

Let me bring you up to date on the play. The first published edition came out in Germany, from Verlag Darmstadter Blatter. This publisher also bought up the rights for new German translation of *Thirteen Days*. This has been published with my Introduction and commentary bringing out its fateful significance as a unique historical document.

In February arrangements were completed with Iwanami Shoten Publishers, Tokyo, to bring out a 1975 edition in Japanese, with a first printing of 50,000 copies. Iwanami Shoten is one of the largest publishing houses in Japan, and they must have given it some advance

notice. An article about my work afterwards appeared in *Mainichi Shimbun*, a Tokyo daily with nationwide circulation of five million, and I recently received a request for an interview from their staff writer, S. Kikuzumi, who will come here June 23. No doubt the situation and problem brought out by the play will be the central part of the interview.

I hope these events will help towards encouraging an American publisher to bring out the play here, where it is most needed and will do most good. This is now truer than ever in the wake of the tremendous defeat suffered by American imperialism in Southeast Asia, because of the danger that its leaders will attempt to restore their image and recoup their losses by throwing their military weight around, as in the Mayaguez incident, and in their explicit threats of "military measures" (Kissinger) against Arab states over oil. An Indian edition would also be very helpful in relation to American public opinion.

Please let me know how things stand now, most importantly with your health, and secondarily with the publication situation.

With all best wishes to you and your family,

Sincerely,  
John

1426 Merritt Drive  
El Cajon, California 92020  
Telephone (714) 447-1641

July 27, 1975

Dear Debiprasad,

Our recent letters crossed in the mails, and I want to reassure you beyond any doubt that you have nothing to ask pardon for. It is only for me to thank you heartily once again for all your kind efforts. The results were not within your control.

Now you have additional problems to contend with in your country. I am hoping to have your evaluation of those unexpected developments.

Meanwhile please accept some recent writings of mine which I am airmailing you under separate cover. The papers have not yet been published here. If you can make use of any of them in print, I give you all rights for publication in India in any language.

You will be receiving, or perhaps have already received from the American publisher a copy of my *The Peace Revolution, Ethos and Social Process*, which I hope you may be able to review in one of your journals.

Soon I will be going to Varna again, for our Bulgarian-American philosophy conference, where I will present the papers on Peaceful Coexistence and Social Progress. I shall miss you there where we had such good times together, and convey your warm greetings to our mutual friends.

With all best wishes as ever,

Sincerely,  
John

1426 Merritt Drive  
El Cajon, California 92020  
Telephone (714) 447-1641

February 7, 1976

Dear Debiprasad,

It was extremely kind of you to send me, by way of Howard, such a beautiful gift. Many thanks for this personal remembrance that I am very glad to have.

I hope your health has improved. These things take some time, as I know from experi-

ence. We are always impatient, but mother nature can't be hurried. I envy Howard the happy opportunity he had to talk with you again, and to meet your wonderful family. He also told me of your interest in a volume on the history of philosophy. You can always count on my cooperation in anything you do.

I trust you received from the publisher a copy of my 1975 book, *The Peace Revolution*, and from me directly, the unpublished papers, and the *N.Y. Times* and *Mainichi Shimbun* materials. Since I last wrote you, *The Crisis* was published in Japan, and a second printing of *The Peace Revolution*. Also, negotiations are under way there towards putting the play on the stage. But I still have no American publisher for it. In spite of all the talk about detente the spirit of the cold war is strong here, and the *open threats* of nuclear war against the Soviet Union, publicly pronounced from the highest government quarters, are *worse than ever*.

We are working hard now on all the plans to receive the ten Bulgarian scholars here for three weeks of conferences this coming summer. I certainly wish you were coming along with them. Between Dale Riepe, Howard Parsons and myself, we must find some way to have you invited here for some period of time convenient to you, which provides an honorarium and covers all expenses including international travel. We will keep looking for this. By the way, do you have in mind to attend the Dusseldorf World Congress of 1978? I strongly recommended to the American, Peter Caws (who spoke, along with you and others the last day at Varna) that he invite you to New York in October to speak at the special Bicentennial symposium sponsored by our American Philosophical Association with some 5,000 members. He is the Director of the symposium which has government money to invite some distinguished foreign philosophers. But I suppose he thought your philosophy was too revolutionary to be presented on the occasion which is supposed to commemorate the American Revolution!

With renewed thanks and all best wishes,

Sincerely,  
John Somerville

Dear Debiprasad, many thanks for your help, and for your splendid contributions in Varna.

John

1426 Merritt Drive  
El Cajon, California 92020  
Telephone (714) 447-1641

October 19, 1973

Professor Pham-nhu-Cuong, Director,  
Institute of Philosophy, Academy of Sciences DRV,  
Hanoi, Democratic Republic of Vietnam

Dear Professor Pham,

I was very glad that the Varna Congress gave me the opportunity to meet with you and your colleague, Professor Dang, to discuss philosophical questions with you, and to plan for further mutual relations in the spirit of friendship and cooperation. I especially wish to thank you, in the name of the VIth Colloquium, for your extremely valuable paper!

Let me confirm in this letter my understanding of the agreement in principle between us-Pham (Institute of Philosophy, Academy of Sciences, DRV), Somerville (Society for the Philosophical Study of Dialectical Materialism, USA), Shibata (Society for Materialistic Philosophy, Japan), Chattopadhyaya (Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, India) — to participate in a philosophical conference in Hanoi, for about five days of the first week of August,

1974. The American group will number about nine (the philosophical delegation which will also visit the People's Republic of China).

The main themes of the conference will be : "The Struggle Against Neo-Colonialism" and "The Formation of the New Person." Various aspects of these themes are to be dealt with in prepared papers and discussions.

In addition, allow me to propose that the conference include the exchange of printed materials, and the discussion of ways and means of continuing these and other forms of philosophical exchanges and cooperation.

We of the Society for the Philosophical Study of Dialectical Materialism are ready, and will be very glad to take part in such a conference, and to continue such cooperation.

With warm greetings to you and to all your colleagues from all the members of our Society,

Sincerely yours,  
John Somerville  
President

Copies to : Professor Shibata,  
Professor Chattopadhyaya,  
Professor Shibata

1426 Merritt Drive  
El Cajon, California 92020  
Telephone (714) 447-1641  
January 12, 1977

Dear Debiprasad,

Many thanks for your letter of December 26, and for the good wishes from yourself and Alaka which I and Rose (my wife) heartily reciprocate.

Many thanks also for preparing a review of *The Crisis*. It is a very small piece of work compared to your volume, *What Is Living and What Is Dead in Indian Philosophy*. I am only afraid that my background of knowledge about Indian philosophy is as small as my interest is great, but if my standing as an outsider, professionally speaking, does not become a barrier, I will do my best for a supporting review. Regrettably, my recent work has been such as still go leave me no time for reading, so that I have as yet had no chance to begin your book.

In regard to the Dusseldorf Congress, I hope there will be an opportunity, as there was for Varna in '73, to emphasize to those making the financial decisions the necessity of assisting a philosopher of your world standing in order that he should be present to make his contribution in person at a world congress. Have you seen the First Circular? If not, you should request one from the Congress Secretariat, the address of which is Institute des Sciences Exactes, 5 Sidlerstrasse, CH-3012, Berne, Switzerland. I'll do anything I can in your behalf.

*Science and Society in Ancient India* is an excellent theme and title, and I am happy to learn that this new work of yours is now going to the printer. By coincidence, the printer of *The Crisis* here is now doing an additional 1,500 copies. A number of professors want to assign it for reading in various courses dealing with contemporary problems. In this connection I should be glad to send a complimentary copy to any of your friends or colleagues, or to periodicals or libraries which might give it some notice. I can easily set aside 20 or 30 copies for that purpose.

With all best wishes,

Sincerely,  
John

P A S

## From the Desk of the Mind-Painter

# Metamorphosis of Obsession

Bhaswati was a bit obstinate, indomitable though she was quiet popular in her College days. There was no convention to build organisation among girls in those days otherwise with so much leadership qualities she would be a leader. Several times she stood against those teachers who made derogatory remarks against women. Once water supply of the hostel was jeopardised for many days. She gave the leadership to gherao the Principal with the demand of regular water supply. Her collegemates regular consulted her in any problem. She was always ready for anybody's call and did not consider the consequences. She was elected as class representative in the College Union. However in the long run she failed to accomodate the party dictates and left the Union. She was awarded Silver medal in the Inter-College recitation competition. Her father was moody, very strong in personality and authoritative. She could not abide by her father and continue her University studies by her own earnings through private tutions.

Also she could not accept the docile personality of her innocent mother. She had sympathy and pity for her mother's sufferings. She developed animosity against her father's male chauvanism but astonishingly she internalised the same within her . This ambivalence against her father has transformed her ambivalence against the male class. She diffuse herself in the external world on that time with this ambivalence. During this time she fanatically searched for a job, prepared herself for the competitive tests, engaged herself on private tutions. She also participated in recitation competition, coach the younger for recitation. She considered her women folk as largely marraige-centred, mean-minded, beauty-conscious class who were always depended on man and had no sense of dignity. So as she crossed the boundary of College-University she avoid female friends. On the other hand in her working place she open heartedly developed various co-operative, sympathetic, helping relationship with her male colleagues and this relationships were much more live and vibrant. But when ever this relationship developed with some amount of intimacy, Bhaswati sensed their inner patriach feeling and stunned by observing their limitations. Perhaps she was a bit choosy regarding selection of partner. But her allegations were also valid.

Once she found some amount of liveness within one thoughtful, apparently detached, poetic, beared elder brother. But within few weeks she became conscious. He recognised him as a born-escapist who only wanted to identify himself as a poet in gesture, otherwise had a tendency to escape from everything. But being a women she had some age-period and within this period she had to marry. At the end of this critical period Bhaswati's self confidence ultimately shattered. Internally within a short period she changed a lot. She lost her confidence on man and at last married an innocent person negotiated by her parents. She withdrew from the outer world and entered into the so called married hub decorated by flowers gate and bannana tree.

But this internal world is quite different. It is unknown to her, it is otherwise. She apprehended that she had reached in an unknown world severing all relationship with her previous relatives. She developed numbness of her extremeties. Her strong facial gesture automatically vanished. In every step she felt as an embarrassed newly wed bride.

Her in-law's whole house is packed with conservative materials. Regular she had to supply hot water and fresh garments to the aged father-in-law specially when he got preparation to go outside. He is ill-tempered. For any faults and failings this reserved man became more dreadfully gloomy and dark. The same Bhaswati who once protested in any occasion of impropriety and injustice, was now always felt anxiety, tension and palpitation. She developed also vertigo. Once or twice she tried to say something but getting a rebuff she visualised her future as a huge barren field where she had no place to escape or to stand independently. So she kept mum and suffered from suppressed grief within herself. She apprehend if she would face such question, "All right you can go anywhere" then what would be her position? If there was any feud among the family members immediately she felt tingling sensation at the extremeties and palpitation. If she took dinner at late hours she suffered from acidity. Many a days it is late.

Gradually she concentrated herself how she could manage properly the duties and responsibilities as a housewife. She tried hard and developed more and more perfection. She tried to keep the house neat and clean and in return got much praise being a good responsible housekeeper. This was the only asset of Bhaswati. But she developed insomnia and startling reaction at night sleep. Through out day and night she felt a peculiar uneasiness. As long she was engaged in washing basin, utensils, kitchen slab she felt some amount of comfort. Because this act of cleaning temporarily gave her some relief. She did not fell such relief in any work. Again and again she rearranged her kitchen. Though always she thought that she had failed to clean the materials properly. So again she started cleaning. Repeatedly doing all this things she developed a habit of washing hands. Opening the tap she visualised the running water trickled down over her hands, fingers and she felt relieved. This is the only satisfaction she perceived.

She lost any source of pleasure in her life except this habit of compulsive cleanliness and she became addicted to it. When switched off from this performance immediately she became tense, restless and began to ruminate of uncleanliness. And again to get relief she started cleaning and then only her tension vanished. Bhaswati is very much eager to know why it is happening so?

- One thing you can easily understand, so long you are engaged in cleaning process, you are satisfied and contended within it. Whenever you finish the job you feel tension. So it is obvious that your habit of clealiness try to hide some deep inner tension. Your expression of wish, intention, will, anger, protest are all thwarted. Your deep sense realise that you have to accept all this things. There is no option. But whenever you do not accept this matters it creates a state of tense, insecure condition. So you develop this inner acute tension and restlessness extending through out your life and it is difficult to endure it. It is also difficult to face it. So whenever you feel that your hands are unclean you engage yourself in the washing act. In this process you get an excuse not to bother about the unclean materials of your life. Your mind is then very much eager for a little tranquility and satisfaction without which your brain would be exhausted and then only it is easiest way to find out a path of relief

