

Live encounters

June 2013

Free online magazine from village earth



Randhir Khare

A poet's journey across Ladakh



Support Live Encounters

Live Encounters is a not-for-profit free online magazine that was started in 2009 in Bali, Indonesia. It showcases some of the best writing from around the world. Civil and human rights activists, animal rights activists, poets, writers, journalists, social workers and more have contributed their time and knowledge for the benefit of the readers of the magazine.

We are appealing for donations to pay for the administrative and technical aspects of the publication. Please help spread the free distribution of knowledge with any amount that you feel you want to give for this just cause.

BANK DETAILS

Sarita Kaul

A/C : 0148748640

Swift Code : BNINIDJAXXX

PT Bank Negara Indonesia (Persero) Tbk

Kantor Cabang Utama Denpasar

Jl. Gajah Mada

Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

markulyseas@liveencounters.net



Live
encounters

June 2013

What is Truth? - Pontius Pilate

Dear Readers,

The present mantra is blaming government for all our ills. We do this without realizing that we are the government. We make the government and work in it. So in effect we are looking at ourselves in the mirror but ignore our reflection and instead create an imaginary image of a sexless self-sustaining behemoth that personifies avarice without the trip switch of morality and conscience.

In this edition we touch on this subject of government and the question of Truth. And, sandwiched between these two are contributions from around the world that are pages from the meaningful pageantry of the human soul.

We thank - **Randhir Khare** for the exclusive on his poetic journey across Ladakh, **Terry McDonagh** for his continued support, **Anat Hoffman** for her article on Women of the Wall, **Philosopher Ivo Coelho** for specially writing the article on Truth, **Robin Marchesi** for his contribution, **Natalie Wood** for her insight into all things Karmiel, **Candess M Campbell's** guidance on health, **Tapan K Ghosh** for the interview and **Chris Hedges** (via truthdig.com).

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

Mark Ulyseas
Publisher/Editor

Cover: Design Mark Ulyseas. Photograph of Maitreya at Likir © Randhir Khare

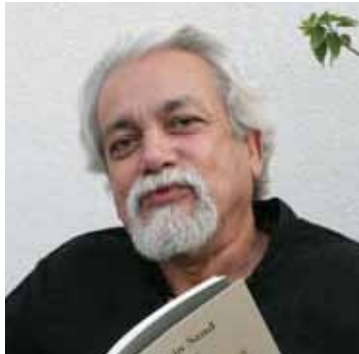
All articles and photographs are the copyright of www.liveencounters.net and its contributors. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the explicit written permission of www.liveencounters.net. Offenders will be criminally prosecuted to the full extent of the law prevailing in their home country and/or elsewhere.

CONTRIBUTORS

Click on title of article to go to page

Live
encounters

June 2013



Ladakh - a poet's journey into the blue beyond Randhir Khare

Khare is an award winning author of twenty one volumes of non-fiction, fiction, translation and poetry. Executive Editor of Heritage India, the International Culture Journal, a Director of The Rewachand Bhojwani Academy and Visiting Professor to the Dept Of English, Pune University. Recently he was given The Residency Award by The Sahitya Akademi (India's National Academy of Letters) for his contribution to Indian Literature and the Human Rights Award for his efforts to preserve and celebrate marginal and minority cultures. www.randhirkhare.in



The Death of Truth Interview with Julian Assange by Chris Hedges

Chris Hedges was a foreign correspondent for the New York Times and was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory Reporting, and his War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award in Nonfiction. Hedges is a senior fellow at the Nation Institute, a columnist for Truthdig, and the Anschutz Distinguished Fellow at Princeton University. He lives in Princeton, New Jersey. **This interview is a joint project of Truthdig and The Nation magazine**



Bollywood Baddies Tapan K Ghosh

Ghosh, is a former professor and Head of the Department of English, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata. His stories have been published in US and UK journals, one of them earning a place among the top-10 stories in a competitive event held in England, and published in the anthology The Bus Stop Scheherazade and Other Stories. His story "Border" was among the top-12 stories in Labyrinth Competition of London in February 2005. He was jury member for the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) and has directed the documentary, Under the Sky. www.sagepub.in



The Railway: Karmiel City's 2020 Vision Natalie Wood

Born in Birmingham, England, U.K., Natalie Wood began working in journalism a month prior to outbreak of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. She remained in regional Jewish journalism for over 20 years, leaving full-time writing to help run a family business and then completed a range of general office work. Wood and her husband, Brian Fink emigrated from Manchester to Israel in March 2010 and live in Karmiel, Galilee where she continues to work, concentrating on creative writing. She features in *Smith Magazine's* new *Six Word Memoirs On Jewish Life* and contributes to *Technorati*, *Blogcritics* and *Live Encounters* magazine. Her stories - www.perfectlywritefamilytales and journalism - www.alwayswriteagain



Stress Candess M Campbell

Candess M. Campbell, PhD is an internationally known Intuitive Life Coach, Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Seminar leader, Hypnotherapist and Author. She specializes in assisting others to gain their own personal power and to live a life of abundance, happiness and joy. Early 2012 she will be releasing her book 12 Weeks to Self-Healing: Transforming Pain through Energy Medicine. www.12weekstoselfhealing.com



What is Truth? Ivo Coelho

Coelho earned his PhD in philosophy from the Gregorian University, Rome. He is Reader in Gnoseology and Metaphysics at Divyadaan: Salesian Institute of Philosophy, Nashik, India, and editor of Divyadaan: Journal of Philosophy and Education. Born in 1958 at Mumbai, he specialized in the hermeneutical thought of the Canadian philosopher, theologian and economist Bernard Lonergan. He is the author of *Hermeneutics and Method: The 'Universal Viewpoint'* in Bernard Lonergan and editor of *Brahman and Person: Essays* by Richard De Smet. www.divyadaan.in



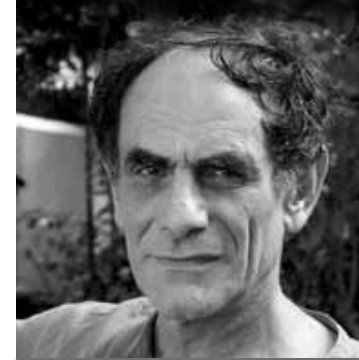
Answered Prayers? Anat Hoffman Civil & Human Rights Activist

She is a major leader for social justice in Israel best known for never giving-up, even when faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Born and raised in Jerusalem, she served in its City Council for 14 years, leading the opposition to the right wing and ultra-Orthodox administration. She is a founding member of Women of the Wall and continues to be a tireless advocate for freedom of religion and women's rights. From 2002, Hoffman is Executive Director of the Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC), the legal and advocacy arm of the Reform Movement in Israel. www.irac.org



Elder Tree Rejuvenated - after Sally McKenna's sculpture Terry McDonagh

Irish poet and dramatist, Terry McDonagh, taught creative writing at the University of Hamburg and was Drama Director at the Int. School Hamburg for 15 years. He now works freelance; has been writer in residence in Europe, Asia, Australia; published seven poetry collections, book of letters, prose and poetry for young people translated into Indonesian and German, distributed internationally by Syracuse Uni. Press; latest poetry collection *Ripple Effect* due for publication in May/June 2013, Arlen House; next children's story, *Michel the Merman*, illustrated by Marc Barnes (NZ) to be published in September 2013. He lives in Hamburg and Ireland. www.terry-mcdonagh.com



Grey Hounds - Barcelona Robin Marchesi

Marchesi was born in Hampshire England. He was educated at Oxford and London Universities. He has lived 'on his wits' throughout the world and has several published works including *Kyoto Garden*, *A B C Quest* and *A Small Journal of Heroin Addiction*. His latest book "Poet of the Building Site" about his time with the Sculptor Barry Flanagan (1941 - 2009) is published by Charta Press in association with the Irish Museum of Modern Art. At the moment he is living in London completing his latest work entitled: "Prospero's Cell."



Photo Gallery - Portraits Bali Mark Ulyseas

These are my photographs of some of the wonderful and enchanting people that I have been fortunate to meet in Bali. They represent the spirit of the island. www.coroflot.com/markulyseas

Ladakh - A poet's journey

For the poet Randhir Khare, a journey to Ladakh was a pilgrimage to the very soul of the great mountains of the north (India) where he savoured the sacred places and spaces and now honours them in these poems and images.
First published in Live Encounters Magazine !



Into The Blue Beyond

Into the mountains,
 Weaving between snow banks,
 Past pasturelands of wild ass
 And winter homes of marmots,
 Rising from sleep –
 Blinking into the blue light
 Freckled with cloud shade,
 Swept by wings of Lammergeyers
 And a staggering wind
 Still coloured by night.

Beyond, eastwards,
 Where streams crinkle down to wetlands
 Flocks pull at fresh grass
 Among feeding pheasants and rocks
 Thick-skinned with lichen –
 The wind flat on its back,
 Drowsy with birdsong.

Here, lost in the blue,
 Trailing this path between snow banks
 To worlds beyond worlds,
 I know –
 This is all there is,
 Nothing more –
 Just elemental change –
 One to another and another,
 Self generating, becoming,
 Fearful, beautiful,
 Eternal.





Chortens Pic © Randhir Khare



Melting ice at Pangong Tso lake Pic © Randhir Khare

I Want

I want to empty the bowl of the sky
Drink the blue deep,
Quench my thirst for constellations,
The great void.

Every particle of me belongs to another
Every breath, every word, every thought,
Every feeling, every dream,
Every victory, every defeat, everything.

I want to empty the bowl of the sky,
Lose my 'I' ness
Become.

Dawn

Dawn with its sack of bells
Lumbers over the mountains
Sun in hand,
Whistles a freedom song,
Tip-toing over chains.

Stay

Stay with the moment, stay,
Shed snake-skin time,
Breathe in the sun-drenched day,
A blue unfettered song
Light on your lips;
Believe there's nothing more beyond
This now,
Stay with the moment, stay.

Somewhere

Somewhere beyond the mountains
Winter waits
A snow leopard stretching itself
On cool grey rock
Licks the blue air;
I can hear its breath
When homes fall asleep
And hours curl into each other's arms
And dreams open mooneyes.

Leaves fall, crackle, crumble,
Turn to dust –
Move with the wind's whirl,
The leopard shivers,
Rises, stalks the town
Fragrant with old fur
And the wheezing of sleepers.

Beyond the mountains,
Winter waits.



Stone painting between prayer wheels at Lamayuru Pic © Randhir Khare



Likir fresco Pic © Randhir Khare

In The Presence Of The Master

I

Here
Where the world collects
And dissolves
In the effulgence of light-
Names, faces, lives,
Pasts, presents, futures
Do not exist;
Just the voice
Rising and falling,
Circling, gliding,
Settling;
In the presence of the Master
The devout bend like rainbows

II

It's not the meaning
Of the words
That move me
But the sound,
Not their manner of saying
But their reverberation,
Not the speaker
But the presence,
Not the moment
But the flow of time,
Not the tangible
But the breath –
Like wind never still,
Flowing
In great cycles of rebirth –
Forever;
At the feet of the Master
Echoes gather in pools
Crystal with truth.

III

I am the seed,
The root, the leaf;
I am the stem,
The trunk, the fruit;
I am the cycle
In the dark,
I am the silence,
I, the spark.

I am your pulse,
Your breath,
Your yearning,
I, your dream,
Your reason, song,
I am the way
You choose to walk on,
I am your act,
Your right, your wrong.



Old homes at Lamayuru Pic © Randhir Khare

Freedom Song

Blue-white mountains surround me,
 Snow skinned granite
 Breathes sunlight rising in plumes,
 Streams string through morning land
 Beading boulders
 And this desert rejoices with magpies
 And redstarts –
 Filling my lungs with peace-dust
 And freedom breath.
 Even though night will bring snow dreams
 And cold lipped wind,
 Even though the dark will shower comets,
 Even though I know this too will pass –
 I savour the circle of blue-white mountains,
 Plumes of sunlight
 And singing streams,
 Filling my lungs with peace-dust,
 Chanting my freedom song.



Wild Ass Pic © Randhir Khare

Up From The Dark Belly

Heaved up from the dark belly
 Of the ocean,
 Floating on time
 Soaked in salt
 And the freedom cry of the wind –
 These fields of sand
 Speak in a language I do not understand,
 Grains flow hissing and sighing,
 Waves wash mani walls
 Sacred with waiting.

I stand here
 Occupying this space, this time,
 Waiting –
 To be finally released,
 Set free –
 A puff of grey dust
 Along the soulbank of the Indus
 On its journey to forever
 In the still light of the afternoon.



Way back from Alchi to Leh Pic © Randhir Khare

I Sit Facing The Mountains

I sit facing the mountains
Carved white out of blue foam,
Birdsong pines up to their knees,
Day tossing swallows into the air,
Magpies trailing tails over rooftops,
I breathe in morning heavy with voices.

Last night, tired of bloodstained stories
Of the city crouched in the plains –
Neck-deep in nectar,
Tired of legends and forgetfulness,
I followed the mountain road
Dusty with cloud-song.

All dark, the wind and rain
Slammed windows, hissed at doors,
Left me dreaming of the broken plains
And how my life has been a circled path –
Each footprint growing, merging,
Till there's one and I don't seem to move.

Hauling myself along the sticky web,
I know the spider watched me
While I swung,
Loose skin from my jowls dripped with age,
I watched the moment when the thread
Snapped and let me float away.

I sit facing the mountain s and I know
That this was meant to be –
This journey from the belly of the storm
Across the broken plains, up from the sea;
And all the journeys that we make
Merge into one and rest –
The warmth of one print in the quilted snow.



Lilac and apple in bloom Pic © Randhir Khare

Mountain Dreams

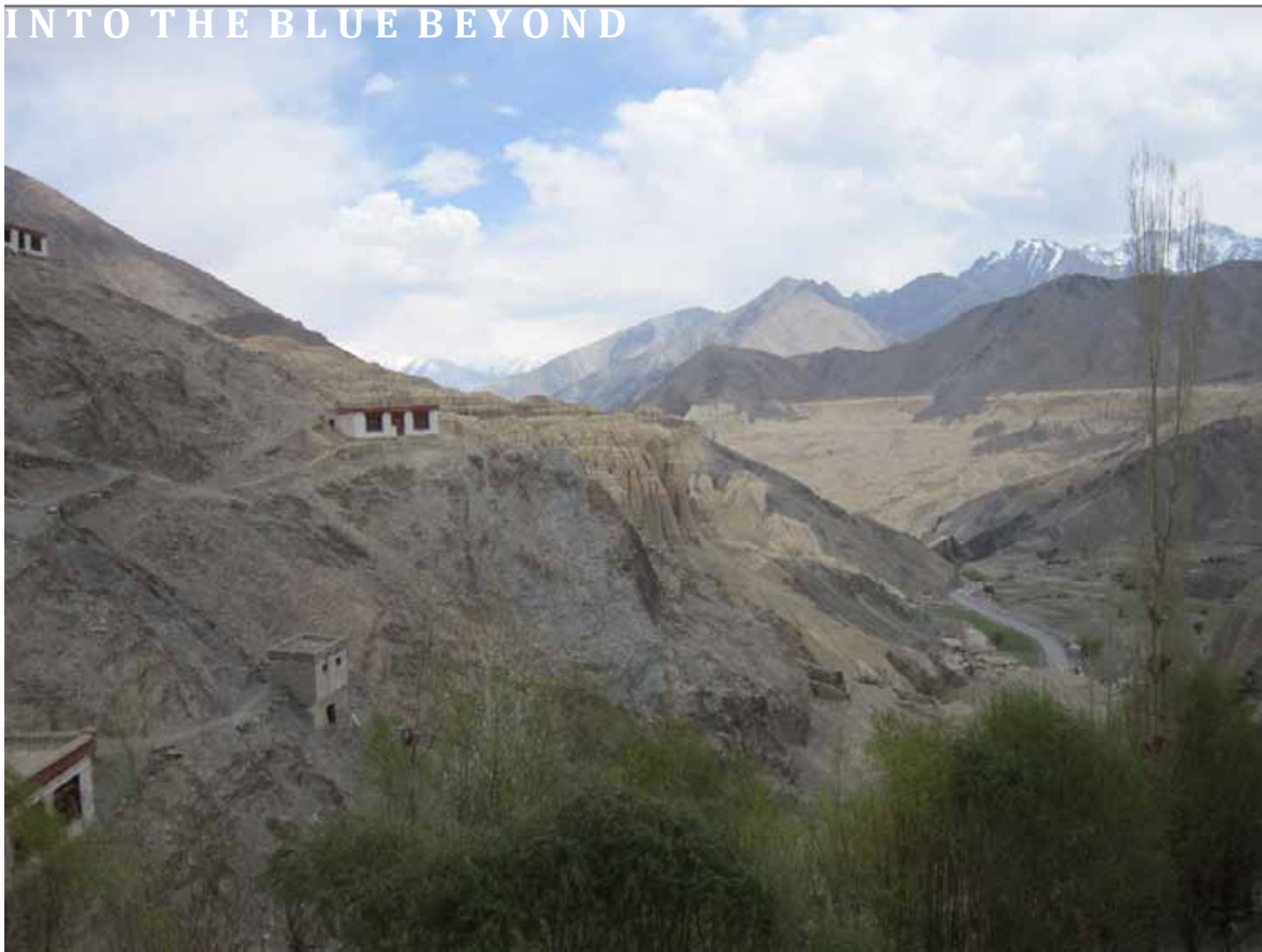
Willow and poplar
Woven thatched and beamed,
This roof holds out the snow,
The sun, the rain,
The mountain's breath of frost,
The burning wind;
It is our shelter
From the ancient sky.

At dusk I watch
The groves of willow and poplar
Still in the dogbark air
Wait for the night,
Their roots deep in the earth
Drinking mountain dreams
Their branches sift the dusty air
For light, pure light.

Tonight I lie awake and feel
This room alive with mountain dreams
And light.

Spring Walking

I walk with the wind
Through apricot orchards in bloom –
Petals in my hair
The foretaste of harvests on my lips,
Wild irises about my feet
And young mother spring
Birthing her newborns
From the furrows of stone.



View from Lamayuru Pic © Randhir Khare

Lamayuru

Bowl of the great lake,
Lamayuru,
Dried by the prophecy of Arhat Nyimagung,
You offered the last drop to the thirsty sky,
Blue tongues licking you dry,
Warm breath blowing out
Crevasses and caves,
Sand ripples and hungry bowls,
Fingers etching paths along mountain bodies,
Scooping new wombs –
Baring them to the elements
Birthing nectar words.

Lamayuru,
The sun explodes and scatters light,
Sucking out ochre, smoothening it dry,
And habitations of the past
Crumble, powder, dust and fly.

And somewhere in this burning light
Hovers the spirit of Naropa the woodseller,
Devotee of Tillipa, Teacher of Marpa -
Father of the Kargynds,
Master of Milarapa –
The journeyman from the power of dark
To the purity of light
Forging simple words,
Songs of the inner life.

I see you holy ones in the eyes of children
And the aged bent with wood bundles
Of willow,
I hear you in the voices of morning
And the whispers of evening,
I feel you in the solemn quiet
Of your sacred spaces in forms of clay,
In the fragrance of butter,
In the glow of candles
And the footfalls of the past.



Pangong Tso Pic © Randhir Khare

Meeting

Lamayuru,
Life bowl of mutating earth and stone,
Home of the past, present, future,
Lamayuru,
Mountains clothe your world
As I recede.

Where the Indus and the Zaskar meet
Two worlds merge,
Dissolve, mingle, colour with colour,
History with history,
Legend with legend,
Memory with memory,
Pebbles, sand, fish, moss –
One with the other,
Until the new river widens its hips –
Flowing out among villages and towns,
Fields, homes and every day cares
Creased in wrinkles of time.



Environs of Hemis Pic © Randhir Khare

At Hemis

At Hemis
Where the sky rests on rock blades
Of mountains
Flags flap like wings of rising birds,
Earth and sky blend into one,
Memory's a window to the dark.

Stagsang Raschen, you who saw
The vision of eighty mahasiddhas,
Became a rainbow body;
Spirit who laid these stones,
Building chambers, passageways –
Honeycombed with secrets,
Where are you now?

My soles, soft on the hard cold floors
Follow from dark to light to dark –
Space into space, beyond, within,
Unknowing of the brick it tramples on;
Smoke, old oil,

Monk murmurs, prayer wheels,
Land outside yielding
To hands and dreams of men,
New homes, chortens and worship shells,
Paved paths eating mountain sides.

At Hemis,
Five hundred souls persist,
Holding flesh and bone about them,
Cloaked in breath,
Filled with blood of life,
Smeared with the dust of death.



Frescoes in Stakna Pic © Randhir Khare

Padmasambhava

Padmasambhava,
Father of the dark truth,
Translator, transformer,
Map maker of soul continents
Within and beyond,
I feel your presence
In this desert land –
Fire and ice,
Silence and chant,
Rock and river,
Hoarse whispers of the wind.

Padmasambhava,
Blood song spirals,
Heartbeat mysteries –
I dance your eight selves
This Monkey Year;
I dance for you, teacher
Of the dark truth,
dance the sacred dance
Beyond myself –
Spinning a spiral
To the centre of my being.

The Death of Truth

Interview with Julian Assange by Chris Hedges
This interview is a joint project of **Truthdig** and **The Nation** magazine

Pig being slaughtered for Hindu ceremony in Bali Pic © Mark Ulyseas



“They set the rules about what a win was. They lost in every battle they defined. Their loss is total. We’ve won the big stuff. The loss of face is hard to overstate. The Pentagon reissued its threats on Sept. 28 last year. This time we laughed. Threats inflate quickly. Now the Pentagon, the White House and the State Department intend to show the world what vindictive losers they are through the persecution of Bradley Manning, myself and the organization more generally.”

LONDON - A tiny tip of the vast subterranean network of governmental and intelligence agencies from around the world dedicated to destroying WikiLeaks and arresting its founder, Julian Assange, appears outside the red-brick building on Hans Crescent Street that houses the Ecuadorean Embassy. Assange, the world’s best-known political refugee, has been in the embassy since he was offered sanctuary there last June. British police in black Kevlar vests are perched night and day on the steps leading up to the building, and others wait in the lobby directly in front of the embassy door. An officer stands on the corner of a side street facing the iconic department store Harrods, half a block away on Brompton Road. Another officer peers out the window of a neighboring building a few feet from Assange’s bedroom at the back of the embassy. Police sit round-the-clock in a communications van topped with an array of antennas that presumably captures all electronic forms of communication from Assange’s ground-floor suite.

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), or Scotland Yard, said the estimated cost of surrounding the Ecuadorean Embassy from June 19, 2012, when Assange entered the building, until Jan. 31, 2013, is the equivalent of \$4.5 million.

Britain has rejected an Ecuadorean request that Assange be granted safe passage to an airport. He is in limbo. It is, he said, like living in a “space station.”

“The status quo, for them, is a loss,” Assange said of the U.S.-led campaign against him as we sat in his small workroom, cluttered with cables and computer equipment. He had a full head of gray hair and gray stubble on his face and was wearing a traditional white embroidered Ecuadorean shirt. “The Pentagon threatened WikiLeaks and me personally, threatened us before the whole world, demanded that we destroy everything we had published, demanded we cease ‘soliciting’ new information from U.S. government whistle-blowers, demanded, in other words, the total annihilation of a publisher. It stated that if we did not self-destruct in this way that we would be ‘compelled’ to do so.”

“But they have failed,” he went on. “They set the rules about what a win was. They lost in every battle they defined. Their loss is total. We’ve won the big stuff. The loss of face is hard to overstate. The Pentagon reissued its threats on Sept. 28 last year. This time we laughed. Threats inflate quickly. Now the Pentagon, the White House and the State Department intend to show the world what vindictive losers they are through the persecution of [Bradley Manning](#), myself and the organization more generally.”

Assange, Manning and WikiLeaks, by making public in 2010 half a million internal documents from the Pentagon and the State Department, along with the 2007 video of U.S. helicopter pilots

nonchalantly gunning down Iraqi civilians, including children, and two Reuters journalists, effectively exposed the empire’s hypocrisy, indiscriminate violence and its use of torture, lies, bribery and crude tactics of intimidation. WikiLeaks shone a spotlight into the inner workings of empire—the most important role of a press—and for this it has become empire’s prey. Those around the globe with the computer skills to search out the secrets of empire are now those whom empire fears most. If we lose this battle, if these rebels are defeated, it means the dark night of corporate totalitarianism. If we win, if the corporate state is unmasked, it can be destroyed.

U.S. government officials quoted in Australian diplomatic cables obtained by [The Saturday Age](#) described the campaign against Assange and WikiLeaks as “unprecedented both in its scale and nature.” The scope of the operation has also been gleaned from statements made during Manning’s pretrial hearing. The U.S. Department of Justice will apparently pay the contractor ManTech of Fairfax, Va., more than \$2 million this year alone for a computer system that, from the tender, appears designed to handle the prosecution documents. The government line item refers only to “WikiLeaks Software and Hardware Maintenance.”

The lead government prosecutor in the Manning case, Maj. Ashden Fein, has told the court that the FBI file that deals with the leak of government documents through WikiLeaks has “42,135 pages or 3,475 documents.” This does not include a huge volume of material accumulated by a grand jury investigation. Manning, Fein has said, represents only 8,741 pages or 636 different documents in that classified FBI file.

There are no divisions among government departments or the two major political parties over what should be Assange’s fate. “I think we should be clear here. WikiLeaks and people that disseminate information to people like this are criminals, first and foremost,” then-press secretary Robert Gibbs, speaking for the Obama administration, said during [a 2010 press briefing](#).

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, a Democrat, and then-Sen. Christopher S. Bond, a Republican, said in a joint letter to the U.S. attorney general calling for Assange’s prosecution: “If Mr. Assange and his possible accomplices cannot be charged under the Espionage Act (or any other applicable statute), please know that we stand ready and willing to support your efforts to ‘close those gaps’ in the law, as you also mentioned. ...”

Republican Candice S. Miller, a U.S. representative from Michigan, [said in the House](#): “It is time that the Obama administration treats WikiLeaks for what it is—a terrorist organization, whose continued operation threatens our security. Shut it down. Shut it down. It is time to shut down this terrorist, this terrorist Web site, WikiLeaks. Shut it down, Attorney General [Eric] Holder.”

The group Anonymous, which has mounted cyberattacks on government agencies at the local and federal levels, saw Barrett Brown—a journalist associated with Anonymous and who specializes in military and intelligence contractors—arrested along with Jeremy Hammond, a political activist alleged to have provided WikiLeaks with 5.5 million emails between the security firm Strategic Forecasting (Stratfor) and its clients.

At least a dozen American governmental agencies, including the Pentagon, the FBI, the Army's Criminal Investigative Department, the Department of Justice, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and the Diplomatic Security Service, are assigned to the WikiLeaks case, while the CIA and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence are assigned to track down WikiLeaks' supposed breaches of security. The global assault - which saw Australia threaten to revoke Assange's passport—is part of the terrifying metamorphosis of the “war on terror” into a wider war on civil liberties. It has become a hunt not for actual terrorists but a hunt for all those with the ability to expose the mounting crimes of the power elite.

The dragnet has swept up any person or organization that fits the profile of those with the technical skills and inclination to burrow into the archives of power and disseminate it to the public. It no longer matters if they have committed a crime. The group Anonymous, which has mounted cyberattacks on government agencies at the local and federal levels, saw **Barrett Brown**—a journalist associated with Anonymous and who specializes in military and intelligence contractors—arrested along with **Jeremy Hammond**, a political activist alleged to have provided WikiLeaks with 5.5 million emails between the security firm Strategic Forecasting (Stratfor) and its clients. Brown and Hammond were apparently seized because of allegations made by an informant named Hector Xavier Monsegur—known as Sabu—who appears to have attempted to entrap WikiLeaks while under FBI supervision.

To entrap and spy on activists, Washington has used an array of informants, including **Adrian Lamo**, who sold Bradley Manning out to the U.S. government.

WikiLeaks collaborators or supporters are routinely stopped—often at international airports—and attempts are made to recruit them as informants. **Jérémy Zimmerman, Smári McCarthy, Jacob Appelbaum, David House** and one of Assange's lawyers, Jennifer Robinson, all have been approached or interrogated. The tactics are often heavy-handed. McCarthy, an Icelandic and WikiLeaks activist, was detained and extensively questioned when he entered the United States. Soon afterward, three men who identified themselves as being from the FBI approached McCarthy in Washington. The men attempted to recruit him as an informant and gave him instructions on how to spy on WikiLeaks.

On Aug. 24, 2011, six FBI agents and two prosecutors **landed in Iceland** on a private jet. The team told the Icelandic government that it had discovered a plan by Anonymous to hack into Icelandic government computers. But it was soon clear the team had come with a very different agenda. The Americans spent the next few days, in flagrant violation of Icelandic sovereignty, interrogating Sigurdur Thordarson, a young WikiLeaks activist, in various Reykjavik hotel rooms. Thordarson,

Kidnapping was given legal cover by a 1989 memorandum issued by the Justice Department stating that “the FBI may use its statutory authority to investigate and arrest individuals for violating United States law, even if the FBI's actions contravene customary international law” and that an “arrest that is inconsistent with international or foreign law does not violate the Fourth Amendment.”

after the U.S. team was discovered by the Icelandic Ministry of the Interior and expelled from the country, was taken to Washington, D.C., for four days of further interrogation. Thordarson appears to have decided to cooperate with the FBI. It was reported in the Icelandic press that he went to Denmark in 2012 and sold the FBI stolen WikiLeaks computer hard drives for about \$5,000.

There have been secret search orders for information from Internet service providers, including Twitter, Google and Sonic, as well as **seizure of information** about Assange and WikiLeaks from the company Dynadot, a domain name registrar and Web host.

Assange's suitcase and computer were stolen on a flight from Sweden to Germany on Sept. 27, 2010. His bankcards were blocked. WikiLeaks' **Moneybookers** primary donation account **was shut down** after being placed on a blacklist in Australia and a “watch list” in the United States. Financial service companies including Visa, MasterCard, PayPal, Bank of America, Western Union and American Express, following denunciations of WikiLeaks by the U.S. government, blacklisted the organization. Last month the Supreme Court of Iceland found the blacklisting to be unlawful and ordered it lifted in Iceland by May 8. There have been frequent massive **denial-of-service attacks** on WikiLeak's infrastructure.

And there is a well-orchestrated campaign of character assassination against Assange, including mischaracterizations of the **sexual misconduct case** brought against him by Swedish police. Assange has not formally been charged with a crime. The two women involved have not accused him of rape.

Bradley Manning's heroism extends to his steadfast refusal, despite what appears to be tremendous pressure, to implicate Assange in espionage. If Manning alleges that Assange had instructed him on how to ferret out classified documents, the U.S. might try to charge Assange with espionage.

Assange sought asylum in the Ecuadorean Embassy after exhausting his fight to avoid extradition from the United Kingdom to Sweden. He and his lawyers say that an extradition to Sweden would mean an extradition to the U.S. If Sweden refused to comply with U.S. demands for Assange, kidnapping, or **“extraordinary rendition,”** would remain an option for Washington.

Kidnapping was given legal cover by a 1989 memorandum issued by the Justice Department stating that “the FBI may use its statutory authority to investigate and arrest individuals for violating United States law, even if the FBI's actions contravene customary international law” and that an “arrest that is inconsistent with international or foreign law does not violate the Fourth Amendment.”

WikiLeaks' most recent foray into full disclosure includes the Kissinger files, or the WikiLeaks Public Library of U.S. Diplomacy. The files, which have built into them a remarkable search engine, provide access to 1.7 million diplomatic communications, once confidential but now in the public record, that were sent between 1973 and 1976. Henry Kissinger, secretary of state from September 1973 to January 1977, authored many of the 205,901 cables that deal with his activities.

This is a stunning example of the security and surveillance state's Orwellian doublespeak. The persecution of Assange and WikiLeaks and the practice of extraordinary rendition embody the shredding of the Fourth Amendment, which was designed to protect us from unreasonable searches and seizures and requires any warrant to be judicially sanctioned and supported by probable cause.

Two Swedes and a Briton were seized by the United States last August somewhere in Africa—it is assumed to have been in Somalia—and held in one of our black sites. They suddenly reappeared—with the Briton stripped of his citizenship—in a Brooklyn courtroom in December facing terrorism charges. Sweden, rather than object to the extradition of its two citizens, dropped the Swedish charges against the prisoners to permit the rendition to occur. The prisoners, The Washington Post reported, were secretly indicted by a federal grand jury two months after being taken.

The persistence of WikiLeaks, despite the onslaught, has been remarkable. In 2012 it released some of the 5.5 million documents sent from or to the private security firm Stratfor. The documents, known as "the Global Intelligence Files," included an email dated Jan. 26, 2011, from Fred Burton, a Stratfor vice president, who wrote: "Text Not for Pub. We [the U.S. government] have a sealed indictment on Assange. Pls protect."

WikiLeaks' most recent foray into full disclosure includes the Kissinger files, or the WikiLeaks Public Library of U.S. Diplomacy. The files, which have built into them a remarkable search engine, provide access to 1.7 million diplomatic communications, once confidential but now in the public record, that were sent between 1973 and 1976. Henry Kissinger, secretary of state from September 1973 to January 1977, authored many of the 205,901 cables that deal with his activities.

In the files it appears that the late Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi may have been hired by the Swedish group Saab-Scania to help sell its Viggen fighter jet to India while his mother, Indira Gandhi, was prime minister.

In 1975 Kissinger during a conversation with the U.S. ambassador to Turkey and two Turkish and Cypriot diplomats assured his hosts that he could work around an official arms embargo then in effect. He is quoted in the documents as saying: "Before the Freedom of Information Act, I used to say at meetings, 'The illegal we do immediately; the unconstitutional takes a little longer.' [laughter] But since the Freedom of Information Act, I'm afraid to say things like that." The documents, along with detailing collaborations with the military dictatorships in Spain and Greece, show that Washington created a torture exemption to allow the military government in Brazil to receive U.S. aid.

Swartz was the Internet activist arrested in January 2011 for downloading more than 5 million academic articles from JSTOR, an online clearinghouse for scholarly journals. Swartz was charged by federal prosecutors with two counts of wire fraud and 11 violations of the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act. The charges carried the threat of \$1 million in fines and 35 years in prison. Swartz committed suicide last Jan. 11.

The documents were obtained from the National Archives and Record Administration and took a year to be prepared in an accessible digital format. "It is essentially what Aaron Swartz was doing, making available documents that until now were hard to access or only obtainable through an intermediary," Assange said in the interview.

Swartz was the Internet activist arrested in January 2011 for downloading more than 5 million academic articles from JSTOR, an online clearinghouse for scholarly journals. Swartz was charged by federal prosecutors with two counts of wire fraud and 11 violations of the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act. The charges carried the threat of \$1 million in fines and 35 years in prison. Swartz committed suicide last Jan. 11.

Assange, 41, works through most of the night and sleeps into the late afternoon. Even though he uses an ultraviolet light device, he was pale, not surprising for someone who has not been out in sunlight for nearly a year. He rarely gives interviews. A treadmill was tilted up against a wall of his quarters; he said he sets it up and tries to run three to five miles on it every day. He has visits from a personal trainer, with whom he practices calisthenics and boxing. He is lanky at 6 feet 2 inches tall and exudes a raw, nervous energy. He leaps, sometimes disconcertingly, from topic to topic, idea to idea, his words rushing to keep up with his cascading thoughts. He works with a small staff and has a steady stream of visitors, including celebrities such as [Lady Gaga](#). When the Ecuadorean Ambassador Ana Alban Mora and Bianca Jagger showed up late one afternoon, Assange pulled down glasses and poured everyone whiskey from a stock of liquor he keeps in a cabinet. His visitors chatted at a small round table, seated in leatherette chairs. Jagger wanted to know how to protect her website from hackers. Assange told her to "make a lot of backup copies."

It is from this room that Assange and his supporters have mounted an election campaign for a seat in Australia's upper house of Parliament. Public surveys from the state of Victoria, where Assange is a candidate, indicate he has a good chance of winning.

Assange communicates with his global network of associates and supporters up to 17 hours a day through numerous cellphones and a collection of laptop computers. He encrypts his communications and religiously shreds anything put down on paper. The frequent movements of the police cordon outside his window make sleep difficult. And he misses his son, whom he raised as a single father. He may also have a daughter, but he does not speak publicly about his children, refusing to disclose their ages or where they live. His family, he said, has received death threats. He has not seen his children since his legal troubles started. The emotional cost is as heavy as the physical one.

“ISAF [the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force] carried out a big sweep. It went house to house. Then an American soldier was killed. They called in an AC-130 gunship. This is a C-130 cargo plane refitted with cannons on the side. It circled overhead and rained down shells. The War Logs say 181 ‘enemy’ were killed. The logs also say there were no wounded or captured. It was a significant massacre. This event, the day when the largest number of people were killed in Afghanistan, has never been properly investigated by the old media.”

Assange said he sees WikiLeaks’ primary role as giving a voice to the victims of U.S. wars and proxy wars by using leaked documents to tell their stories. The release of the [Afghan and Iraq War Logs](#), he said, disclosed the extent of civilian death and suffering, and the plethora of lies told by the Pentagon and the state to conceal the human toll. The logs, Assange said, also unmasked the bankruptcy of the traditional press and its obsequious service as war propagandists.

“There were 90,000 records in the Afghan War Logs,” Assange said. “We had to look at different angles in the material to add up the number of civilians who have been killed. We studied the records. We ranked events different ways. I wondered if we could find out the largest number of civilians killed in a single event. It turned out that this occurred during Operation Medusa, led by Canadian forces in September 2006. The U.S.-backed local government was quite corrupt. The Taliban was, in effect, the political opposition and had a lot of support. The locals rose up against the government. Most of the young men in the area, from a political perspective, were Taliban. There was a government crackdown that encountered strong resistance. ISAF [the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force] carried out a big sweep. It went house to house. Then an American soldier was killed. They called in an AC-130 gunship. This is a C-130 cargo plane refitted with cannons on the side. It circled overhead and rained down shells. The War Logs say 181 ‘enemy’ were killed. The logs also say there were no wounded or captured. It was a significant massacre. This event, the day when the largest number of people were killed in Afghanistan, has never been properly investigated by the old media.”

Operation Medusa, which occurred 20 miles west of Kandahar, took the lives of four Canadian soldiers and involved some 2,000 NATO and Afghan troops. It was one of the largest military operations by the ISAF in the Kandahar region.

Assange searched for accounts of reporters who were on the scene. What he discovered appalled him. He watched an embedded Canadian reporter, Graeme Smith of the Toronto Globe and Mail, use these words on a Canadian military website to describe his experiences during Operation Medusa:

“In September 2006 I had one of the most intense experiences of my life. I was on the front lines of something called Operation Medusa. It was a big Canadian offensive against the Taliban who were massed outside of Kandahar City. The Taliban were digging trenches and intimidating locals, and the Canadians decided to sweep in there in big numbers and force them out. And I was travelling with a platoon that called themselves the “Nomads”. These were guys who had been sent all over, you know, sort of, a 50,000 square kilometer box out to the very edges of Kandahar City, and so they were moving around all the time; they were never sleeping in the same place twice and they’d even made up these little patches for their uniforms that said “Nomads” on them.

As a reporter at The New York Times, I was among those expected to prod sources inside the organs of power to provide information, including top-secret information. The Pentagon Papers, released to the Times in 1971, and the Times’ Pulitzer-winning 2005 exposure of the warrantless wire-tapping of U.S. citizens by the National Security Council used “top secret” documents—a classification more restricted than the lower-level “secret” designation of the documents released by WikiLeaks.

The Nomads took me in and they sort of made me one of them. I spent what was originally supposed to be just a two or three day embed with them, stretched out into two weeks. I didn’t have a change of underwear. I didn’t have a change of shirt. I remember showering in my clothes, washing first the clothes on my body, then stripping the clothes off and washing my body, and that was just using a bucket as a shower. It was an intense experience. I slept in my flak jacket a lot of nights. We were under fire together, you know, we had RPGs whistling in. One time I was standing around behind a troop carrier and we were just sort of relaxing—we were in a down moment—and I think some guys had coffee out and were standing around and I heard a loud clap beside my right ear. It was like someone had sort of snuck up behind me and sort of played a prank by clapping beside my ear. I turned around to say hey that’s not really funny, that’s kind of loud, and all of the soldiers were lying on the ground because they know what to do when an incoming sniper round comes in, and I didn’t because [laughs] it was my first time under fire. So I threw myself to the ground as well. They had sort of made me one of them and so they gave me a little “Nomads” patch that I attached to my flak jacket and you know as a journalist you try to avoid drinking the Kool-Aid, but I did feel a sense of belonging with those guys.”

“The physical demeanor of this man, the way he describes life in the great outdoors, led me to understand that here was someone who had never boxed, been mountain climbing, played rugby, been involved in any of these classically masculine activities,” Assange said. “Now, for the first time, he feels like a man. He has gone to battle. It was one of many examples of the failure by the embedded reporters to report the truth. They were part of the team.”

Assange is correct. The press of a nation at war, in every conflict I covered, is an enthusiastic part of the machine, cheerleaders for slaughter and tireless mythmakers for war and the military. The few renegades within the press who refuse to wave the flag and slavishly lionize the troops, who will not endow them with a host of virtues including heroism, patriotism and courage, find themselves pariahs in newsrooms and viciously attacked—like Assange and Manning—by the state.

As a reporter at The New York Times, I was among those expected to prod sources inside the organs of power to provide information, including top-secret information. The Pentagon Papers, released to the Times in 1971, and the Times’ Pulitzer-winning 2005 exposure of the warrantless wiretapping of U.S. citizens by the National Security Council used “top secret” documents—a classification more restricted than the lower-level “secret” designation of the documents released by WikiLeaks. But as the traditional press atrophies with dizzying speed—effectively emasculated by Barack Obama’s use of the Espionage Act half a dozen times since 2009 to target whistle-blowers like Thomas Drake. In addition, former CIA official John Kiriakou was prosecuted and imprisoned on charges of violating the Intelligence Identities Protection Act.

The New York Times, The Guardian, El Pais, Le Monde and Der Spiegel giddily printed redacted copies of some of the WikiLeaks files and then promptly threw Assange and Manning to the sharks. It was not only morally repugnant, but also stunningly shortsighted. Do these news organizations believe that if the state shuts down organizations such as WikiLeaks and imprisons Manning and Assange, traditional news outlets will be left alone?

The cables that WikiLeaks released, as disturbing as they were, invariably put a pro-unit or pro-U.S. spin on events. The reality in war is usually much worse. Those counted as dead enemy combatants are often civilians. Military units write their own after-action reports and therefore attempt to justify or hide their behavior. Despite the heated rhetoric of the state, no one has provided evidence that anything released by WikiLeaks cost lives. Then-Secretary of Defense Robert Gates in a 2010 letter to Sen. Carl Levin conceded this point. He wrote Levin: “The initial assessment in no way discounts the risk to national security. However, the review to date has not revealed any sensitive intelligence sources and methods compromised by the disclosure.”

The New York Times, The Guardian, El Pais, Le Monde and Der Spiegel giddily printed redacted copies of some of the WikiLeaks files and then promptly threw Assange and Manning to the sharks. It was not only morally repugnant, but also stunningly shortsighted.

Do these news organizations believe that if the state shuts down organizations such as WikiLeaks and imprisons Manning and Assange, traditional news outlets will be left alone? Can’t they connect the dots between the prosecutions of government whistle-blowers under the Espionage Act, warrantless wiretapping, monitoring of communications and the persecution of Manning and Assange? Don’t they worry that when the state finishes with Manning, Assange and WikiLeaks, these atrophied news outlets will be next? Haven’t they realized that this is a war by a global corporate elite not against an organization or an individual but against the freedom of the press and democracy?

And yet Assange is surprisingly hopeful—at least for the short and medium term. He believes that the system cannot protect itself completely from those who chip away at its digital walls.

“The national security state can try to reduce our activity,” he said. “It can close the neck a little tighter. But there are three forces working against it. The first is the massive surveillance required to protect its communication, including the nature of its cryptology. In the military everyone now has an ID card with a little chip on it so you know who is logged into what. A system this vast is prone to deterioration and breakdown. Secondly, there is widespread knowledge not only of how to leak, but how to leak and not be caught, how to even avoid suspicion that you are leaking. The military and intelligence systems collect a vast amount of information and move it around quickly. This means you can also get it out quickly. There will always be people within the system that have an agenda to defy authority. Yes, there are general deterrents, such as when the DOJ [Department of Justice] prosecutes and indicts someone. They can discourage people from engaging in this behavior. But the opposite is also true. When that behavior is successful it is an example. It encourages others. This is why they want to eliminate all who provide this encouragement.”

The U.S., according to one of Assange’s lawyers, Michael Ratner, appears poised to seize Assange the moment he steps out of the embassy. Washington does not want to become a party in two competing extradition requests to Britain. But Washington, with a sealed grand jury indictment prepared against Assange, can take him once the Swedish imbroglio is resolved, or can take him should Britain make a decision not to extradite.

“The medium-term perspective is very good,” he said. “The education of young people takes place on the Internet. You cannot hire anyone who is skilled in any field without them having been educated on the Internet. The military, the CIA, the FBI, all have no choice but to hire from a pool of people that have been educated on the Internet. This means they are hiring our moles in vast numbers. And this means that these organizations will see their capacity to control information diminish as more and more people with our values are hired.”

The long term, however, may not be as sanguine. Assange recently completed a book with three co-authors—Jacob Appelbaum, Andy Müller-Maguhn and Jérémie Zimmermann—called “Cypherpunks: Freedom and the Future of the Internet.” It warns that we are “galloping into a new transnational dystopia.” The Internet has become not only a tool to educate, they write, but the mechanism to cement into place a “Postmodern Surveillance Dystopia” that is supranational and dominated by global corporate power. This new system of global control will “merge global humanity into one giant grid of mass surveillance and mass control.” It is only through encryption that we can protect ourselves, they argue, and only by breaking through the digital walls of secrecy erected by the power elite can we blunt state secrecy. “The internet, our greatest tool of emancipation,” Assange writes, “has been transformed into the most dangerous facilitator of totalitarianism we have ever seen.”

The U.S., according to one of Assange’s lawyers, Michael Ratner, appears poised to seize Assange the moment he steps out of the embassy. Washington does not want to become a party in two competing extradition requests to Britain. But Washington, with a sealed grand jury indictment prepared against Assange, can take him once the Swedish imbroglio is resolved, or can take him should Britain make a decision not to extradite. Neil MacBride, who has been mentioned as a potential head of the FBI, is U.S. attorney for the eastern district of Virginia, which led the grand jury investigation, and he appears to have completed his work.

Assange said, “The grand jury was very active in late 2011, pulling in witnesses, forcing them to testify, pulling in documents. It’s been much less active during 2012 and 2013. The DOJ appears ready to proceed with the prosecution proper immediately following the Manning trial.”

Assange spoke repeatedly about Manning, with evident concern. He sees in the young Army private a reflection of his own situation, as well as the draconian consequences of refusing to cooperate with the security and surveillance state. Manning’s 12-week military trial is scheduled to begin in June. The prosecution is calling 141 witnesses, including an anonymous Navy SEAL who was part of the raid that killed Osama bin Laden. Assange called the Navy SEAL the “star diva” of the state’s “12-week Broadway musical.” Manning is as bereft of establishment support as Assange.

10% of the U.S. military is gay. Well over 50% are from broken homes. Take those two factors together. That gets you down to, say, 5% - 5% on the outside. There are 5 million people with active security clearances, so now you're down to 250,000 people. You still have to get from 250,000 to one. You can only explain Bradley Manning by his virtues. Virtues others can learn from."

"The old media attempted to remove his alleged heroic qualities," Assange said of Manning. "An act of heroism requires that you make a conscious act. It is not an unreasoned expression of madness or sexual frustration. It requires making a choice—a choice that others can follow. If you do something solely because you are a mad homosexual there is no choice. No one can choose to be a mad homosexual. So they stripped him, or attempted to strip him, of all his refinements."

"His alleged actions are a rare event," Assange went on. "And why does a rare event happen? What do we know about him? What do we know about Bradley Manning? We know that he won three science fairs. We know the guy is bright. We know that he was interested in politics early on. We know he's very articulate and outspoken. We know he didn't like lies. ... We know he was skilled at his job of being an intelligence analyst. If the media was looking for an explanation they could point to this combination of his abilities and motivations. They could point to his talents and virtues. They should not point to him being gay, or from a broken home, except perhaps in passing. Ten percent of the U.S. military is gay. Well over 50 percent are from broken homes. Take those two factors together. That gets you down to, say, 5 percent—5 percent on the outside. There are 5 million people with active security clearances, so now you're down to 250,000 people. You still have to get from 250,000 to one. You can only explain Bradley Manning by his virtues. Virtues others can learn from."

I walked for a long time down Sloane Street after leaving the embassy. The red double-decker buses and the automobiles inched along the thoroughfare. I passed boutiques with window displays devoted to Prada, Giorgio Armani and Gucci. I was jostled by shoppers with bags stuffed full of high-end purchases. They, these consumers, seemed blissfully unaware of the tragedy unfolding a few blocks away.

"In this respect, our townsfolk were like everybody else, wrapped up in themselves; in other words, they were humanists: they disbelieved in pestilences," Albert Camus wrote in "The Plague." "A pestilence isn't a thing made to man's measure; therefore we tell ourselves that pestilence is a mere bogey of the mind, a bad dream that will pass away. But it doesn't always pass away and, from one bad dream to another, it is men who pass away, and the humanists first of all, because they have taken no precautions."

I stopped in front of the four white columns that led into the brick-turreted Cadogan Hotel. The hotel is where Oscar Wilde was arrested in Room 118 on April 6, 1895, before being charged with "committing acts of gross indecency with other male persons." John Betjeman imagined the shock of that arrest, which ruined Wilde's life, in his poem *"The Arrest of Oscar Wilde at the Cadogan Hotel."*

The world has been turned upside down. The pestilence of corporate totalitarianism is spreading rapidly over the earth. The criminals have seized power. It is not, in the end, simply Assange or Manning they want. It is all who dare to defy the official narrative, to expose the big lie of the global corporate state.

Here's a fragment:

A thump, and a murmur of voices—
 ("Oh why must they make such a din?")
 As the door of the bedroom swung open
 And TWO PLAIN CLOTHES POLICEMEN came in:
*"Mr. Woilde, we 'ave come for tew take yew
 Where felons and criminals dwell:
 We must ask yew tew leave with us quietly
 For this is the Cadogan Hotel."*

The world has been turned upside down. The pestilence of corporate totalitarianism is spreading rapidly over the earth. The criminals have seized power. It is not, in the end, simply Assange or Manning they want. It is all who dare to defy the official narrative, to expose the big lie of the global corporate state. The persecution of Assange and Manning is the harbinger of what is to come, the rise of a bitter world where criminals in Brooks Brothers suits and gangsters in beribboned military uniforms—propped up by a vast internal and external security apparatus, a compliant press and a morally bankrupt political elite—monitor and crush those who dissent. Writers, artists, actors, journalists, scientists, intellectuals and workers will be forced to obey or thrown into bondage.

I fear for Julian Assange.

I fear for Bradley Manning.

I fear for us all.





Declaration: The Bollywood film posters featuring in this edition have been taken from the net and are being used merely to illustrate the fantastic contribution that Bollywood has made to filmdom. It is in no way being used for any commercial purpose as Live Encounters Magazine is a not-for-profit free online magazine. No copyright infringement intended. - Publisher

Tapan K Ghosh

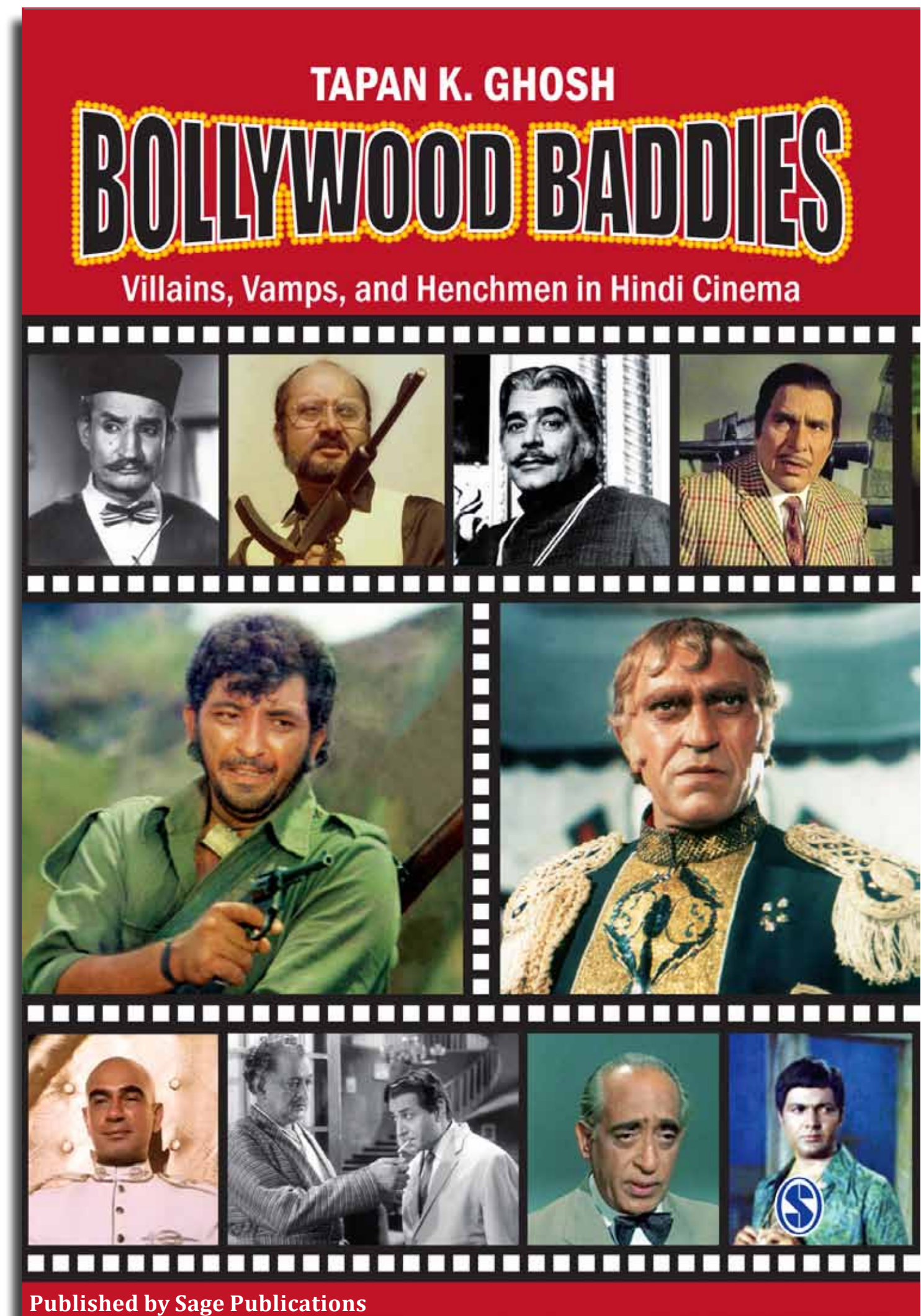
Author of *Bollywood Baddies*

in a Live Encounter with Mark Ulyseas

The acts of simulation in the mirror scene of *Mard* (1985) featuring Amitabh Bachchan and Prem Chopra, a romantic villain like Pran, shows mimicry at its best under the intoxication of bhang, made from Indian hemp. A whole range of emotions like surprise, incredulity, self-pity, and stupidity, have been enacted in this scene. It's fun on one hand, and awakening to one's world on the other. Yet, within the film reality the hero is better placed than the villain as he isn't really drunk whereas the villain has been put on a higher dose of bhang. This characterises how the baddies in Bollywood cinema have fought a lost battle, adding to the hero's charisma. Along with their trusted henchmen and vamps, these baddies have suffered most, receiving a raw deal.

The book *Bollywood Baddies: Villains, Vamps, and Henchmen in Hindi Cinema*, explores these unsung people, showing how the country's socio-political environment played a crucial role in guiding the nature and operation of villainy in Bollywood cinema. With the Bofors scandal, the coming of V.P. Singh's government to power, and the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, the time was ripe for villains to burst on the scene with aplomb. The early hazy dawns of *Parinda*, a Vidhu Vinod Chopra film of 1989 symbolically suggests this suffocating scenario. Nights looked longer, and days shorter. It was obvious that something in the rule of nature went wrong.

To show this transition, the narrative begins with Ashok Kumar's negative role in *Kismet* as early as 1943, and ends with the *Agneepath* remake in 2012. In between, it discusses all major villains of Bollywood, even their henchmen like M.B. Shetty, Sharat Saxena and others, and vamps like Nadira, Helen, Bipasha Basu, among others. A long journey no doubt, but the baddies make it worth taking by virtue of their unique dimension and variety in playing the roles from one decade to the other.





Above: Jism-2 2003. Centre: Mother India 1957. Right: Bluff Master 1963.

It is claimed that in the nascent years of Bollywood and even till the late '90s Bollywood drew heavily on Hollywood for 'inspiration'/storylines. Is this true? And does this also reflect on the characterisation of baddies?

I'm glad that you've raised this question. The only point is that it should form the subject of a separate study along with, for example, an inquiry into the influence of southern (Indian) films, Tamil and Telugu, on Bollywood scenario (*Bodyguard* and *Ghajini* being recent examples). I don't agree though with this contention of Bollywood drawing heavily on Hollywood for its inspiration. This was raised toward the end of the '70s, maybe, when *Kala Patthar* was made, drawing in some indirect implicit way on the Hollywood hit *Towering Inferno*. It is said that even some of the technicians involved in the making of *Kala Patthar* were brought in from Hollywood (p.87 of my book on *Baddies*). Still, the final product churned out had nothing to do with the Hollywood ambience. It couldn't, because Bollywood makers had to make money.

This issue of Hollywood's influence on Bollywood was mooted by persons who grew suspicious every now and then of the quality of Bollywood commercials in an esoteric way. And, why till the late '90s? *Sarkar*, a Ram Gopal Verma film, starred by Amitabh Bachchan, was made in 2005, drawing on *The Godfather* (note on p.203). What I mean to say is that the Hollywood inspiration didn't disturb the essentially Indian character of Bollywood cinema. As a matter of fact, the book *Bollywood Baddies* dealing with the villains, vamps, and their lackeys implicitly answers this question. More than the heroes, the baddies make us aware of the Indian political scenario.

As soon as the villains spring into action, we locate them in the Indian environment. Look at the fun-package also. In *Seeta Aur Geeta*, one of the heroes, a doctor, (Sanjeev Kumar) suddenly starts measuring the blood-pressure of a goon. The fool is staggered with disbelief but surrenders to the doctor. A moment later the wily doctor punches the goon in his face. In *Dostana* (1980), the villain fires from the hole of his coat-pocket. It has always been a characteristically Indian package. Look also at the Bollywood-craze in the market abroad. That speaks eloquently of how the foreign audience has developed a liking the Indian face of Bollywood cinema. That's the secret. The occasional influence might be there, but it has been eloquently transformed into the Indian context, making the so-called subject of influence look casual and of little consequence.

I don't think it's true and has any impact on the characterisation of villains. In the chapter on vamps, I've made it clear how these fallen women (pp137-151) retained their indigenous character, like their male counterparts, in spite of sharing some western inputs. This trend goes well with the typically Indian mood of openness, absorbing everything like a sponge.



Above: Agneepath 2012. Centre: Mr. India 1987. Right: Dostana 1980.

When did the stereotype image of the vamp morph into a lead role, which in fact challenged the 'Star' of the film?

This started happening since the '60s, right at the beginning of the decade. I'll be obliged if you see my discussion of a Kishore Sahu film *Dil Apna Aur Preet Parai* (pp.134-136) that doesn't seem to have attracted much attention so far. Yet, it's a powerful film, full of profound cinematic suggestions. Kishore Sahu is a director and storywriter of considerable merit and literary taste. The villain and the vamp have always remained marginalised people, not receiving much attention so far. Yet, in this film, the vamp not only challenges the hero (Raj Kumar) but also the heroine. One might also mention Kajol in *Gupt*, outwitting the hero. *Jism*, a recent film (2003; pp151-52) takes up the trend to a towering height.

Give us a glimpse of the role of the woman as a baddie in context to the position of women in India. Does it stereotype her as a mother, wife or whore?

This partly answers the first question. As a matter of fact, the chapter on vamps in the book throws light on this issue. Yes, the traditional Indian women are essentially wives and mothers. Bollywood mainstream cinema has always remained doggedly loyal to this national character. Women in India are still essentially mothers and wives. The success of T.V. serials in remote towns and villages of India confirms this feature. By doing so, the serial makers are actually following their godfathers of the bigger screen.

The vamps in Bollywood cinema moved far away from the devdasi dancing girls of the South (India) and the erotic lavni of Maharashtra. They were initially used by middlemen and greedy priests for entertaining the nobility, even the zamindars at a later stage. Remember Satyajit Ray's *Jalsaghar* in this context. Women even now are hired to dance and sing. But, essentially, they're mothers. If we see the films carefully, we realise how the whores, wives, and lovers have been used over the decades in Bollywood cinema according to Indian parameters, rooted in the society, just like the villains are. This has been an excellent achievement, and this book may have done a small job by recognising this feature on a larger scale.

See the vamp as the anguished lover in *Kati Patang* and in *Pagla Kahin Ka*, both films discussed in detail in this book (pp. 142-43; 146-47). *Professor*, another popular hit of the early '60s registers the unmistakable anguish of Lalita Pawar, playing the role of a strong woman. Toward the end, her womanly instinct prevails like it does in *Junglee* also. In both instances, the mother inside the vamp prevails. In *Professor*, Shammi Kapoor, the hero finds himself in a deeply embarrassing

continued



Above: Gupt 1997. Centre: An Evening in Paris 1967. Right: Dil Apna Aur Preet Parai 1960.

Give us a glimpse of the role of the woman as a baddie in context to the position of women in India. Does it stereotype her as a mother, wife or whore? (contd/-)

and awkward position when his real identity as a young man (not a codger as he feigned so long) is revealed. In all cases it's always the demon-lover wailing for her man, like it happens in Coleridge's famous poem 'Kubla Khan.'

It's deeply engrossing to watch these films and many others from beginning to end (not just those frames that support a particular hypothesis that dismisses the mother as a *jalamukhi* /a volcano in *Junglee*) to realise how the woman as a baddie assumes a far more complex character in the Indian context. The fact is many of these films have so far been mentioned in passing.

Like the villain, the vamp, in spite of her being a whore and a cabaret dancer, has fallen in love, and has moved out of the frame finally, making way for the heroine. That forms a substantial part of the psyche of a woman in India. Yes, a stereotype sometimes, but not always. Even a vamp can betray her anguish as a lover. That is the point. Nadira, Helen, Bindu, Lalita Pawar have all given powerhouse performances playing strong women.

At what stage in the evolution of Bollywood did the image of the villain become immortalized?

Many would say the '70s and after, but I'd go by the '50s, especially *Kanhaiyalal*, playing the immortal moneylender beast in *Mother India*. The '50s of B. cinema couldn't be said by any stretch of imagination to be a time of total disillusionment. People still pinned their hope on Nehruvian socialism, though with a little apprehension like cloudlets threatening an autumn sky. But, see what Lala Sukhiram does even in a scenario like this. Answering a starved woman's apparent decision to surrender, Lala blurts, "Ah, crikey! I do understand, my queen, I do understand. Even if Sukhilala keeps a dog at his house, he would have a gold chain round its neck." This is outrageous villainy.

There are many such throwaway fluff lines spoken by the later villains of Bollywood cinema. But, Lala manages to cross the height of incivility. Such atrocious desire to put a gold chain round a woman's neck, and comparing her to a dog, sounds more sinister than the rants of a Gabbar Singh and others in the '70s. Still, Lala is so well-meaning apparently, inclined to help others in their distress. He appears with a lantern in the flood scene of *Mother India*, bringing in more darkness for the forlorn heroine. A deconstruction of Bollywood tropes has been attempted in this book.



Above: Gangs of Wasseypur 2012. Centre: Junglee 1961. Right: Sarkar 2005.

Anupam Kher, for example, adjusts his spectacles in and after moments of crisis, summoning a sense of dignity. He has to, playing the baddie; since he knows that he can hardly win the kudos, defeating his goody rivals.

Could you give the readers a few examples of some movies where the audience actually sympathized with the baddies? And do these instances reflect the social disparities of the day?

Yes, answering this question now seems perfectly logical. Apparently, sympathising with a baddie is difficult in the Indian context. Even the Duke of Gloucester's famous (or notorious?) wooing of Queen Anne ("Was ever woman in this humour woo'd?") hardly tips the scale in his favour, though we feel over-awed by the scene. There is usually a creepy sensation bringing in admiration for the bad guy. But, if we track back a little, dispensing with the low-angle take and moving out of the height, then there are moments when we feel sympathy (not empathy) for the baddie, like we do in *Bluff Master*, *Brahmachari*, *An Evening in Paris*, *Kashmir Ki Kali*— all films of the '60s. Pran's claim as a suave-looking villain, playing the baddie as a dapper, is frustrated on each occasion in these films.

In *An Evening in Paris*, we sympathise with him when the hero and the heroine dupe him on foreign soil. Even Mogambo in *Mr. India* gains our sympathy when, playing an uneven battle, he's confronted in his lavish den by the invisible *Mr. India*, Anil Kapoor. Bob Christo, playing a lackey in the same film, also wins our sympathy when he cringes at his invisible tormentor. In both cases, the hero, basically a nitwit, looks like Indrajit, Ravana's wicked son, fighting from behind the clouds in *The Ramayana*. Kindly mark this comparison, as it subverts the hero's so-called ethical position. Toward the end of the film *Karan Arjun*, Amrish Puri also looks utterly helpless when he loses his son. Puri's brilliant performance wins the game in his favour.

When Ajit is staggered with disbelief in *Kalicharan* by facing a look-alike hero, we sympathize with the baddie for a while. This feature may have its resonance with *The Ramayana*. If we read the epic in the original, we are taken with sympathy for the evil Ravana, who loses his sons one by one while all the lethal weapons intended to destroy the divine incarnation is frustrated by the impossible feat of Hanumana, the monkey-god (pp.9 and 27 of the book). Mainstream Bollywood cinema deserves special credit for using these implications to good commercial effect.

Yes, these instances do reflect the social disparities of the time when these films were made and shown in theatres.

continued



Above: Bodyguard 2011. Centre: Pagla Kahin Ka 1970. Right: Sholay 1975.

What do you hope to achieve by writing this book?

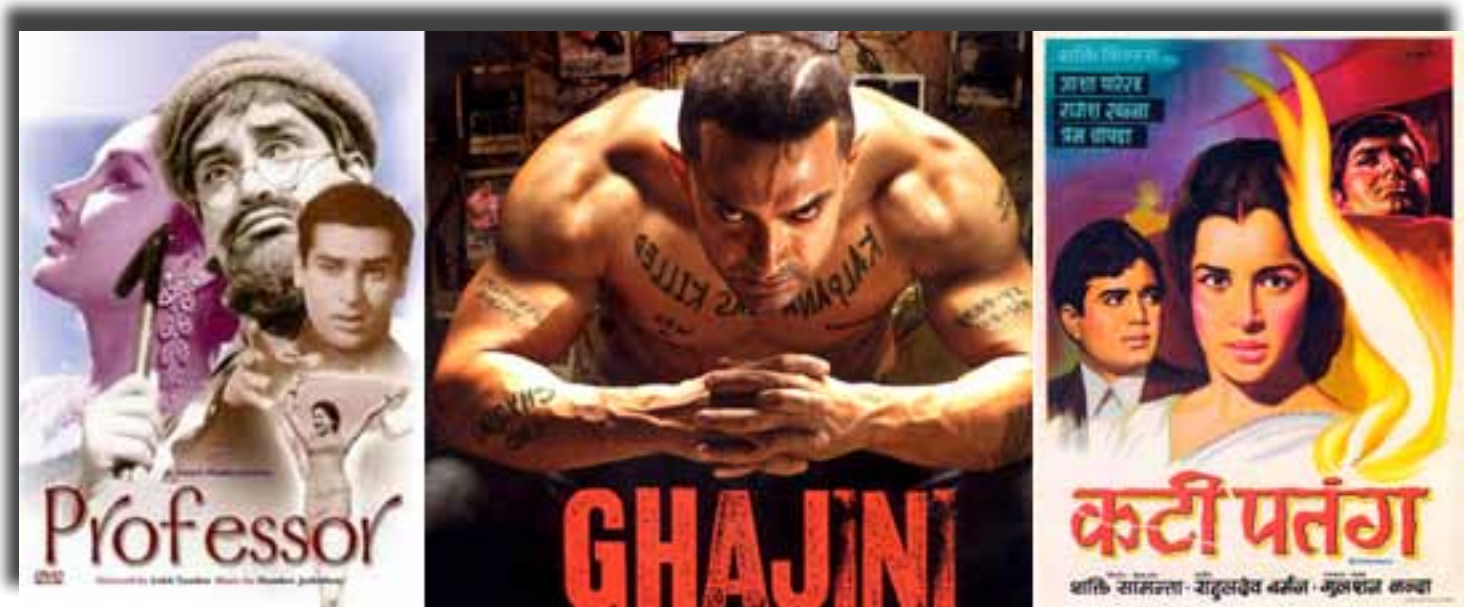
Well, the first thing is that I wanted to write a book on cinema from the perspective of viewers - those who kept the Bollywood show alive over the decades. I wanted to be one with them, become one of them, and watch the films as if I was inside a theatre hall, feeling the occasional itchy sensation as a consequence of sitting on an uncomfortable, torn cushion. Remember many theatre halls in the towns of India aren't very comfortable in spite of the occasional penny-pinching face-lifts made by the grudging theatre-owners, some of whom run other business also, like digging coal from coalmines (remember the *Gangs of Wasseypur* experience). Armed with this knowledge of the hoi polloi and the vermilion-painted image of Bajrangbali, the monkey-god (*Page 20*), who is warmly acknowledged by a visibly rattled Bob Christo in *Mr. India*, I could start from a vantage point and ignore the esoteric minds with blissful ignorance. After all, the bedlam and confusion of Teza, Daga, and Walcott (Bob Christo) in *Mr. India* quickly switched over from their forced surrender to Bajrangbali to an adulation of the dangerous Mogambo.

I didn't want to prove anything in this book; I wanted to show. The present story of villains, henchmen, and vamps, along with some minor characters—the role of the editor, for example, in *Mr. India*, had to be a straightforward account for the sake of popular readership. So, this book is as much a tribute to the villains as it is to the viewers, who lined up unflinchingly on the first day of the release of a film. I wanted to repeat a two and half hour entertainment inside a theatre hall in the form of pages in a book. The visual transformation was made, as we all know, from pages to frames. I started with the effects in order to go back to the cause, the genesis. This alone could help us appreciate the real merit of Bollywood entertainment.

I'm glad that this aim has been achieved, partly at least. Questions like what villainy is, or how life is unavoidable without the existence of evil, and how virtue and vice are spun together - have also been raised and suggested in this book. These form an integral part of human experience on earth.

In 21st century Bollywood is the baddie, vamp or henchman projected as a role model for eco-socio-political inequality? And is there an attempt to seek redressal for existing disparities?

This is an interesting question, related to our previous observation. These evil guys are certainly going to reflect the social tremor, anxiety, and inequality of the present century. They have served so long as the role-model for eco-socio-political inequality, and will continue to do so in future with



Above: Professor 1962. Centre: Ghajini 2008. Right: Kati Patang 1970.

more gusto, savvy and technological competence. I guess that sometimes the villains' operation might move beyond spatial limitations, showing fantastic schemes and possibilities. Occasionally, the form of fantasy might be used to redeem the public minds from the suffocating gloom of daily life. The 'politician' and 'terrorist' villains are also going to stomp the screen occasionally. The age of the superstar is probably gone, a feature that might become the subject of my future inquiry.

Not in sight till now. I believe in personal redressal.

The last line of the book is, "At the moment, it looks like straightening a dog's tail."

Who is your favourite baddie in Bollywood and why?

Certainly Mogambo, in spite of his clownish gait. Next comes Kancha Cheena of the new *Agneepath*.

Mogambo, to my mind, shows the trend of future villains. Some of his hysterics are shared by Prakash Raj in 2011 blockbuster *Singham*. Look how the baddie behaves toward the end of the film. The villains from now on might play up such comic prattles as hoop-la.

A sodden Kancha in black gait drags villainy up on an elemental level as he drags Vijay, the hero, up the mound. I have spelt it out in the book.

Please share with the readers a glimpse of your life and works?

So unlike the baddies, as a matter of fact. My hobby is to watch films and look beyond the window, thinking and writing on my PC. It's good to feel the changing faces of trees and seasons in spite of present day's ecological rupture with our environment, something that restores our faith in the good and the bad and our mythological inheritance.

I left my university job when I heard a call from within to take writing as profession. In appreciation of my job, the university published my book *Rabindranath Tagore and Popular Forms of Culture* that was partly inspired by my aimless wanderings through the streets of Dublin, especially the Abbey theatre, the statue of Parnell, and so on. My story 'The Border' got a special mention of the judges in an international event for its 'confident story-telling and well-measured prose.' Another story 'An Encounter' made its way into the first ten in a competitive event held in UK, and was published in an anthology called *The Bus Stop Scheherazade and other stories*.

continued



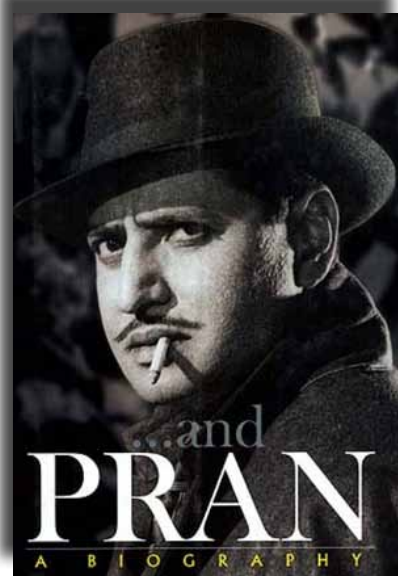
Love in Tokyo 1966.

Please share with the readers a glimpse of your life and works? (contd/-)

Two other stories have since then been published in *The Storyteller*, a magazine from US. Right now I'm working on my first novel, and planning another book on Bollywood. I have travelled a lot around my country and abroad. Years before, I ended up making a documentary on the idea of shelter for all after I failed for some reasons to make a full-length feature film. However, writing scenarios is my other hobby, especially when I'm stuck with one of those where-am-I moments. In the past I edited a film journal, was a jury member on the *Central Board of Film Certification*, and wrote film-reviews in popular journals

What is your message to those wanting to become baddies in Bollywood?

A bit embarrassing. Still, let me try. There are many actors now playing the baddie. I consider both Prakash Raj and Manoj Bajpayee outstanding. All I can say is that there's no reason now (in contrast to the time when Pran, Prem Chopra, and others were around) to feel awkward in playing a baddie. Mr. Pran Sikand has now got the National Dadasaheb Falke award. Also, a baddie, as I have said in my book, is an integral part of creation and the society around us. Given the situation, it is possible to "write good angel on the devil's horn," philosophically and aesthetically. But, this holds back more than it apparently seems.

Pic © <http://www.pransikand.com>



The Railway: Karmiel City's 2020 Vision

"My relationship with trains is so close now that every time my train meets one going the other way I expect to see myself on it, waving."
(George Szirtes, a Hungarian-born poet who lives and works in the U.K.)

Israeli life happens in short bursts. If you remember The Six Day War, you know what I mean!

This year, an unusually cold, intensely wet winter segued into spring with barely a backward glance and as April ended, we found ourselves putting away our heaters and woollies and starting to worry about the spiralling costs of air conditioning.

But here in Karmiel there are more pressing anxieties. On Sunday 05 May, the military deployed two Iron Dome missile defence batteries near us, each in Tzfat and Haifa. The move came barely hours after Israel allegedly blew up a shipment of Iranian missiles intended for the terrorist group, Hezbollah near the Syrian capital, Damascus. How long tensions will remain this high I cannot predict but matters were considered serious enough for Prime Minister Netanyahu to convene a security cabinet meeting and thus delay a highly publicised proposed trade trip to China.

It is often remarked that external foes aside, Israel is a society at continual war with itself and a recent skirmish between the City of Karmiel and the government is a good illustration.

The row was over the construction of a double track, 23 kilometre stretch of rail between Acco and Karmiel which had been underway for about 18 months when Yair Lapid, the recently elected Minister of Finance attempted to stymie it as part of swingeing budgetary cuts. Everyone in the area, from long-serving Mayor Adi Eldar to ordinary citizens and even non-residents living as far away as the Golan were hopping mad and a large demonstration at the city's entrance was planned in protest. Organisers of a hastily drawn petition collected at least 12,000 names, intending to hand it over to the relevant authorities. But arrangements were cancelled with barely hours to spare when those holding the purse strings had their minds changed.

One of my acquaintances pointed out: *"The railway would not only help the development of Karmiel - it would help all the northern towns and villages. We live in Katsrin on the Golan (45 minutes from Karmiel) and I am counting on the Karmiel railway to get me to the centre of the country instead of having to drive so many hours."* And another person living on the periphery noted: *"If, in fact, this Acco-Karmiel railway is terminated I will be interested to see if the inflation in housing prices that occurred when the project was announced will be deflated."*

Both of these are excellent arguments but before adding my own, I'll give a little background: Karmiel is the site of one of two rail stations planned and it is hoped that eventually the line will be extended to Korazim near Tzfat and then on to Kiryat Shemona, at Israel's northern tip.

The public memory is short, so many Israelis will have forgotten that the idea of the railway line was aired - then dismissed - also for financial reasons - during the Sharon administration. Moreover, an alternative plan to construct a light railway linking Karmiel and Haifa was also rejected. But the idea for a 'heavy railway' was revived in February 2010 when the government approved a budget of about NIS 2.8 billion (about US \$750M), leaving a further NIS 2.2 billion outstanding for electrifying the line, rolling stock and other new lines.

So the costs are enormous but almost all those affected - Karmiel, Israel Railways, many residents of the city and region - even tourists - will be recompensed handsomely when the plan comes to fruition. No more will well-meaning visitors observe - like one in March 2011: "... it is a little tricky to get there as bus times are a bit hit and miss, requiring a journey at Tel Aviv, Haifa, Acco or Tiberius. The railway network doesn't cover the greater Galilee area"

But while I'm totally in favour of the scheme, I also see drawbacks.

First: **The 'heavy railway', chosen in favour over a light rail system, still leaves residents of local Arab towns and villages without immediate access to the network. A report in Haaretz as long ago as December 2009 argued that building a light rail system would avoid having to appropriate Arab land while the heavy rail project would mean 'confiscating' such land, digging a five-kilometre tunnel, setting up three new interchanges and finding a way to avoid damage to ancient graves in the area - which may delay the project for several years. Further, the system now being built will not serve residents of Arab villages as no stops are being built there.** Even in 2009 Mr Eldar argued that a light rail system would leave "the people of Kiryat Shemona ... waiting for the train for another 100 years.

"Only a train can link Karmiel to the centre of the country in one hour and 15 minutes. Israel Railway already planned the line and I support the ministers' decision," he said.

Mr Eldar, a visionary, sees a utopian future in which by 2020 the railway will help Karmiel's transformation from a pleasant northern countryside town into a major city with a 100,000-strong population and an important tourist centre offering much more than its prestigious annual dance festival.

But I'm also a cynic: As the population grows and so too attendant health problems, Karmiel will be in desperate need of its own full-scale hospital not simply a series of clinics and an emergency room. Where in God's own vineyard are we going to acquire the money for that?



Stress

Emotional signs and symptoms of stress include

- irritability,
- angry outbursts,
- hostility,
- depression,
- jealousy,
- restlessness,
- withdrawal,
- anxiousness,
- diminished initiative,
- hyper-vigilance,
- feeling that things are not real,
- lack of interest in things you used to enjoy,
- crying outbursts,
- being critical of others,
- self-deprecation,
- nightmares,
- impatience,
- lack of hope,
- narrowed focus,
- obsessive rumination,
- lack of self-esteem,
- insomnia,

and either overeating or loss of appetite.



I have provided you with the Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale. It is a standard test developed initially in 1967 by two psychiatrists, Thomas Holmes and Richard Rahe. This test was published as the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS). Using Life Change Units (LCU), they were able to correlate the relationship between stress and illness in participants.



Many people think about stress as being specific to negative happenings in their lives, but stress actually occurs from both negative and positive situations. In fact, your energy system picks up a great amount of stress without you even being aware. What's wonderful, however, is that your body is amazing at moving back into balance.

You may remember a time when something happened suddenly and unexpectedly, and you immediately went into a heightened state of awareness. Your body is set up with a protective mechanism toward "fight" or "flight." This reaction creates an outpouring of adrenaline and other hormones into your blood stream, which produces a number of protective changes in your body. This flood provides you with the energy and strength to either fight or flee from the situation. Here, your heart rate increases, allowing more blood flow to your muscles, brain, and heart. Your breathing also increases to a faster pace in order to take in more oxygen, and your muscles tense in preparation for action. You become mentally alert, and your senses become more aware so that you can assess the situation and act quickly. In addition to this, your blood sugar, fats, and cholesterol increase for extra energy. There is a rise in your platelets and blood clotting ability, which prevents hemorrhaging in case of injury.

Most of the time though, you don't have this fight-or-flight response. Instead, there is a steady stream of stressors that increase and decrease as the day goes on. You become accustomed to the stress and then see it as normal, and all the while it is taking a toll on your body. You may find you compare yourself to others and then think that you don't have it so bad, or that your stress is worse than others, which creates more stress. If this makes you wonder about your own stress level I have provided you with the Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale. It is a standard test developed initially in 1967 by two psychiatrists, Thomas Holmes and Richard Rahe. This test was published as the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS). Using Life Change Units (LCU), they were able to correlate the relationship between stress and illness in participants. In 1970, Rahe implemented another test, which assessed the reliability of the stress scale as a predictor of illness.

Take a moment to evaluate your stress level with this test - [Life Events Stress Scale](#). Having taken the stress test, you may be surprised by the results. If you find you do not have many of the stressors listed but still struggle with stress, understand that although we share a human experience, we all experience life differently.

In addition to understanding what stresses you, you may also experience physical symptoms of stress such as increased heart rate, pounding heart, elevated blood pressure, sweaty palms, headache, trembling, twitching, stuttering, sleep disturbances, fatigue, shallow breathing, dry mouth, cold hands, itching, being easily startled, chronic pain, susceptibility to illness, and tightness in the chest, neck, jaw, and back muscles.

Emotional signs and symptoms of stress include irritability, angry outbursts, hostility, depression, jealousy, restlessness, withdrawal, anxiousness, diminished initiative, hyper-vigilance, feeling that things are not real, lack of interest in things you used to enjoy, crying outbursts, being critical of others, self-deprecation, nightmares, impatience, lack of hope, narrowed focus, obsessive rumination, lack of self-esteem, insomnia, and either overeating or loss of appetite.

In addition to taking the Holmes and Rahe Stress test mentioned earlier, before you make changes, figure out on a scale from 1–10 how stressed you feel in your life. Do this with 1 being little or no stress, 5 being a medium level of stress (or being stressed about half the time during the week), and 10 being a high level of stress (or being stressed daily). Make a note of your stress score in your journal so you can test yourself again after using some of the tools outlined for you.

Ways in which you can reduce stress:

01. Compartmentalize your life—focus on one thing at a time.
02. Set realistic goals and break projects down into manageable pieces.
03. Know your limits and prioritize.
04. Eat healthy and avoid sugary snacks.
05. Decrease or alleviate caffeine altogether.
06. Move your body.
07. Get enough sleep—7 or 8 hours a night is recommended.
08. Decrease or alleviate alcohol altogether.
09. Get massage or receive healthy touch.
10. Become a non-smoker.
11. Practice relaxation.
12. Share with friends.
13. Journal.
14. Create play in your life!
15. Listen to your body and your emotions.

This is just a beginning for you to start reducing stress in your life. Often when you change your behaviors, you do not notice a difference at first. You may want to put this list on the refrigerator or a mirror and practice for six months to see how your life changes. Then assess your stress level on a scale from 1–10 again and see how much you have improved. You know your body more than anyone else. Taking an inventory of yourself can be life changing! A short video that teaches you to ground your energy and relax is at [LINK](#). You can do this daily to teach your body to relax. For more information [12 Weeks to Self-Healing: Transforming Pain through Energy Medicine](#).



We thank Ivo Coelho, priest, philosopher and rector of Ratisbonne monastery, Jerusalem, for taking time out from his busy schedule to pen this exclusive article for Live Encounters.

What is Truth?

Mark Ulyseas asked me to write about truth: **What is truth? And how does one recognize it, define it, live with it?** The question cannot but have an echo for anyone who has heard of Pontius Pilate. For someone who, in addition, happens to live not far from where the question was uttered, and who, in addition, also has what you might call a professional interest, the invitation was tempting. So here I am.

The more I think about it, the more it becomes clear to me that the question about truth is complex. But I have also learnt, from one of my teachers, that when something is complex, a good strategy is to break it down, and to tackle problems one at a time. This means that we will not be able to say everything all at once, and that whatever we say will have to be qualified in many different ways by what is said later. But that is exactly what it means to write from a 'moving viewpoint.'

I hope everyone is familiar with the word 'insight.' To have an insight is to understand something, to grasp connections, to get the point. A very famous example is that of Archimedes running out naked from the baths of Syracuse, shouting Eureka! I've got it! What did he find? What did he 'get'? He had been mulling over a problem set by the king, and he finally made the connection between different densities of different metals, and the experience of loss of weight in water – that's where the baths helped, I guess. But each one of us makes connections between hundreds of things everyday, and hopefully everyone remembers at least some moments when we made connections, moments of significant insight, when things fell into place, when things clicked.

My own memory is from way back when I was in primary school. We had an arithmetic test, and we had to memorize the multiplication tables for the number 5. I found that I just could not memorize the table. But I distinctly remember, just as I was leaving home for school, hitting upon the simple fact that the tables went "5 – 10 – 15 – 20" and so on. Once I understood that, I had no more need to memorize the table for 5. It was a little and delightful moment of insight.

We could ask here: how do we 'know' that an insight is correct? I am not asking about rules here, or methods. I am just asking: we all have insights, and, while not all our insights are correct, we have had hundreds of little insights that are correct, and that we live by. What is happening here? What is the mechanism by which we 'know' that our insights are correct? I want to suggest that this is a matter of questions. As long as questions keep arising, we 'know' that we are not yet there. But when questions pertaining to the matter in hand stop arising, we 'know' that we are there, that we have 'got the point.' The coming to an end of further relevant questions is the way we 'know' that our insights are correct.

When our conscience is restless, we ‘know’ that we have either not arrived at the right thing to do, or else that we have done something that we ought not to have done. And when instead our conscience is at rest, we ‘know’ that we have reached the right thing to do, or that we have done the right thing.

I am talking here of what Aristotle called *physis*, “inbuilt principles of motion and of rest.” One of these inbuilt principles is conscience: I think all of us are familiar with the restless conscience and with the restful conscience. When our conscience is restless, we ‘know’ that we have either not arrived at the right thing to do, or else that we have done something that we ought not to have done. And when instead our conscience is at rest, we ‘know’ that we have reached the right thing to do, or that we have done the right thing. Conscience is the inbuilt dynamism that concerns right and wrong. But we also have an inbuilt dynamism that concerns truth and falsity, and that is what I have been trying to talk about. When further relevant questions come to an end, we ‘know’ that our insight is correct. When instead questions keep arising, we know that we have not yet reached understanding.

At this point I must add that, when it is a question of factual judgments, making connections alone is not enough. In order to make the judgment, “It is a goal,” it is not enough to say, “If the football goes into this particular area defined by these posts, it is a goal.” A conditional statement is far from being a goal! It is merely, perhaps, a rule of the game. What we need is the additional element, “The football has gone into the area defined by the goal posts,” and then it follows immediately, “It is a goal,” or “A goal has been scored.” But from where do we obtain this additional element? Very simply, from the evidence of our senses – either our naked sight or else, as happens more and more in professional games, our sight aided by sophisticated equipment.

Still, the first and primary evidence that a referee relies on is the evidence of his senses, aided perhaps by the sense evidence supplied by the linesmen. So here, I think, is a very simple example of how we make factual judgments: we have an insight or connection between different elements, and we have sense evidence, or experiential evidence. More technically and precisely, we could put it in this way: we have a ‘conditioned,’ which is the judgment of fact to be made (“It is a goal”); we have a link between conditions and the conditioned (“If the football goes into this particular area defined by these posts, it is a goal”); and we have the fulfilment of conditions (“The football has gone into the area defined by the goal posts”). If the conditioned is “B,” the link “If A then B,” and the fulfilment of conditions “A,” then it is easy to see the syllogism here: “If A then B; But A; therefore B.”

Of course the professional philosopher and even just some smart person will object immediately: in order to explain how we made one judgment, you have had recourse to two others, one of which is itself a factual judgment. But I reply: we don’t really operate by formulating such judgments. These are merely ways of helping each one to identify operative procedures in our knowing. I must admit that I have taken something of a shortcut in the example I have given, because it is

Here is where we have to face the human condition squarely: there is simply no recipe for making correct judgments. There is no method that leads in a foolproof way to truth, no criteria that are so ‘objective’ as to be independent of the person making the judgment.

merely an accepted convention in the game of football; still, it serves the purpose of a simple illustration of a link between conditions and conditioned. But back to the operative procedures: the point is to become aware, for example, that the absence of further relevant questions on some particular point is our inbuilt criterion for correctness of insights.

Once again, however, a question will arise, and must arise: is not the absence of further relevant questions a very subjective criterion – just like, in fact, the personal conscience of each one? It is true that we have the experience of questions coming to an end on some particular point. But then questions can come to an end for so many reasons: not only when there is nothing more to be understood, but also because we are bored, or distracted, or prejudiced, or whatever. Is there any way of distinguished between these cases? Is there any way of finding out when it is that questions have really come to an end on any particular topic? Here is where we have to face the human condition squarely: there is simply no recipe for making correct judgments. There is no method that leads in a foolproof way to truth, no criteria that are so ‘objective’ as to be independent of the person making the judgment.

Is there then nothing more to be said? No, for while there are no rules for making correct judgments, there are certain factors that we can certainly keep in mind, factors that make correct judgments more probable.

A first factor is that we should give further questions a chance to arise. A second factor, interestingly, is that questions should be set correctly. Setting questions badly or incorrectly is one of the major reasons why we never arrive at truth. (A famous example here might be a bit abstruse: Aristotle was searching for the cause of motion. Newton, instead, asked, not about the cause of motion, but about the cause of acceleration, or change of motion. The fruitfulness of this change of question is manifest by the enormous development of the science of mechanics and of physics in general as a result. Newton’s great insight was that motion does not have a cause, an insight that he formulated in the familiar law of inertia, “A body continues to be in a state of rest or of uniform motion unless it is acted upon by an equal and opposite force.”)

But this raises a problem. For setting questions correctly can be done only when we are familiar with a situation or a subject, when we have mastery in that domain. (Your car breaks down. You call a mechanic. He takes a look, tightens a screw, and charges you a hundred dollars. You object: a hundred dollars for tightening a screw? And the mechanic replies: one dollar for tightening the screw, ninety-nine for knowing which screw to tighten.) But this means that in order to make one judgment we have to be in possession of a whole set of correct judgments, and we cannot have a

What I have been saying is in some way a translation and development of Aristotle when he says that the criterion of moral judgments is the good conscience of a virtuous person: not just any good conscience, but the good conscience of a virtuous person, a person who is totally authentic.

set of correct judgments unless we make a whole series of correct judgments. A vicious circle! But not impossible to handle. For what do we do when we do not have something? We borrow from those who have. So if we do not have the necessary set of correct judgments, we borrow from those who have, from the expert, the master, the guru. Such borrowing has a name: it is called learning. The vicious circle is broken, in other words, by the process of learning. All learning is a borrowing from others who know better. All learning involves a suspicion of personal judgment till such time as one can make judgments on one's own. All learning involves, therefore, a modicum of humility. And learning is not only formal, but also informal, and, in fact, mostly informal. It is the process of education, acculturation, socialization. And with this we are smack in the middle of society, culture, tradition, history.

The third factor, then, is mastery of the situation. Through a self-correcting process of learning we move gradually towards mastery of situations. And one who is master of a situation can be relatively confident that her setting of questions is correct, and that questions have really come to an end.

The fourth factor is temperament. Am I hasty by temperament? Or am I perhaps indecisive? And here all that we can do is become aware of our temperament and make efforts to balance them.

These factors make it obvious that personal and historical factors enter into judgment: there is no criterion of truth that is so objective as to be independent of the person. Objectivity, in other words, is the fruit of authentic subjectivity, where subjectivity is not merely the subjectivity of the individual but also of the tradition that has formed him or her; and where personal authenticity includes not only moral and religious aspects but also emotional-psychic and intellectual-philosophical ones.

What I have been saying is in some way a translation and development of Aristotle when he says that the criterion of moral judgments is the good conscience of a virtuous person: not just any good conscience, but the good conscience of a virtuous person, a person who is totally authentic. It is also a translation and development of Thomas Aquinas' teaching about wisdom as the habit or virtue of right judgment: just as judgment does not consist merely in reduction to its sources in sense and in intellectual light, but needs to be the judgment of a wise person, so also the awfully subjective character of the cessation of further relevant questions is complemented by recognizing its insertion into the larger context of the authenticity of the individual and of his or her tradition. Yet again, what I have been saying is related in some way to the whole Christian tradition of spiritual discernment, right from St Paul who says that the unspiritual man cannot grasp the things of the Spirit,

It is also related to the great Sankaracarya's *nitya-nitya-vastu-viveka*, the ability to discern between what is eternal and what is not, on the model of the *paramahansa* or the great swan that is able to take in the milk and leave behind the water in a mixture of milk and water.

to the Fathers of the Church who taught that fish cannot be seen when the water is muddy, and that the sense of taste cannot be relied on when a person is sick. It is also related to the great Sankaracarya's *nitya-nitya-vastu-viveka*, the ability to discern between what is eternal and what is not, on the model of the *paramahansa* or the great swan that is able to take in the milk and leave behind the water in a mixture of milk and water. Discernment requires that we are spiritually whole and holy. But in most ordinary cases, that boils down to simple familiarity and mastery of situations.

We do reach reality, then. Not because we have some god's eye point of view (Hilary Putnam), not because there is some skyhook by which we can suspend ourselves so as to transcend the human condition (Richard Rorty), but because we have an inbuilt measure, an inbuilt principle of movement and of rest, and habits of wisdom or prudence or mastery of situations.

But we have been talking about simple, ordinary judgments of commonsense of the type we need to live and travel and earn livelihoods and do the thousand and one things we do every day. There are, of course, more complicated cases, in the areas of religion and philosophy and politics, and, I would add, interpersonal relationships. Especially in the first three areas, we often come across radically differing positions, interpretations, judgments, themselves rooted in radically different viewpoints or horizons or backgrounds. Is there any way of handling such differences? Is there any way of passing judgment upon traditions? Is it possible to make judgments about personal or community attainment of authenticity? Are we not thoroughly conditioned by our backgrounds, our traditions, our viewpoints? Once again we are faced with the problem: we cannot jump out of our skins.

And this is true: we cannot jump out of our skins. We are conditioned by our histories and our traditions. The question to be asked is: are we absolutely so conditioned, so that there is no freedom at all? Are we condemned to live and die in the traditions in which we were born? In point of fact, we know that people do make radical choices that involve getting out of the traditions of their birth. The most common instances are in the area of religion. How does, for example, the Jewish Alphonse Ratisbonne become Christian? But radical 'conversions' are not necessarily limited to the area of religion. People change philosophies radically too, as sometimes they change their politics. We are not, I would say, absolutely conditioned by our backgrounds.

Having said that, I would say that contemporary psychological counselling offers us a good way out: you cannot get rid of your past history, but you can certainly become aware of it, and to the extent you become aware of it, name it, appropriate it, to that extent you will become free of its conditioning. Martin Heidegger, in fact, recommended something along these lines when he said:

Paul Ricoeur is completely right when he points out that self-knowledge is attained at the end of a long detour. We come to knowledge of ourselves only through encounter with the other, with the text, with the tradition/s, with living persons. Is this a foolproof method? Will it really solve our problems? Is it really able to handle radical differences in horizons? And here we have to say that there is really no foolproof method, no automatic criterion. All we can do is become aware, as much as possible, of our horizons. All we can do is bring these horizons to light, and then make our decisions...

don't try to jump out of the hermeneutic circle of your historicity; rather, try to enter properly into it. Moving towards truth is a question of attaining self-transparency, engaging in self-appropriation, thematizing our horizons, objectifying our subjectivity – while recognizing with Hans-Georg Gadamer that this effort will always remain incomplete.

Self-transparency, self-appropriation, thematization is not to be confused with introspection in the sense of closing our eyes and trying to spot what is going on inside. Here is where conversation and dialogue enter into the picture: it is in conversation, whether with an actual person or with a text, that we move towards self-transparency and self-appropriation. Paul Ricoeur is completely right when he points out that self-knowledge is attained at the end of a long detour. We come to knowledge of ourselves only through encounter with the other, with the text, with the tradition/s, with living persons.

Is this a foolproof method? Will it really solve our problems? Is it really able to handle radical differences in horizons? And here we have to say that there is really no foolproof method, no automatic criterion. All we can do is become aware, as much as possible, of our horizons. All we can do is bring these horizons to light, and then make our decisions, this time with explicit deliberateness. Such explicit deliberateness is as much authentic as can be expected of any human being. Thus, as Rorty would say, there is ultimately no algorithm, no explicit criterion for selecting between one radically opposed horizon or another, no touchstone for choosing between incommensurable universes of discourse. However, there is also what someone has called the experiment of history, the judgment of history over traditions. Just as radical lack of harmony in a person ends up in self-destruction, so also radical lack of harmony in a tradition results eventually in the decline and destruction of that tradition. We just cannot think and say and do anything and everything with impunity. We pay for it with our lives.

A few other points before I end. First, not all factual judgments are as simple as "It is a goal." The appeal to experience can be quite complex, as when I meet a friend and say, "Something has happened to you." Involved here is the type of insight that identifies this set of data as 'my friend,' compares this set with a remembered set of data, perhaps from the previous day, and registers that, while both sets of data belong to the unity, identity, whole that is 'my friend,' yet there is no perfect overlap. There issues the judgment, "Something has happened to you," though out of courtesy and delicacy we often phrase this as a question, "Has something happened?" adding, perhaps, "You don't look cheerful." The governing insight (the 'link' between conditions and conditioned) might be put as follows: "If both sets of data pertain to the same thing, and if there is no perfect overlap between the two sets, then something has happened." The fulfilment of conditions is given in the perceived and remembered sets of data.

And what of truths that we live by? Here is the whole great area of morality and religion, where by religion I intend to include all global attitudes towards life, including all the varieties of agnosticism and atheism. This is a much larger and complex issue. But I do think it is related in all sorts of important ways to the little issues I have been discussing above. Religion and morality: those are certainly the exciting areas. But I tend to think, more and more, that great disagreements in the first two are often rooted in the area of 'boring philosophy.'

A second point involves language. The process of making judgments obviously involves mastery of some particular language. Connected with this is that commonsense judgments involve a language that is not precise and defined, whose concepts and terms are most often blurred, and that still functions perfectly well for commonsense purposes. Even in a most simple judgment such as "This is a dog," the concept dog is far from being perfectly defined. What we usually mean by dog is what we would certainly pronounce to be a dog in any concrete situation with which we are familiar, what we could learn to be a dog, and what we would be willing to believe is a dog. And that is enough! This point might seem to be from the Ludwig Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations*, but, for the record, is actually from Bernard Lonergan's *Insight*. In the area of ordinary language, meaning, as Wittgenstein famously said, lies in use. And in this area, I think there is much to be said for Rorty's brilliant analyses of truth as consensus. In my opinion, the great bane of a large part of the contemporary Thomist tradition is its failure to recognize adequately the distinction between commonsense and theory. But that is a rather technical aside, best forgotten for now.

Let me get back to the starting point. As might have become evident, I jumped straightaway into the question, how do we recognize truth, without bothering to begin by defining truth or establishing its meaning. Perhaps this procedure is not as foolish as it might seem to be. If meaning lies in use, then implicit in our performance of knowing will be a meaning or meanings of truth. The kind of meaning that my own analysis of knowing suggests is really the classical one, the idea of truth as correspondence between knowing and being. Along the way I have brought in also another theory, that of truth or objectivity as consensus. And while it might not have become all that evident, I believe that there is a good measure also of the pragmatic theory of truth, most especially in the area of common sense: if I mistakenly identify someone as my friend, and if I care to prolong the interaction even just a little bit, very quickly I will be disabused of my notion. In the area of common sense we do not have to wait upon the judgment of history. We have what I have been calling the self-correcting process of learning.

And what of truths that we live by? Here is the whole great area of morality and religion, where by religion I intend to include all global attitudes towards life, including all the varieties of agnosticism and atheism. This is a much larger and complex issue. But I do think it is related in all sorts of important ways to the little issues I have been discussing above. Religion and morality: those are certainly the exciting areas. But I tend to think, more and more, that great disagreements in the first two are often rooted in the area of 'boring philosophy.'



Answered Prayers?

As Chair of *Women of the Wall*, my prayers are being answered. For the last 24 years we have been going to the Western Wall with only one goal in mind: to pray with a tallit (prayer shawl), and to pray in full voice. This struggle for our rights as Jewish women has put me in newspapers as well as in prison. My intention from the beginning was neither. I simply wanted to pray at Judaism's holiest site. That is still my desire.

When you dedicate yourself to a cause there are many peaks and valleys. We have been dwelling in one of our deepest valleys in recent months as the ultra-Orthodox rabbis who run the Western Wall Heritage Foundation (the body that administers the site) and the police precinct that protect it ramped up their harassment of our efforts to pray at the Wall.

Each month there were detentions and other forms of intimidation, but we did not relent. Each month our numbers grew, and the support from all over the world kept increasing the pressure on the government of Israel to change the situation.

Finally, last April, Judge Moshe Sobel of the Jerusalem District Court issued a groundbreaking ruling saying our group was not illegal and we would be allowed to pray at the Wall without fear of further detentions. That same week, Jewish Agency Chairman Natan Sharansky sat with Women of the Wall to discuss his plan for new section that would be set aside for egalitarian prayer at the Kotel. I began to receive congratulations from around the world as if the struggle was over, but, as is often the case in politics, the devil is in the details.





What is the Sobel ruling exactly? He has finally given an answer to the question that is the basis for the harassment of women trying to pray at the Western Wall: what is local custom at the Wall? Sobel ruled that the way we pray—namely, with a tallit—is not against local custom, and that we are not in violation of the Rule of Holy Sites. This was our vindication after two decades of struggle.

Before Sobel, the practice was that any person who performed a religious act at the Western Wall that “offended the feelings of others” would be removed and banned from coming to the area for 30 days. Each month as we would come to the Kotel to perform the morning services that mark the beginning of the new month in the Jewish Calendar (Rosh Chodesh), we would be met with police inspecting our bags looking for our tallitot.

At the end of the service, almost as a matter of form, some of us would be taken away by the police and coerced to sign a statement that we were deliberately trying to create problems. Finally, we would be told that we are banned from coming to the Kotel for a set period of time, usually one month.

What were the results of the Sobel Ruling? The following Rosh Chodesh hundreds of us went to the Wall ready to finally complete a service without the police interrupting us. Many ultra-Orthodox rabbis had told their followers to come to the Wall at 6:30am to be ready for us, and they complied. We arrived to see several thousand screaming ultra-Orthodox men and women being held back by a wall of men in blue uniforms. The same police who dragged me to prison in handcuffs on several occasions were now splitting a sea of black hats and hateful stares for us.

Those ultra-Orthodox men threw bottles and garbage at us and called us terrible names in every language under the sun, but we stayed focused on our task. The Women of the Wall welcomed the new month at the Western Wall in our own way. Some of us had been coming since the beginning and others were newer or even first timers, but all of us felt the same sense of pride.

The Sobel Ruling might mean the end of the harassment for Women looking to pray in the women’s section of the Western Wall, but this does not make the Wall an inclusive site for all Jews. This is why the Sharansky Plan is so important.



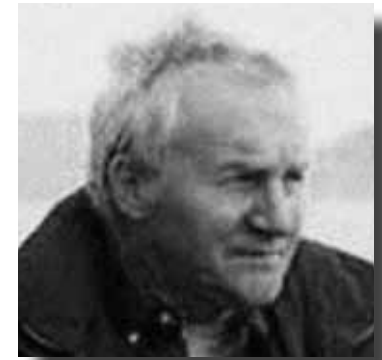
The Sharansky Plan is an initiative by Chairman Sharansky to create a third section of the Western Wall complex that would be designated for mixed prayer, the idea being that every stream of Judaism should have a place that is equal and respectful of their needs. What makes this plan so significant is that it is the first time the government of Israel has taken real action to address the issue.

The cries for change that have been coming from all corners of the globe are finally hitting home and, for the first time, the Israeli public is taking notice. Two years ago most Israelis did not know who we were and did not see any real need to fix the unfair situation at the Western Wall. Most Israelis do not go to the Wall and were perfectly happy to leave it to the Haredi. We have finally managed to make them see that surrendering our heritage to this one extreme minority is dangerous and must not continue. Recent polls now show that over 60% of Israelis support the view that the Wall should become more inclusive.

The only way we are finally going to put the Jewish infighting at the Wall to rest is if all of us who are invested in the Wall’s future participate in Sharansky’s process for changing the status quo. It is for this reason that I am in full support of his efforts and I intend to be a constructive partner in finding a solution.

With our victory in court comes a responsibility to see that no voices are silenced and no communities are offended in our struggle for freedom. I agree with a recent piece by Rabbi Menachem Creditor, when he said that we must take it upon ourselves to see “that Haredim do not become targets of Jewish hate. Pluralism is not limited to progressive streams of Judaism.” We must know that change is not easy for everyone and that the ultra-Orthodox community is not to be defamed or vilified in this process.

The Women of the Wall as an organization, and myself as its Chair, feel a collective sense of relief that our harassment is over, but we are only one piece of the puzzle when it comes to making the Western Wall a home for all Jews. We need to find an equitable compromise that respects the feelings and unique needs of all streams of Judaism. We are not at the end of the struggle for freedom at the Western Wall, but we are in what I hope is the final chapter of that struggle. I will continue to work as a part of Chairman Sharansky’s efforts to protect the rights of all streams of Judaism at the Western Wall.



This poem, Elder Tree Rejuvenated, is dedicated to my friend, the sculptor, Sally McKenna, of Glore Mill Art Centre. Over a cup of tea, she took me through her experiences of not respecting nature. We looked at a most wonderful piece of her work – an Elder tree – in steel, brass and painted canvas. We must first ask nature's permission, she would say. When I returned to my house, a few miles away, I wrote this poem.

Elder Tree Rejuvenated *after Sally McKenna's sculpture*

I wanted to go on the road
and I did. I had to. I'd slept
under the leaves of an Elder
and was transported to its
underworld by the old woman
of the hedgerows. She tried
to teach me the power of life:
love was a wild and sacred thing
that went its own way, she said.

And I wanted to cut the Elder
without its permission, keep it
under my control – burn it
on St. John's Night, maybe.
I went to the gypsies for help
But they turned away in terror.
Elder is the queen of herbs; it's
the tree of rebirth, they screamed.

A man with strange new blessings
and Roman garb came to hack
at the sacred core of the Elder.
He lad it out on piles on a hilltop,
cast its berries to the winds of
the East, South, West, North;
he poured oil and sin on its spirit
on Midsummer's night, but it
grew back and went its own way
into a new year, rejuvenated
in steel, brass and painted canvas
like the queen of herbs and healing.





This photo belongs to Viajar24h.com's photostream [LINK](#)

Grey Hounds - Barcelona

Around the 'coarse' run the hounds to a backdrop of Spanish Hombres, Catalanian style.

At the dog races Barcelona.

Each day from the apartment window I watch the same procedure. From two steel doors, the muzzled racers appear, blinking in the sunlight, led by a never changing team of handlers, they parade before the Punters.

Usually, there are about a hundred, disinterested spectators, whose numbers grow, till at the outset of the race, when the crowd has swelled, an eager anticipation swirls in the atmosphere, and the hounds bark in their cages, awaiting the starters signal for the Hare to run.

The starter is an old cripple. He seems to live in the dark, cavernous kennels, from where he shuffles, unaffected by the expectant crowd, to another small, dark, hut, blinking in the unaccustomed sunlight.

When he reaches his destination he rings a bell. The traps open and the Hounds scamper after what looks like, at first sight, a cut out white sock, which inflates, as it gathers speed.

The Greyhounds never catch this pretend Hare.

It runs forever.

Some times, watching this continual action I have, of this stadium below the window, I imagine the dogs never change. They are the same dogs, in each race, doomed to always fail, in their pursuit, of a mythic creature, disguised as white cotton stretched over a piece of bizarrely woven wire.

The race is over. They rake the sandy track. Punters tear up losing bets.

There is a brief pause.

Time to change the number on each dog.

For the crippled starter, to add, or subtract, a little tinting on the coat of each Hound and they receive another shot of 'methadrine'. Then the crippled starter returns with the same hounds. Out again, under a different name, forever running this track, day in day out, winning... but never reaching your prey.

The black hound gave me this idea.

He never wins, always there, or thereabouts, but never winning. Each race has a black hound which has varying white markings on its body. There are five races each day, seven days a week, sometimes twice a day.

Now that is working for a living.



Viajar24h.com's photostream [LINK](#)

These are my photographs of some of the wonderful and enchanting people that I have been fortunate to meet in Bali.

They are the spirit of the island.



A shaman and his son.





Pemangku, temple priest.



Pemangku, temple priest.



Pemangku, temple priest.



Subsistence rice farmer.



At a cock fight.



Lady with Kopi Bali.

www.liveencounters.net



June 2013

Free online magazine from village earth



www.liveencounters.net