

10TH ANNIVERSARY 2010-2019

Live encounters

FREE ONLINE MAGAZINE FROM VILLAGE EARTH
VOLUME TWO DECEMBER 2019



LIVE ENCOUNTERS
THINKERS

COVER IMAGE 'THE PHILOSOPHER' © WOLFGANG WIDMOSER



©Mark Ulyseas

Angkor, Siem Reap, Cambodia.

©liveencounters.net october 2019 Celebrating 10th Anniversary Year

SUPPORT LIVE ENCOUNTERS. DONATE NOW AND KEEP THE MAGAZINE LIVE IN 2020!

Live Encounters is a not-for-profit free online magazine that was founded in 2009 in Bali, Indonesia. It showcases some of the best writing from around the world. Poets, writers, academics, civil & human/animal rights activists, academics, environmentalists, social workers, photographers 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 for this just cause.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

Mark Ulyseas
Publisher/Editor
markulyseas@liveencounters.net

[Donate](#)

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

MARK ULYSEAS, EDITOR

DR PETER GONSALVES

DR NAMRATA GOSWAMI

DAVID MORGAN

DR GRETA SYKES

DR HOWARD RICHARDS

DR NANCY BLAIR & DR MARK L GESNER

RATNA & SUHASINI VIRA

DR KALINGA SENEVIRATNE

DR N MYTHILI

PROFESSOR FARHAT BASIR KHAN

K V THOMAS

DR NARESH CHANDRA SAXENA

DR ASHOK KUMAR

INDERJIT SINGH JAIJEE & DONA SURI



This essay was written and published in 2008. Since then I have updated it every year. Except for a few lines here and there the basic essay has remained in its original form. It is a reminder to us that the inhumanity of humanity has not changed. In fact it appears to be growing in intensity.

Mark Ulyseas has served time in advertising as copywriter and creative director selling people things they didn't need, a ghost writer for some years, columnist of a newspaper, a freelance journalist and photographer. In 2009 he created *Live Encounters Magazine*, in Bali, Indonesia. It is a not for profit (adfree) free online magazine featuring leading academics, writers, poets, activists of all hues etc. from around the world. March 2016 saw the launch of its sister publication *Live Encounters Poetry*, which was relaunched as *Live Encounters Poetry & Writing* in March 2017. In February 2019 the third publication was launched, *LE Children Poetry & Writing* (now renamed *Live Encounters Young Poets & Writers*). He has edited, designed and produced all of *Live Encounters'* 172 publications till date (December 2019). Mark's philosophy is that knowledge must be free and shared freely to empower all towards enlightenment. He is the author of three books: *RAINY – My friend & Philosopher*, *Seductive Avatars of Maya – Anthology of Dystopian Lives* and *In Gethsemane: Transcripts of a Journey*. www.amazon.com/markulyseas <https://liveencounters.net/mark-ulyseas/>



Vanquished in a cock fight, Bali.

MARK ULYSEAS

2019, YEAR OF LIVING FOOLISHLY?

This year is grinding to a close and then hope will begin for the New Year.

So what will it be?

More wars for religious or commercial purposes?

Cultural genocide?

Child abuse? Human slavery? Beheadings?

Another Mass Extinction?

New insidious revelations that expose the all-pervasive criminality of governments, international politics and sections of the Media?

Is the UN still a coffee shop for the rich and powerful to hang out and where honour exists among thieves?

And are the medusa-like social media barons new lords of the manor? Do they control our hearts and minds? And is this the age of artificial intelligence?

And is tourism fast becoming another avatar of terrorism?

There is so much to choose from. It's like a supermarket out there with all kinds of man-made disasters available on the shelves, one has simply to reach out and grab one. 2019 is ending on a note of negotiated delusions with the Climate Change Conference. What happened to the good old days when we used a blanket instead of a heater? All this talk of saving the world is pointless. Everything is done half-heartedly. Let's make a resolution for the New Year to decimate the planet. Destroy all our natural resources, pollute the rivers and farm the seas to extinction. At least we would be doing one thing properly.



Display at Killing Fields museum ©Mark Ulyseas

On one hand we talk of peace, love and no war. On the other hand we bomb, rape, pillage, annex and subdue nations with money, military power and retarded religiosity.

For instance, let's take a quick look at Afghanistan. The British couldn't control the tribes in the 19th century, the Russians failed miserably and the Americans with their assorted comrades in arms, poor souls, are being killed along with thousands of faceless unarmed Afghan civilians. I suppose life is cheaper by the dozen. Hasn't anyone got a clue as to what the Afghans want?

What about certain parts of the Middle East, areas that have become mass open air abattoirs for the mindless slaughter of innocent people? Do you think they will run out of people considering the number of killings that are taking place? Education there is history – like the death of a six year old killed by a bullet deliberately fired at close range. It stems from the barrel of a gun. The pen is for signing death certificates.

Statistics are essential in war zones. They can always be rearranged to suit one's perceived objectives. The little numbers represent people; mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, relatives and friends. A neat way to manage these numbers is to write in pencil so that an eraser can be used judiciously. And as the death toll in war ravaged countries rises, a hysterical caucus threatens a host of other countries for deviating from the 'acceptable norms of international behaviour' like illegally invading countries on trumped up charges and bombing innocent folk back to the stone age... while deliberately turning a blind eye to China, a country that continues to violently dismantle the vibrant ancient Uyghurs culture, brainwashing and incarcerating the Uyghurs in *re-education* camps.

Incidentally, these very countries vie for commercial and 'military' space in the South China Sea while using China as a manufacturing base and its banks for financing projects. And when they don't get their way, sanctions of all hues are applied in the name of nationalism regardless of the impact on domestic industry and jobs.

Africa, the Dark Continent, what can one say about its peoples and their ancient civilizations that have slowly been corrupted by large corporations and foreign governments meddling in the affairs of the states: Buying and selling governments on mammoth proportions? Oh for the days of the Rwandan blood bath. Everything is quiet now, no excitement and drama except for bloody popular



Trash of tourists at Killing Fields ©Mark Ulyseas

uprisings, theft of natural resources and other inconsequential happenings like the sudden spread of highly infectious diseases and mass kidnapping of school children for forced marriage and conversion...and the continuing practice of female genital mutilation, which appears to be a thriving business across the world where doting parents in western countries take their little girls on 'vacation' cuts while their governments lecture Africans on the scourge of female genital mutilation.

What about the sub-continent, India? Do they still abort female fetuses or do they bury them alive, now? Burn women who don't bring enough dowry? Is rape intrinsic to the culture? Do they continue to decimate wildlife? Persevere in the destruction of the environment? And do millions still exist on the threshold of life and death? And is the arrogant Indian Middle Class growing to newer levels self-indulgence? And are the subsistence farmers still committing suicide due to failure of crops and rising debt? And is protection of the holy cow more important than feeding hundreds of millions of people living below the poverty line? And are politicians continuing to feed off the socio-economic-religious insecurities of its people? And are sections of its media turning into manic performing artists, deliberately taking sides in political dramas and *creating news* for ratings.

Forgive me, I missed that little country to the west of India, the homeland of terrorists - Pakistan. Poor chaps they've had such a tiresome year with the constant ebb and flow of political violence and religious fundamentalism peppered with suicide bombers that probably the common folk want to migrate to the West... can't really blame them. Their new government is its armed forces' ventriloquist doll. The common folk's only desire is to live in peace to pray, work and procreate. Meanwhile their government has switched debtors from the West to China, which has commercially colonised this country bleeding it by a thousand loans.

And to the east of the Indian sub-continent is a country that follows the religion of non-violence in word not deed...as millions of people of another religion are chased out of the country, their homes burnt, women raped and men exterminated like vermin.

Now let's see who is left on the black board? Hmmm...the indigenous people of the Amazon are still fighting a losing battle with the powers that be to stop the plunder of their home, the rain forest, the green lung of mother earth, which is on fire.

From genocide to environmental disasters it has been a roller coaster ride through many countries and peoples and cultures and religions. This journey will end only when we truly comprehend the reason as to why we have been put on this planet by a power far greater than we can ever imagine.



South America appears to be lost in translation. We never seem to get a lot of news from there except for soccer, drug lords, plunder of the marine world and the continued exploitation of the poor and defenceless by rapacious governments sponsored by those from the North and elsewhere. It has become the battle ground of powerful countries that use the common folk as cannon fodder.

Let's leave all this violence for some tuna, shark fin, whale, and dolphin meat. The Japanese and an assortment of other 'civilised' countries, Norway in particular, are so considerate to the world at large. For countries that pride themselves on rejecting nuclear weapons they have a rather odd way of showing their respect for the environment. I am referring to the mass killing of whales, dolphins and other sea creatures on an industrial scale. Actually you must admire their concern. Ever considered the fact that they maybe ridding the oceans of monsters that take up so much space and are a serious health hazard to humanity?

I think Japan's neighbour China has the right approach. It has dispensed with the cumbersome concept of human rights and its implementation. In its place totalitarianism with a large dose of plutocracy has been suitably installed. It uses its neighbour, a mini nuclear state, as a stick to threaten countries in the region for better trade deals and easing of sanctions. Will the festering sore of Hong Kong cure itself by violence? Or will the PLA drop in the clear the streets with troops and tanks? For now, blood, guts and broken limbs can be seen live on TV as the city moves towards becoming a Middle Eastern city in South east Asia...violence central.

There are many countries that lecture China on its human rights. Wonder who has a perfect track record? The world's last self-proclaimed superpower? A superpower, now led by a petulant imbecile, which continues to interfere in the affairs of other nations ... at times actually sending troops and bombing unarmed civilians, including hospitals and marriage parties along with perceived enemies of the State and supplying state of the art weapons to be used against civilians living a hand to mouth existence? I suppose the term 'collateral damage' is more palatable than the word... murder. Like a million dollar missile blasting a school bus with forty children like a meat grinder. There is money to be made in the killings but not much left to urgently help its own people devastated by natural disasters like massive fires and super storms.

Civil liberties are essential for the survival of a nation and so is the health of its people. In some areas of society where common sense has been the victim, Nature has found a way of retaliating by inventing diseases like Ebola, AIDS, Swine Flu and Zika, infecting millions and helping to keep the population in check: Of course, with a little assistance from humankind's scientific community who often test drugs on unsuspecting illiterate folk in the holy name of finding new cures to make a profit. Meanwhile humanity is susceptible to dangerous new strains of super bacteria resistant to antibiotics.

As 2019 downs its shutters the price of a human body has gone up. Human trafficking and organ trafficking around the world, including in the civilised nations, is now second only to drug peddling in revenue. Profiteers forecast a higher income in 2020, thanks to war and growing poverty.

And once again, as we have done in the past, this Christmas and New Year we shall all sit down to sumptuous meals, drink whatever fancies our taste buds, shop till we drop and pamper our overweight children and pets. It's the season of happiness, love and family especially for the homeless, injured and maimed children of wars, missing people in Afghanistan, Syria, Xinjiang Uyghur Region, Tibet, Yemen, Hong Kong and elsewhere, asylum seekers, political detainees and the fringe folk of the planet. They will surely be very happy and content with what they see, hear, feel and touch this festive season.

From genocide to environmental disasters it has been a roller coaster ride through many countries and peoples and cultures and religions. This journey will end only when we truly comprehend the reason as to why we have been put on this planet by a power far greater than we can ever imagine.

Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year to you.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

Peter Gonsalves, Ph.D, teaches the Sciences of Social Communication at Salesian University, Rome. This extract is adapted from the last volume of his Gandhian trilogy, *Gandhi and the Popes: from Pius XI to Francis* (Peter Lang publishers, 2015). The earlier books are, *Clothing for Liberation* (SAGE 2010) and *Khadi: Gandhi's Mega Symbol of Subversion* (SAGE 2012).

He may be contacted at www.petergonsalves.in or gonsalves.p@gmail.com



DR PETER GONSALVES

Gandhi: John Paul II's 'Hero of Humanity'

Karol Wojtyła, the future Pope and Saint, John Paul II¹, had read Mahatma Gandhi's writings and was struck with admiration for him. As a philosopher-theologian and specialist in Christian ethics, he was not afraid to quote Gandhi, as can be seen in his support for *Humane Vitae* below. The article appeared in the *L'Osservatore Romano* on January 5, 1969,² with the following words from Gandhi's *Autobiography*:

I think it is the height of ignorance to believe that the sexual act is an independent function necessary like sleeping or eating. The world depends for its existence on the act of generation, and as the world is the play-ground of God and a reflection of His glory, the act of generation should be controlled for the ordered growth of the world. He who realizes this will control his lust at any cost, equip himself with the knowledge necessary for the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of his progeny, and give the benefit of that knowledge to posterity.³

Having written extensively on the 'Theology of the Body', Wojtyła was in awe of Gandhi's resistance to propaganda in favour of artificial methods of birth control on two occasions. He did not succumb, but persevered in the conviction that one ought to act with the force of internal effort rather than outward means,⁴ because "Moral results can only be produced by moral restraints."⁵

Dr Peter Gonsalves



In 1986, John Paul II made his first visit to India. In deference to the Mahatma, he called it his 'pilgrimage' which he began from the tomb of Gandhi at Raj Ghat, Delhi, on February 1.⁶

My visit to India is a pilgrimage of good will and peace, and the fulfilment of a desire to experience personally the very soul of your country. It is entirely fitting that this pilgrimage should begin here, at Raj Ghat, dedicated to the memory of the illustrious Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation and "apostle of non-violence". The figure of Mahatma Gandhi and the meaning of his life's work have penetrated the *conscience of humanity*. In his famous words, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has expressed the conviction of the whole world: "The light that shone in this country was no ordinary light." Two days ago marked the thirty-eighth anniversary of his death. He who lived by non-violence appeared to be defeated by violence. For a brief moment the light seemed to have gone out. Yet his teachings and the example of his life live on in the minds and hearts of millions of men and women. ... Yes, the light is still shining, and the heritage of Mahatma Gandhi speaks to us still. And today as a pilgrim of peace I have come here to pay homage to Mahatma Gandhi, *hero of humanity*.⁷

Fr. Carlo Torriani, PIME, an eyewitness, testifies:

In the ten days he was there [in India], Pope Wojtyła gave forty-three speeches. In my view, however, the most important part of his visit was the long period of time he spent kneeling in silence before Mahatma Gandhi's mausoleum on his first day in New Delhi. All the speeches he gave in the various cities were prepared beforehand and to some extent taken as a given but there was something extraordinary about this gesture, about a Pope who kneels down before the tomb of a man [...] for more than five minutes breaking with protocol.⁸

Eugene. J. Dionne Jr, reporter to the *New York Times*, corroborates by stating that of all the events organized for the Pope's visit to India, "the most important moment took place near the beginning when the Pope, shoeless, knelt in long minutes of prayer before Gandhi's tomb. With the thousands of words the Pope spoke about spiritual brotherhood, his most eloquent statement was: Silence."⁹

The day that followed being a Sunday, John Paul II celebrated solemn high Mass and delivered a sermon on the issue of social inequality: "The Church in India has for many years been making important contributions to the development of this country and to the alleviation of the problems of the poor." He cited the work of Mother Teresa as an example and continued:

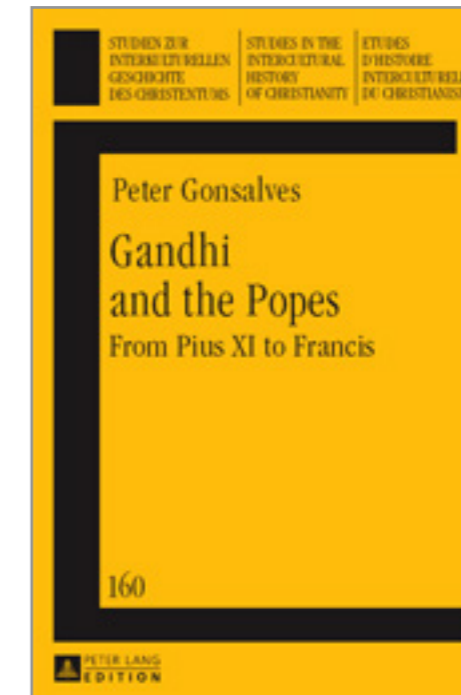
There is the monumental contribution of Mahatma Gandhi, who helped break down social barriers and divisions and made possible a new era of unity and advancement. "We are all equal. It is the touch of sin that pollutes us and never that of a human being. None are high and none are low for one who would devote his life to service"¹⁰ He stands as a symbol of the highest qualities and values of the Indian people, and is admired in every country of the world.¹¹

After mentioning other noteworthy models for Indians to imitate, he added:

The noble efforts of these great men and women of India, efforts aimed at fostering social liberation and integral human development, are in accord with the spirit of the Gospel. All who have advanced the dignity and freedom of their brothers and sisters are blessed in the eyes of Christ, the King of glory. By their efforts, such people help to bring about a civilisation of love, where the rich willingly share with the poor, where the poor can be free from hunger and want, and where everyone comes to realise that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God".

When talking to the huge crowd gathered in Cochin, Kerala, he said:

As citizens of India, a vast country with many languages, customs, and religions, you certainly realise the essential importance of a true spirit of reconciliation and communal peace. This is the spirit that you find in the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi.¹²



To the representatives of the different religious and cultural traditions of India, the Pope explained:

India has so much to offer to the world in the task of understanding man and the truth of his existence. And what she offers specifically is a noble spiritual vision of man – man, a pilgrim of the Absolute, travelling towards a goal, seeking the face of God. Did not Mahatma Gandhi put it this way: “What I want to achieve – what I have been striving and pining to achieve... is self-realization – to see God face to face. I live and move and have my being in pursuit of this goal.” [...] [These] very words used by Mahatma Gandhi about his own spiritual quest echo the words quoted by Saint Paul when he explained that God is not far from each of us: “In him we live and move and have our being.”¹³

One needs to be reminded that these effusive statements in praise of Gandhi were not simply a communication ploy to win the hearts of his Indian audience while basking in the warmth of their hospitality. John Paul II was at that very moment highly engaged in the work of liberating his own country through a nonviolent Movement called *Solidarność* (Solidarity) that was patterned on Gandhi’s *Satyagraha* (Truth-force).¹⁵ Thanks to this choice, Poland won freedom in 1989, barely nine years after the Movement began, and three years after the pope’s visit to India. Indeed, the ‘pilgrimage’ to India was a prayer for the liberation of his own people! In retrospect, Lech Wałęsa, the leader of the Movement admitted: “We failed when we tried to combat Communism with weapons, but when we took up Mahatma Gandhi’s tactics and strategy, we emerged winners! Truly, the whole world should be a disciple of Gandhi.”¹⁵

Jonathan Kwitny’s extensively researched eight-year study on John Paul II confirms that “On the evidence, the cold war was won [...] by a nonviolent mass movement, like those of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.,¹⁶ led by a man whose religious office has precluded him from talking about it openly.” In interviews he conducted, colleagues reveal how the Pope “guided them into a major hunger strike” and how “he handed out envelopes of cash to sustain their work. Time and again, as pope, he singlehandedly rescued the revolution he begat, often in dramatic private confrontations.”¹⁷

Moreover, with the accession of John Paul II, the Church officially proclaimed itself as the ‘guardian’ of human freedom in the struggle against authoritarianism. His first encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*, denounced violations of human rights¹⁸ – the condition and basis for the true dignity of the human person. Political analyst, Samuel P. Huntington demonstrates how “John Paul II seemed to have a way of showing up in full pontifical majesty at critical points in democratization processes.” Although the purpose of his visits were always said to be pastoral, “their effects were almost invariably political.”²⁰

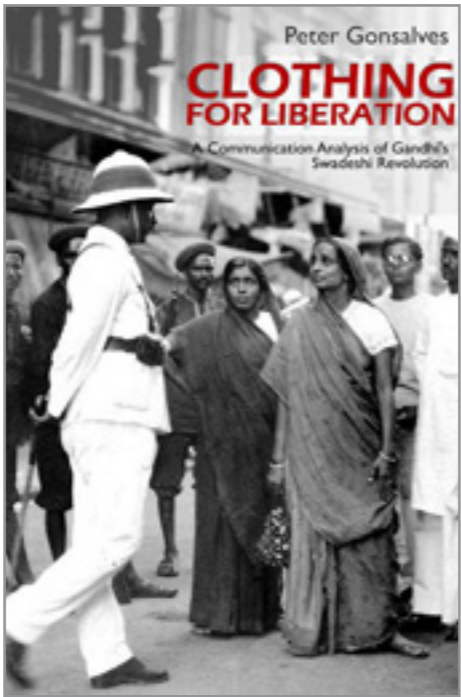
For instance, when confronting the Dictator Augusto Pinochet in Chile in 1987, the Pope spelled out the relation of democracy to his mission: “I am not the evangelizer of democracy; I am the evangelizer of the Gospel. To the Gospel message, of course, belong all the problems of human rights; and, if democracy means human rights, it also belongs to the message of the Church.”²¹

In his 1991 encyclical, *Centesimus Annus*, he elaborately defended democracy as the form of government most conducive to justice and the mission of the church.

The power of truth leads us to recognize with Mahatma Gandhi the dignity, equality and fraternal solidarity of all human beings, and it prompts us to reject every form of discrimination. It shows us once again the need for mutual understanding acceptance and collaboration between religious groups in the pluralist society of modern India and throughout the world.²²

On his return flight to India, John Paul II confessed to journalists: “I learned a great deal from him and I am not ashamed to say it. [...] I think Gandhi is still alive. Not only is he still alive, he is still necessary to us, to our West. He was never a Christian and never claimed to be [one] but I learned a great deal from him. Christians can learn to be Christian from him. The fact I have quoted him in my homilies should tell you something.”²³

Back in St. Peter’s Square for the general audience that followed his return to Rome, the Pope elaborated on the importance of his pilgrimage to India and explicitly commended Gandhi’s relevance for a just and peaceful world. “The Father of Indian independence points the way to all who – for the most noble ideals – seek to separate the fight for justice from every form of hate.”²⁴



On assessing the impact of his visit, some Vatican officials and Indian Catholic leaders felt that the Pope’s speeches seemed cautious. When asked why he had not criticized the Indian Government’s birth control policies or been stronger in his attacks on the caste system, he replied: “I was not there to criticize. I was there to evangelize. And I evangelized. Exactly that. I have evangelized the Indian people through the words of Mahatma Gandhi.”

Foot Notes

1. Pope John Paul II, born Karol Józef Wojtyła (1920-2005), was elected head of the Catholic Church and sovereign of the Vatican City State in 1978. He was declared a Saint on April 27, 2014.

2. Karol Wojtyła, “La verità dell’Humanae vitae” in L’Osservatore Romano, January 5, 1969, pp. 1–2.

3. M. K. Gandhi, An Autobiography, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 2005, 188.

4. Cf. Gandhi, An Autobiography, p. 190.

5. M. K. Gandhi, The Essential Writings, Judith Brown (Ed.), Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2008, p. 251.

6. “Address of John Paul II on the occasion of the visit to the Funerary Monument of Raj Ghat dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi Delhi (India)”, Saturday, February 1, 1986, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/1986/february/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19860201_rajghat_en.html

7. “Address of John Paul II ...”, February 1, 1986 (Italics mine).

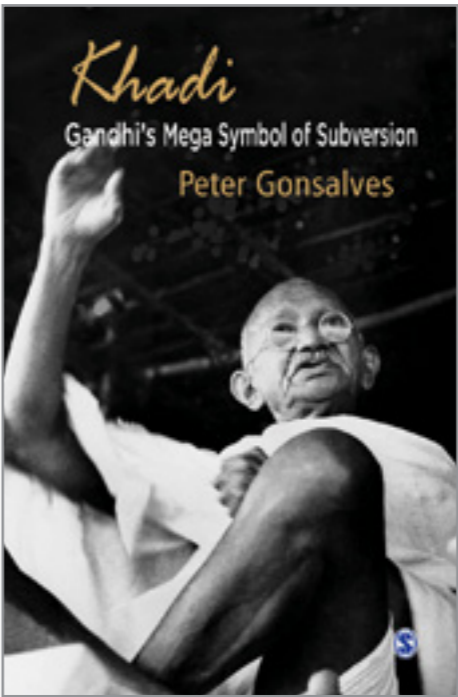
8. Carlo Torriani, “Quando il Papa imparò da Gandhi”, in Missionline.org, March 1, 2014, in <https://www.lastampa.it/vatican-insider/it/2014/04/22/news/quando-giovanni-paolo-ii-si-inchino-a-gandhi-1.35768808> (13-10-2019).

9. Eugene J. Dionne Jr, “Reporter’s Notebook: Pope in the Land of Gandhi”, in New York Times, February 12, 1986, Section A, p. 2.

10. Mahadev Desai, “Yervada Prison, 14 August 1932”, in The Diary of Mahadev Desai, vol 1, Ahmadabad 1953, pp. 286-87, <https://www.ny-times.com/1986/02/12/world/reporter-s-notebook-pope-in-the-land-of-gandhi.html> (03-10-2019)

11. John Paul II, “Mass with the Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Provinces of Delhi and Agra”, Sunday, February 2, 1986, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1986/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19860202_indira-gandhi.html (21-09-2019)

12. John Paul II, “Mass for the Faithful of the Ecclesiastical District of the ‘Gran Cochin’”, Friday, February 7, 1986, https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1986/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19860207_gran-cochin.html (30-09-2019)



13. John Paul II, “Address to the representatives of the different religious and cultural traditions in the ‘Indira Gandhi’ Stadium”, February 2, 1986, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1986/february/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19860202_rappresentanti-religioni.html (29-10-2019)

14. Cf. Kinga Rodkiewicz, “Civil disobedience in Poland – its roots and examples” in Mahatma Gandhi, Complete Information Website, Sarvodaya, Mumbai, http://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/civil_dis.htm (07-03-2013).

15. Ronita Torcato, “Encounter with a Polish Gandhian”, in The Hindu, 11-3-2007, <http://www.hindu.com/mag/2007/03/11/stories/2007031100180500.htm> (26-10-2012).

16. Michael T. Kaufman, “The Polish Pope”, in The New York Times on the Web, October 19, 1997, <http://www.nytimes.com/books/97/10/19/reviews/971019.19kauffmt.html> (03-04-2013).

17. Jane Barnes - Helen Whitney, “John Paul II & The Fall of Communism” in, Frontline, 1999, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/pope/communism/> (23-05-2012).

18. John Paul II, “Redemptor Hominis”, Acta Apostolicae Sedis (AAS), 71, no. 17, 1979, pp. 295-300.

19. The visits of John Paul II in states controlled by authoritarian regimes are: Poland, June 1979, June 1983, and June 1987; Brazil, June-July 1980, the Philippines, February 1981; Argentina, June 1982; Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Haiti, March 1983; Korea, May 1984; Chile, april 1987; Paraguay, May 1988. Cf. Samuel P. Huntington, The Third Wave, Democratization in the late Twentieth Century, Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1993, p. 83.

20. Huntington, The Third Wave, p. 83.

21. Huntington, The Third Wave, 83-84. John Paul II spelled out the urgency of promoting social justice in his encyclicals Sollicitudo rei socialis, AAS 80, no. 26, 1988, pp. 544ff; See also John Paul II’s Centesimus annus, AAS, 83, nos. 28, 36-39, 1991, pp. 638ff.

22. John Paul II, “Address of John Paul II ...”, February 1, 1986.

23. Torriani, “Quando il Papa ...”, Missionline.org, 2014.

24. John Paul II, “Udienza Generale, Mercoledì, February 26, 1986”, Vatican.va, no. 2 (trans. mine), http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/audiences/1986/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19860226_it.html (04-03-2013).

25. Dionne, “Reporter’s Notebook”, 1986, Section A, p. 2. (italics mine)

Dr. Namrata Goswami is an author, strategic analyst, and consultant on counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism, alternate futures, and great power politics. Earlier, she was Senior Fellow at the United States Institute for Peace (USIP) and Research Fellow at the Institute for Défense Studies and Analyses (IDSA). She is the recipient of the Fulbright-Nehru Senior Research Fellowship. Currently, she is working on two book projects, one on the topic of 'Ethnic Narratives', to be published by Oxford University Press, and the other on the topic of 'Great Power Ambitions' to be published by Lexington Press, an imprint of Rowman and Littlefield.



DR NAMRATA GOSWAMI

Strategic Messages & Inferences from China's 70th Anniversary Celebrations

China celebrated the 70th anniversary of its founding on October 1, 2019. In that celebration, the 'military parade' held the most critical position via which China transmitted to the internal Chinese domestic audience (1.4 billion) and external observers the power and lethal capabilities in possession of the Communist Party of China (CPC). In the military parade, 15,000 soldiers marched across Tiananmen Square.

Added to that, 580 pieces of military equipment were showcased, with 40 per cent of military hardware, shown for the very first time.¹ 160 military air-crafts flew overhead, with Chinese commentators on live TV, explaining their range and stealth capacity. China, for the very first time, showcased its medium range hyper-sonic glide vehicle,² the DF-17, along with others like the DF-41 and the DF-100.³ Also showcased were the GJ-11 "Sharp Sword" supersonic stealth Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle (UCAV)⁴ and the WZ-8 high altitude, high speed reconnaissance drone.⁵ Wu Jian, editor of *Defense Weekly* from Shanghai explained in an interview with *Global Times*:

The biggest advantage of the drone [WZ-8] is that it can effectively gather intelligence in real time in a controllable way compared to other platforms like satellites...A satellite must travel along its orbit and conduct reconnaissance only when it is above the target...this can be calculated by the enemy, and can create fake intelligence...A high-altitude, high-speed reconnaissance drone will not have this problem... the drone will also act as a soft deterrence, giving the message that the Chinese military can engage in reconnaissance on its targets, so can it launch strikes on them.⁶

Dr Namrata Goswami

First, the primary goal here is to accelerate efforts to constitute and build legitimacy for the CPC; Second: broadcast China's military capabilities as a measure of its 'Great Power' status and a 'deterrence focused signaling', least countries like the U.S. believe they can take on China militarily over issues such as Taiwan, Hong Kong or the SCS.



After the military parade was over, President Xi Jinping reminded all that “no force will stop or shake China or its people from achieving its goals” of becoming the primary global power,⁷ as well as its consequent intended goal of unification of the motherland⁸ with its lost territories (read South China Sea Islands, East China Sea Islands, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Arunachal Pradesh). What I found most insightful, while watching the military parade via the Xinhua live telecast⁹ were the painstakingly crafted 70 seconds videos¹⁰ of China's success -1949-2019- in fields such as poverty alleviation,¹¹ space technology, high speed rail, housing, and overall infrastructure [Xinhua is China's major news source]. The commentator kept reminding us that China is the only country that has met the United Nations Millennium Development goals,¹² especially when it comes to poverty alleviation. This perspective was corroborated by an article in *China.org.cn*,

Especially since the launch of the "reform and opening-up" policy 40 years ago, the unprecedented economic and social success China has achieved as it marches towards achieving its "Chinese Dream" [footnote added by author]¹³ has no parallel in human history. Consider what has happened: As the world's most populated country, China, which could barely feed its people 70 years ago, has made historic achievements in poverty alleviation by lifting more than 700 million people out of poverty through various welfare schemes while offering Chinese wisdom and solutions to global poverty reduction. This figure accounts for nearly 70% of the world-wide poverty alleviation numbers. From 1978 to 2018, the number of impoverished people in the country dropped from 770 million to 16.6 million, and the poverty rate from 97.5% to 1.7%...In doing so, China has written a new chapter in humanity's fight against poverty. It was the first developing nation to achieve the targets set for hunger and poverty-free society under the U.N. Millennium Development goals...Hailing China's remarkable success in poverty reduction and contributions to the world organization, Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, president of the 74th session of the UN General Assembly, used his opening speech to declare: "China is on track to ending poverty ahead of schedule as envisioned by the U.N. 2030 Agenda -- this alone would be a significant contribution to the global community."¹⁴

Given all such highlights, to include the assertion that China's military strength is to ensure the 'forward march' of the Chinese nation and its people, what I infer from China's National Day 'Military Parade', the biggest ever since its founding, and its 70th year celebrations,¹⁵ are two clear messages.

First, the primary goal here is to accelerate efforts to constitute and build legitimacy for the CPC; Second: broadcast China's military capabilities as a measure of its 'Great Power' status and a 'deterrence focused signaling', least countries like the U.S. believe they can take on China militarily over issues such as Taiwan, Hong Kong or the SCS.

Legitimacy

The CPC is actively constructing a narrative of legitimacy, both within China and abroad, to ensure that it continues its authoritarian one-party rule. This was apparent during the live telecast of the military parade, when *Xinhua* broadcasted videos of the Prime Minister of Cambodia, President of Pakistan,¹⁶ as well as messages from Serbia about how positive the CPC has been for China, and how these countries would like to emulate China's success story. There were special reports carried in Chinese language news sources highlighting world leaders congratulating President Xi Jinping,¹⁷ to include U.S. President Donald Trump's congratulatory tweet,¹⁸ Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's message and Russian President's Vladimir Putin's good wishes, which stated “Russia and China are mutually irreplaceable strategic partners. I highly value our friendship and would like to continue to work closely with you to benefit the people of Russia and China”.¹⁹ *Xinhua* highlighted and praised the CPC for the great achievements China has enjoyed since its founding. China has a dedicated website for its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and that forum was filled with analyses about China's success; a clear signal to BRI's 70 members.²⁰

While most analysts view these messages from world leaders as routine, I argue that for the CPC, broadcasting such messages builds into its aura, creates a narrative of legitimacy for its rule, as well as showcases its reach, to its internal audience. This aspect is extremely important for the CPC given the atmosphere of illegitimacy surrounding its stake to power, since it is a party that has self-selected itself to rule China. As Daniel W. Drezner posits: “identities are developed or constituted through mutual recognition-authoritative actors are considered legitimate in the international community not only because of self-recognition but because others recognize them as legitimate”.²¹ This Chinese behavior of constituting legitimacy follows the time-old aphorism of one of China's greatest philosophers, Sun Tzu. For a comprehensive grand strategy of success, Sun Tzu believed that a state must have five inter-related factors.

China's strategic culture prioritizes the ability to use force when required, though for China, to realize Xi's China dream, the superior grand strategy is to win without fighting. As the author of the book, *China Dream*, Liu Mingfu, a retired PLA Colonel maintains; as per Sun Tzu's guidance, the breakout of war is the breakdown of strategy and demonstrates civilizational demise. To win a war by stratagem, without bloodshed, is the way of a superior grand strategy and civilization.



These include an understanding of the power of norms (moral legitimacy), heaven, earth (physical conditions), leadership, and finally, method and discipline (assessment of military capability, context, relative power potential/difference, logistics, resources).²² Once all elements come together, a state can benefit from a grand strategy for success. So, by building internal and external legitimization, President Xi and the CPC are following Sun Tzu's first factor: the power of norms (moral legitimacy); and his third factor: leadership.

Showcase Military Power

China's strategic culture prioritizes the ability to use force when required, though for China, to realize Xi's China dream, the superior grand strategy is to win without fighting. As the author of the book, *China Dream*, Liu Mingfu, a retired PLA Colonel maintains; as per Sun Tzu's guidance, the breakout of war is the breakdown of strategy and demonstrates civilizational demise. To win a war by stratagem, without bloodshed, is the way of a superior grand strategy and civilization.²³

With a combination of economic resources, moral legitimacy, and by constituting standards of behavior, China is playing at a game for power; one with consequences for the global order. For with power comes influence, especially "the capacity or ability to direct or influence the behavior of others or the course of events". By broadcasting military power at its 70th national day celebrations, especially showcasing new military hardware 'made in China', Xi's rather explicit message is that China has the military capacity to defend what it believes is rightfully its territory, or take over new territory as a unification goal, but chooses not to do so, since it believes in peace.²⁴ Based on current available statistics, China is the second largest military spender, with \$250 billion in 2018.²⁵ [The U.S. leads the world with \$649 billion in 2018;²⁶ though the returns from the military budget could differ given cost difference in both countries]. The recent parade demonstrates that China has upgraded its military hardware, followed by investments in new military services like the PLA Strategic Support Force, and the Rocket Force. As mentioned earlier, several new UCAVs were on displays, followed by the DF-17, China's hyper-sonic missile, capable of maneuvering at many times the speed of sound, making it difficult to deter, thereby raising serious doubts about the effectiveness of the missile defense system being built by the U.S. and Japan. The DF-41, China's long range intercontinental missile (9,320 miles) that can travel to the U.S. in 30 minutes was showcased during the parade, coupled with the DF-21D, designed to hit ships 932 miles away, as well as the DF-26 intermediate range missile,

that can reach Guam, where the U.S. military base is located. While these were the two clear strategic messages, it is useful to access Xi's own foundational strategic philosophy.

Xi's Strategic Philosophy

Xi is influenced by one of the toughest of the legalist scholars from ancient China, known as Han Fei Tzi or Tzu,²⁷ a philosopher from the Warring state period (475–221 BC).²⁸ Han Fei Tzi asserted that morality had no place in the realm of ruling, especially when the sole goal was that of preservation of the state. Morality is only useful to create an 'atmosphere of legitimacy' but must be cast aside in the interest of national survival (read national revival or rejuvenation). Ruling consisted of strengthening the hand of the state, and effective control of the population with the usage of law. We can see that manifest in present day China with the increased role of the People's Armed Police (PAP),²⁹ proudly showcased in the October 1 'military parade', its technology focused surveillance,³⁰ and the social credit system.³¹ Han Fei Tzi specified that the ruler himself was determined by a set of principles and maintained an enigmatic personality that oversaw his subordinate officers of the court. According to this tradition, self-interest dictated almost every aspect of administration, and concepts like deceit, intrigue and a ruthless disposition were encouraged for success.

In the context of the Hong Kong democracy protests, or China's occupation of the South China Sea islands, Xi wants to deliberately project military power, least the U.S. or an alliance led by the U.S. think it prudent to intervene to deter China's revisionist territorial grab. As of today, China has moved about 10,000 to 12,000 PLA/PAP into Hong Kong, up from 3000 a month ago. A September 30, 2019 Reuters report suggest that "there are now up to 12,000 Chinese troops in Hong Kong... Among them: members of the People's Armed Police, a paramilitary force that answers to Xi Jinping. If China moves to put down protests in the city, they will likely do the job..."³² The PAP, a paramilitary force, was brought under direct control of the Central Military Commission (CMC) since 2018, of which Xi is the Chairman.³³ Before that administrative change, the PAP was under the dual command of the CMC and the State Council. I predict that China will become militarily aggressive *vis-a-vis* Hong Kong since the National Day and 70th anniversary celebrations are now over. However, PAP will be at the forefront of riot control measures unlike what occurred in 1989 when the PLA was used to suppress pro-democracy protests.

I can predict that the next big celebration for the PRC is in 2049 - the 100th year celebration of its establishment. That year, China will not only showcase cutting edge military hardware but also demonstrate 'world first' capabilities of a lunar industrial base as well as the first ever Space-Based Solar Power (SBSP) satellite in orbit. Already, China has demonstrated several 'space firsts' like landing on the far side of the Moon, building of an un-hackable Quantum satellite, *Micius*, as well as growing the first two cotton leaves on the lunar surface.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I can predict that the next big celebration for the PRC is in 2049 - the 100th year celebration of its establishment. That year, China will not only showcase cutting edge military hardware but also demonstrate 'world first' capabilities of a lunar industrial base as well as the first ever Space-Based Solar Power (SBSP) satellite in orbit. Already, China has demonstrated several 'space firsts' like landing on the far side of the Moon, building of an un-hackable Quantum satellite, *Micius*,³⁴ as well as growing the first two cotton leaves on the lunar surface.³⁵

Several economic forecasts predict that by 2050, China will be the leading economy in the world, followed by India.³⁶ The U.S. will fall into third position. With economic resources at hand, China will spend more on military modernization and its space-based technology. The trend in the last five years clearly support such an outcome. For instance, between 2009 and 2018, China has witnessed an 83 per cent change in its military expenditure.³⁷ In 2010, China spent \$115.7 billion in defense. In 2018, that has gone up to \$250 as per the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). The Chinese government estimates of its military budget tends to downplay its defense expenditure, sometimes half of what SIPRI estimates. However, SIPRI's assessment is corroborated by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS):

Where possible, official defence budgets for the current and previous two years are shown, as well as an estimate of actual defence expenditures for those countries where true defence expenditure is thought to be *higher than official budget* [emphasis added] figures suggest... Therefore, there will be several countries listed in The Military Balance for which only an official defence-budget figure is provided but where, in reality, true defence-related expenditure is almost certainly higher.³⁸

Given all that, the CPC, under Xi's leadership and direction, will bolster both internal control and external assertiveness. These changes should not surprise anyone observing China. When Xi took over power in 2012, he clearly indicated that the time for China's national revival has come.³⁹



He followed up his words by establishing firm control over the PLA, create new military institutional structures backed by his Civil-Military Integration Strategy, encourage initiatives like the 'New Silk Road',⁴⁰ the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), reassert territorial claims, and aggressively move to stake China's claim on them. Under Xi's leadership, China is actively shaping its regional and global environment, where it emerges as the lead player, expanding its sphere of influence.

Besides the two main intended strategic messages: CPC legitimacy and broadcasting military power, China's national day celebrations and the military parade offer a few further strategic insights: that the key factors of nationalism, and pride in China's achievement were in full display; the Chinese narrative is that the revival of an old civilization with modern characteristics will offer an alternative compelling paradigm *vis a vis* the liberal world order. The CPC narrative of legitimacy-building will continue, backed by China focused alliance mechanisms like the BRI, which has 70 member countries and plans to invest \$575 billion in these "corridor economies".⁴¹ Remarkably, countries like New Zealand⁴² (part of the five countries intelligence alliance of the Anglosphere: U.S; U.K; Australia; New Zealand; Canada),⁴³ popularly known as the Five Eyes, have joined the BRI. In Europe, Greece,⁴⁴ Italy,⁴⁵ Serbia,⁴⁶ are among those who have joined. Early this year, Luxembourg joined the BRI, in lieu of which China Bank posted the first BRI Bond of \$500 million in the Luxembourg Stock Exchange (LSE).⁴⁷ *The Global Times*, one of China's leading state funded newspapers specified why Luxembourg joining the BRI is such a bid deal strategically for the China led initiative:

*The tiny European nation of Luxembourg has a very important status in the EU. It is the eurozone's leading financial center and the world's second-largest fund market. With the UK possibly leaving the EU trade bloc, Luxembourg is eyeing London's spot as the financial hub for EU countries after Brexit...The former prime minister of Luxembourg, Jean-Claude Juncker, is currently the president of the European Commission...Luxembourg can perhaps serve as a pragmatic bridgehead for cooperation between the BRI and Europe. The country was the first non-Asian nation to join the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), a multilateral development bank that has been seen as a key supporter for BRI projects, and will host the bank's first annual meeting outside of Asia in July.*⁴⁸



For now, the images of Chinese military hardware dominate the news cycles of the world. The strategic signaling Xi intended through the October 1 military parade display has achieved its strategic effect; that China is a Great Power, and its military capabilities *[emphasis added]* is “much closer to the U.S. than you probably think”.⁴⁹

Foot Notes

1. “People’s Republic of China Celebrates 70th Anniversary in Beijing with its Largest Military Parade”, South China Morning Post, October 1, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/video/china/3031109/china-celebrates-70th-anniversary-beijing-largest-military-parade-ever>

2. Michael Martina, “China Showcases Fearsome New Missiles to Counter U.S. at Military Parade”, Reuters, October 1, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-anniversary-military/china-showcases-fearsome-new-missiles-to-counter-u-s-at-military-parade-idUSKBN1WG342>

3. “DF 17, DF 100 & DF 41 Makes Debut at National Day Parade”, CGTN, You Tube, September 30, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMUbpMTfZtE>

4. Jeremy Page, “China Brings out the Big Guns for National Day”, The Wall Street Journal, October 1, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/china-brings-out-the-big-guns-for-national-day-11569928535>

5. Yang Sheng and Liu Xuanzun, “China Unveils New High-Altitude, High Speed Reconnaissance Drone”, Global Times, October 1, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1165936.shtml>

6. Ibid.

7. “Xinhua Headlines: Leading the Chase for the China Dream”, Xinhua, March 14, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-03/14/c_137895290.htm

8. Evelyn Cheng, “China’s Xi: No Force Can Stop the Chinese People and the Chinese Nation”, CNBC, September 30, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/10/01/china-70th-anniversary-xi-says-no-force-can-stop-the-chinese-people.html>

9. “Live: China Holds Grand Gathering, Parade on 70th National Day”, Xinhua, September 30, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dit7zmnzAh0&t=9115s>

10. “70 Years of Achievement in 70 Seconds”, The Global Times, September 29, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1165874.shtml>

11. “China Anti-Poverty Battle 70 Years in 70 Seconds”, Xinhua, September 26, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Dn1MwqqFgk>

12. United Nations, “Millennium Development Goals and Beyond 2015”, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

13. For China Dream, please see China Daily, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/Chinese-dream.html>

14. Rabi Sankar Bosu, “China’s Victory Over Poverty Inspiration to the World”, China. org.cn, October 1, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, http://www.china.org.cn/opinion/2019-10/01/content_75262598.htm

15. South China Morning Post, “China’s Largest Military Parade Marks National Day”, You Tube, October 1, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ayi8ddu_eZg

16. “Highlights of Foreign Congratulatory Messages on PRC’s 70th Founding Anniversary”, Xinhua, September 30, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/30/c_138437499.htm

17. “World Leaders Extend Wishes for PRC’s 70th Founding Anniversary”, CGTN, October 2, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2019-10-02/World-leaders-extend-wishes-for-PRC-s-70th-founding-anniversary-Kt7MoBA8Pm/index.html>

18. @realDonaldTrump, October 1, 2019: “Congratulations to President Xi and the Chinese people on the 70th Anniversary of the People’s Republic of China!”

19. “World Leaders Congratulate China on 70th Anniversary”, Global Times, October 2, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <http://www.global-times.cn/content/1165978.shtml>

20. “Belt and Road News”, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.beltandroad.news/2019/09/26/serbia-mali-have-congratulations-prc-on-the-70th-anniversary/>

21. Daniel W. Drezner, Theories of International Politics and Zombies (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015): 66.

22. Sun Tzu, The Art of War, translated by Lionel Giles, accessed October 9, 2019, <http://classics.mit.edu/Tzu/artwar.html>

23. Liu Mingfu, China Dream: Great Power Thinking and Strategic Posture in the Post-American World (Beijing: CN Times Beijing Media Time United Publishing Company Limited, 2015).

24. Edward Wong, “China’s Global Message: We are Tough but Not Threatening”, The New York Times, October 2, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/02/world/asia/china-world-parade-military.html>

25. SIPRI, “World Military Expenditure Grows to \$1.8 trillion in 2018”, April 29, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2019/world-military-expenditure-grows-18-trillion-2018>

26. Ibid.

27. Alexander Zwagerman, “The Chinese Hobbes: Xi Jinping’s Favorite Philosopher”, Hong Kong Press, June 13, 2016, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.hongkongfp.com/2016/06/13/chinese-hobbes-xi-jinpings-favorite-philosopher/>

28. Han Feizi, accessed October 9, 2019, <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~freeman/courses/phil301/13.%20Han%20Feizi.pdf>



29. Henry Boyd, “China’s People’s Armed Police: Reorganized and Refocused”, IISS, June 21, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.iiss.org/blogs/military-balance/2019/06/china-pap>

30. Paul Mozur, “Inside China’s Dystopian Dreams: A.I. Shame and Lots of Cameras”, The New York Times, July 8, 2018, Accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/08/business/china-surveillance-technology.html>

31. “China Speeds Up Effort in Building a Social Credit System”, Xinhua, June 6, 2018, accessed October 9, 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-06/06/c_137235486.htm

32. Greg Torode, “China Quietly Doubles Troop Levels in Hong Kong, Envoys Says”, Reuters, September 30, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/china-army-hongkong/>

33. Timothy R. Heath, “The Consolidation of Political Power in China under Xi Jinping”, Rand, February 7, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/testimonies/CT500/CT503/RAND_CT503.pdf

34. “Details of China’s Long Range, Quantum Secured “Unhackable” Messaging Secured”, Xinhua, January 20, 2018, accessed October 9, 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-01/20/c_136909246.htm

35. Andrew Jones, “China Grew Two Cotton Leaves on the Moon”, IEEE Spectrum, September 30, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://spectrum.ieee.org/tech-talk/aerospace/robotic-exploration/china-grew-these-leaves-on-the-moon>

36. PwC WaterhouseCooper, “The World in 2050”, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/issues/economy/the-world-in-2050.html>

37. SIPRI, “Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2018”, SIPRI Fact Book, April 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, https://sipri.org/sites/default/files/2019-04/fs_1904_milex_2018_0.pdf

38. Anthony H. Cordesman, “Estimates of Chinese Military Spending”, CSIS, September 21, 2016, accessed October 9, 2019, https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/160928_AHC_Estimates_Chinese_Military_Spending.pdf

39. “Xi Focus: Xi Stress Striving for National Rejuvenation ahead of PRC’s 70th Founding Anniversary”, Xinhua, September 12, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/12/c_138387616.htm

40. Wu Jiao, “Xi Proposes a ‘New Silk Road’ with Central Asia”, China Daily, September 8, 2013, accessed October 9, 2019, https://www.china-daily.com.cn/china/2013xivisitcenterasia/2013-09/08/content_16952228.htm

41. The World Bank, “Belt and Road Initiative”, March 29, 2018, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/regional-integration/brief/belt-and-road-initiative>

42. Bernard Lagan, “New Zealand is the First Five Eyes Country to Join China’s Belt and Road Project”, The Times, May 8, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/new-zealand-is-first-five-eyes-country-to-join-china-s-belt-and-road-project-3l5g7qq6z>

43. J Vitor Tossini, “The Five Eyes-The Intelligence Alliance of the Anglosphere”, UK Defence Journal, November 14, 2017, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/the-five-eyes-the-intelligence-alliance-of-the-anglosphere/>

44. Greece Officially Joins the BRI”, OBOReuropa, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.oboreurope.com/en/greece-bri/>

45. Holly Ellyatt, “Is Italy Playing with Fire When it Comes to China?”, CNBC, March 27, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.cnn.com/2019/03/27/italys-joins-chinas-belt-and-road-initiative.html>

46. Rebecca Banovic, “China and Serbia Sign Major Infrastructure Deal Under Belt and Road Initiative”, Forbes, April 28, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rebeccabanovic/2019/04/28/china-and-serbia-sign-major-infrastructure-deal-under-the-belt-and-road-initiative/#6fe6a4a42dde>

47. “Bank of China Lists 500-mln USD BRI Bond in Luxembourg”, Xinhua, April 25, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-04/25/c_138006422.htm

48. Hu Weijia, “Why Luxembourg’s Endorsement of BRI is a Big Deal”, Global Times, March 31, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1144135.shtml>

49. Peter Robertson, “China’s Military Might is Much Closer to the US than You Probably Think”, The Conversation, October 1, 2019, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://theconversation.com/chinas-military-might-is-much-closer-to-the-us-than-you-probably-think-124487>

David Morgan is an editor and writer based in London and Manchester. He is involved mostly in historical research and has edited a number of books for the Socialist History Society: such as '1917: The Russian Revolution, Reactions and Impact' and 'The Labour Party in Historical Perspective' to which he contributed essays on Freud and Leonard Woolf respectively. He is currently finishing a book that will reappraise the ideas of John Ruskin. David also writes on political issues, especially the Kurds in Turkey. He is a long-standing member of the Peace in Kurdistan campaign for which in 2019 he co-edited a book, Peace Poems for Ocalan, with Estella Schmid. David also writes poetry.

David Morgan reflects on the latest brutal betrayal of the Kurdish people and argues that their fate matters to all of us.

DAVID MORGAN

Stolen Dreams, Living Nightmares

The Kurds and Us

The great betrayal of the Kurds in Syria by Washington began with a midnight telephone call on 6th October 2019 between President Erdogan and President Trump, after which the US troops, which had been restraining the Turkish forces, were withdrawn from the Kurdish-controlled territory, giving a greenlight to the long planned Turkish invasion of Northern Syria. Out of the chaos of the Syrian conflict, the Kurds had managed to establish a new society which they named Rojava; it has been run democratically from the grassroots, bringing all communities together and empowering women as never before in this region of the world. Rojava has acted as a beacon of hope and stands as an example of what can be achieved when people join together. Rojava has inspired idealists the world over, but it has filled the corrupt with dread that their grip on power could finally be slipping away. It thus inspired great loyalty in its numerous followers but provoked the intense hatred of its enemies. The battle is by no means over, because it is a struggle for existence that strikes at the very heart of what it means to be fully human and free.



David Morgan

‘The Kurds are worse than ISIS’, the American people have been told by their Commander in Chief; an office whose present occupant is noted at least for speaking in simple language that the people can always understand. Clearly, when he remarks that the Kurds are worse than ISIS he must be telling the truth; he is a man who can be trusted, he doesn’t swim in the swamp, and wouldn’t ever attempt to pull the wool over his people’s eyes. And President Erdogan may use blood curdling rhetoric a little too frequently for comfort and his admiration of Herr Hitler is somewhat suspect, but he is at least on the side of the West and must inevitably be considered one of the angels. Those rumours that he has been working covertly with ISIS are surely but the invention of untrustworthy radicals and anarchists who hate democracy and the free world. So goes the logic.



Theft of Our Dreams

Stealing our dreams is a theft of our very humanity. It marks the forcible removal of what is most precious and essential for existence: the possibility of happiness and hope. The snatching away of hope is the worst crime that can be inflicted on a person; to inflict such an injury on an entire people must count as a profound crime against humanity, as one is accustomed to say. The media and professional advocates at law perhaps too glibly speak of abuses of human rights but always only in certain carefully selectively chosen circumstances; the language of rights is degraded by politics and marshalled in the arsenal of opportunism. Those permitted to be deserving of attention are sifted and selected to serve political interests. The universally declared basic freedoms and human rights applied across the board without fair or favour to every living human being on earth has hardly ever been applied in reality despite the florid rhetoric. When people such as the Kurds seek to demand their rights they are rebuffed and the responses to their fate are frequently either silence, blindness or embarrassment from those who like to take it upon themselves to police the world and proclaim these rights, defending and cherishing these values at least in words and inscribed as learned opinions in worthy tomes; their actions too often failing to live up to their ideals. The historic mistreatment of the Kurds is a clear case in point that holds up a mirror to the human rights lobby and our supposed democratic governments; under intense scrutiny, we find them wanting and the world order stands exposed for what it is, rendered naked in its full grotesquery, deception and ugliness.

Too trusting in their allies

The innocent dreamers of Rojava, assailed on all sides by assorted barbarisms and bandits, self-proclaimed admirers of Hitler, death cults, killers and torturers, were compelled out of necessity to bound together and embrace in common cause, the ultimate corporate power, the most ruthless on earth, driven by an utter ruthlessness founded on a belief in its own righteousness; that biggest of the big spenders on armaments, a bully always armed to the teeth and ready for a fight. The fragility of this unlikely alignment of opposites was fated from the outset to be but a temporary engagement, but never in modern memory has an ally been so brutally and abruptly betrayed.

The world looked on aghast as the Syrian Kurds were thrown to the wolves, whose plight, as the Turks were given the signal to invade, was to be callously dismissed by the Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States with words that sounded as if they had come straight from a second rate comedy script, ‘they have a lot of sand to play with’; whatever that was supposed to mean. More worrisome for those who still adhere to principles of truth and justice are the euphemisms employed by the media outlets who repeatedly describe the Turkish military’s invasion of Rojava, including the once celebrated Kobane, as an ‘incursion’. This is quite unforgiveable because they should know better; in fact they do know better; they are consciously employing such euphemisms because they are attempting to manipulate the facts to render Turkey’s actions innocuous and even invisible; using choice of words to disguise the brutal invasion that is unfolding on the ground, and which continues to be ruthlessly executed as the world’s powers sit on the side-lines and avert their eyes as horrendous crimes are committed.

All countries have their own challenges and political preoccupations on their domestic agendas which consume all their waking hours; they have their own priorities such as Brexit and reducing the use of plastic shopping bags, so maybe they must be forgiven if they cannot live up to their responsibilities to take action to avert massacres in distant lands. ‘The Kurds are worse than ISIS’, the American people have been told by their Commander in Chief; an office whose present occupant is noted at least for speaking in simple language that the people can always understand. Clearly, when he remarks that the Kurds are worse than ISIS he must be telling the truth; he is a man who can be trusted, he doesn’t swim in the swamp, and wouldn’t ever attempt to pull the wool over his people’s eyes. And President Erdogan may use blood curdling rhetoric a little too frequently for comfort and his admiration of Herr Hitler is somewhat suspect, but he is at least on the side of the West and must inevitably be considered one of the angels. Those rumours that he has been working covertly with ISIS are surely but the invention of untrustworthy radicals and anarchists who hate democracy and the free world. So goes the logic.

In truth, the move to snuff out the Rojava experiment is an attack on every person who has invested hope in this unique achievement that has come to embody the struggle for freedom of oppressed humanity everywhere. It has given hope that another world is not only possible but within our grasp right now within our own lifetime and not a distant dream emerging at some indeterminate moment in a future that never comes.



Its very existence and survival against the odds for so long has always posed a challenge to the old autocratic elites who have prevailed for centuries, ruling with brute force in their own self-interest by treating the lands and people over whom they hold sway as personal fiefdoms and mere resources to be raped and exploited without restraint for private gain. The impoverishment and enslavement of the vast majority expose the callous lies at the heart of liberal political economy whose dogmas of “trickle down” and “opportunities for all” are merely cruel jokes when the imposition of social disciplines are so mercilessly brutal.

This is a region where evils of medieval magnitude long thrive, strengthened by new technologies of oppression and crucially by alliances of convenience with international partners who ostensibly espouse far different values of liberty and human rights that barely exist locally. Unwilling flesh is coaxed, tethered and displayed for sale in the slave markets for the gratification of the lusts of those who lord it over the subject nations. Actual slavery as unendurable as any such in previous periods of the shared history of human misery now thrives amidst all the failed states, too numerous to count, the deliberate impoverishment of millions, the glaring chasms of wealth and power on a scale unimagined in past centuries.

Turkey, brooding across the border, always viewed this US-Kurdish association in war-torn Syria with deep suspicion. Their success in pushing back and defeating ISIS was greeted with a degree of trepidation in Ankara. Kurdish spokesmen have frequently warned that Erdogan was not only a friend of the Islamists but was coordinating his military activities with them; even that Turkey was aiding and supplying the jihadists. Erdogan has certainly always reserved his wrath for the Kurds, branding the Syrian Democratic Forces or SDF, as a front for the PKK. The People's Protection Units, or YPG, whose ranks of men and women, mainly Syrian Kurds, found themselves fighting alongside the US to repel ISIS achieved great victories on the ground but at tremendous cost to themselves in the loss of many thousands of lives. The Kurds had earned worldwide acclaim for destroying the jihadist dream of establishing a caliphate in the region, but Turkey did not join in the applause for one single moment. There was to be no alteration to Erdogan's preparations to expunge what he stubbornly viewed as ‘terrorists’ and a mere extension of the PKK, which he demonises as the sworn enemies of the Turkish nation, despite all the appeals for a peaceful accommodation and negotiated settlement coming from the Kurds, not least from their jailed leader, Abdullah Ocalan.

Former US Defense Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld is reputed to have once said, "It's not our fault that God put America's oil underneath other people's countries".

While this Rumsfeld quote is almost certainly apocryphal, Trump is quite boastful of his intentions in the Middle East and of Syria he told press outside the White House, ‘I like oil. We’re keeping the oil’.

Remarks made during press questions, 1 November 2019.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otP-AxlKKTE>

In a typical display of sophistry the operation in Syria was given the code name, “Operation Peace Spring”, when the action meant anything but bringing peace. The Turkish onslaught has seen brute force inflicted against Kurdish defence units and civilians alike, showing no mercy or discrimination; it has caused mass panic and misery, huge dislocation of the local population including the uprooting of more than 300,000 people in a matter of a few days. The Turkish operations continue to this day despite a temporary ceasefire. The stated aim is to create a Turkish run ‘buffer zone’ along the Syrian border, in lands previously controlled by the Kurds, replicating on a vast scale what Turkey had earlier done in Afrin, which is basically ethnic cleansing. Turkey is seeking to replace the Kurds with the refugees from the Syrian conflict presently residing inside Turkey. This is to treat people on all sides as if they were mere pawns or counters to be moved around a chess-board. This is clearly a case of ethnic cleansing and it is appalling that the so-called international community is doing so little to call a halt. The world's greatest power and self-appointed global policeman has, in fact, blatantly colluded with Erdogan and facilitated his crimes. Trump's statement that the Kurds are in many ways ‘worse than ISIS’ was not an indication of presidential senility, but a conscious decision to realign United States policy with Turkey and also to undercut any accusation that the Kurds have been betrayed in a most brutal way.

Hold onto the Dream

The destruction of Rojava must not be allowed to happen. We need our dreams as much as we need air to breathe. Breathing the air of freedom is the ultimate fulfilment of all our dreams. As darkness descends on a generation, the resistance and the dreams cannot be stifled forever even if setbacks seem like fatal body blows. Many people all over the world have been inspired by the courage and resilience of the Kurdish men and women who have been fighting against great odds and malignant forces ranged against them. By so doing, they point to humanity's enduring capacity to reshape the world in the interests of the common people rather than the corporations and dictators. The corporate powers and cynical politicians along with their hired pundits and hacks in the media want to steal the dreams of the people and to deny them the hope of a better future. This can no longer be permitted. The fate of Rojava is the fate of all of us.

Poet, writer and artist Greta Sykes has published her work in many anthologies. She is a member of London Voices Poetry Group and also produces art work for them. Her new volume of poetry called 'The Shipping News and Other Poems' came out in August 2016. The German translation of her book 'Under charred skies' has now been published in Germany under the title 'Unter verbranntem Himmel' by Eulenspiegel Verlag. She is the chair of the Socialist History Society and has organised joint poetry events for them at the Poetry Café. She is a trained child psychologist and has taught at the Institute of Education, London University, where she is now an associate researcher. Her particular focus is now on women's emancipation and antiquity.



DR GRETA SYKES

SEX IS BETTER UNDER SOCIALISM

Some thoughts after the catastrophic loss of votes for Die Linke (the Left) in East Germany.

Kristen Ghodsee wrote a book about the upheaval unleashed by the fall of the wall in Germany 1989. She discovered the extent to which people's lives were thrown into turmoil during the so called 'velvet revolution'. Ghodsee saw the occasion as an ideal opportunity to study first-hand how aspects of citizen's everyday experiences were devastated. She interviewed many people with a particular focus on how women's sex lives were affected and came to the conclusion that sex was better under socialism than capitalism, both for men and women. The stress of making ends meet under a capitalist society does not usually allow us to learn how much better our sex lives could be, if economic pressures were reduced.

"Socialists have long understood that creating equity between men and women despite their biological sex differences requires collective forms of support for child rearing," she writes. In East Germany, for example, the state supported integrating women into the workforce with policies that subsidised housing, children's clothing, groceries and childcare. This support also meant that women could more easily consider having children without waiting for marriage. "By 1989, 34% of all births in East Germany were to single parents. After German reunification, the end of these subsidies resulted in a "birth strike": the fertility rate in former East German states fell by 60%."

Dr Greta Sykes

Four years after opening the borders the result of the recent elections reveal an acceleration of discontent in the country. The elections took place in the former East German states of Brandenburg and Saxony. For months the TV programmes (Das Erste, ZDF, 3SAT) cajoled their audiences with comedy programmes which religiously castigated the AFD (Alternative for Germany) as Nazis and a taboo party for any reasonable citizen. The news and culture programmes similarly vaccinated their audiences against the virus of AFD leanings by referring to the AFD as Nazis, right-wing extremists and not part of the bourgeois world.



“To the surprise of many in the West, two-thirds of the East German women reported that they “almost always” had an orgasm during sex, with another 18% revealing they did so “often”. What’s more, 82% of them reported being “happy” after sex. On the other hand, the West German women experienced orgasms half as much as their communist counterparts and only 52% of them reported being “happy” after sex. In Russia, studies on various kinds of relationships show a proliferation of people viewing relationships as a mere “calculation” after the fall of the wall. “(Ghodsee, 2019). Ghodsee’s study is a good starting point for trying to understand the dramatic developments taking shape in Germany since 2015, when Angela Merkel opened the borders to allow over a million refugees enter the country. It is likely that her decision led to the BREXIT debacle and furthered the deep divisions which engulf the whole of Europe into pro and anti-open borders disputes. Not only was the Austrian government of Kurz brought down with a focus on their refugee policy, but lately the Salvini government in Italy with a similar strict policy on border controls was manoeuvred out of government.

The 2019 local elections in East Germany

Four years after opening the borders the result of the recent elections reveal an acceleration of discontent in the country. The elections took place in the former East German states of Brandenburg and Saxony. For months the TV programmes (Das Erste, ZDF, 3SAT) cajoled their audiences with comedy programmes which religiously castigated the AFD (Alternative for Germany) as Nazis and a taboo party for any reasonable citizen. The news and culture programmes similarly vaccinated their audiences against the virus of AFD leanings by referring to the AFD as Nazis, right-wing extremists and not part of the bourgeois world. Nevertheless, in spite of their efforts to persuade people the results were a massive blow to mainstream politics and the fraudulent lie of a consensus politics that was dangled in front of viewers.

The results, as reported in the Sueddeutsche Zeitung were as follows:

Brandenburg:

SPD: 26.2%, losing 5.7%
 AFD: 23.5%, gaining 11.3%
 CDU: 15.6%, losing 7.4%
 Gruene: 10.8%, gaining 4.6%
 Linke: 10.7%, losing 7.9%

Sachsen:

CDU: 32.1%, losing 7.3%
 AFD: 27.5%, gaining 17.8%
 Linke: 10.4%, losing 8.5%
 Gruene: 8.6%, gaining 2.9%
 SPD: 7.7%, losing 4.7%
 Election participation: 66.6%

The results make clear that the mainstream parties have lost their traditional attraction for the majority of citizens in East Germany, notwithstanding that they had lost their hold on the whole of Germany already during the recent EU election. The fact that the SPD, the socialist party of Germany, the traditional party of the working people, has reached such low results is likely to be due to their presence in the grand coalition with the CDU, the Christian democrats, as well as change resulting from lower trade union membership, the loss of traditional jobs and the technological impact of the internet. More poignantly, are the results of ‘Die Linke’.

The tragedy of Die Linke

Originally the party of the communist East German state, called SED (Socialist Unity Party), this party had led East Germany to become one of the most prosperous states in the world after the war and one with a proud record in the Olympic games. Maligned by the West as part of the Cold War, interfered with and castigated as ‘Stalinist’, the pressure from the West led to the fall of the wall. The following rapid dismantling of East German industry, its wholesale takeover and buying out by the West, has left deep rifts and frustrations between the two parts of Germany. Many now think that the cultural differences between them are here to stay: 40 years of socialism have left their mark. The media, mainly owned by the West, continues to play its role in naming and shaming East Germans who profess to having enjoyed living in their country.

After the fall of the wall the former SED renamed itself PDS, party of democratic socialism, only to then group together with the West German left to form Die Linke. The deprecation of all things East German or socialist by the West’s media led to a weakening of their former ideals and adherence to working class politics.

Much has been written about the dogma of political correctness which extends to various degrees of green politics, a welcoming migration policy in the name of 'Human rights' and identity politics. In an essay entitled 'Identity politics and the left', 1996, Eric Hobsbawm discusses identity politics as an aberration of left-wing politics. Put briefly identity politics atomises the working people into smaller and smaller units of specialist issues, such as colour, race, religion, body weight, gender in terms of trans, gay and hetero.

Rather than resist the berating impact of the media they drifted into the world of identity politics and other fashionable trends, such as 'no to borders' and a globalised neoliberalism. Their aims became meaningless to working people in need of jobs, education, pensions and welfare. The party that used to be the party of workers and peasants had become a party of sanctimonious 'Gutmenschen' (good moral people). Like the Greens and other mainstream parties, they profess to speak up for refugees and their human rights at the expense of their traditional working-class voters. Considering that the rift between rich and poor has become an acknowledged public scandal also in Germany, Die Linke is complicit in supporting politics that use the hard-earned money of the working people to finance a much larger population of migrants who never paid into the public purse. It is a tragedy that at a time of an existential crisis of the West that encompasses culture, politics, economics and spirituality, for a socialist party to desert their traditional voters who suffer low wages, pensions that cannot support them and poverty in old age. At the same time the social wage which people had worked for is now being distributed among people who were displaced by capitalist wars and should have been supported in their own countries to regain stability. These are the reasons for the success of the AFD (Alternative fuer Deutschland). They have taken up issues that concern working people and made it their aim to support them.

Political correctness and the media

Much has been written about the dogma of political correctness which extends to various degrees of green politics, a welcoming migration policy in the name of 'Human rights' and identity politics. In an essay entitled 'Identity politics and the left', 1996, Eric Hobsbawm discusses identity politics as an aberration of left-wing politics. Put briefly identity politics atomises the working people into smaller and smaller units of specialist issues, such as colour, race, religion, body weight, gender in terms of trans, gay and hetero. The list could be even longer. Needless to say, that each small grouping will have their specialist concerns which need to be addressed to make it worthwhile to form such a group. Political correctness is the media tool with which this atomisation is achieved by ensuring that the moralising demands of each identity group is set in stone and anyone who will not abide by their code of conduct is silenced. Famous feminists, such as Germaine Greer in the UK and Alice Schwarzer in Germany, have been rebuked for trespassing on one or another 'correct' notion by such a group.



The media are happy to play this game and have more or less eliminated any controversy and debate. Marxist political analysts have long argued that the media are a tool of the elite, namely the military-industrial-media complex who rule the Western world with the US in the lead on the basis of their global military presence. The US hegemony continues to dictate global events through economic sanctions and wars or the threat of war. Its drive for globalising their products, such as Goggle, Facebook, Apple, involves globalising populations and robbing them of their cultural roots. It keeps leaders of less powerful nations on their toes. Consequently, the media, being a tool of the imperialist Western elite, will do the bidding for them and guide public opinion in the direction they favour.

It is vital to note that globalisation is not the same as internationalism, the former is constructed by the elite, the latter is organised by the working people. Globalisation is one of the cogs in the imperialist US motor to maintain its hegemony. It involved numerous wars in the Middle East and elsewhere (Yugoslavia, Afghanistan) with stationing of their troops and hardware. Its product is an unresolved migration crisis that costs many peoples' lives daily and has so far eluded finding a resolution.

This may be less surprising than one would think: The refugees are a welcome source of cheap labour for Western economies. The fact that they undermine existing trade union agreements and generally spread the social welfare budget among a much larger population is quietly sanctioned by the elite. Additionally, their concern for the effect on existing cultural communities and the import of IS terrorists is a low priority for them. A form of cultural totalitarianism by media enforces a control on the freedom of expression. Identity politics and political correctness dictate what can be said. This way the migration crisis has become part of our daily lives. Via TV images of drowning children and sinking boats our natural capacity for compassion has become a political poison in our minds that prevents rational analysis.

Those who started the wars and the crisis expect the people to suffer the consequences of their exploitative politics. Countries like Austria, Italy and Hungary are condemned for refusing to go along with the sanctimonious hypocrisy and cultural totalitarianism that has been unleashed by the West.



The class struggle

While most of the mainstream, including the German Greens have signed up to the politics of the elite, Die Linke hovers. Their leader, Sarah Wagenknecht (*in above photo*) tried very hard to move her party in the direction of working-class politics. She was derided. Someone even threw a cake into her face. She has built up a pressure group called 'Aufstehen' (stand up) which attempts to influence views, but with little effect so far. This betrayal of Die Linke is the reason for people deserting that party. Their loyalty to left-wing politics was too severely tested and has given way under the strain of living in a society that has lost its direction. The media trumpet the globalised 'bunte' (colourful) town – all the people see and experience is social decay, lower wages, lower pensions, rising rents and an increase in crime..

The gap between the aims and objectives of the ruling elite is as far apart as ever.

Ruling elite, military industrial complex

cheap labour that moves around the globe as private business demands, people to move as easily as money, globalised private business determines everyone's life, no regard for culture, a passive government that nods all demands of the elite through, use of war and immigration policies to achieve cheap labour, use of profit motive and technology to accelerate the income of the rich, no to borders to ensure cheap labour can move around the globe, no need for spirituality or belonging.

The working people

Having a job that pays adequate wages as agreed by trade unions, adequate health service, education and pensions that cover needs in old age, sense of being rooted in culture, sense of community where one lives, a government that listens to people and can withstand the demands of private business, no to war, no to mass immigration, support for families where they are at home, a sustainable economy based on tax fairness, borders that protect populations, their income and pensions in their home culture, deep need for spirituality and belonging.

Humans need to be rooted in their culture which extends to their community. It needs to be celebrated and cherished, as poets and singers have done throughout human history. Such a life is deeply rooted in a sense of spirituality and belonging which leads to trust. Such a life can be achieved and would give us back a sex and love life that is free from exploitation. It would reduce our need for cheap substitutes, such as shopping, drugs and violence on screens.

Sarah Wagenknecht commented after the election:

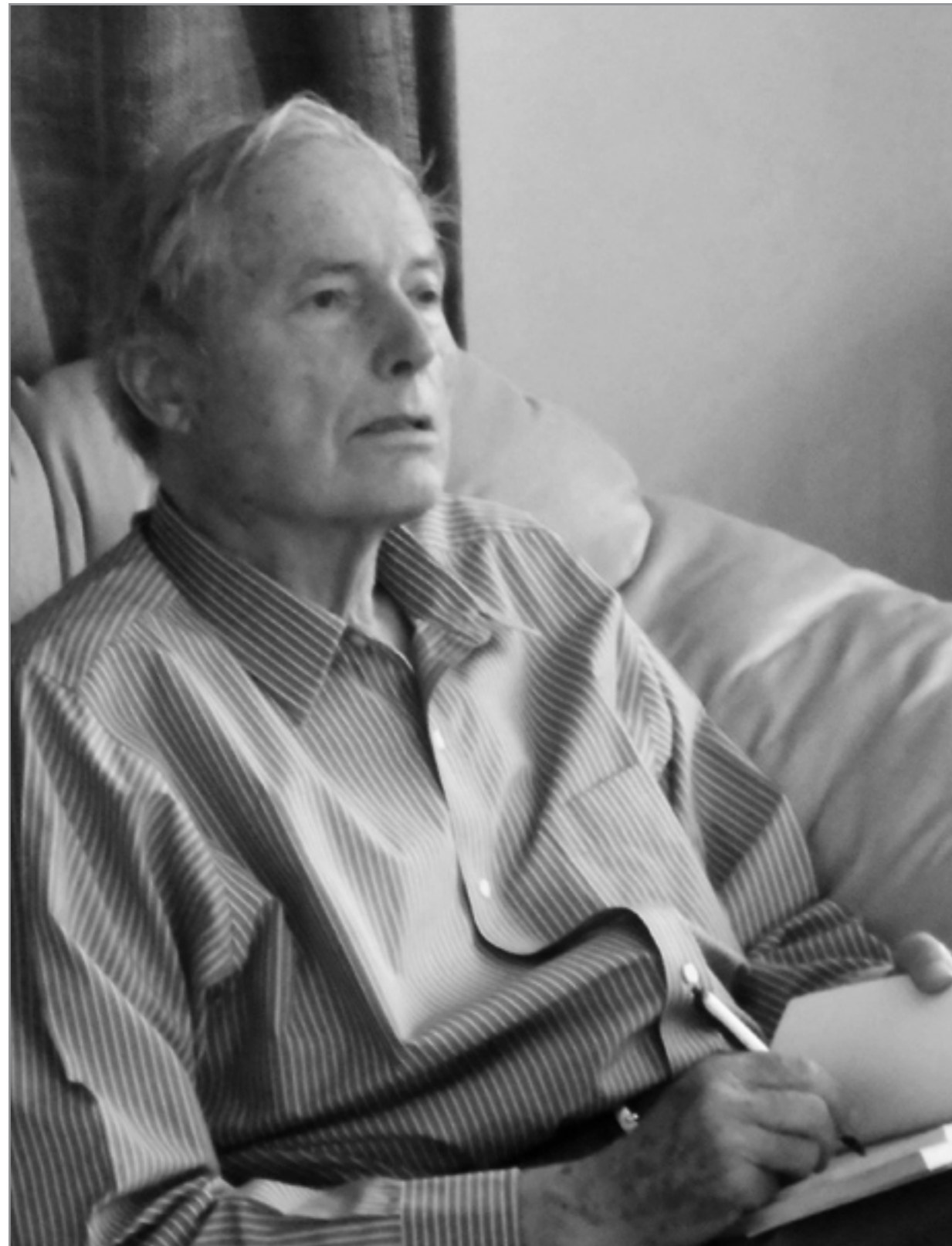
'...Die Linke is not any more perceived by their voters as a force that takes a serious interest in their lives and is capable of changing it for the better. That is very bad. Die Linke must again become an alternative for all those who have been deserted by the current politics, for all those who work hard for low wages and are anxious about poverty in old age. When our party is experienced by these people as a green-liberal lifestyle party, when they feel that our party looks down on them because they don't cope with a trendy city lifestyle, then it is only normal that they turn away from us. We must no longer tolerate that.'

Global warming, sex and socialism

The major issue of our time is, of course, the environment, biodiversity and global warming. Without a programme of massive change to the way we run our societies and use up natural resources we shall not survive as a species. We need to think and act creatively. All of the new ideas will have to start with a reinvention of our life on earth as natural beings, not as robots and exploiters. We need to reduce and reuse materials we use. We need to cut down on travel, exploitation of fossil fuels and rare earths. We need to use agriculture organically. We need to stop wars and stop the arms trade. Looking at the list it is obvious that such demands do not fit with the demands of the elite and the military industrial complex. They do not fit with capitalism's drive for constant expansion and profit. They do, however, fit with the demands of the people. They fit with the demands of socialism. They fit with our need to protect women and men from exploitation. They fit with a return to a more natural way of life that involves living in harmony with nature, not exploiting it. They fit with a holistic view of natural beings taking care of the planet and other creatures. They fit with Ghodsee's revelations about the success of sex under socialism.

Humans need to be rooted in their culture which extends to their community. It needs to be celebrated and cherished, as poets and singers have done throughout human history. Such a life is deeply rooted in a sense of spirituality and belonging which leads to trust. Such a life can be achieved and would give us back a sex and love life that is free from exploitation. It would reduce our need for cheap substitutes, such as shopping, drugs and violence on screens.

Dr Howard Richards (born June 10, 1938) is a philosopher of Social Science who has worked with the concepts of basic cultural structures and constitutive rules. He holds the title of Research Professor of Philosophy at Earlham College, a liberal arts college in Richmond, Indiana, USA, the Quaker School where he taught for thirty years. He officially retired from Earlham College, together with his wife Caroline Higgins in 2007, but retained the title of Research Professor of Philosophy. A member of the Yale class of 1960, he holds a PhD in Philosophy from the University of California, Santa Barbara, a Juris Doctor (J.D.) from the Stanford Law School, an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) from Oxford University (UK) and a PhD in Educational Planning, with a specialization in applied psychology and moral education from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto, Canada. Dr Richards is a Catholic, a member of Holy Trinity (Santisima Trinidad) parish in Limache, Chile, and a member of the third order of St. Francis, S.F.O www.wikipedia.org



DR HOWARD RICHARDS

THE POSITIVE EROTIC

1.

The First Commandment

My philosophy is simple: mobilize resources to meet needs. It is easily spelled: L.O.V.E.

2.

The Color Green

I understood her. She said she had an advantage in life because she enjoyed the color green. Being from California, having grown up companion to the eucalyptus and the sycamore, I was familiar with palms and pines growing together, and I knew the dark greens of juniper, cypress, cedar, bougainvillea, Spanish oak, live oak, scrub oak, as well as the lighter greens of camphor trees and of the grass on the hills after the winter rain.

3.

Visitors

We have much to learn from trees, "that vigorous and pacific tribe," and nothing to fear from them. Without knowing why we are doing it, we invite them into our cities to instruct us and to keep us company. They speak to us of our own ancient selves as we are still, as we were when we stalked among the shadow and sunlight of forest and savanna, for hundreds of thousands of years before this brief blip on the time line called civilization. Their hues and tones touch unknown chords deep in the DNA-coded information circuitry of our bodies, like a blind man playing a piano. We plant trees to line our boulevards because, like good friends, they teach us who we are, who we really are. Of course we do not know why we do it --any more than we know our real motives for anything we do.

© Howard Richards

2019 october © liveencounters.net

Dr Howard Richards. Photo credit: Pasquale Misuraca, Italian filmmaker.



photo pixabay.com

4. Chemistry

In a lover's kiss protons lock and unlock electrons according to valences; electricity flows, energy is bound and released. The pressure of lips is like the pressure of a stone pressed upon the earth by gravity, and both, considered as pressures, are the same as any pressures anywhere.

5. Ceremony

He is a ceremonious young man, given to elaborate welcomes and to fervent goodbyes. His eye contact is never even a split-second late, or a millimeter misplaced; his laughter --due to a miracle only gods could understand-- is both perfectly spontaneous and perfectly appropriate. Whoever steps into his presence steps onto a stage: young or old, male or female, newcomer or intimate --each has a role, and each is aglow with the joy of being in a bonding performance with a co-star and an audience. No ancient chieftain with painted face beating his drums amid billowing smoke, had a more exacting sense of the right moment, the right word, the right movement. Fate has placed him in the position of manager of an auto parts store, where he charms suppliers and customers alike. He is the soul of the place. All the styles of ritual observed in chimpanzees, baboons, and orangutans; and all those attributed to the earliest humans in their relationships with nature and with each other; find their echoes in his manner of conducting a telephone conversation to verify a credit reference, and in his way of making change for a twenty dollar bill. If fate had placed him elsewhere he might have been the founder of a church, or of a jazz band.

6. Merchandise

At the adult bookstore ©©I mean almost any adult bookstore-- for a quarter you can see private videos of Sandra Deelite penetrated six ways by Mike "the stud" Hammer. (Actually I made up the names "Deelite" and "Mike Hammer," for fear of possible adverse consequences of using real porn stars' names.) Deelite and Hammer portray what Nancy Hartsock (Nancy Hartsock, *Money, Sex, and Power*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1987) calls a negative erotic, eros riven by layers of hostility.

7. Sea Pleasures

Among Spaniards who dance the bolero, there are some who, after sipping two glasses of red wine, will tell you that in a human life the magic of romance is lo indispensable. Among the more sensible races, the Chinese for example, the sentimental context for the complete enjoyment of the bolero is sadly lacking, and yet there is no more certain proposition than that the Chinese have pleasures akin to those of the Spanish. There is a community of blood, of adrenaline, of epinephrine, of sperm, of testosterone ... which guarantees that throughout the gamut of historically created sentiments, any two are related, at least as cousins. All human blood can be traced to the same source, and that source is the sea. The salinity of blood is witness to an evolution through unbroken chains of intermediate liquids out of the oceans where life began. The beating of hearts is witness to an evolution through unbroken chains of intermediate rhythms out of the ebbs and flows of waters.

8. Water

"Circumambulate the city on a dreamy Sabbath afternoon. Go from Corlears Hook to Coenties Slip, and from thence, by Whitehall, northward. What do you see ? --Posted like silent sentinels all around the town, stand thousands upon thousands of mortal men fixed in ocean reveries. Some leaning against the piles; some seated upon the pier-heads; some looking over the bulwarks of ships from China; some high aloft in the rigging, as if striving to get a still better seaward peep But look ! here come more crowds, pacing straight for the water, and seemingly bound for a dive. Strange ! Nothing will content them but the extremist limit of the land; loitering under the shady lee of yonder warehouses will not suffice. No. They must get just as nigh the water as they possibly can without falling in. And there they stand --miles of them-- leagues. Inlanders all, they come from lanes and alleys, streets and avenues -- north, east, south, and west. Yet here they all unite." (Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*. Chapter I.)

09. At the Cafe

The positive erotic. A nice phrase. Nancy Hartsock's *Money, Sex and Power* --a good book. What better thing could I do, sitting at the Cafe Bianco with a cup of orange spice tea and a slice of banana bread, than develop a nice phrase taken from a good book ?

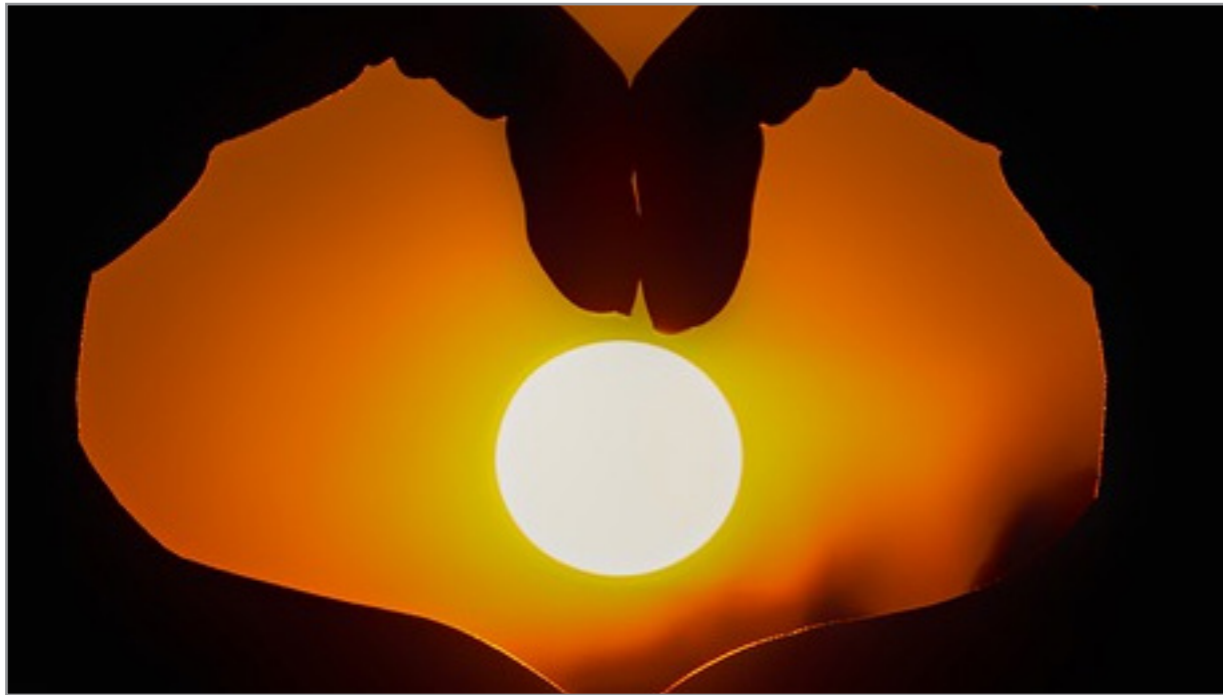


photo pixabay.com

10.

Excitement

I find it hard to believe a key premise of Hartsock's argument, which is that whether a stimulus is exciting, how much excitement it causes, and the quality of the excitement, all depend on society and personal history. I am not saying that Hartsock's premise is not true --just that I find it hard to believe. I had been accustomed to believing that if I had an erection the cause was a woman. I suppose that what I had been accustomed to believe presupposed that I was programmed genetically so that when presented with a suitable stimulus --a young individual of the opposite sex with regular features and enlarged mammary glands-- I would suffer an adrenaline rush and a tendency toward panting, penile expansion, and shaking; just as among certain species of wasps the male is fatally attracted to the female when the female, prompted by instinct, whirs its wings a certain number of strokes per second. Which is evidently not the case. Nancy Hartsock, supported by the sexologists cited in her footnotes, tells me that whether I am excited, how much, and in what way depends on how the ancient chemistry which encodes the construction of the tissues of my body has been overlaid and interwoven here in the city by and with my ethnicity, my religion, my language, the images in my mind, my childhood, my significant relationships with others ... but I must admit, that even agreeing that what Nancy Hartsock says must be true, I still do not understand anything. I was in Los Angeles and I saw a drawing on a billboard of a buxom woman wearing sunglasses, with only a name, "Angelyne," and a telephone number, and my palms were sweating. She was not a woman. She was not even a photograph of a woman. She was a cartoonist's outline of an imaginary woman, expanded to three times the size of a large elephant, printed in bright ink, and posted on a large billboard placed skyward above Seventh Street on the roof of a small building. I am supposed to be a reasonable, educated, happily married, baptized person, and my hands were sweating and I still don't know why.

11

Life

Inside the Club Casbah an almost bare waitress dances on a table top. Outside the Casbah, on the sidewalk, passersby who cannot afford to enter the Club and see the show, stand a while to listen to the music. Two Jehovah's Witnesses seize the opportunity to read to those who will listen, from the book of Revelations. On the side of the street, next to edge of the curb, a policeman stops a young man riding a bicycle with no headlight and speaks to him. Anger boils. Under the sidewalk, in a drain, a rat sniffs for food. Farther down, worms tunnel through the warm earth. Farther up, a bird flies in the night sky.

12

Motivation

The problem many men face in life is how to get themselves motivated to do something constructive. Anthropology, history and common sense tell us that for most men there is one major motivation which does it: a good relationship with a woman. Jeremy Bentham was although not the first, the most famous and the most influential of the fools who imagined that men could be rehabilitated by putting them in prisons where they are systematically kept away from women. In his philosophy, which takes as its first premise that "Nature has placed man under two masters, pleasure and pain," he overlooks the decisive fact that pleasure is found mainly in interpersonal relationships (as should be evident from "pleasure's" etymology --its ties with "to please" and "to be pleased.") As everybody knows, the prisons which Bentham and his loony friends bequeathed to western civilization and the world are, and have been since their inception, not institutions which accomplish rehabilitation, but schools for crime. Of course the regular public schools are also schools for crime, because they teach children that the purpose of life is success; the students show that they have mastered the implicit curriculum when they achieve success as drug dealers, prostitutes, and pimps. It could not be otherwise. The reform of personalities and, ultimately, the reform of society, would be much more likely to be accomplished by following Nancy Hartsock's philosophy, by changing the sign of the erotic from negative to positive.

13.

Where we Live

Two and one half million people live in the city of Santiago, but nobody lives in Santiago. Each lives in the world of his or her imagination." (translated from your humble servant's *Apuntes de Filosofia*. Santiago: Taller de Editores, 1972)

14.

The Mirror Where My Adrenaline Enjoys Seeing Itself

If "physical" means "not social," then the erotic is not physical. It is outgoing, gregarious. The best part of ecstasy is not being carried away; it is being carried away together. For this reason achieving a positive erotic can not be a private project. Nor can it be, if it is to be deep and stable, the project of two, an egoisme a deux.



photo pixabay.com

14. **The Mirror Where My Adrenaline Enjoys Seeing Itself** *contd..*

The tendency of desire is toward the desire to be desired --by a family, by the shadowy titans of the unconscious mind, by an audience, by a choir of angels, and --why not?-- by the singing forests, by the brooding spirits of the mountains, by the Milky Way. A perfected human society --one that satisfied the tendency of desire-- would make it easy for every person, from the youngest to the most senior, to feel wanted, affirmed, cared for --and not only to feel it, but to know it; and not only to feel it and know it with the top of the head, but to feel it and know it with every cell of the body from the end of the longest hair of the head to the tip of the longest toe. Those tiny creatures, the sperm and the ova, who inhabit our genitalia, are like us. They love attention too. They are mega-social.

15. **Charm Secrets**

Sometimes I imagine that each person I meet is someone with whom I have shared a bonding experience, or a special caring relationship, such as sitting up with them while they struggle with an illness, speaking kind words and serving them chamomile tea; but that the love we have shared must, for mysterious reasons, remain forever undisclosed. The person's apparent indifference to me when we meet again by chance is due to their zealous protection of our secret, but I, being given more to risks and to generosity, permit myself a twinkle in my eye, a slight smile, and a slight gesture to signal so imperceptibly that no one else will notice-- our complicity in past joy. We are pretending that one of us is just an ordinary customer standing in line, the other, just an ordinary bank teller, but in reality we are linked by treasured memories of great passions, in reality in our hearts we are celebrating a sweet mystic communion; each knows, and each knows that the other knows, that we are from the sea, which held us together and rocked us both to sleep, before several million years of separation which, with each passing day, have made our unity more sacred because more ancient. We will never be frustrated by present or future loneliness, because our memories of the embraces we have already enjoyed will forever comfort us. We will never be unfaithful to our wives, husbands, lovers, or friends, because every secret rendezvous has already happened, and would only be spoiled by repetition.

16 **The Ballots are Counted**

If one person, more or less, finds that his palms are sweating, the phenomenon hardly proves the existence of a trend. But a billboard in a city with a phone number implies that enough people are dialing the number; and paying somebody money for something, to make this particular sex business profitable. It is by a similar deduction that Nancy Hartsock shows that sexual excitement in our culture is predominantly linked to hostility. One line of evidence is from studies of pornography. It is a multi-billion dollar industry, and it can only be the massive institution it is because people are thrilled by pain, death, humiliation, and destruction. A second line of evidence is from studies of rape. It is also a massive reality, and it is found to be rarely the result of erotic fascination per se, almost always the result of a need to have power, control, revenge. The ballots are counted, and the negative erotic has won a majority in both houses of parliament; it will form the government.

I do not wish to debate the statistical issues (e.g. Is soft porn hostile? Is date-rape rape?) According to any reasonable interpretation of the data, the conclusion is that in the psyches of our neighbors there rages an epidemic of rage and violence. It may be that to a certain extent there is nothing to be done --because biology and not culture decrees that violence shall be sexually exciting. However, as Nancy Hartsock says, there will be time enough to bemoan the fate to which nature has abandoned us after we have done what we can do to improve our culture.

17. **Repression**

I had a dream that when Michel Foucault arrived in heaven, the first thing he did was to request a leave of absence, recognizing --like Proust requesting a vacation on the first day of his employment at the Musee Mazarin-- that his inner call led him elsewhere. Foucault asked Saint Peter, the keeper of the keys, for permission to attend an academic congress on Herbert Marcuse's Concept of Surplus Repression at the University of San Diego, and would he please allow him to depart with an extra key, just in case, upon his return, his arrival at the pearly gate should turn out to be at an hour later than eleven p.m. Saint Peter granted Foucault's requests, but as a precaution sent Saint Thomas Aquinas along as a chaperon.



photo pixabay.com

17.

Repression *contd...*

I had a dream that when Michel Foucault arrived in heaven, the first thing he did was to request a leave of absence, recognizing --like Proust requesting a vacation on the first day of his employment at the Musee Mazarin-- that his inner call led him elsewhere. Foucault asked Saint Peter, the keeper of the keys, for permission to attend an academic congress on Herbert Marcuse's Concept of Surplus Repression at the University of San Diego, and would he please allow him to depart with an extra key, just in case, upon his return, his arrival at the pearly gate should turn out to be at an hour later than eleven p.m. Saint Peter granted Foucault's requests, but as a precaution sent Saint Thomas Aquinas along as a chaperon.

The Congress proved to be not at the University itself, but at the Hyatt Regency Hotel nearby, and to be divided into seventeen concurrent panels in separate rooms. The visitors from heaven slipped into a room where there were five panelists, and only two in the audience (besides the two visitors from heaven, who were, of course, invisible). At the end, one of the two people in the audience commented that whatever else one might say about the concept of surplus repression, the word "repression" is poorly chosen. It evokes a mechanical image; it suggests a bad power above holding down a good instinct below.

Marcuse agrees with Freud that sex must be repressed and sublimated to channel energy into the necessary work of civilization, but then he agrees with Marx that much of the so-called necessary work is necessary only to keep a privileged class in power. Less work is *really* necessary; and therefore less repression is really necessary. The unnecessary repression is surplus, and it is morally questionable as is the capitalist's extraction of surplus value from the worker.

The problem, said the unidentified member of the audience, is that the image implies that something would be gained by taking the lid off sex, so to speak, or, for that matter, taking the lid off instinctual expression in general.

The second unidentified member of the audience agreed. "What is needed," she said, "is the re-interpretation of sex."

The invisible Saint Thomas whispered gently into the invisible Foucault's invisible ear, as if discreetly seeking to seduce him with reason, "Methinks these mortals reinvent the wheel. Plato re-interpreted sex as love of wisdom in the *Symposium* and in the *Phaedrus* in the fourth century before the Word became incarnate. And in the thirteenth century I summarized sixteen centuries of Christian, Jewish, and Arabic tradition in my dazzling and compendious demonstration that the positive erotic is none other than God, may his holy name be praised per *omnes saeculae saeculorum*."

18.

The Shouting Silence

"Only beauty will save the world," wrote Dostoyevsky. A revolutionary doctrine. It calls for the overthrow of the ruling boredom. The radical agitators for beauty's revolution are those who are decency's enemies: the drive-by murderers, the addicts, the racist bigots, the death squads, the Islamic fundamentalists, the Serbian nationalists, violent ethnic militants of all kinds, the armed cults, the Neo-Nazis, gangs, the corrupt TV evangelists, terrorists, school dropouts, computer hackers, child abusers, serial rapists, druglords, white-collar crooks,.... They are the messengers who are trying to tell us that there is something deeply wrong with our mainly liberal, mainly modern, increasingly democratic, and increasingly global society. If we ask ourselves over and over again why mainstream life offers the indecent so little that they decline to join it, then we will, I believe, eventually come to agree with Dostoyevsky.

19.

The Positive Erotic

Nancy Hartsock (*Money Sex and Power*, pp. 166-67) uses the term "erotic" to describe three related aspects of human life which have been named as eros traditionally and in contemporary psychology: (1) What Sigmund Freud called, "the aim of making one out of many," both in what he called a *vita sexualis normalis*, and in the forms he called perverted or sublimated --the perversions being pathological, and the sublimations providing "the spiritual treasures of civilization;" (2) Sensuality, what Plato called appetites; (3) The enjoyment of creativity. The third category is very broad for Hartsock; it plays in her work a role similar to that of joy in non-alienated human labor in Marx; it includes the pleasures of creative effort in philosophy, in art, in physical labor, and in raising children.



photo pixabay.com

19.

The Positive Erotic contd...

I would almost define the positive erotic as pleasant emotion which helps to mobilize resources to meet needs. The reason why I think such a simple definition would not be far off is that pleasant emotions untouched by the deep passions, untouched by the deep need to be recognized and desired, are not likely to motivate people to move very much very far. Hence any pleasant emotion that makes any considerable contribution to mobilizing resources to meet needs is almost certain to tap erotic energy.

20.

I Want to Come to You as the Spring Comes to the Cherry Trees

The soul (Latin *anima*, Greek *psuche*) is the active and esthetic element in human being. Marx chided materialists for failing to appreciate it. The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism --that of Feuerbach included-- is that the object, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the object or contemplation. but not as human sensuous activity, practice, not subjectively. Thus it happened that the active side, in opposition to materialism, was developed by idealism. (First Thesis on Feuerbach) As if in response to Marx's call for a subjective materialism, some of the best evocations of the positive erotic have been composed by Communist authors: A. K. Makarenko, Pablo Milanes, Pablo Neruda, Violeta Parra, Silvio Rodriguez, Jose Saramago.

21.

On Whether the First of the Twelve Steps is Really Necessary

To those who believe that communities of joyful solidarity can be built without trust in Divine Higher Powers, I say, "go for it !" "Do it!" As for myself, I find applicable a phrase I learned from Padre Miguel, who was (and may still be) the pastor of *Santisima Trinidad* parish in Limache, Chile. It is *una tarea tan superior a nuestras fuerzas*. (Literally translated: "a task far superior to our forces")

22.

The Bitter Root

Nancy Hartsock's proposal is not just to change the sign of the erotic in order to make human relationships beautiful. She works through Marx's analysis of the contradictions of capitalism, and finds that communities based on exchange are necessarily fragile and false. But she finds that at an even deeper and older level our culture rests on combat and intimidation.

In the exchange society friendship becomes a liability and people are constrained to be strangers to each other. But an agonistic society is even worse --people are enemies to each other. The negative erotic we experience is the overlay given by a commercial culture to an older layer of fear. The positive erotic is a key to building communities which are stable and true; and it is therefore a contribution to building better neighborhoods, cities, and global structures, not just a key to a more rewarding intimacy.

23.

Joy

A perfume. A word with a beautiful history. Delirium beyond fun. Deeper and more spontaneous than pleasure. Medieval Christian theologians declared joy to be a gift whose source was friendship with God. Buddhist theologians raise joy to the second power: sympathetic joy, joy in the joy of others.

24.

Color, Flavor

Audre Lorde, in her short essay, "The Uses of the Erotic," refers to an experience only we older folks will remember. After World War II margarine was sold in solid white one pound blocks sheathed in plastic, with a small pellet of intense red dye wrapped in its own small plastic sheathe placed in the middle, as if the red pellet were the white margarine's belly button. After buying the margarine you break the sheathe of the red pellet, and then you knead the pellet in the block up and down, back and forth, like bread dough, until the whole block becomes yellow. The erotic is like the red pellet of concentrated dye: if you open it, and work with it, it gives color and flavor to life.

25.

Mater Dolorosa

Savants there are who will tell you that community is created only by suffering. The Cross. The martyrs. The battlefields made sacred by bloodshed. The pogroms. Enduring the siege of Stalingrad together. Losing the battle at the Plains of Abraham in 1763; the assassinations of Gandhi, King, Kennedy, Romero Jean-Paul Sartre in his *Critique de la Raison Dialectique* offers the similar concept that unity comes from sharing danger, as when conspirators, guerrillas, criminals, or soldiers in battle depend for their lives on each other's loyalty.

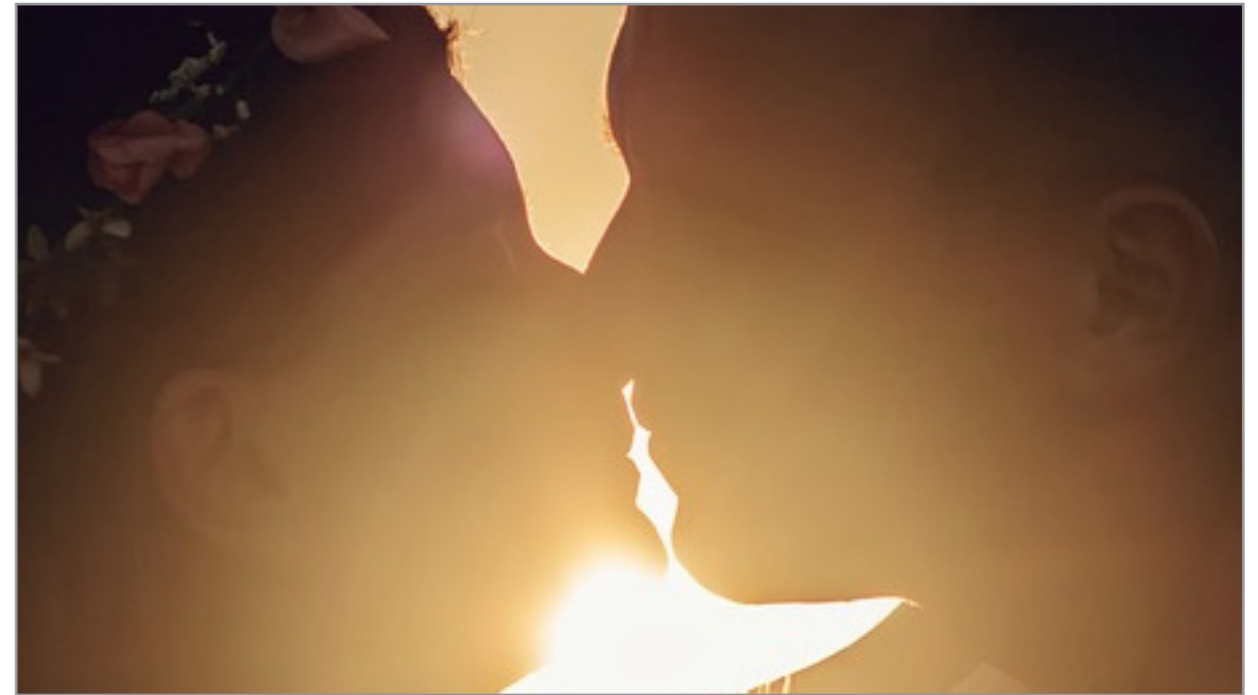


photo pixabay.com

25.

Mater Dolorosa *contd...*

I would not want to be interpreted as asserting the contrary, that only pleasure forges commitment. I say only that a positive social construction of the erotic is one which helps to integrate a way of life, helps to make it beautiful in its entirety. Humanity's fine ethnic traditions have always woven meaning and practice from not one but several of the Great Obsessions to which the tissues of our brains and bodies, the blood, the sperm, and all our fluids, already commit us: Sex, Violence, Ceremony, Nostalgia, God. But since they have not, on the whole, woven their strands very well, the history of our species recites, nevertheless, that most people most of the time have been poor and miserable.

26.

The Interior Journey

Every smell, every taste, every sight, every stretch of a muscle, every movement, every catching of a rhythm, every sound, every touch ... is a voyage backward in time, a discovery from the inside of the emotions of our hunter-gather ancestors, of our primate ancestors, of our mammalian ancestors, of our reptilian ancestors, of our ichthyan ancestors ... of the stardust from which the earth was formed.

27.

Light

It was like the sun bursting through the clouds, dazzling what had been a darkened landscape; and it was like looking through the window of a climbing airplane when it breaks through the top of a fog bank into the blue above. Suddenly I realized, as if in a flash of light, that a thousand books about socialism were somewhat beside the main point. They are books about how the masses, led by the socialists, might constitute themselves as effective political actors and take power. But the revolution is not a change in power; it is a change in norms, in rules. Most people believe that socialists have held enough power in enough unsuccessful social experiments to justify drawing the conclusion that the rules of the game of capitalism are the only rules that work. God knows they work very badly, but most people doubt that there is any alternative.

The tasks of those of us who still are socialists, in this age of doubt, are to live socialism, to prove it feasible by doing it; and to publicize socialism's very real historical accomplishments, to prove it feasible by correcting memories. Until we can show the public that there are real alternatives, we shall neither have power nor deserve it.

28.

Kisses Can Tell the Truth

I do not want to expect too much or too little from the positive erotic. I have reason to believe that it exists; that there could be more of it; that it could be a part of the motivating energy that will build a better world; and that when a better world is built it will be a part of the motivating energy that sustains it.

Nancy Stanford Blair, PhD, knew she wanted to make a positive difference in people's lives from a very early age. Once she discovered teaching as the route to touching the future, she never turned back. With a career that spans four decades creating learning opportunities at the primary, secondary, college and professional levels, Nancy has always promoted the singular and collective influence of people to transform themselves and the circumstances around them. Specifically, Nancy has created multiple local, state, national and international programs that have successfully developed inspirational, transformational leaders. She is currently Professor Emerita of Doctoral Leadership Studies at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a consultant in leadership formation and sustainability, and a proud grandmother of seven future leaders. She has co-authored four books: *Connecting Leadership to the Brain*, *Leading with the Brain in Mind*, *Mindful Leadership* and *Leading Coherently: Reflections from Leaders around the World* (SAGE). She has earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and her PhD from the University of Illinois. Nancy brings her message to life through creating the unbridled capacity in others to masterfully and fully serve their corner of the world.

Mark L. Gesner, PhD, was exposed to transformational leadership early in life at large family gatherings in Brooklyn, New York, where his grandmother and great aunts inspired a sense of strength and belonging among all who entered. He sought to emulate their positive influence with his colleagues and students, and learned how to be especially impactful by traveling the world where he gained a deep appreciation for diverse perspectives and finding wisdom in unexpected places. These underpinnings informed Mark's career of creating innovative programs, supporting entrepreneurs, growing organizations and businesses, building partnerships, and developing mission-driven leaders. He has designed programs and led courses about innovation, organizational development, cross-cultural management, leadership and community engagement. He currently serves as Executive Director of the Hub for Innovation and Community Engaged Learning at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Prior to working as a faculty member and administrator in higher education, Mark was a leader for Hostelling International USA, an organization promoting cross-cultural understanding through affordable travel. He holds an undergraduate degree from the State University of New York at Albany, and graduate degrees from Harvard University and Cardinal Stritch University. Mark brings his message to life by being an engaged local and global citizen who supports others in realizing their individual and collective aspirations and to discover home wherever they roam.

DR. NANCY STANFORD BLAIR & DR MARK L. GESNER DISCOVERING YOUR LIFE'S MESSAGE



Authors: Dr Nancy Stanford Blair & Dr Mark L Gesner
Your Life is Your Message, Discovering the Core of Transformational Leadership
Published by SAGE
<https://in.sagepub.com/en-in/sas/your-life-is-your-message/book271730>

When Mahatma Gandhi was asked by a reporter to sum up his life's work, he responded simply, "My life is my message." We all send a message with our thoughts, words and deeds, but is it the message we intend? Are we purposeful in putting forth our better self, our elevated version of the person we want to be? We invite you to explore and clarify your message to align it with the legacy that you want to leave behind.

Based on over 100 interviews with leaders from around the world who found their way to mission-driven lives, we discovered a path to determine our lives' meaning and the influence we all hope to achieve. From CEOs of Starbucks and Southwest Airlines who developed their leadership messages early in life, to community catalysts in Kenya and India whose sense of purpose propelled them to enhance the lives of those in poverty, we learned compelling lessons for all those seeking fulfillment and positive transformation for the self, others, and the systems in which they live and work.

If you are an emerging or accomplished leader of an organization, a business, or within your community and are interested in finding the authentic and impactful leader within, read on. Some might argue that now, more than ever before in the history of human existence, we need leaders like you who are self-aware, committed to a set of central core values, and are intent on aligning their life's work to the improvement of their corner of the world. Whether you educate today's children for a challenging tomorrow, run a successful corporation that seeks a return on investment on multiple levels, provide healthcare for burgeoning public human mental and physical needs, or are committed to a non-profit and its mission -- we need YOU to be the best you can be....the most authentic you....the most impassioned you....the most coherent you, who knows your message and shows it throughout your life's work.



The Ascending Spiral of Transformation:

Think of this journey as an upward spiral that begins in your childhood with rudimentary questions about who you are, why you are here, what you want and how you want to be.



Figure One: The Ascending Spiral of Transformation

At the bottom of this spiral are your early musings about the weighty questions -- asked and answered from a child's point of view based on your family, culture, religion and schooling. As you mature, you have the opportunity to ask these questions again and again, becoming more tightly coiled in your understanding of yourself and where you are headed. As a current leader, it's always good to pause and update your responses to see if you have indeed found alignment in the answers, or if not, determine how to get back on track.

Questions for Transformational Leaders . . . Including You

Are you ready to find your message and realize the vision to which you aspire? One way of getting inspired for the journey forward is to get to know some of the leaders we interviewed and see how they responded to our queries about their leadership, and build upon their lessons learned by asking yourself the very same questions of yourself.

Who Are You?

Who are you? Not your role or gender, or who you are in relationship to others. Rather, who are you at your core? What are the central values that motivate your decision making every day?

One of our interviewees, for example, explained how she focused on her values regarding equity and human decency. Retired Ambassador Brenda Schoonover, a lifelong career diplomat for the United States State Department, Chief of Mission for Belgium and Ambassador to Togo, described her childhood growing up in segregated America. From being one of the first African Americans to integrate a high school in rural Maryland, to joining the first Peace Corp Mission to Philippines, she formed a solid set of core values that included respect for differences, fair and just treatment for all and appreciation for diversity.

Who, reader, are you?

Why Are You Here?

Why are you here? This is not meant as a vague existential question, but more as a clarifier of your life's purpose and mission.

One of our interviewees responded to this question by focusing on how she served the needs of others. Colleen Barrett rose from an executive secretary to the President of Southwest Airlines to become the company president herself. Her purpose, as she described it, was to provide excellent care for her employees so that they in turn felt fulfilled as they lived out the mission to "Fly Southwest, the most service centered airline in the industry".



As a result of her clear focus on purpose, her airline was the only one who didn’t face bankruptcy in the turbulent 90’s because the employees became shareholders with a full stake in supporting the company.

Why, reader, are you here?

What Do You Hope to Accomplish?

What do you want to accomplish with your life? This is not the money you will amass, but rather, the difference you will make.

Another of the leaders interviewed answered this question by highlighting his goal of giving back to his roots. Kiren, was a dedicated servant leader that we met at the Gandhi Ashram in Ahmedabad. As a successful engineer in Chicago, his purpose was to give back to his native country, India. Eventually, he discovered a clear goal-to educate the children of the slums. As a result, he was able to build an educational system that developed from a handful of kids on the street corner near the Ashram to full support of 9000 children.

Reader, what do you hope to accomplish?

How Will You Get There?

How will you realize you mission and vision? This is not a question about a laundry list of actions you plan to take, but rather, how will you form an overall approach to leadership that is aligned with your values and purpose?

Jamie Elder, a social entrepreneur who grew up in poverty, explained his “How” by considering his legacy and the path that would yield the result he envisitoned. He has a keen sense of how his family and mentors formed him, and readily articulates that he wants “to be remembered for being an active and valuable contributor to the final integration of Black Americans into the American society through economic prosperity and ownership.

I want to be remembered for being a pioneer in the field social entrepreneurship and innovation. Most importantly, I want to be remembered as someone who didn’t waste my life living selfishly for myself, but sacrificing and compromising when necessary for the better of others.”

Reader, how will you accomplish your mission?

Breakdowns:

Did you find a consistent line of meaning from the first question to last? Is it clear to you how your values relate to your purpose and how your purpose drives your ultimate goal? Do you believe your leadership actions are in concert with all the above? If not, where do you see the breakdowns?

Breakdowns occur when we are feeling disconnected from ourselves and our life’s purpose, when we are feeling untrue to our core values, and when we are dissatisfied with the outcomes we seek or we lack confidence in our actions. The following questions may help you discover any break-downs you are currently experiencing.

1. Disconnected? If the breakdown is between your who and your why, then more time is needed to think about your deepest core values and what gives your life meaning and purpose. You’ll know the feeling if you feel disconnected from the work you are currently doing.
Do you have an unsettled feeling about living a life of meaning?
Are you unsure about what’s most important to you?
2. Needing Clarity? If the breakdown is between your why and your what, then more time is needed to become clearer about the outcome you desire and how it will indeed help you fulfill your purpose. You’ll know the feeling if you have already started to achieve some out comes but the results aren’t really making the difference you initially sought.
Is your goal clear enough so that you will know when you achieve it?
Is the goal truly aligned with your purpose and values?



3. **Trouble Sleeping?**

If the breakdown is between your what and how, then more time is needed to reflect on your leadership behavior patterns. You'll know the feeling if you have trouble sleeping at night because you don't like the decisions you made or the way you behaved during the day. *When times get tough, do you forget to revisit your core values to drive your decisions? Do you feel confused about what is the right decision to make and action to take?*

Breakdowns are common in the role of leadership. It's a tough job with many others counting on you. All the more reason for you to invest the time and energy necessary for a deeper dive into your own transformation, one that emanates from internal clarity and powerful external coherence.

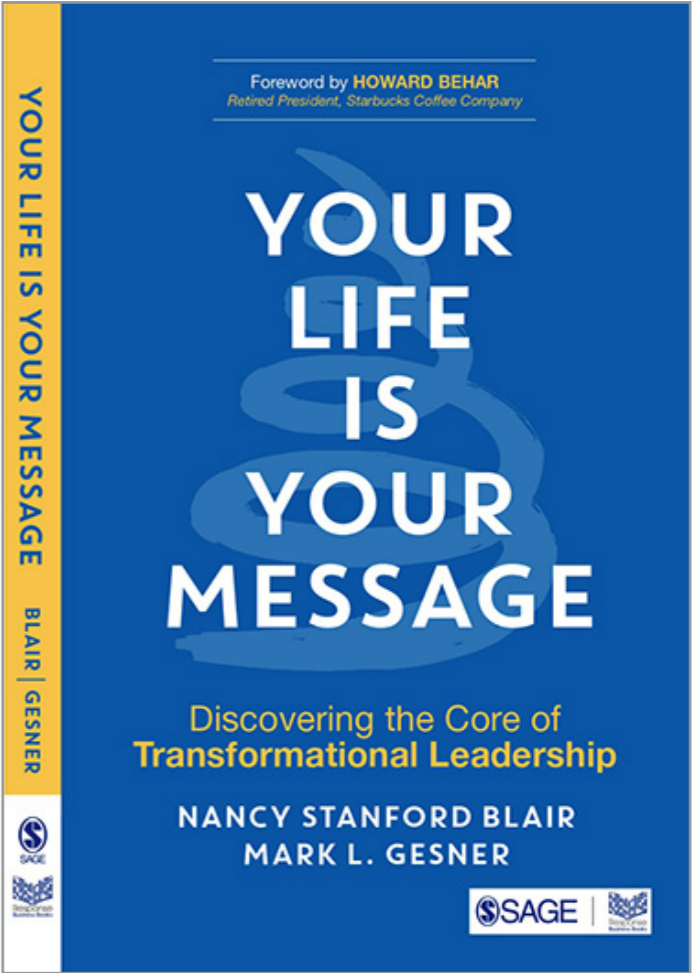


Figure Two: Leading from the Inside Out

Forging Ahead:

We encourage you to forge ahead and live a life of “more” that suits your own sense of coherence, strengthens your ability to lead, and empowers you to positively transform yourself and your organization. Discovering this place of clarity feels like home. It is not about finding a destination or end product, but rather a process and path for which only you have the directions. It is a place where your life is your message.

To learn more from famous and not so famous leaders around the world, pick up a copy of Your Life is Your Message: Discovering the Core of Transformational Leadership, published by SAGE and available on Amazon.



Ratna Vira, the author of *Daughter By Court Order* and *It's Not About You* is known for holding up a mirror to society in her bestselling novels. Her books have been translated into Hindi, thereby drawing a large readership in the smaller towns of India. Her first book was featured in *The New York Times*, and both books have been the subject of several research and PhD theses. Ratna has spoken at leading universities, international business schools, corporate occasions and been part of several panels. *Why People Give* is her first non-fiction book, co-written with her daughter, Suhasini.

Suhasini Vira is a Laidlaw Research Award winning student of Economics and Politics at Durham University, and she has brought a well-researched foundation to the book. She is presently researching on the precarity of informal employment for youth in India. Suhasini has been editor of *The Bubble* and her university economics journal.

This mother-daughter team holds out a brief for altruism - and why our society needs it now more than ever before.

RATNA & SUHASINI VIRA

WHY PEOPLE GIVE - INTERPRETING ALTRUISM



Authors: Ratna and Suhasini Vira
 Why People Give - Interpreting Altruism
 Published by SAGE
<https://in.sagepub.com/en-in/sas/why-people-give/book270470>

This is a deeply moving book, which charts the rise of altruism across time, belief systems, and cultures. This book is very relevant in the India of today, where empathy is evaporating from society. *Why People Give* will change how we look at the act of giving and, equally importantly, how we treat each other. Written in an academically serious, but entirely accessible style, the book seeks to develop a greater public understanding of altruism and the inherent motivations that drive philanthropy.

The book is written about the basis for altruism and giving in India. Suhasini brings to the book freshness of the millennial outlook whereas Ratna has looked at the whole idea of why sometimes it is easier for people to give to institutions rather than help a fellow human being in need.

It has as its major segment, a readable, academic exploration of the history, anthropology, economics, and psychology of altruism. The book is passionately argued and superbly researched. *Why People Give* has a generic appeal as it is written about the basis for altruism and giving in India. Suhasini and Ratna, the authors, examine the act of giving from the primeval human instincts embedded in our genetic code, to exploring the psychology and economics of giving and altruism in India. They argue that Indians dramatically undervalue the impulse that drives giving. The book explores what and how far are we as a people willing to reach out to those whom we perceive as less fortunate than us. The fundamental basis of caring, a cautionary account about the battle between greed and giving, and our own frailty in the face of life choices are discussed.

Compassion and emotion are passé. We live in the digital age surrounded by millennials who use Emojis and Instagram to express themselves, and with them most of us are forgetting life as we once knew it. We forget the heart and meticulously count Likes on Facebook posts. We believe that Facebook and WhatsApp are free. What we are just beginning to realise is that in using them, we have begun to give up our freedom. In wanting to be connected all the time, our loneliness gets amplified.

It is a truism that conflicting issues are seldom about what is on the surface; conflicts are often about matters that remain unsaid, untreated, and unhealed, about emotional wounds. The authors argue that individual choice about giving and altruism are also driven by a similar impulse, and that we cannot look to understanding philanthropy without considering the motivation for giving. Giving and caring are linked to happiness and positive psychology and *Why People Give* shows this link through extensive research.

Everyone has a heart, a physical one, but is the modern emphasis on reason, rationality and the brain pushing aside the spiritual relationship of the hearth with the 'soul'? Is the heart no longer the representation of feelings for our community?

Repeated instances of altruistic behaviour, of continuing charity, are evidence that people still feel their heart as a representation of their self, of the emotional self, which cannot be reduced to materialistic, biological terms.

While details of the brain were unknown in the early Vedic period, thoughts and emotions, and consciousness itself, came from the mind. But, as the soul rested in the heart, it was also the source of dreams and meditative thought. True consciousness, therefore, came from the heart and not the mind. The ultimate desire was to become one with *Brahman* and that could come about through connecting your heart to the heart of *Brahman* through duty, service, sacrifice, devotion, and charity.

Charity, generosity and specifically the giving of alms are regarded as virtuous in most Indian philosophies and religions. *Daana*, a Sanskrit/Pali word denoting charity and giving, came from the heart. *Daana* traces its roots to Vedic traditions and can take the form of helping individuals in need, or in the wider form of helping many through public works and philanthropy.

Romantic poetry, in the East and the West, continued to reinforce the link of the heart to emotions and to giving. A person could be cold-hearted, tender-hearted, or warm-hearted. For the romantics, the giving and the charity were ends in themselves, independent on the worthiness of the receiver.

In a more cynical and brutal world, newspaper headlines no longer stun us. Our apathy is so strong. A girl is abandoned, daughters killed, women raped, and families found murdered. These stories no longer move us. Ponzi schemes bankrupt families, farmers commit suicide. Millionaires are made, and some led to prison. 'Karma,' we mutter 'catching up'. Ingenuous ways to multiply and quadruple wealth and dodge tax are revealed daily.

All the while, the same people are seen supporting the latest causes, visiting the temples and houses of prayer, and washing their sins through giving. Is this truly charity? Is it altruism or merely selfish behaviour?

Compassion and emotion are passé. We live in the digital age surrounded by millennials who use Emojis and Instagram to express themselves, and with them most of us are forgetting life as we once knew it. We forget the heart and meticulously count Likes on Facebook posts. We believe that Facebook and WhatsApp are free. What we are just beginning to realise is that in using them, we have begun to give up our freedom. In wanting to be connected all the time, our loneliness gets amplified.

However, money does not seem to be the glue that binds people together. In a series on the lives of the super-rich on the History Channel, it was observed that they had the same insecurities as those with very little. Their wealth became their biggest insecurity, putting their lives at risk. So, the billionaire spends his life surrounded by body guards and then hires detectives to shadow his bodyguards who know too much about him and his family. He sends his kids to college wanting them to experience life and so-called normalcy but is worried about who they interact with and has their friends and associates shadowed and the boyfriend investigated. Beyond a point, the wealth which is meant to give happiness morphs into something else instead of protecting the individual from the hardships of life, it often is the reason that the person needs protection.

It is this that has compelled this book, *Why People Give*, to be written. The need to believe that the heart still beats, that humanity still has a chance. Counting cars and houses, clothes and parties, rocks on fingers is all good but life is meant to be measured by something far deeper, more sustainable and although this book cannot give answers it does attempt to show you how small changes can give hope. A trickle can become a downpour covering the distance between words and the truth.

The authors conclude that motivations will differ, and that altruistic behaviour is not inherently in our genes. It has to be learned. Fortunately, our physical frailties and the powers we gained through language and the Cognitive Revolution have made us capable of societal structures and of working together. Altruism may not be in our genes, but it is very much part of what makes us human beings.

We need to see each other and relate to society. We need to see with our souls and reach out with our hearts. Look back and look ahead and carry people with you. Pause, help as you rush through your day. Count your blessings and in your prayers, include someone else's troubles.

In the age of biopics in India, actor Dharmendra's words rang true. He said that he did not want a book, or a movie made on his life because people forget. And the world moves on. A strong sentiment but so true.

What does remain, however, is the echo of our actions. Do good without the sword of karma hanging over you but because you have a heart that beats with compassion.

But not everyone believes that sharing what one has is good. The ability to give does not mean the same thing as the propensity to give; this is a basic human characteristic.

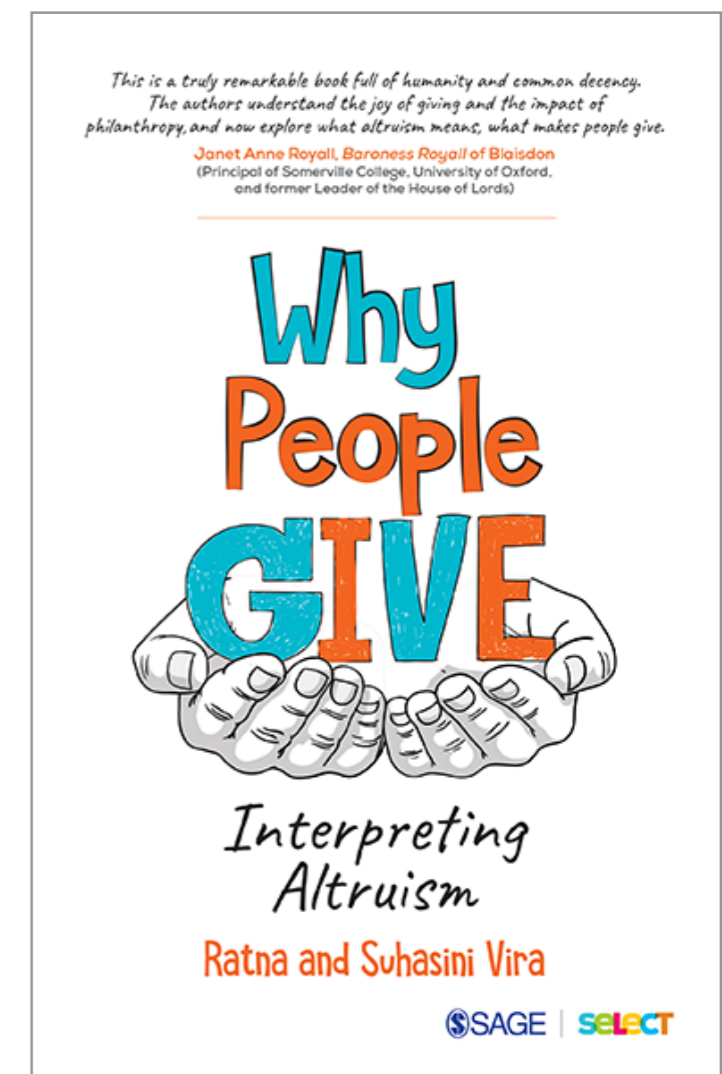
Why People Give explores evolution and Richard Dawkin's theory of the Selfish Gene. It seeks an understanding for altruism from economic game theoretical models, while recognising that memes and social behaviour sometimes do not follow strict academic models. While there are several reasons identified for why people do not give to charity, the authors argue that effective altruism is more than merely giving to charity. The book identifies the seven faces of philanthropy and the psychological and emotional impact on the giver and receiver. Positive psychology and the motivators of change are identified.

The authors conclude that motivations will differ, and that altruistic behaviour is not inherently in our genes. It has to be learned. Fortunately, our physical frailties and the powers we gained through language and the Cognitive Revolution have made us capable of societal structures and of working together. Altruism may not be in our genes, but it is very much part of what makes us human beings.

To connect the reader with the real people affected by the act of giving, the book is bracketed with two chapters, an opening that relates the emotional account of two people whose lives were transformed by the assistance of others, and a closing that explores the motivations, emotional courage and feisty spirit of a couple faced with personal loss who created a movement that saves the lives of many children across India.

The authors, in their journey of research and meeting people, came across numerous stories of children who live today because of the work done by charities and their indefatigable team of volunteers, doctors, and donors. These indelible stories of real people enhance the book and the journey unfolds with each chapter ending with a story. Stories of children who live today because of the work done by charities and their indefatigable team of volunteers, doctors, and donors. The book is passionately argued, deeply researched, and filled with indelible stories of real people. It will resonate with many people, with its real-life stories, illustrations and conversations between Keira and Rita, which in a way sum up the essence of the chapter.

SAGE Publications
<https://in.sagepub.com/en-in/sas/why-people-give/book270470>



Dr Kalinga Seneviratne, is a Sri Lanka born journalist, radio broadcaster, television documentary maker and a media and international communications analyst. He has been a development communication consultant for UNESCO and was the Head of Research at the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC) in Singapore from 2005-2012. Kalinga holds a Phd in International Communications (Australia), Masters in Social Science (Australia) and Bachelor's degree in Engineering Science (UK). He specializes in development journalism and feature writing and has been writing for the Inter Press Service (IPS) and IDN In-Depth news since 1991. He has written over 1000 feature stories in a career spanning more than 25 years covering over 30 countries. His edited publications include "Mindful Communication for Sustainable Development: Perspectives from Asia" published by SAGE in 2018. In 1987 he received a UN Media Peace Award for a series broadcast on Australian community radio looking at the relationship between rich and poor countries.



DR KALINGA SENEVIRATNE IS 'WATCHDOG' JOURNALISM A WESTERN MYTHOLOGY?

In January 2003, French Communications Professor Ignacio Ramonet told an audience of over 5,000 young people, mainly from Latin America, attending the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre in Brazil that Corporations now own and produce not only traditional media, but everything which we call culture and communication. They are also involved in leisure, pop music, cinema and sports. They have no objective of being the 'fourth estate' to protect the citizenry from abuse of power by governments. "They have come together as a power," he argued. "The fourth power (estate) is now exploiting and oppressing the populations (for their own profits). How can we tackle this power, which has transformed from friends of the citizenry to its enemy?"

Throughout the period I was writing this book, attempts to get Wikileaks founder Julian Assange out of the Ecuadorian embassy in London and extradited to the US to face espionage charges was gathering steam. One would argue that he was practicing 'watchdog' journalism to its core, but for the US authorities he was a hacker and a security threat. Now many governments, the latest his home country Australia, are enacting laws to jail whistle blowers who expose governments' abuse of power. This dilemma is the central focus of the book, where it is argued with numerous examples, that the so-called "liberal free media" in the West has jettisoned its 'watchdog' role as news turns into a commodity for sale.

When I began writing this book, my mind went back to the 1980s, when as a raw reporter, I interviewed veteran Indian journalist Chakravarti Raghavan in Geneva, when he told me "exception makes the news". Few months later when I put this question to Michael Ruepka, the then editor-in-chief of Reuters news agency, he told me: "No one is interested to know if I went to work safely, but, if you fell under a bus, they will be interested to know how".

So that is what is news – reporting about exceptional circumstances - not the every-day reality. Thus, we have set ourselves up for the current era of news as entertainment. How India's most popular TV news anchor Arnab Goswami has taken this to new heights with his rating-topping panel discussions where everyone shouts at each other, is discussed in length in the chapter that discusses whether we ever had a truth era.

Today, the mainstream media (MSM) battles for relevance in an age of excessive commercialization and challenges from the Internet. Ironically, the wave of media "liberalization" that have been pushed through around the world by western liberals have weakened the basic premise of the Libertarian Media Function Theory (LMFT). As the broadcast media in particular, transforms from a public enterprise to a commercial entity, it has changed the way journalism is practiced globally. News media has drifted towards a public relations and influencer-pedaling paradigm that is manufacturing consent to suit the interests of whoever owns the media.

Time To Review Media Theory

We have been teaching in journalism programs for over half a century that for the media to be free it has to be privately owned. It is only then, that the media is able to play the 'watchdog' role of a 'fourth estate'. It is also what differentiates a "free" media from that of a "controlled" media in an authoritative state, where the media are owned by the government. The 'four theories of the press' that were prescribed in the 1950s and still widely taught in mass communication programs, assign the LMFT to describe the former and Authoritarian Media Function Theory to defined the latter.

MSM's global news agenda need to include and ask questions such as, why are people who are not producing anything, like the bosses of Facebook and Amazon, are among the top 10 richest people in the world? They need to investigate the power of the pharmaceutical industries to protect its profits at the cost of affordable medicines for most of the world's population; how 911 has scuttled a growing 'global justice movement'; why mining companies should be taxed more; how the world's rich and the corrupt exploit globalization of financial flows; and why labour migration is a 21st century slave trade. The book examine these issues and MSM's failures.

LMFT worked as long as the media owners only owned the media. But, when the media – both at international and national levels- began to be owned by business conglomerates that are sometimes more powerful than government, the libertarian model of the “free media” began to unravel. As Noam Chomsky amply describes it, journalism has become a system of ‘manufacturing consent’ to promote the interests media owners. Unfortunately, this Propaganda Model, which he developed with Herman and McChesney is not often discussed in American textbooks that are used in mass communication programs across the world.

In this context, President Trump's continuing outbursts about the “fake news” American MSM, even going to the extent of describing it as “enemies of the American people” - echoing similar sentiments to Professor Ramonet – though for different reasons, should be welcomed. Unfortunately, the American media has responded by attacking the President rather than paying attention to his message of why the media may not be reflecting the sentiments of the people that voted for him. What made them to embrace his message? Just labeling them as “xenophobic” or “racist” is not ‘watchdog’ journalism.

The socio-economics of why they are against free trade deals, globalization and immigration need to be investigated and analyzed. This is also a concern expressed by millions of people across the world. A whole chapter has been devoted to discussing how neo-liberalism is breeding inequality across the globe while the MSM is largely ignoring it.

MSM's global news agenda need to include and ask questions such as, why are people who are not producing anything, like the bosses of Facebook and Amazon, are among the top 10 richest people in the world? They need to investigate the power of the pharmaceutical industries to protect its profits at the cost of affordable medicines for most of the world's population; how 911 has scuttled a growing 'global justice movement'; why mining companies should be taxed more; how the world's rich and the corrupt exploit globalization of financial flows; and why labour migration is a 21st century slave trade. The book examine these issues and MSM's failures.

Subjectivity As Objectivity

This leads to where western-centric news values are questioned, and it is argued that imbalances in news – especially at international level – occurs because the truth is subjective.

Way back in 1980, founder of the Asian Press Union Tarzie Vittachi argued in a column published in Newsweek that the news values practiced by western media is coloured by their cultural viewpoints. Which makes “a bikini a more appropriate symbol of civilization than a sari or a chador”. This theme is further expanded in the book with examples of western reporting and its cultural biases – such as in the reporting of the defeat of Tamil Tiger terrorists in Sri Lanka; focus of the 2004 Asian Tsunami reporting; focusing on China's Belt and Road Initiative as a “debt trap”; why US war crimes are not addressed when reporting Obama's visit to Hiroshima and Laos; and many others. Former head of UN Information Division Dr Shashi Tharoor points out that such subjective news reporting reflects a lack of respect for the “other”.

Danger of Evangelical Liberalism

Dr S Gurumurthy, an Indian chartered accountant turned journalist and influencer notes, that liberal ideology which says “I am the only truth that I only know what the solution is” has become the greatest threat to freedom of expression. He argues, that “the media cannot produce right communication, because the ecosystem has been taken over by ideological drolls”. This is discussed at various points in the book with regards to donor funded NGO media that have created chaos like the ‘Arab Spring’.

Singaporean strategic communication specialist Viswa Sadasivan warns that freedom of expression is being threatened by organized syndicates (such as western donor driven local NGOs) or organized government regimes employing these powerful platform to reach out to young people who are seeking for something to believe in. “(They) are manipulating these minds, using the same platforms that they have come to trust. That for me is grossly unethical,” he argues.

Fake News Hysteria – Fear of the Alternative

With the advent of new communication technologies, the alternative media – known as “social media” – is today able to compete with the MSM on a level playing field. The latter’s hysteria is fuelled mainly by the fear of this competition, and often exposure of the MSM’s shortcomings, especially in terms of subjective neo-liberal biases.

British MSM’s attempts to de-legitimise Jeremy Corbyn and his successful use of social media to brand himself; Philippines Rodrigo Duterte’s successful presidential campaign using young cyber-troopers; and Malaysiakini’s low-cost internet news portal’s success in influencing the political agenda in Malaysia are examples of how the alternative has made an impact. While there are real ‘fake news’ that is a worry with the low cost distribution model of the Internet, yet, disinformation is not a new phenomena. We need to be careful that the Fake News hysteria will not result in stifling different opinions.

Mindfully Non-Adversarial

The ‘watchdog’ journalism model we have been teaching and practicing is too adversarial and today the news media is driving conflicts rather than helping to resolve these. Balance we have been told is giving two sides to a story, which in itself creates a conflict.

In the final chapter, the book discusses a mindful journalism model drawing from philosophical ideas from Asian (mainly Buddhist) wisdom, to develop a journalism culture of cooperation and promoting harmony in society. There are many examples taken and discussed about why the media need to investigate and expose ‘structural violence’ of the global economic system, which is driving conflict and inequality. The real “watchdog” journalism is to expose those who are abusing their power and they are not necessarily governments. The book calls for a new paradigm in training journalists.

Dr. Kalinga Seneviratne
Myth of ‘Free Media and Fake News
in the Post-Truth Era
Published by SAGE

<https://in.sagepub.com/en-in/sas/myth-of-%E2%80%98free-media%E2%80%99-and-fake-news-in-the-post-truth-era/book271595>



Dr. N. Mythili is an expert in school education with sixteen years of professional experience. She obtained national scholarship to do her Ph.D. at Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru. In her Ph.D. thesis, she carried out an in-depth study on time on task in teaching-learning process, an unexplored area in the year 2000. Currently, Dr. Mythili joined National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), New Delhi in 2013 as Assistant Professor. She has played a crucial role in developing the Curriculum Framework for School Leadership for Indian context and established school leadership academies in different states of India. Her research articles on the community pressure for achieving higher quality, effective use of time and quality education, regulatory mechanism in teacher education, governance and leadership, legitimacy of school leadership of women, quest for success of women leaders, innovations and the like are published in well-known journals in India.



DR N MYTHILI

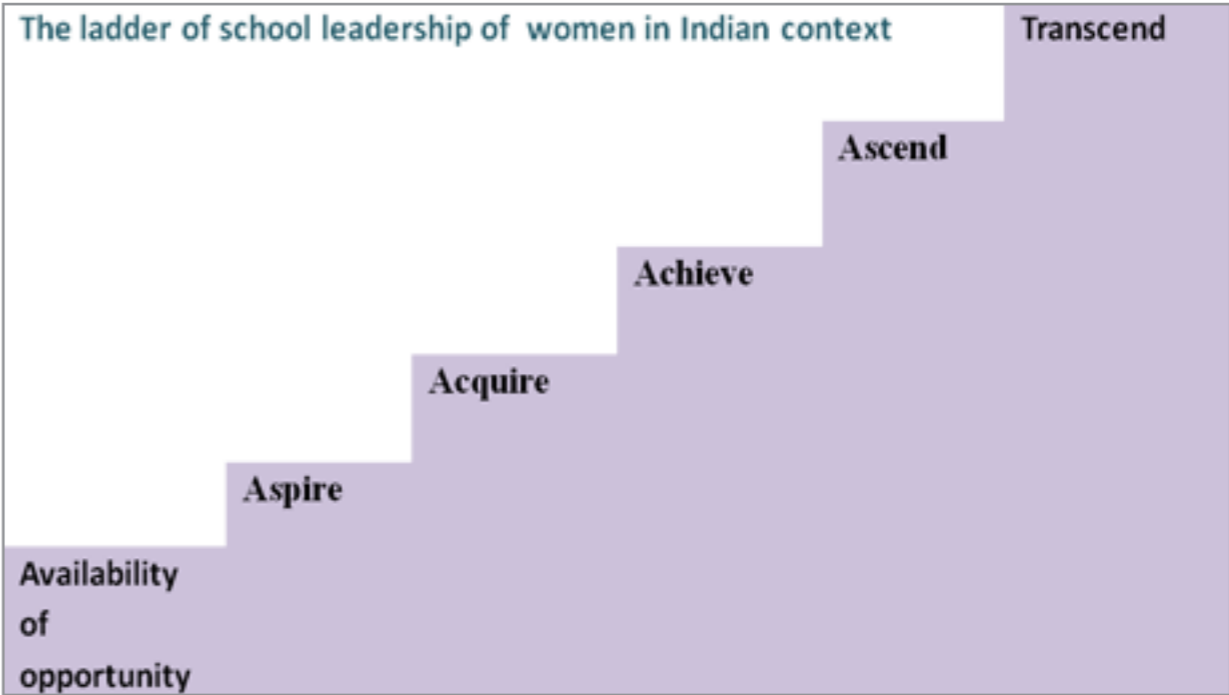
WOMEN IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

School leadership, as we know well, is the second most important factor influencing student learning and constitutes the prime factor for overall improvement of school quality. Women principals play a crucial role in influencing school quality due to their unique leadership practices such as caring, relationship oriented, democratic, sharing power, and so on. Besides, they also practice academic, transformational and collaborative leadership styles predominantly. They also bring in a different perspective to strategic decisions being less autocratic, rewarding others, adopting participatory approach for consensus building, share power, use power to influence rather than for coercive actions and role-modeling.

Due to the fact that teaching is treated as a quasi profession, women leaders in teaching profession, especially in school education, do not get adequate attention in discourses related to Gender and Development (GAD) and Women in Development (WID). In developing and traditional country contexts, Women especially face tensions due to interaction between opposing dyadic factors such as masculinity - femininity syndrome, covert compulsions to assume a male persona, socio-cultural effects, thwarted opportunities, patriarchy, drawing parallels between home and school for their roles as teachers, and an 'all-protective male brother-like' teacher at the school taking care of female teachers on whom family of female teachers has trust. Women school heads use parallel strategies of both conformity and resistance in mediating their agency to face challenges and difficult situations.

In Indian context, studies make no distinction between women teachers and women school heads. A few studies which focused on school leadership failed to address gender equality arguing the case for women school heads. Excessive focus on women's empowerment has actually blurred the recognition of women as leaders in any form of women's studies. Many studies do not consider educated women in teaching professions. This has led to a deficit approach in studying women in teaching profession, specially, women school leaders. All this has resulted in according low legitimacy to women working in school leadership positions. As there is paucity of studies in the area of school leadership of women in India, it is important to begin the discourse on women teachers and position women school leaders. Therefore, the present book focuses on how women succeed as school leaders and the path they traverse considering the Indian context.

Secondary data analysis using quantitative analysis was undertaken to present all India scenario considering all states and Union Territories. Four types of school leadership positions across all school categories prevailing in Indian context was studied - Acting Head master/mistress (in all schools), Head teacher (secondary level), vice principal and principal (senior secondary level). In addition, 20 cases of women school heads was studied to delve deep into the path traversed for success along with identifying the determinants of successful school leadership and their legitimacy as school leaders using qualitative data. At the end, woman in school leadership was theorized including defining school leadership of women and gender in school leadership of women. Policy implications were also discussed based on the results obtained.



Representation of women in school leadership positions depends on four factors such as Distribution of School Categories, Schooling Pattern, and School Leadership Positions which are inter-dependent; recruitment policies for school leadership positions in all states and UTs; capabilities of women as school heads and; parallel leadership positions as alternate choices to school leadership positions in the education system across different states and UTs. Out of the 10 school categories, only 4 school categories have designated leadership post – Head Teacher/Head Master, principal and vice principal. These school categories are primary/upper primary to secondary level and primary/upper primary to senior secondary level. The secondary data from UDISE, the official national statistics statistics for school education, was analysed considering 50% as the cutoff point to label the women school heads as higher, equal or lower as school heads across different school categories.

Results show that women are represented higher as vice principals in only one school category, i.e., primary to higher secondary schools, which constitutes a mere 3.16 percent of total schools in India. Women teachers are also higher represented in this school category. It is an encouraging trend indeed. Women are under-represented as principals and HMs at senior secondary and secondary levels, respectively. All states and Union Territories (UTs) have been grouped into four educational regions, viz., north, south, east and west. A region wise analysis shows that women are higher represented as vice-principals in southern (68.2%) and northern region (54.8%) in primary to higher primary schools. In the southern region, women are also higher represented as vice-principals in upper primary to senior secondary (60.2%) school category, as principals in primary to higher secondary (59.2%) and in upper primary to senior secondary (50.9%) school categories.

Further, all states and UTs were considered distinctly to analyze the aggregate trend by considering all school categories together for each school leadership position. Results show that there is higher representation of women in four leadership positions such as Acting HMs, Head Teacher, Vice-Principal and Principal in Chandigarh, Goa, Kerala, Punjab and Tamil Nadu states/UTs. Meghalaya has higher representation of women as acting HMs, Head teachers, and vice principals. A& N Islands has higher representation of women as acting HMs and Head Teachers. Karnataka shows higher representation of women as vice principals besides acting HMs. Even in Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh there is a higher representation of women vice principals.

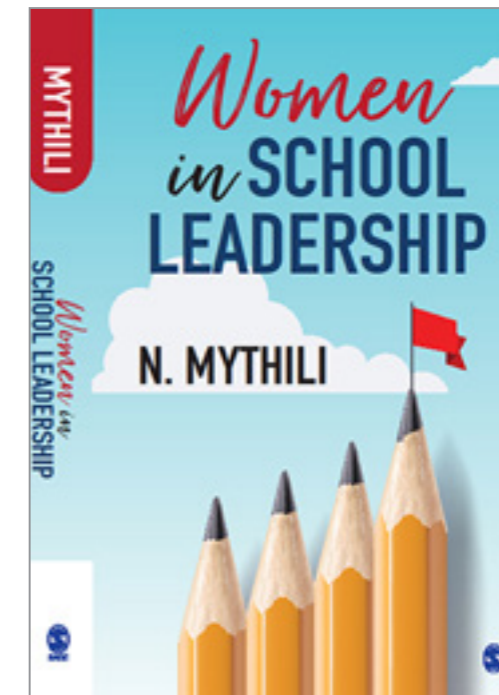
The representation of women in these school leadership positions is influenced by the recruitment and promotion policies of the state, distribution of school categories and their proportion in the states/UTs, parallel leadership positions existing within the programmatic structures of the state where women might make choices to work on deputation or transfer rather than in the school, and lastly their achieved and ascribed capabilities, the privilege they wish to exploit in becoming and being school leaders.

A five step ladder of school leadership of women emerged from the narrative analysis of the qualitative data obtained from interviewing 20 women school heads spread in 8 different states. Another step was added to this ladder using the results of secondary data analysis carried out earlier. All together, six steps emerged to construct the ladder of school leadership of women in Indian context. These steps of ladder are: availability of opportunity for leadership positions, aspire, acquire, achieve, ascend, and transcend (see the figure). Each step of the ladder is summarized herewith. Availability of opportunity for school leadership position constitutes the first step and has been explained above. Remaining steps are going to be explained.

Aspire refers to drawing inspiration and support from both parents and husband- the significant others- for the woman aspirant. She tries to exploit the Intellectual capital prevailing in the family to acquire necessary qualification and learns to compete for the job from family’s orientation for employment through vocational anticipatory socialization. Since parents also aspire and influence their daughters for a decent occupation that gives stability to their life, it is also a collective aspiration of the family. This is the second step in the ladder.

Acquiring the school leadership position, the third step in the ladder, is a combination of making choices, complying with obligations and compulsions, seek opportunities, and prioritise or balance between family roles and career responsibilities. After acquiring the school leadership position, women experience the need to establish themselves as leaders as mere position does not accord them as leaders in the real life of school. In other words, the legitimacy as leaders needs to gained after acquiring the leadership position. Positional leadership only gives them the minimum essential legitimacy. Beyond this minimum level of legitimacy, women have to work hard to prove their legitimacy as leaders.

Author: Dr N. Mythili
 Women in School Leadership
 Published by SAGE
<https://in.sagepub.com/en-in/sas/women-in-school-leadership/book269416>



Women try to negotiate and assert their leadership through resilience, caution, diligence, sometimes working silently, proving positivity, neutralise sensitive situations despite experiencing a subtle tension continues to exist between expectations by education system, family while trying to realise personal goals. They also attempt to depoliticise complexity with an explicit attitude of “All is Well” refusing to heed to tension saying “There is no problem at all” to construct a safety net of shadow neutrality around and yet problematise wherever negotiations are possible. All these tantamount to building a strong determination balancing that of resilience while practicing school leadership effectively. This is the fourth step in the ladder called ‘achieve’. At this stage, women perceive higher power differentials and low status since they are in the process of establishing leaders by positioning their potentials through achieving desired results. This entails a moderate degree of legitimacy to their leadership. Hence, it is necessary for woman to cross the threshold of perceived higher power differentials is crucial to stabilize themselves as leaders.

Sustaining success gained in different instances is crucial. For this women leaders work hard by crossing professional barriers and systemic constraints fairly well to move to the fifth step, Ascend. At this stage, they try neither to encourage patriarchy nor succumb to the status quo. They assert merit over gender based choices, adopt caution to address covert and overt gender practices, and put different capitals inherited or acquired to maximum use – social, intellectual, cultural, and financial so that they are sufficiently and comfortably able to raise the bar of excellence, demonstrate confidence, emphasise on self effort, exercise agency more conspicuously to excel as professional leaders by achieving results. They do this besides fulfilling the demands of multiple roles and responsibilities as wives, mothers, teachers, etc. In this step, they experience higher status, lesser power differentials with moderate negotiation to gain higher legitimacy as leaders. Recognition also comes to certain women school heads significantly at this stage. Few women got higher responsibilities in the education system which they are more than happy to do and deliver the best results considering it as a privilege rather than excess work outside the responsibility of the principal’s role. This is a phase when women have established as successful leaders beyond doubt and are safely placed as leaders within the system.

However, some of the women gradually mature into transformational leaders through their works and engagement. They begin to consider school leadership as a means for rising to higher realms of life to gradually transform oneself with an attitude of service serving the cause of children’s education

irrespective of the different forms of capitals that her family can provide her. School structure serves as an important means to strengthen their agency to cross over the norm-based leadership effectively mediating the constraints and challenges. These women surpass the structural boundaries and constraints of educational system and family even when they are working in the schools as its school head. Hence, the sixth and final step, Transcend, is a stage achieved even while facing the challenges and overcoming barriers and limitations by deriving a sense of self-worth through leadership, achieving a sense of fulfillment and confidence having worked to one’s satisfaction and respecting whatever opportunities were available to them. At this stage, degree of acceptance of their leadership by others very high and negotiation is least characterised by least perception of power differentials that accords high legitimacy as school leaders.

These women school leaders climb different steps of the ladder by interacting with structures exercising fundamental or practical–evaluative agency juxtaposed with fundamental and/or domain specific capacity. To establish legitimacy as leaders, they practice promotion focused leadership behavior and/or prevention focused leadership behavior using culturally congruent leadership and/or universal leadership styles duly exercising rational or traditional gender perspectives according to situations. These women build trust with people, practice people-centred approaches and a restrained neutrality to succeed as leaders. They not only experience the taste of success but also the bitterness when denied, mis-recognised, under-recognised which makes them strong to smile at failures, accept denials, develop dispassion to let-go and continue to look afresh to pursue their dreams in spite of adversities. Hence, gender in school leadership of women is a peculiar admix of binaries - exercising caution over fearlessness; practicing masculinity and femininity; silently resist covert compulsions arising from patriarchy yet verbalise it occasionally; use intuition over logic and; make no distinction between personal and professional life at times.

In this way, the book tries to capture the process and the path through which women succeed as school leaders to strength the case for women school leaders to be legitimate stakeholders of global discourses on WID and GAD.

Prof. Farhat Basir Khan is a distinguished academician, a communication strategist, media practitioner and an innovator with several new media techniques and formats to his credit. He is the senior most faculty member of Asia's premiere mass communication institute, the AJK Mass Communication Research Centre and has served on several prestigious positions in AJK MCRC including the Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad Chair Professor, Professor of Media and Communication and outside as Founder Director and Professor of the Academy for Photographic Excellence. In addition to leading several productions, researches, advocacy campaigns, Prof. Khan is a true champion of a Digital India. He has also made remarkable efforts in capacity building, media and digital literacy and sensitization. Also has the unique distinction of producing the fifty-year commemorative audio-visual for UNICEF India, as well as for World Health Organization, which was part of their main celebration events. Currently, he also serves on the board of editors of Journal of Scientific Temper of CSIR, department of science and technology, Government of India.



PROFESSOR FARHAT BASIR KHAN

THE GAME OF VOTES

The Game of Votes has something for everyone. It whets the appetite of journalists, people interested in Indian politics and history as well as the wary watcher of the growing stranglehold of social media over politics, society and media. The book takes you on a roller-coaster ride through the din of Indian elections, the art of forging political alliances, the overwhelming influence of social media companies in global politics, the menace of fake news and the worldwide rise of right wing politics.

Commending this timely and incisive book by Prof. Khan, the foreword, written by Former President and Congress leader Pranab Mukherjee, says: "The book looks at the role of technology platforms, micro-profiling voters, clash of personalities and the rise of the 'national champion'—all of which have been dealt with in detail. It is both empowering and liberating when a communication expert, who is also a renowned teacher, uses original research to unravel the various threads of what makes for a modern-day Indian election."

The timing of the book and its vast expanse is both interesting and important. It comes at a time when people the world over are intrigued with BJP stalwart Narendra Modi's homecoming as the Indian Prime Minister for the second time. His first time was predicted with a massive visible youth wave, but his second run with a bigger mandate was a surprise to many and a shock to a few, considering widespread chaos over demonetisation, confusion over GST and rise in communal politics. This unpredictable rise of brand Modi, his inexplicable persona, style of politics and vote-conversion abilities are contrasted with the losing sheen of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty, loss of confidence in the Congress, failure to launch of the Gandhi scion and electoral reverses for the party in an increasingly turbulent yet ambitious Indian nation.

Using a carefully thought through strategy, Team Modi has emerged as a party which has emerged as most wired and connected with the ambitions, goals and dreams of the country. It also speaks to the questions of growing ambition of the Indian middle class and the desire for enhanced participation in governance. September 15th each year is celebrated as the International Day of Democracy by the UN, calling for 'participation' as the central theme this year the UN, put the issues of democracies front and centre, where taking a democracy from being merely representative to a truly participatory one is key. The book Game of Votes is therefore an important read, as it highlights the very quality and nature of an entire paradigm shift which India, has experienced as the world's largest democracy. This is by far one of the most critical book to have been written on elections tracing Indian elections from the heady post-Independence Nehruvian era to the frenzied Modi victory of 2019, this book tells a compelling story of how India become the world's largest and most vibrant democracy. The book traces the changing political and media landscape beginning with the tepid elections of the fifties to the feverish social media driven elections of the 21st century. Politics has always been a topic dear to the Indian heart and this book will revive the historical memories of long-forgotten politicians, scintillating slogans and shrewd electoral discourses that moulded the land and its people.

Media and marketing pundits were aware that the elephant in the room - Facebook - will have an impact on the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. How deep will it be and what impact will it have was a question mark. This is precisely the question the book unravels by looking back at former American President Barack Obama's and current President Donald Trump's elections where social media, particularly Facebook had played a major role in the campaigns.

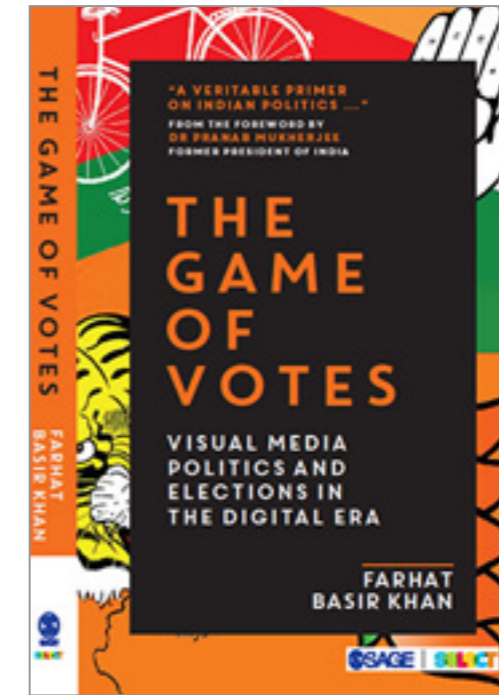
Author: Professor Farhat Basir Khan

The Game of Votes

Visual Media Politics and Elections in the Digital Era

Published by SAGE

<https://in.sagepub.com/en-in/sas/the-game-of-votes/book271611>



What the pundits had not reckoned with was the impact the newer kid on the block - WhatsApp will have, considering its mega role in making viral news elements that are volatile, insidious and fake. With Prof. Khan's background in visual media research, he critically looks at how these new media companies and platforms have been exploited by the election campaign managers.

In one of the chapters, Prof Khan deciphers the visual imagery that appeared in the newspapers during the 2014 Indian elections. He unpacks lucidly the visual communication model which enabled team Modi to leverage the news media by strategically and carefully crafting compelling visual stories and completely capture the minds of the public and create positive perception for his candidature. Been cleverly managed. To quote from the book: "The patterns that emerged from the analysis are a clear indication of a robust and well-thought photographic communication strategy in place; it does not seem to be just happenstance or coincidence. BJP was the only party with visible and consistent patterns in their use of photographs. They maintained a constant flow of photographic communication in both the newspapers depicting their focus on the use of newspapers for dissemination of messages. Whether it was the media that decided to feature photographs of BJP and Narendra Modi in a certain light and a certain way, or whether it was the political party that pushed for the publication of the photographs, a coherent strategy was perceptible."

A political revolution in history is usually ushered in when the larger population experiences social or economic oppression and high degrees of corruption. Such regime changes are usually accompanied with a high degree of bloodshed and the country goes through a radical shift in political ideology. The general election in 2014 has been considered historic in many ways for a country like India to have first experienced over two centuries of British imperialism and hegemony, to have then largely been led by a single party, The Indian National Congress, which had seen politicians from relatively well of backgrounds. The eve of the 2014 general elections saw massive media expose' and fearless journalism, where the Indian media spoke truth to power, exposed rampant corruption and several scams that shook the nation. This book is the as much the story of elections in India, its incredible democratic public institutions, its millions of voters, as it is of a common man, often called a "Chai wala" or ordinary tea seller, who rose from the rank and file of the Bhartiya Janta Party, to become the elected leader of the world's largest democracy.

This is a book which needs to be read by Modi's supporters and his critics, by the believers or the Bhakts, and the anti Modi brigade, for it powerfully and lucidly informs the discourse, backed by original research as to how Modi became the Prime Minister in 2014 and repeated a stunning victory with an even bigger majority in 2019. It needs to be read by the conspiracy theorists and the out of touch with reality advocates, written in an easy to understand language it brings the readers close to the current realities in India, while effectively tracing the historical journey of this great nation. It showcases how the new Indian is delighted and filled with pride when Modi takes to the International stages in some of the biggest global venues. It talks about the journey when elections were fought on the three planks of roti, kapda and makaan, to the India when development and the pace of growth are the real issue, when article 370 is an election issue.

Written in easy-to-understand language, the book is an unputdownable, rapid read about India's fast-changing politics, shifting-sand ideologies and the issues which the voter cares about, where and how to engage them meaningfully and powerfully and sheds light on how savvy the new age Indian politicians and parties have become. Driven by data and fuelled with analysis and insights about emotions, issues, causes, campaigns, choices, circumstances of the Indian voter, this is the coming of age story of the business and practice of media and campaign management and effective advocacy where communication and data professionals are new stars and where the new age politicians is not afraid of newer social experiments taking forward legacy campaign strategies but not without peppering them with a healthy dose of technology. The book highlights the fact that the social media has not just become a daily battleground for fake news but has tightened its tentacles around the core of Indian democracy - its free and fair elections. This is a must read and possibility one of the most of the most critically important book of the times we live in. The game of votes responds to critical questions of how elections are won and fought in India today and this is a critical issue for not just the citizens of India but also for all friends of India, making it a must read book.



K. V. Thomas a law graduate from Kerala University has over 36 years of distinguished career in Intelligence Bureau (IB), MHA, Government of India, in various capacities in different parts of India. He superannuated from IB in 2010 as Assistant Director. For his outstanding contributions, he was decorated with President's Police Medal for distinguished service (2008) and Indian Police Medal for meritorious service (1996), besides special awards of the Bureau for his outstanding professional contributions. The National Police Academy, Hyderabad awarded him Police Fellowship in 1997 for undertaking a research project on Policing which he successfully completed in 1998. He has authored 5 books mainly on Internal Security, Human Rights and Insurgency: 1. Human Rights, Terrorism and Policing in India (1999) 2. Policing in 21st Century—Myth, Realities and Challenges (2012).3. Left Wing Extremism & Human Rights (2014); 4. Kerala-Insurgency Politics (2018) and 5. ISRO- Misfired-The espionage case that shook India (2019).

K. V. THOMAS

ISRO- MISFIRED: THE ESPIONAGE CASE THAT SHOOK INDIA

Espionage, Christopher Andrew reminds us, is the second oldest profession. The Holy Bible reveals that Moses's successor Joshua sent a couple of agents to spy out ancient Jericho where they were sheltered by the madam of the local brothel. Sun Tzu, the most famous and influential of the Chinese military writer says that success in the realm of war relies on 'foreknowledge', which in turn requires intelligence through espionage. Lord Wellington ran his own highly successful espionage network, even though he was humbugged by Napoleon on the eve of Waterloo. During the 'cold war era', espionage agents of all time such as "The Cambridge Five" 'Aldrich Ames', 'The Rosenbergs' etc. played historic role in the power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union and their allied powers. Ian Fleming had immortalised the art of espionage through his fictional character 'James Bond' (007) and his dare-devil operations across the world! Even after the cold war era, the intelligence tool of espionage continues to play a decisive role in global power politics and in the strategic and economic conflicts between nation states. The new challenge of global terrorism and the emergence of non-state actors tacitly or clandestinely sponsored by ruling regimes in many countries has added new dimensions to espionage and related operations.

Thus, building up of a professionally competent counter-intelligence or counter-espionage set up has become one of the core areas of internal security planning or architecture of any nation. The primary role of any such set up is to 'deter, detect and destroy' the espionage or related operations by hostile or alien powers jeopardising the security or stability of a nation. A number of covert tradecraft tools or mechanisms such as Agents, surveillance, interrogation, cover assignments and Technical operations have been used to meet the challenge. The more professionally superior these tools or operations, the greater will be the success in achieving the tasks. On the other hand, when the major players carry out such

sensitive tasks without due diligence that will open a Pandora's Box of controversies and disputes adversely affecting the image and reputation of the major stake-holders. This book examines many such crucial issues connected with the infamous ISRO espionage case of 1994 that created big bangs in our scientific, political and investigative fields. This case had all ingredients of a spy-thriller – women, sex, money, blackmail, space scientists, technology leak, etc. just like the Hollywood spy-thriller 'From Russia with Love'. Thus, the story unfolds in 1994 with the arrest of Maldivian lady Mariam Rasheeda, then described by many as 'modern Matahari' and her accomplice Fauzia Hassan for their operations to lay hands on sensitive documents/ cryogenic technology of ISRO which was at the cusp of developing Cryogenic engine capabilities with help from Russia. A couple of senior ISRO scientists namely S. Nambi Narayanan and D. Sasikumaran and others like Chandrasekharan the India representative of Russian Space Agency Glavkosmos who were suspected to be in the espionage network, were subsequently arrested. Ecstatic over the detection of an 'espionage case' in Southern India after many decades, various security/ enforcement agencies quickly built up the 'spy story' based on the interrogation statements of the suspects, which were truth, semi-truth or total lies. Acting swiftly, a Special Investigation Team of Kerala police vigorously pursued such 'leads' without adhering to the 'due process of law' or the basic canons of criminal investigation. It cast a shadow of serious doubt over the veteran Congress leader K Karunakaran, the then Chief Minister of Kerala for defending the then inspector-general of Kerala police Raman Srivastava whose name too has surfaced in the spy-network. All hell broke loose when the political parties and the vernacular media entered the scene with their sinister motive to dethrone K Karunakaran from the Chief Minister post. Not only that Karunakaran fell, but also that even, the then Prime Minister of India P V Narasimha Rao was not spared in such orchestrated campaign.

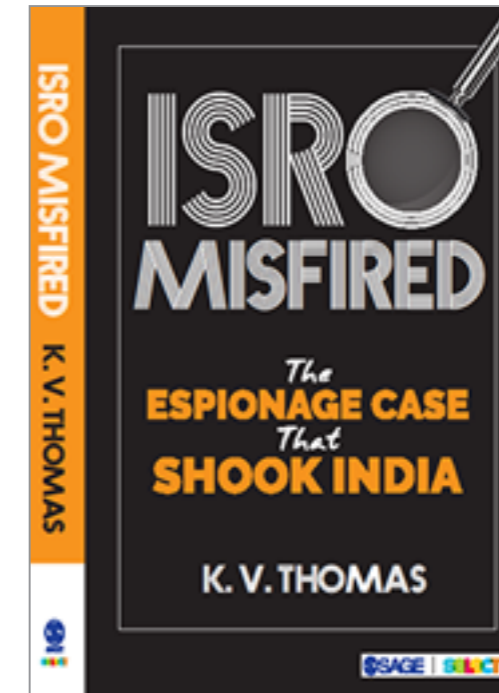
Author: K. V. Thomas

ISRO Misfired

The Espionage Case that shook India

Published by SAGE

<https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/asi/isro-misfired/book270523>



With the CBI taking over the investigation of the case, the story took a different line. They exonerated all the accused without finding an iota of evidence or material on espionage or related offences under Official Secrets Act, 1923. Then followed the unending legal battles in various Courts with the apex court finally exonerating all the accused. Yet, Nambi Narayanan continued his historic legal battle for over two decades against the alleged perpetrators of his arrest and humiliation. He ultimately won the battle in 2018, when the Supreme Court ordered granting him Rs 50 lakhs as compensation for malicious prosecution. But, two other accused, Chandrasekharan and SK Sharma, who were also fighting for justice passed away during 2018.

But, the ISRO espionage story does not end: it still creates strong ripples in the politics, functioning of intelligence and law enforcement agencies, media and Judiciary. The book seriously looks into these grey areas and come out with significant insights into these critical areas of internal security. Firstly, we should not ignore the reality that espionage is life and death game in which the players –male or female- would take all precautions not to leave any tell tales that would betray them. The real life stories of Mata Hari, Kim Philby and Aldrich Ames demonstrate as how meticulously they operated their espionage network and how difficult was their detection as real spies. Philby who held senior positions in British intelligence set up (MI6) operated for more than 3 decades before taking asylum in Soviet Union, on detection. The heart of the matter is that counter-espionage experts meticulously plan and launch clandestine operations for months or years to build up concrete case before the network is busted. Such an approach was lacking from the part of the concerned agencies in the case of ISRO espionage case! Instead of discreetly pursuing any clue or input of espionage nature by using various trade craft tools such as surveillance, interception/ monitoring/bugging, clandestine photography and profiling of suspects and their associates - which the counter intelligence agencies are accustomed to- , the suspects of the ISRO case were arrested in haste and interrogated with much fanfare. This leads to us to the question of professionalism of the organizations entrusted with vital internal security tasks and judicious application of tradecraft tools such as interrogation in counter espionage operations. Ironically, the fundamentals of such tools like interrogation or secret enquiries (spot verification of disclosures) were not adhered to in the ISRO case. This speaks of the need of the proper streamlining of the law enforcement- security- intelligence outfits by ensuring accountability, transparency and professionalism especially when the nation is facing a mosaic of serious internal security challenges mainly from hostile neighbours.

Thirdly, the canons of ‘restrictive security’ (‘concept of need to know basis’) which are vital in the success of counter-espionage operations were flouted in ISRO case. With the easy accessibility of secret information including the disclosures of suspects during interrogation, the vernacular media, having different agenda or motive, virtually celebrated the espionage case by serializing sensational stories with all spicy ingredients- sex, money and foreign agents. Never did the media pause for a moment to ask questions about the veracity of the inputs that they received. The systematic media or public trial of the suspects, had even impacted the decisions of august institutions including judiciary, as manifest from the divergent decisions of different Courts on crucial legal or procedural issues.

Another equally discernible trend is the attempts of political parties to exploit sensational internal security for their narrow vested interests or to ‘size up’ their opponents. When such parties or leaders are in collusion with sections of investigators or law enforcement personnel, the concept of rule of law or ‘due process of law’ is ignored. . Perhaps, ISRO case testifies this cardinal truth!

Finally, the ISRO espionage case, especially the judicial pronouncements by the apex Court, has given new dimensions to the concept of public justice and victim- justice. The Apex court decision in 2018 directing the State of Kerala to pay a compensation of Rs 50 lakhs to Nambi Narayanan and ordering the constitution of a committee for obtaining factual scenario that led to his arrest sends a clear message to all concerned agencies that offenses against public justice are punishable. Moreover, the concept of public justice now transcends beyond the conventional spheres of law and is inextricably intertwined with development and welfare. The crucial message is that lack of professionalism or failure of agencies or institutions -as in the case of ISRO espionage story- retards the process of development and the onward march of the nation to new horizons. Perhaps the words of Kumar Chellappan rightly points towards this truth;

“The ISRO spy case of 1994 not only finished the career of India’s two exceptionally brilliant space scientists by implicating them as spies but also put the country’s cryogenic engine development programme on hold for more than 19 years. The programme could have saved India millions of dollar”

Naresh Chandra Saxena has been a career civil servant. Topper of his batch (1964) in the IAS, Dr. Saxena retired as Secretary, Planning Commission in 2002. He also worked as Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development (1997-99) in Government of India. During 1993-96 he was Director, National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie, which trains civil servants. On behalf of the Supreme Court of India, he monitored hunger based programmes in India from 2001 to 2017. He has chaired several government committees, such as on 'Women's Land Rights', 'Identification of poor families', 'Implementation of Forest Rights Act', 'Joint Review Mission on Elementary Education' and 'Bauxite Mining in Orissa'. Dr Saxena did his Doctorate in Forestry from the Oxford University in 1992. He was awarded honorary Ph.D from the University of East Anglia in 2006. He has worked on development issues in Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, East Timor, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, and Afghanistan. He regularly advised UNICEF and UNDP between 2002 and 2017.



DR NARESH CHANDRA SAXENA

WHY IS INDIAN BUREAUCRACY NOT DELIVERING?

Despite impressive economic growth in the last three decades India could not achieve many Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by United Nations, particularly in hunger, health, nutrition, gender, and sanitation. The latest Global Hunger Index has ranked India a lowly 102 among the 117 countries it has mapped. Even within South Asia, India is behind every other country. India's social indicators are today worse than countries poorer than India such as Bangladesh and Vietnam. Besides, growth has not helped the most marginalized groups, such as tribals and women.

Divergence between growth and development witnessed in India clearly explodes the trickle-down theory that rapid growth by itself would take care of the underprivileged. Though India has done well where contractors are involved, such as road transport and power supply, India does poorly in all programmes that require active involvement of grassroots bureaucracy without contractors; whether it is the quality of education, immunisation, health care, maintenance of land records, groundwater management, crime control, and so on. Unfortunately governance in India at the state and district levels is quite weak, manifesting itself in poor service delivery, uncaring administration, corruption, and uncoordinated and wasteful public expenditure. My book analyses the present Indian situation and suggests systemic changes in all cross-cutting systemic issues, such as the role of politicians, size and nature of Indian bureaucracy, accountability, M&E of programmes, and civil service reforms.

Is something wrong with the IAS?

India's administration, both at the Centre and State's level, is dominated by the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers, recruited after a tough competitive examination in which one million appear annually and only 200 are selected. Most IAS officers are brilliant, hardworking, and honest. Many of them also try to remain distant from unscrupulous politicians. But people are more interested in the outcomes that the system is responsible for, rather than in their personal qualities. Are teachers and doctors present in their place of postings and providing quality services? Are widows and disabled receiving their pensions regularly in time? Do land records reflect the ground reality and are updated without bribes? Are street vendors and rickshaw pullers able to earn their livelihoods without harassment? Are outcomes being measured and reported honestly, so that corrective action can be taken to improve delivery? I am afraid the answer to these questions is in the negative.

Posted for weeks, collecting weekly bribes

One of the main reasons why systemic reforms have not been initiated by the IAS officials is the lack of stable tenure. Postings and transfers are two well-known areas where the evolution of firm criteria can easily be circumvented in the name of administrative efficacy. Even if the fiscal climate does not allow fresh recruitment on a large scale, a game of musical chairs through transfers can always bring in huge rentals to corrupt politicians. As tenures shorten both efficiency and accountability suffer. In a north Indian state the average tenure of an IAS officer in the last 20 years is said to be as low as six months, leading to a wisecrack that 'if we are posted for weeks all we can do is to collect our weekly bribes'.

Government of India (GOI) transfers more than 40 billion US \$ every year to the states. Evidence suggests that many state governments, especially the poor ones, are neither able to draw their entitled funds from GOI, nor are able to release these to the districts/villages in time, with the result that GOI is often constrained to divert the unclaimed funds to better performing states. An evaluation by Unicef showed that only less than 10% of grassroot workers in Bihar, a poor State, received honorarium regularly, most received it only twice in a year rather than monthly.

While presiding over a meeting of the Planning Commission in 2001, Prime Minister Vajpayee lamented that the problem with poor states was that they did not have any industry. I made a cheeky remark, 'Sir, these states have a flourishing transfer and posting industry'. He looked angrily at me for making fun of his tribe.

Lack of domain knowledge

A high degree of professionalism ought to be the dominant characteristic of a modern bureaucracy. The fatal failing of the Indian bureaucracy has been its low level of professional competence. The IAS officer spends more than half of his tenure on policy desks where domain knowledge is a vital prerequisite. However in the present environment prevailing in the States there is no incentive for a young civil servant to acquire knowledge or improve his skills. There is thus an exponential growth in both, his ignorance and arrogance. An important factor which contributes to the surrender of senior officers before political masters is the total lack of any market value and lack of alternative employment potential. Of late, some senior officers after retirement are being hired by the private sector, not so much for their professionalism, but for their ability to influence government in favour of the hiring company.

It is counterproductive to fill up senior positions with career civil servants who do not have previous experience in that broad field. Therefore after the first ten years of service each IAS officer should be encouraged to specialise in one or two chosen sectors by not only giving them long tenures but even permitting them to join academic or research organisations where they could improve their intellectual skills.

Dilatory budgetary procedures

Government of India (GOI) transfers more than 40 billion US \$ every year to the states. Evidence suggests that many state governments, especially the poor ones, are neither able to draw their entitled funds from GOI, nor are able to release these to the districts/villages in time, with the result that GOI is often constrained to divert the unclaimed funds to better performing states. An evaluation by Unicef showed that only less than 10% of grassroot workers in Bihar, a poor State, received honorarium regularly, most received it only twice in a year rather than monthly.

GOI's own studies show that even electronic transfer takes months with the result that in Mid Day Meals programme ground staff such as cooks and helpers are not paid for months, Similar delays take place in supply of text books, filling up of vacancies, especially in the remote and tribal areas, capital works, funds for maintenance, etc.

Rampant absenteeism and bogus reporting

The bulk of expenditure in education and health typically flows to the salaries of teachers and health workers, yet widespread absenteeism means that services are not effectively provided. Teacher absenteeism, particularly in the north, is endemic, with almost two-thirds of government teachers either absent or not teaching at the time of the investigators' unannounced visits. A study by the Planning Commission found that on surprise inspection in Bihar and Rajasthan just a quarter of doctors were physically on duty at the Community Health Centres. Absenteeism is rampant though seldom measured.

A few years ago I visited a rural school in north India. I wrote on the black board a two digit subtraction (31 minus 18), and asked the class V students to do it. Then I went round the desks, and found that hardly half of the students could do it correctly. Next day when I met the District Head I asked him if he or his team monitored quality of learning. He said, 'Sir, you are the first person to be asking me this question. Government has never asked this, they only want to know if I have spent the allotted budget, built the new classrooms, and recruited the requisite number of teachers. There is no column in my format about the quality of learning'.

Equally, state governments do not discourage reporting of inflated figures from the districts, which again renders monitoring ineffective. As data are often not verified or collected through independent sources, no action is taken against officers indulging in bogus reporting. The practice is so widespread in all the states, presumably with the connivance of senior officers, that the overall percentage of severely malnourished grade III & IV children, according to the data reaching GOI from Jharkhand was only 0.5 per cent, as against 16 per cent reported by Unicef in its survey. The field officials are thus able to escape from any sense of accountability for reducing malnutrition. One district head, when confronted with this kind of bogus figures, told me that reporting correct data is "a high-risk and low-reward activity"!

The situation can easily be corrected by greater transparency of the district records that should be put on a website, and by frequent field inspections by an independent team of experts, nutritionists, and grassroots workers. The Ministry of Women and Child Development at the Centre should also pull up the States for not recognising and reporting almost 90 percent of the severely malnourished children.

Finally

A good civil service is necessary but not sufficient for good governance; a bad civil service is sufficient but not necessary for bad governance. Unfortunately, in many Indian states, politics has become a business. Politicians put pressure on the system with a view to maximising private gains. Governance reforms are intractable under such 'kleptocracy' that exploits national wealth for its own benefit and is, by definition, uninterested in transparency and accountability. A pliable and unskilled civil service is actually desirable from its point of view - public employees dependent on the regime's discretionary largesse are forced to become corrupt, cannot quit their jobs, and reluctantly become the regime's accomplices. Providing financial assistance to such states by the Central Government without linking it with performance and reforms will be a waste of resources. Recent efforts by Niti Aayog, GOI's think tank, to improve governance by publicising inter-state performance on key indicators is a laudable step. Let us hope the Aayog evaluates states on transparency, public satisfaction, and integrity too.

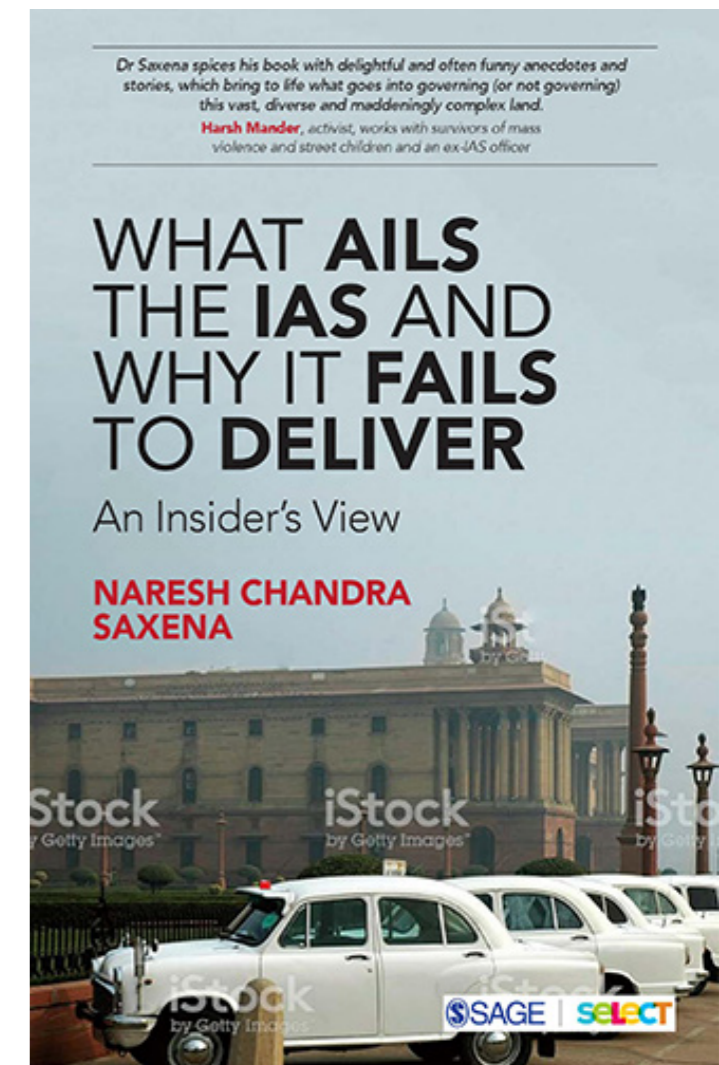
Dr. Naresh Chandra Saxena

What Ails the IAS

And why it fails to deliver

Published by SAGE

<https://in.sagepub.com/en-in/sas/what-ails-the-ias-and-why-it-fails-to-deliver/book271478>



Dr. Ashok Sharma, Visiting Fellow, The University of New South Wales Canberra at the Australian Defence Force Academy; Adjunct Associate Professor, Institute of Governance and Policy Analysis, The University of Canberra; Deputy Chair, New Zealand Institute of International Affairs, Auckland.



DR. ASHOK SHARMA

India's Pursuit of Energy Security: *Domestic Measures, Foreign Policy, Geopolitics*

India is the world's third largest energy consumer and is expected to continue to supersede the growth rate of all major economies. The high GDP growth rate in India is key to raise standards of living, provide electricity to all houses and lift millions of its people out of poverty. India has to also create millions of jobs for its young demography every year, embark on its developmental goals and shift to manufacturing industry as reflected in Prime Minister Modi's 'Make in India' programme. All this means more and more energy.

But, India with almost 1/5th of the world population is not very well endowed with energy reserves. The domestic reserves and measures are not sufficient. The source and composition of such energy are also crucial given the twin challenges of climate change as well as the paucity of domestic sources of energy, the latter necessitating India's hunt for energy sources abroad to face energy geopolitical challenges from China.

This book is an in-depth analysis of India's pursuit of energy security in the domestic and foreign policy realms amidst the competitive geopolitical environment and the global climate change concerns.

I argue that India's quest for energy security abroad is a multi-pronged approach and not confined only to the oil and natural gas reserves in the Middle Eastern region. But India's efforts to access to the new forms of energy and new geological location for the exploration and access to the energy sources, is putting it in direct competition with China.

In the past, the competition for the energy sources could be seen between the two superpowers during the Cold War period in which the energy security formed one of the major components in the US-Soviet Union geopolitical rivalry which catapulted into the military conflicts in the Middle East and Afghanistan. The energy competition between India and China is mostly confined to the commercial and diplomatic level, but India's hunt for energy sources abroad is gradually dragging it into a direct competition with China which may get intensified due to their strategic rivalry and security concerns amidst the unfolding strategic scenario in the Indo-Pacific region.

India's energy security is being pursued under the conceptual framework of four 'A's: availability, accessibility, affordability, and acceptability. The four 'A's have been central in India's pursuit of energy security. The universal accessibility and the availability of resources at an affordable price amidst the global warming concerns are central to India's energy security. However, the acceptability and affordability aspects have become more distinct in India's energy policy. Prime Minister Modi

has intensely pursued India's energy security amidst the carbon emission concerns, and has worked in the direction of his Paris Climate Accord commitment to move towards low carbon emission fuel.

The book deals above issues of India's energy security in six chapters and a conclusion.

India's nuclear policy has gone through the defiance and dalliance with the international nuclear regime and nuclear weapon states. The chapter gives an insight into India's nuclear diplomacy and pacts with various countries starting with the US-India Civilian Nuclear Agreement, and its wider acceptance by the international community reflected in the waiver by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and safeguard agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Chapter one examines the factors and dynamics that explain the concept of energy security. It looks into the varied interpretations and evolution of the concept of energy security in economic, social, political and geopolitical contexts. Energy security is on top of the policy priorities for many countries- ranging from developed, developing and under-developed nations. India's of energy security in the domestic, international and environmental settings.

Chapter two elaborates on India's sources of energy, reserves and energy mix, highlights the gap between demand and supply, and failure to tap the potential of its domestic reserves. It examines the ongoing debates about the viability of India's energy basket including fossil fuels such as coal and gas, alternate renewable energy sources such as nuclear, and renewables such as wind, waste to energy and solar energy. The renewables especially solar and wind energy will have its increased share in India's energy basket in the coming decades, but coal will continue to lead India's energy mix. There is no substantial proof that India can address its energy demand, both for consumer and industry, without the use of imported coal to supplement its domestic supply.

Chapter three examines the policy approach and action taken by the Government of India at the domestic level to address its energy security. Three major energy policy frameworks have guided India's energy security efforts at the domestic level: Integrated Energy Policy, Expert Group Reports on Low-Carbon Inclusive Growth, and National Energy Policy. India's energy measures have aimed at the exploration and production of the new reserves of hydrocarbon sources, both onshore and off-shore, and leverage its renewable energy potentials including solar and wind power.

India's energy policy reforms and regulatory measures include liberalisation of the energy sector by inviting private players, marketing and pricing freedom for new gas production, modernisation and the technological evolution in the energy sector.

Encouraging Private Participation focuses on the Electricity Act 2003, the measures taken by the current government to improve the condition of power distribution through the 'Ujjwal Discom Assurance Yojana'(UDAY) scheme, the opening of coal mines and the renewable energy sector to private companies.

Chapter four asserts that the inadequate domestic reserves of oil and gas and pressing energy demand have pushed energy security as one of the top foreign policy priorities. Since increased domestic production alone will not be sufficient to meet the projected needs for either oil, gas or coal, India is also expanding its efforts abroad. Hydrocarbons constitute the major share of India's energy basket, and it is important for the base load power. Despite the recent push to domestic exploration & production activities for oil and gas, India needs to look abroad for these sources.

India has been reliant on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries which caters two-third of its oil needs. But over the past decade and half, India has taken steps to diversify its hydrocarbon sources outside the domain of the GCC to the regions of Latin America and Caribbean, Africa, Caspian Basin, Russia and in the recent years in the seas of Indo-Pacific region. And to increase the gas supply, it has engaged in the construction of gas pipelines with its bordering nations. Problems of diversification of energy sources for India arise from the political volatility and geopolitics of the region. Eventually, this has made energy security one of the top foreign policy priorities.

Chapter Five delves into the India's quest for nuclear energy, diplomacy and agreements. India's nuclear power capacity is not up to its potential, contributing less than 3 percent of its energy mix. India aims to enhance nuclear energy to 25 percent in its energy mix by 2050. The international embargo that was imposed after its nuclear explosion for the scientific purposes in 1974 hampered India's civilian nuclear power capacity generation. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation regime did not allow India to obtain nuclear reactors, enriched uranium and advanced civilian nuclear technology. To get rid- off the nuclear embargo, India resorted to a concerted foreign policy effort to dismantle the technological denial regime. Consequently, over the past two decades, India has consistently pursued nuclear issues in its foreign policy and concluded nuclear agreements with several countries which required intense diplomacy, lobbying, and negotiations amidst its geopolitics.

India's nuclear policy has gone through the defiance and dalliance with the international nuclear regime and nuclear weapon states. The chapter gives an insight into India's nuclear diplomacy and pacts with various countries starting with the US-India Civilian Nuclear Agreement, and its wider acceptance by the international community reflected in the waiver by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and safeguard agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Then the chapter deals with India's nuclear agreements in the foreign policy context with countries namely as stated the US, then France, Russia, Australia, Canada, and the UK. India's nuclear agreements with the above-mentioned countries have been significant for a number of reasons including the influence they hold in the international nuclear regime, their legitimate status as nuclear powers, their advanced and high-tech nuclear technology, best nuclear practices and safeguards, and/or their abundant uranium reserves.

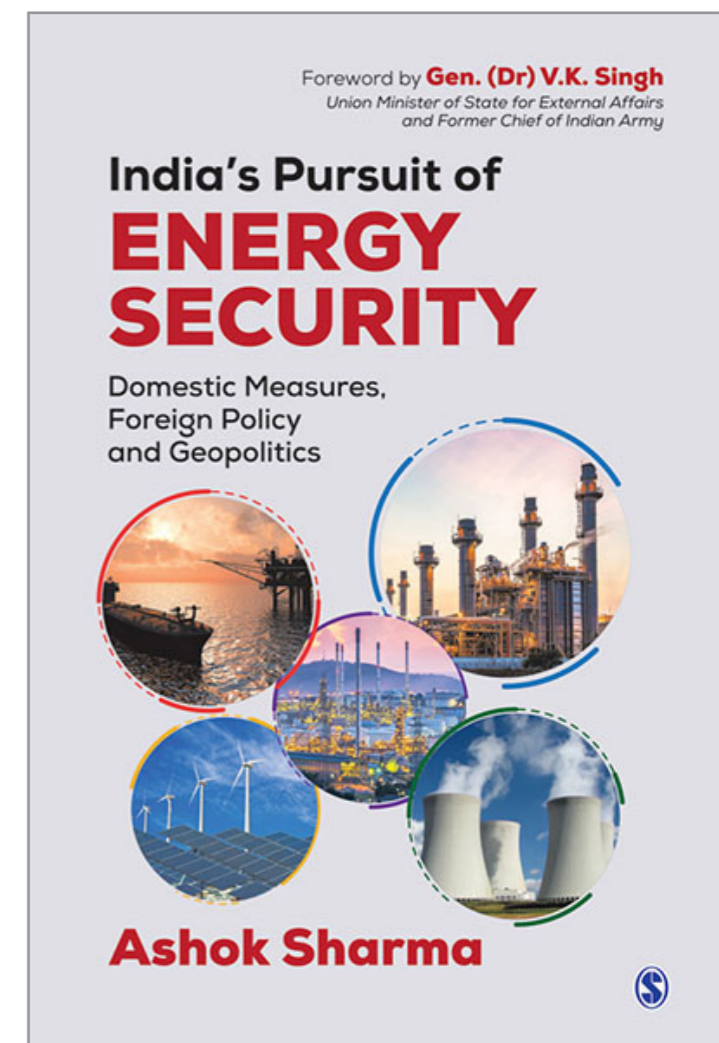
Chapter six is about India-China energy geopolitics. The energy geopolitics traditionally has been confined to exploration for hydrocarbon sources mainly in oil and gas, and confined to the Middle East and Caspian Basin for a long time. But over the past two decades, the energy geopolitics is being witnessed in Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, Caspian Basin and the Indo-Pacific region particularly in the waters of the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. These regions are rich in oil and gas and have immense potential reserves. India and China are directly competing for the hydrocarbon sources in these new destinations. This energy geopolitics is mainly because of their overlapping oil and gas exploration and production and gas pipelines in these regions.

This is further aggravated by their long-standing strategic rivalry and complex relationship, great power politics in the emerging strategic geometry in the Indo-Pacific region. The India-China energy security geopolitics is not confined to the conventional sources of energy only but it is very much visible nuclear energy and renewable energy sector as well.

The Indo-US civilian nuclear deal and India's bid to the NSG and the Chinese opposition to both with failure to stop the first and success at later, India-China energy security geopolitics is here to stay and in a more intense form. Though India-China energy geopolitics largely has been limited to commercial competition, diplomatic tussle and lobbying, it has the potential to catapult in conflict which might get aggravated due to their long adversarial relations.

Dr. Ashok Sharma
India's Pursuit of Energy Security
Published by SAGE

<https://in.sagepub.com/en-in/sas/india%E2%80%99s-pursuit-of-energy-security/book269889>



Inderjit Singh Jaijee is well known in Punjab for his work to ensure education for rural children whose fathers have committed suicide as well as for his advocacy of civil rights and human rights. In the course of this work he has been arrested 17 times and imprisoned five times. He remains active in this cause. The organizations with which he is associated – the Baba Nanak Educational Society and the Movement Against State Repression – are both scrupulously a-political and non-sectarian. Until 1983, he was a marketing executive for Dunlops India Ltd. In that year, as the situation in Punjab deteriorated, he took voluntary retirement and returned to Punjab. He was elected to the Punjab Vidhan Sabha on the Akali ticket in 1985 but resigned in 1986 in a protest against government actions at the Golden Temple.

Dona Suri came to India at the age of 22 and has remained here ever since. She looks back on 35 years as an editor, starting her career in India Today and subsequently working for The Tribune, Indian Express and Hindustan Times. She retired as associate editor from Hindustan Times. She provided editorial and research assistance in Inderjit Singh Jaijee's previous two books and has written two books of science history for young readers (The Story of Iron and The Story of Copper).

INDERJIT SINGH JAIJEE & DONA SURI LEGACY OF MILITANCY IN PUNJAB



Authors: Inderjit Singh Jaijee & Dona Suri

Legacy of Militancy in Punjab: the long road to 'normalcy':

Published by SAGE

<https://in.sagepub.com/en-in/sas/the-legacy-of-militancy-in-punjab/book271755>

Some 40 years ago political temperature was rising all over the region:

Iran and Iraq were at war. In Pakistan, the generals were getting rich thanks to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan since that conflict compelled the USA to pour money into its loyal ally. The generals felt sufficiently secure to roll back martial law and allow Pakistan to once again play at democracy. The Afghanistan adventure bled the Soviets white and by the end of the decade the tottering Soviet Union came down, burying the USSR Communist Party in the wreckage – with consequences for leftist movements all over the world.

During these years India was struggling to cope economically. To be sure, the '80s were a decade of economic growth but the price for it was massive expansion of the country's fiscal deficit and rapidly worsening balance of payments. By the end of the '80s the Indian government took out a \$1.8 billion IMF loan. It was take the loan or watch the country collapse.

India would be much easier to understand if there were only one political pot but in fact there are many. All pots are boiling but at any given time, some are boiling more vigorously than others. The decade of the '80s saw the Assam pot gradually return to a simmer. The Punjab pot burst into flames following the 1984 assault on the Golden Temple. Three years later, following the dubious election of 1987, the Kashmir pot also caught fire.

Militancy shook the government of Punjab and when a government is shaken it will admit of no questioning. A shaky government dare not even consider an accusation of error, lapse or malfeasance. It's a slippery slope. The government's grip depends on sticking to the position that everything it does is not only right but absolutely necessary. Back in the eighties this meant immunity for every sort of government officer, but most particularly for officers of the police. Absolute power is highly addictive – and usually highly enriching; mere stabilisation of the law and order situation is not enough to break the habit.

Inderjit Singh Jaijee could have watched the conflagration in Punjab from the comfort of a company executive's office in Delhi but instead resigned from his job and returned to Punjab. He started on his first file of newspaper clippings in 1982. Fourteen year-by-year files later, those thousands of clippings became the basis of Jaijee first book– Politics of Genocide. Explaining the focus of that book, Jaijee wrote

"I do not condone acts of violence or disregard of law from any side. I focused on State terrorism in this book because the State with its great resources is capable of violence far exceeding anything that an individual or a handful of individuals can do Taking an emotional approach is not helpful. I have done my best to remain objective and hammer away at the basic thesis that the confusion and conflicting versions of what happened in Punjab - and to the Sikhs in other parts of the country - must be replaced by accurate information and that it is in the interest of all Indians to learn the truth as a first step toward guaranteeing for themselves a just and responsible government."

Violent incidents waned after about 1993 but developments connected to the era of militancy continued to unfold and newspaper clippings continued to accumulate in file after file. Originally, the idea was to bring out an updated and expanded edition of Politics of Genocide but the wise editors at Sage suggested writing a "Volume II" which would take up where the first book left off and deal with events of the past 27 years – the years of "normal" Punjab.

Twenty-seven years adds up to a mountain of information to process. That's where Dona Suri came in. Suri's background is in editing – ten years working for The Tribune, another ten with the Indian Express and ten more with the Hindustan Times ... and all this time in Chandigarh where the media is saturated with news from Punjab. Moreover, she had edited Jaijee's first book.

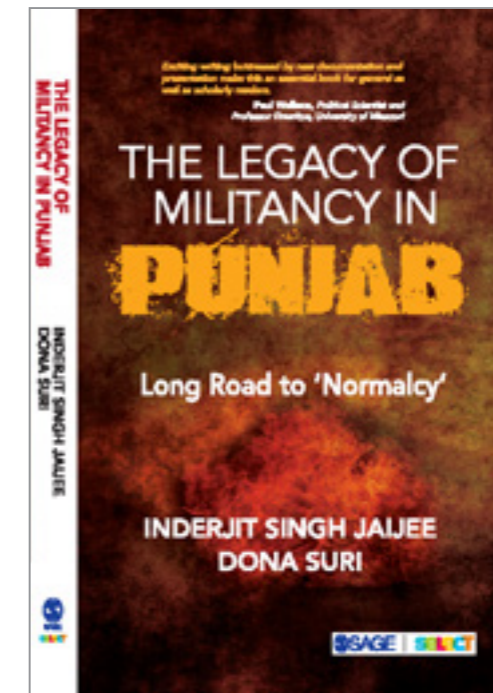
In the course of this processing, the record of events and developments gradually sifted out into four basic headings, namely Political, Legal, Administrative and Cultural and each of these categories in turn could be broken down into a number of aspects.

For instance, one aspect of politics was the rise and fall of political parties and leaders within the state as well as the evolution of perception on the part of the citizens of Punjab. Another aspect was the attitude of the Central government and its ruling parties. In the era before militancy, the ruling party at the Centre treated Punjab as a "card" to be played for nationwide electoral advantage. If that had changed, how had it changed?

Developments connected with the law and the courts were an obvious category. On television and in the press, distinguished commentators declared that the trouble in Punjab was over and done with ... the chapter was closed. But hundreds of serious cases had been brought before the courts – criminal charges of murder, abduction, extortion, rape, arson, rioting and wrongful arrest. In many cases, the accused were politically connected, or they were police officers. The "Bullets Flying" chapter had closed but its closure in fact enabled the opening of the "Fiat Justicia" chapter. Cases brought by victims in Delhi, Haryana, UP, Uttarkhand, Kashmir and Punjab occupied the courts for decades after normalcy supposedly returned to Punjab. Some cases are still going on. We knew of no other research that followed the twists and turns of centrally appointed inquiry commissions, cases connected to the November 1984 riots and cases brought before various high courts and CBI courts. The judgments in these cases were powerful lamps that illuminated a bloodstained past.

Militancy shook the government of Punjab and when a government is shaken it will admit of no questioning. A shaky government dare not even consider an accusation of error, lapse or malfeasance. It's a slippery slope. The government's grip depends on sticking to the position that everything it does is not only right but absolutely necessary. Back in the eighties this meant immunity for every sort of government officer, but most particularly for officers of the police. Absolute power is highly addictive – and usually highly enriching; mere stabilisation of the law and order situation is not enough to break the habit.

Practices that took hold in the era of terror and counter-terror continued for years after 'normalcy' supposedly returned to Punjab. The most obvious and widespread of these practices was property-grabbing. Some of this was outright grab and some of it was grab by means of subverting land-use regulations. All such grabbing flourished because the power of citizens had been diminished and fear of consequences had been extinguished.



A great deal of medical research is devoted to post traumatic stress disorder. It is now widely accepted that war or natural disasters can leave deep and lasting mental scars of those who survive. The reactions of some people who found themselves in the thick of violence during Punjab's decade of militancy fitted perfectly into the PTSD textbook descriptions.

In his earlier book, Jaijee had observed [After Blue Star] *Many Sikhs reacted by withdrawing from all sorts of social activities and going into a sort of mourning, others took it as a call to martyrdom and saffron-coloured turbans sprouted everywhere; others - especially women - responded hysterically and fantastic stories circulated: hawks (the mascot of the Tenth Guru) were reported to be roosting in various gurdwaras; there was talk of prophecies and curses that would befall whosoever desecrated the shrine. Many elderly people, who had been reasonably healthy for their ages before Bluestar, seemed to lose the will to live and died within a few months.*

Conflict leaves scars not only on vulnerable individuals but on societies and on culture generally. In Punjab the residue of militancy is easy to see. The chapter on culture examined the many ways in which militancy (and the government's response to it) had a long-lasting impact on culture. Responses are seen in books, cinema and music – three standard manifestations of culture. Just as significant are the non-standard manifestations. Think of these as pop culture responses. One instance takes the form of a brisk and growing market for militant memorabilia – things such as T-shirts, bumper stickers and car decals, recordings of Bhindranwala speeches. Since Operation Bluestar itself is now 35 years in the past, even those people who are today in their 40s would have only a vague memory of the era. People with clear memories of those days would be in their 60s and 70s. As a general rule, elderly shoppers do not buy a lot of militant-themed merchandise. One may conclude that most of those who buy Bhindranwala T-shirts, etc, are acquainted with the militancy era through what they have heard or read or watched on broadcast media. For this post Bluestar generation, Sikh militancy is a sort of abstraction. This is not to say that militancy as a concept is weaker than militancy as a lived experience – it can be quite the opposite.

Sifting through nearly three decades of clippings also revealed that in all this long period at no time was “Khalistan” ever completely out of the media. Khalistan stories were reported in every single year. There were many reports of arrests of suspected militants but even more numerous were stories that insisted that a Khalistan revival was right around the corner. ‘Dire Warning’ stories

typically appeared some weeks or months before an election giving rise to the suspicion of a political motive behind their publication. We also found it interesting to juxtapose the “looming threat” stories with the dismal electoral record of radical Sikh candidates in state and general elections.

All in all, our overview of the past 27 years since normalcy supposed returned to Punjab showed an obvious disconnect between what politicians and commentators were saying and the lived reality of Punjab for ordinary people.

In Punjab combating terrorism provided an iron-clad excuse for a wide range of wrong-doing. It excused police raj with the attendant abduction, extrajudicial killing and extortion. Abuses did not stop when the decade of militancy wound down. Police raj morphed into goonda raj which was indispensable for grabbing property or otherwise acquiring wealth by illegal means. Combating terrorism justified draconian laws that violated the rights of the individual and it justified attempts to establish secretive central agencies in contravention of state's rights.

As a subject for speeches, campaigning and party manoeuvring, terror, foreign and domestic, is a staple. This is particularly so at national level. Meanwhile, at the grassroots level, the citizen, irrespective of region or religion, is concerned about employment and job security, running the home on a tight budget, paying school fees, praying that none of their family will require medical treatment and seething with anger over the bribes they must pay to get even simple jobs done. There is simply no connect between these two levels.

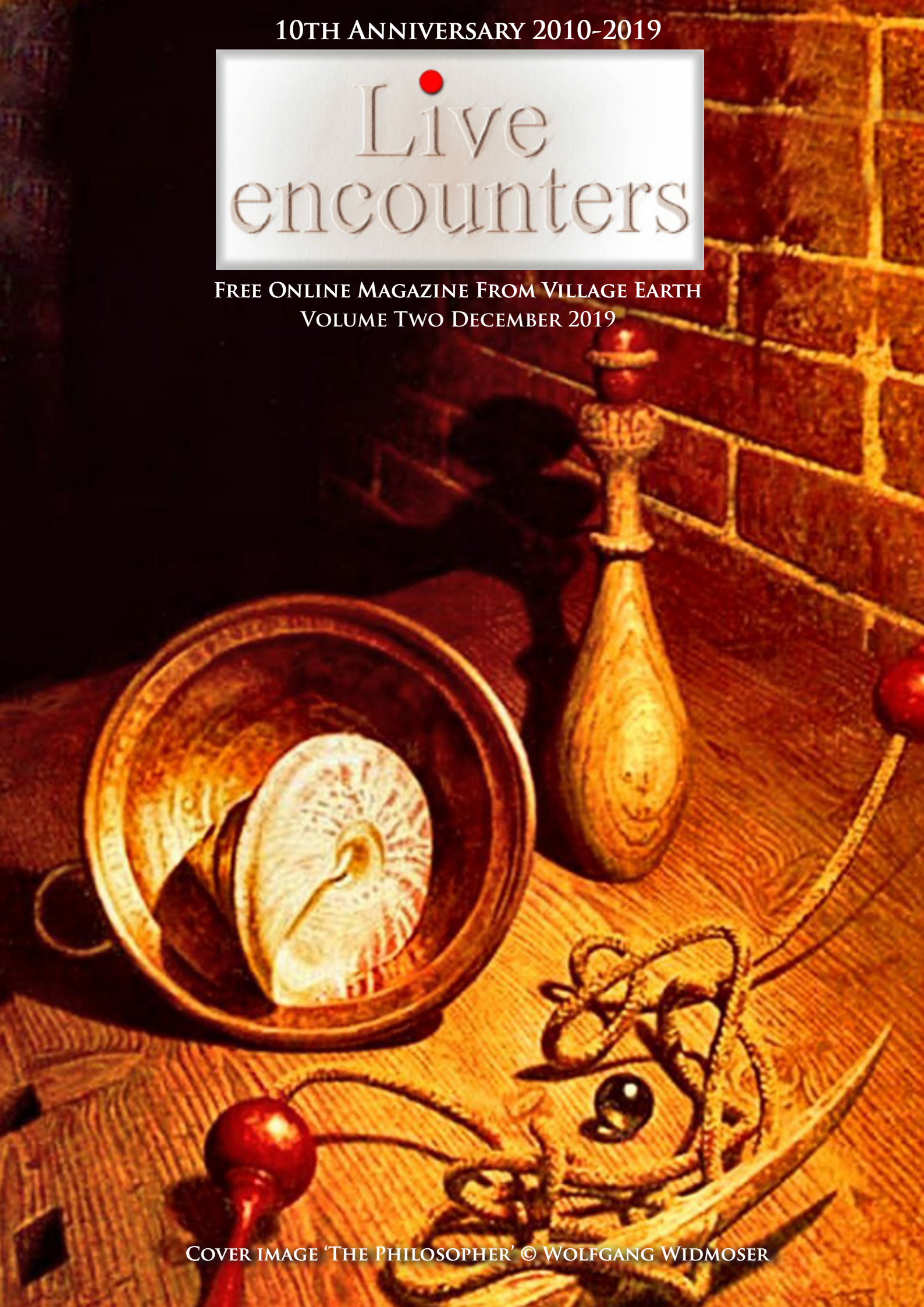
Addressing corruption, lack of employment, the ever-widening wealth gap, agricultural prices, or any of the issues that impinge on people's lives would give the impression that the leader or party is prepared to actually do something. Fulminating about terrorists, in Punjab or elsewhere, is a much better option: it requires no great political will or political courage to vow war on terror. From time to time, it may be necessary to spin statements, articles or even arrest dramas to keep the appearance of imminent danger alive but that is cheaply and easily managed.

Here's an interesting world record: A man in Britain, John Prestwich, MBE, died at the age of 67, after a Guinness Book certified 50 years on artificial respiration. One wouldn't be surprised if Khalistan surpasses that record

10TH ANNIVERSARY 2010-2019

Live encounters

FREE ONLINE MAGAZINE FROM VILLAGE EARTH
VOLUME TWO DECEMBER 2019



COVER IMAGE 'THE PHILOSOPHER' © WOLFGANG WIDMOSER