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# Live encounters

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## LIVE ENCOUNTERS *Retro*

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Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

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***Live Encounters Retro*** features  
fourteen select insightful articles  
published in *Live Encounters'* previous editions,  
since its inception over ten years ago (2010).

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[This article first published in Live Encounters Magazine, June 2015.](#)

*As the Italian writer Amadeo Bordiga argued, capitalism is driven by a "ravenous hunger for catastrophe and ruin". It is a system that thrives on destruction.*

## A BETTER WORLD IS STILL POSSIBLE: Longing and Belonging in an Age of Transition

For far too many people in this global village life literally has taken on the condition of a living hell; it is not only the grinding poverty, starvation, insecurity, destitution, slavery in all but name in sweat-shops, the bonded labour, the vulnerable who are trafficked, the anonymous "illegals" working unprotected by law in the twilight economies of the world's great cities where they clean the smart offices of the law firms, banks and brokers; there are those who are even more vulnerable who are at the mercy of the market, those who are compelled to sell their bodies as sex slaves, child prostitutes and escorts, and finally those even more vulnerable who are forced to sell body parts, kidneys, blood, even eyes, to raise money to survive. For these people, the nightmare world portrayed in the futuristic novel by Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, isn't just an unsettling fantasy about farming humans for their organs; it's very close to their own reality. For too many, the marketplace truly is a dystopian tyranny with little or no escape route.

Communal, ethnic and political rivalries apparently continue to spread like wildfire in the modern world. The mutual hatreds among neighbouring peoples, who seem to have forgotten that after all they are of the same species, sharing the same lands and relying on common resources for their own sustenance, is a shocking feature of modern existence. Tensions and divisions appear to be exacerbating and the mounting casualties of the ever lengthening catalogue of atrocities committed by human against human is tragic to reflect upon. Indeed, there are other trends that give cause for hope and that demonstrate people moving closer together. This fragile but remarkable planet on which we all inhabit provides our common shelter and all the basic necessities and fulfilment that we require, amply sufficient to satisfy our appetites and enable us to carry on a very comfortable existence had we the foresight to realise this and were we able to set aside the greed, lust, animosities, petty squabbles and disputes that scar us all. Within the cosmic scheme of things, historic tribal conflicts are really little more than fist fights in a school playground, mere skirmishes of almost no significance, when examined within the context of the challenge of climate change that threatens the very survival of life on earth; why fight for a tiny patch of land when the full entirety seems poised for immanent destruction?

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David Morgan



The gleeful demolition of the treasures of Hatra and Nimrud were acts of mindless hatred and were a full-scale assault on our sensibilities. The threat to Palmyra is equally an affront to our shared values and it is now a living nightmare that such destruction is even being contemplated. ISIS remains a threat to humanity and we should not need the destruction of another ancient treasure to remind us that it represents anti-life.

As I write I hear in the news that another historic site in the Middle East that should be cherished for all time as part of the glorious heritage of human civilisation is in danger of destruction from the zealots of ISIS (Islamic State). Ancient Palmyra in Syria seems increasingly at risk from ISIS fighters who have now captured the site. A true wonder of the world, Palmyra has been described as the "Venice of the Sands" and was unlike any other city of the Roman Empire. What remains of Palmyra today is still magnificent and provides rich evidence of an ancient prosperous civilisation that thrived on the edge of an oasis of date palms and fertile gardens. For centuries the ancient city's vast field of stone columns, arches and ruins astonished travelling traders and later tourists. It is remotely located in the middle of the Syrian Desert about half-way between the Mediterranean coast and the valley of the Euphrates. The site is particularly difficult to protect because of its huge size and remoteness. Palmyra was a cosmopolitan culture with an international outlook and as such it presents a challenge to the bigoted ideology of ISIS. It is feared that this important treasure will go the same way of ancient Hatra and Nimrud which were bulldozed when the rampaging ISIS took the territory. Of course, some understandably insist that it is difficult to become too emotional about the plight of a collection of stones while babies are dying in such high numbers, but the world surely cannot look on as a passive spectator as the heritage of humanity is systematically and so wantonly destroyed before our very gaze. The gleeful demolition of the treasures of Hatra and Nimrud were acts of mindless hatred and were a full-scale assault on our sensibilities. The threat to Palmyra is equally an affront to our shared values and it is now a living nightmare that such destruction is even being contemplated. ISIS remains a threat to humanity and we should not need the destruction of another ancient treasure to remind us that it represents anti-life.

We should not forget, however, that the US forces inflicted their own destruction on many precious sites during their saturation bombing of Iraq and during the intervention following the collapse of the Saddam Husein regime. In fact the US military had long made vandalism a central principle of foreign policy as the terror waged on Vietnam showed. So how can we expect the US - that land where culture is reduced to shallow entertainment and only the new is really valued - to protect ancient Palmyra now? In any case, one suspects that ISIS in Iraq and Syria are simply acting like subcontractors in the global building industry while the world powers are main contractors biding their time. In taking their electric saws and bulldozers to priceless ancient monuments ISIS is literally clearing the ground for a future real estate boom when the ravenous speculators and developers in their smart suits arrive on the scene expressing a passionate determination to rebuild the country.

It is truly alarming that there is not more international outrage at the prospect of the threatened destruction of this marvellous example of a past civilisation. The destruction of the cherished common

The destruction of English monasteries under King Henry VIII was a huge act of vandalism and theft by the state of lands and property owned by the Church. Henry, like the Viking hordes who came before him, was another bearded fanatic wielding an axe and tragically such hideous zealots inflict similar destruction on our world today.



Portrait Henry VIII by Hans Holbein

heritage that we are witnessing today in Palmyra, however, is not an isolated incident or act of zealotry unique to ISIS or to modern history. In the 19th century visionary intellectuals such as John Ruskin warned the public about the threats to fine old buildings posed by the processes unleashed by modern commerce such as the speculative developers, ill-planned renovations and shoddy workmanship. The commercial spirit of the age was seen to be highly detrimental to the health of people and their built environment. Greed and unrestrained profiteering are still wreaking havoc on the urban environment worldwide to this day.

Ruskin's visit to Italy inspired one of his most important works, *The Stones of Venice*. Today that unique city remains under serious threat from developers and the desire of local businesses to profit from maximising its tourism potential. Venice is thus a victim of its own success. Once again informed observers are warning that the city is under threat. In an investigative report titled "The death of Venice", published in The Independent newspaper on 14 May 2015, the writer described how "corrupt officials, mass tourism and soaring property prices have stifled life in the city".

The article went on to warn that poorer people are being forced out due to soaring house prices, a trend that is by no means exclusive to Venice but, actually, common to most modern cities: "What's more, over the past two decades, property owners have increasingly converted apartments into hotels or rentals, driving up the costs of permanent housing. The result: only the wealthy can afford to live here. Three decades ago, more than 120,000 people called Venice home. Today, there are 55,000. By 2030, some demographers predict, there will be no more full-time residents."

The wholesale destruction of both the built environment and natural landscape has been a continuing feature of human history since records began. It is a process that is often erroneously misnamed as "progress". To illustrate the point, let's turn our observations to English history where the experience of its suffering people illustrates very well the theft, vandalism, wanton destruction and ruthless greed inflicted by a very powerful against the wider community by the use of brute force, intimidation and the full power of the state.

The destruction of English monasteries under King Henry VIII was a huge act of vandalism and theft by the state of lands and property owned by the Church. Henry, like the Viking hordes who came before him, was another bearded fanatic wielding an axe and tragically such hideous zealots inflict similar destruction on our world today. Land grabbing, theft and the brazen abuse of power are the same processes doing the same kinds of damage although in very different contexts.



The Act of Supremacy in 1534 declared Henry VIII the Supreme Head of the Church of England, signalling the separation of England from Rome. This act and subsequent legislation gave the Crown the authority to disband monasteries in England, Wales and Ireland, to appropriate their income and dispossess them of all their assets. All precious metals, all altar furnishings and other high-value items such as bells, candlesticks and roofing lead, became the King's personal property to dispose of at its will.

The dissolution marked the forcible transfer into private hands of lands which to an extent had been widely used by the community. The monasteries had been an integral part of village life for centuries and they performed important social functions at a time when there was no welfare state, no public health service nor any formal education available to the vast majority of people. From this perspective, the destruction of these institutions was a crime against the public and a great loss.

Simple greed and power motivated the King. A survey conducted by Henry's minister Thomas Cromwell found that the monasteries held about a quarter of all the cultivated land in England. Clearly, this was a sizeable amount of land and an important source of power outside the control of the country's secular authority. This was of course the era that marked the decline of feudalism and the birth of modern capitalism.

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The term 'dissolution of the monasteries' encompasses all the religious establishments that were appropriated by the Crown. Between 1536 and 1540 it took possession of some 800 monasteries, abbeys, nunneries and friaries. Many were perceived as corrupt as they had accumulated great wealth and lands. But the establishments had offered a whole way of life to more than 11,000 monks, nuns, friars and canons. They were also centres of learning in a largely illiterate and poorly educated population. It was a major theft of church assets. Important monastic libraries were also destroyed and many valuable manuscripts were lost forever.

Many former monasteries were sold off to big private landowners, invariably friends and associates of the monarch. Many more were simply left to ruin, such as the picturesque Tintern Abbey, in Monmouthshire. Its ruins stand in an exquisite landscape and were later to inspire Romantic poets and painters such as Wordsworth and Turner. These buildings stand as monuments not to human vanity but to what was thought to be a greater power beyond our transient existence. The very names of such places as Lindisfarne Priory and Glastonbury Abbey immediately instil a sense of enchantment and sublimity. With the rise of the Romantic Movement in the 18th century old ruins became cherished for their historical associations and spending time around remnants of a past



*Lindisfarne Castle on Holy Island, near Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland, England.*

age especially when found within a splendid natural setting gave them an almost a therapeutic quality. The profound respect for earlier civilisations going back to antiquity was an attitude that is also seen in the growing popularity of collecting. Ancient artefacts, pieces of masonry and antique statues became highly desirable objects as they remain so to this day. Sigmund Freud's huge collection of ancient Greek and Egyptian figurines perhaps betrays an exceptional mania for collecting but it is representative of a modern obsession for collecting and preoccupation with the past which is widely shared among the population. It is a trend that lingers on and is part of the legacy left by the Romantics to future generations. Freud and collectors like him would no doubt insist that such objects were cherished not for any monetary value but for their intrinsic qualities as samples of human creativity and the grandeur of past civilisations. It is an attitude that is totally admirable.

This destruction marked the real and symbolic defacement inflicted on historic buildings. All items of property were stolen and the systematic stripping and dismantling of the removable assets of the buildings took place. Valuable lead and glass were ripped out to be sold off or reused, along with stones that made up the buildings themselves. Henry waged a fanatical war against images that were deemed superstitious. In 1538 pilgrimages to shrines and the offering of money or candles to images or relics were prohibited. Many shrines were destroyed and references to the pope and St Thomas Becket were banned.

The process of destruction became more extensive under the reign of Edward VI when destruction became much more systematic. Many religious images were to be utterly destroyed 'so that there remain no memory of the same', which meant that public art such as ornaments, carvings and artefacts were defaced, whitewashed or obliterated to erase them from public memory.

In the 17th century the Puritan version of Protestantism became zealous in its aim to root out very last vestige of what was perceived as idolatry from the public domain and popular custom. These campaigns occurred with the blessings of Parliament. In the years 1643 and 1644 parliamentary ordinances were adopted against "monuments of superstition and idolatry". Representations of the Virgin Mary and other saints were to be prohibited, as well as the carrying of crucifixes, plain crosses, angels and even inscriptions invoking prayers for the dead. Such things were to be utterly demolished by order of law. Those who sought to enforce the legislation genuinely believed in what they were doing. They believed that they owed a duty to God to eliminate all evidence of idolatry as this was the only means of combating the dangerous spread of sin. As a result many paintings, stained glass, even music and religious ceremonials came under attack as they were seen as sinful and contrary to God's wishes.





*ISIS destroying artefacts.*

The campaigns of destruction during this period were comprehensive, systematic and very well organised. When one reads of such idiotic activities carried out by perfectly normal human beings one can easily despair of the destructive and self-destructive impulses displayed by humanity with alarming frequency throughout its history. Humanity is a true Janus with both a beautiful and an ugly face: it has been remarkably creative and built great civilisations, but at the same time, it has often carried out the most appalling atrocities against fellow human beings and all the other creatures who share this fragile earth.

## Enclosures

The wars and conflicts that have continued unabated for a decade or longer in the Middle East, with a central focus on Iraq and Syria, can usefully be viewed as part of a history of enclosure movements worldwide. There has been a pattern of human conflicts involving land enclosure and encroachment on previously common lands throughout history in all locations and within every civilisation. Often great ruthlessness, up to and including genocide of entire populations, has been inflicted on people who stood in the way of the juggernaut of change, alternatively known as "progress".

The Christian religion devised the myth of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden, a glorious garden where no human was permitted to own any portion of land and where even the very concept of ownership was unheard of until Eve was seduced by the serpent and man began to yearn for possessions. This myth explained the human condition in a simple story to illiterate people who were in desperate need of some comforting thoughts. It was a myth that enabled communities in distress to make some sense of their sufferings in this world, to endure their lot while hoping for a better time in the sweet hereafter.

The process of enclosure of formerly common or waste lands took place over many centuries, in fact it has happened at least as long as there has been civilisation. The first enclosures occurred when the first cities were founded with the onset of urban civilisation. Landed estates likewise were also initially established on what had previously been land that had been held in common or had remained uncultivated. These appropriations, disruptions and mass displacement of peoples are all part of the dynamic of capitalist development where nothing is sacred. The very concept of "ownership" as such was quite unheard of before the start of the process of codifying law when it began to be drawn up by those who had exercised their strength to overpower other members of the community and had used brute force against rivals to take control and accumulate wealth for themselves.

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In the 17th century following the defeat of Royalist forces in the great Civil War (or "English Revolution" as historian Christopher Hill described it) many landed estates held by families who had fought for the deposed King Charles I were appropriated and handed over to those loyal to the Commonwealth.

As Hill says "The estates of all substantial Royalists were sequestrated, that is, taken over by county committees, which collected rents and fines and assigned leases. The lands of more than 700 Royalists were confiscated and sold...It was an upheaval comparable with the dissolution of the monasteries," (The Century of Revolution).

Of course, not all lands changed hands and the law continued to be enforced with utmost severity against the "lower orders" who sought to argue for the rights of the poor to make free use of commons and waste lands. Brutal suppression was to be the fate of the so-called Diggers or "True Levellers" led by Gerrard Winstanley who had taken over waste land near St George's Hill, Surrey. This popular action by a group of impoverished men and women, who had joined together to cultivate a barren stretch of land that seemed to be owned by nobody, was to be mercilessly suppressed. They had seriously misunderstood the intentions of Parliament's rebellion against the King if they thought that they had fought for the land to be taken as a "common treasury for all", which was how Winstanley interpreted the Christian message.

Incidentally, and perhaps unsurprisingly, St George's Hill is today a very expensive piece of private real estate.

The meaning of enclosure is to take over or take possession of land for exclusively private use. It means to take into private hands by force what was once held in common or by the community. The process of appropriating land and other natural resources into private hands is the basis of the entire modern economy.

In his book *Keywords*, the cultural critic Raymond Williams offers some fascinating reflections on the changing meaning of the word "common": it meant commons as in common or ordinary people and a community as distinct from the lords and nobility. The enclosure movement gathered pace in the latter half of the 18th century with the onset of full-blooded capitalist commerce. Enclosure met with significant popular resistance which had to be carried out anonymously because of the severe punishments that would be inflicted on any act of defiance from the common people. The law was used to protect the "men of property", not defend the rights of the ordinary men and women.



Countries such as Libya and Tunisia that had to be rebuilt following the Arab Spring were defined by the IMF and World Bank as “countries in transition”. Huge conferences were held in the world’s capitals to draw up programmes of assistance led by the international community. Transition became the official term for an assisted reconstruction stage following a humanitarian intervention, such as the bombing of Libya – in fact, it might more accurately be seen as a rebranding of the old conquer and plunder methods of a bygone era. The outcome of dependency and exploitation seems very familiar.

### Modern Ideology

People can be taught to accept the world as it is despite all injustices being largely avoidable, the needless inequality, suffering and cruelty inflicted on fellow humans, accepted as facts because of the power of ideology. According to Raymond Williams any moment in time contains three strands of ideology: there are old ideas that are on their way out; also dominant ideas that are held by the majority of people; finally, there are emergent ideas fostered by avant-garde segments of the population and which may become part of the mainstream in generations to come. Today, it seems, the dominant ideology is becoming ever more facile. More and more people simply don’t believe what they are being told anymore. This is a positive development if it means that people are starting to think for themselves and make their own choices. The stunning election result in Scotland where a rejuvenated Scottish National Party campaigning on a progressive social democratic programme swept the board must be a cause for celebration, as is the Green party’s million-plus votes won.

### Lost in Transition

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The degradation of language in modern political discourse insists that human “aspiration” is simply about making money. People aspire to become “filthy rich” and want to emulate the excesses of the super-rich glitterati whose apparent constant partying is a fixation of modern journalism. “Aspiration” has now come to dominate contemporary British political debate, a fact that was manifest during the recent general election campaign and has become even more dominant following the shock result which returned the right Conservatives with a slim majority, thus confounding all pre-election opinion polls which had been predicting a “hung” Parliament and another coalition government. The Labour Party is judged to have failed miserably because it had been unable to represent “aspirational” working people. When in 1906 the first ever Labour MPs were elected to Parliament, numbering in total 45, each were asked to name which books and writers had most inspired them; overwhelmingly they replied John Ruskin and his work, *Unto This Last*.



*Elections in Tunisia.*

This anecdote is usually cited to show how little British Labour was influenced by Marx, who after all was a resident in London for much of his active life. In 2013, when asked about their summer reading, Labour MPs replied with *This Boy*, the autobiography of their fellow MP Alan Johnson and *Five Days in May* by Labour peer, Lord Adonis, which betrays a definite narrowing of interests. And despite the fact that one Labour frontbench spokesperson, Tristram Hunt, was previously a historian and author of several bestsellers, and at least one of the runners for the current Labour leadership race, Liz Kendall, has a first in history from Cambridge, Labour politicians today seem totally incapable of projecting an inspiring vision that resonates among the public. They seem to know little of their own history or that of the people whom they seek to represent. Their remedies for political reform appear based on not much more than public relations and the findings of opinion pollsters; hence, all their talk of “aspirations”, the “politics of envy” and being “very relaxed about people getting filthy rich”, as Peter Mandelson once notoriously said. Not so long ago the British Labour Party, one of the world’s most successful social democratic parties, stood boldly for “a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families.” Sadly, that is no longer the case.

Surely aspiration should more broadly be understood as striving to do good in society, to help your fellow men and women, to care about the planet, to make a mark as a pioneer in a specific scientific field or creative endeavour. Human creativity has sadly been reduced to the ability to make lots of cash, rather than to appreciate art, express one’s creativity in various fields, painting, poetry and music. Art is no longer seen as a basic expression of what it means to be human, but as a means of entertainment or temporary distraction. The world of art and opera are too often seen as largely for the wealthy: “opera is not for the likes of us”, ironically stated by those think nothing of paying hundreds of pounds for a football season ticket or to attend a rock concert.

But at a deeper level there are aspirations that are shared by all humanity for a harmonious existence, free from harm and conflict, where they can be free to take pleasure in exploring life in all its sensuous possibilities. It is simply that in an ever increasingly unequal global community the opportunities for enjoyment and experiencing all that life has to offer will of necessity remain circumscribed to fewer and fewer people as long as the underlying inequalities are not seriously addressed.

There's a democratic deficit and a deep contradiction in an advertising system that relentlessly promotes conspicuous consumption; it whets appetites that it cannot possibly satisfy. In the consumer society “exclusive” goods, luxury services and the best products are offered to everyone who cares to casually flick through the pages of a magazine (real or online) or walks into the local shopping mall;

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*Palmyra theatre.*

### **Modern Ideology** *contd...*

but how can a product be truly exclusive if it really were the possession of everyone? But to those people existing on a minimum wage, of which there are sadly growing numbers, these advertisements must appear like a very cruel joke. To people compelled to use food banks, it is the basics of life that are becoming elusive. That's certainly true of social divisions not only in the national context of the affluent economies, of Europe and elsewhere, but all over the world there are millions who remain excluded from even the most basic opportunities to enjoy life, let alone to become conspicuous consumers.

But while there is life, there must be hope. The persistence of hope will continue while humans have a breath within them. The blue flower was a motif in German Romanticism mentioned in a novella by the writer Novalis. The search for the blue flower represented hope, inspiration, beauty, love and desire. It symbolised a metaphysical striving within each individual consciousness for the infinite and a constant questing for all that's good. This is an existential quest and indicates a human yearning for quite a different order and quality of life setting it totally apart from the crude, materialistic "aspirations" for accumulating ever more wealth that obsesses British politicians evident during the 2015 election campaign and Labour leadership battle. This is the cult of materialism that is destroying the world.

There is evidence of the beauty of existence all around us but we need the free time to truly open our eyes properly and learn to see. Tiny tantalising intimations can be discovered in our mundane surroundings and in contemplation of the beauty of nature: in the magnificent radiance of a sunset in a clear sky; the magnificence of a mountain view; the rolling waves on the deep blue ocean; the rustle of a gentle breeze through trees; the natural music of the dawn chorus; and the intricate textures of new flowers in bloom. The wonders of nature are infinite and life can be glorious as we would realise if we but had sufficient free time and opportunity to enjoy and contemplate them fully.

The precious luxury of free time was systematically denied to the great mass of the people until onset of the 20th century when the social advances initiated by the organised workers' movement forced concessions from the ruling order and welfare states were founded under an emerging democratic system and vastly improved conditions of working.

The law began to work for everyone rather than simply upholding an unjust system. In marked contrast, we now find ourselves in an era when all these social gains are being eroded and even our free time is once again under threat to become a luxury enjoyed by the privileged few. That is, if we let it happen.

That fragile blue flower long ago imagined by the Romantics represents the hope that is within our grasp if we would only wake from our enchanted slumber and seek it out. But there is a long struggle ahead before that point is reached. We will be getting to our destination when there is more public outrage at the imminent destruction of hugely important world heritage sites such as Palmyra. What is required is nothing less than a totally new sensibility.

The traditional methods, vehicles and agencies of social transformation have mostly been widely discredited through historic mistakes and have thus lost much of their effectiveness; namely, the cadre party, organised labour, and in recent years the new social movements, the anti-globalisation networks and social forums, to name but the main ones, have all failed to challenge corporate power despite raising their dissident voices against injustice.

Nevertheless, we must stubbornly insist that a better world is still possible and our battered global village is simply threatened with redevelopment and can be shaped in whatever direction we choose. The world may be in transition but there is nothing inevitable about the conclusion. Perhaps the screams of agony that we hear echoing around us are really the birth pangs of a new world that is struggling to be born. It must be that there is still a future as long as life is not extinguished and the possibility of sharing the world's resources on a fairer basis not just with the sustenance of all humanity but with all the living creatures which equally draw their sustenance from a common environment. That fragile blue flower long ago imagined by the Romantics represents the hope that is within our grasp if we would only wake from our enchanted slumber and seek it out. But there is a long struggle ahead before that point is reached. We will be getting to our destination when there is more public outrage at the imminent destruction of hugely important world heritage sites such as Palmyra. What is required is nothing less than a totally new sensibility.



A blue flower (German: Blaue Blume) is a central symbol of inspiration. It stands for desire, love, and the metaphysical striving for the infinite and unreachable. It symbolizes hope and the beauty of things.

[wiki](#)



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## A RETURNING ECO-EXILE

BY CAPTAIN PAUL WATSON

SEA SHEPHERD CONSERVATION SOCIETY

<https://www.seashepherdglobal.org/>

It is a fascinating experience being an exile and an international fugitive. I have been at sea for fifteen months since departing from Germany in early August 2012. On that day when I refused to be extradited by Germany to Japan, I drove to the Netherlands and there I boarded a sailing boat. It took me four months to reach Samoa where I boarded my flagship the Steve Irwin to continue down to the waters around Antarctica.

The next three months were spent in the Southern and Indian Oceans in pursuit of the Japanese whaling fleet where the Sea Shepherd fleet of four vessels succeeded in restricting the whale kill to 9% of their intended quota saving close to 900 whales. It was a very successful campaign but success has its consequences.

The Sea Shepherd fleet returned to Australia in mid-March but I could not go ashore because of two Interpol Red notices. One from Costa Rica for stopping a Costa Rican shark poacher in Guatemalan waters in 2002 and the other from Japan for conspiracy to trespass and interference with business. I left the Steve Irwin off Tasmania and for the last eight months I have been on the water continuously except for occasional landings on remote uninhabited islands in the South Pacific.



Text & Pics © Captain Paul Watson.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul\\_Watson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Watson)



**During the last year my allegations against Chinchilla's government have been given credibility with the head of COPESCA the Costa Rican fishery agency now under investigation for bribery from shark poachers and drug traffickers.**



Top: Laura Chinchilla 'no corruption or censorship in Costa Rica government [LINK](#). Bottom: Costa Rican Times 'how deep is the costa rica shark finning-rabbit-hole [LINK](#).



During that time I collected lots of plastic debris from remote beaches, watched Green Turtles and numerous species of sea-birds laying their eggs and I ate quite a few coconuts. I was also working with my legal team to resolve the issues that forced me into exile.

The Costa Rican warrant is blatantly political and finally even Interpol saw through it. It has been dropped from the Interpol Red List. The charges for interfering with a Costa Rican shark poaching vessel stem from 2002 but the warrant for my arrest was issued in 2012 only a few weeks after a meeting between Costa Rican President Laura Chinchilla and the Prime Minister of Japan. Also, during the last year my allegations against Chinchilla's government have been given credibility with the head of COPESCA the Costa Rican fishery agency now under investigation for bribery from shark poachers and drug traffickers.

No one gets extradited for trespassing and especially when it was someone else doing the trespassing.

In 2011, Pete Bethune's boat the Ady Gil was rammed and destroyed by a Japanese security vessel in the Southern Ocean. Bethune responded by boarding the Japanese vessel to demand that the Japanese captain return to New Zealand to answer for the destruction of his boat. Instead the Japanese arrested Bethune and charged him with trespassing.

Before Bethune boarded the Shonan Maru #2, I advised him not to do so and I can be seen on camera doing so.

**Bethune responded by boarding the Japanese vessel to demand that the Japanese captain return to New Zealand to answer for the destruction of his boat. Instead the Japanese arrested Bethune and charged him with trespassing.**

**Before Bethune boarded the Shonan Maru #2, I advised him not to do so and I can be seen on camera doing so.**

Bethune was taken back to Japan and put on trial where he made a deal. In return for a suspended sentence Bethune stated that I had ordered him to board the whaling ship. This was the basis for the charges filed against me with Interpol.

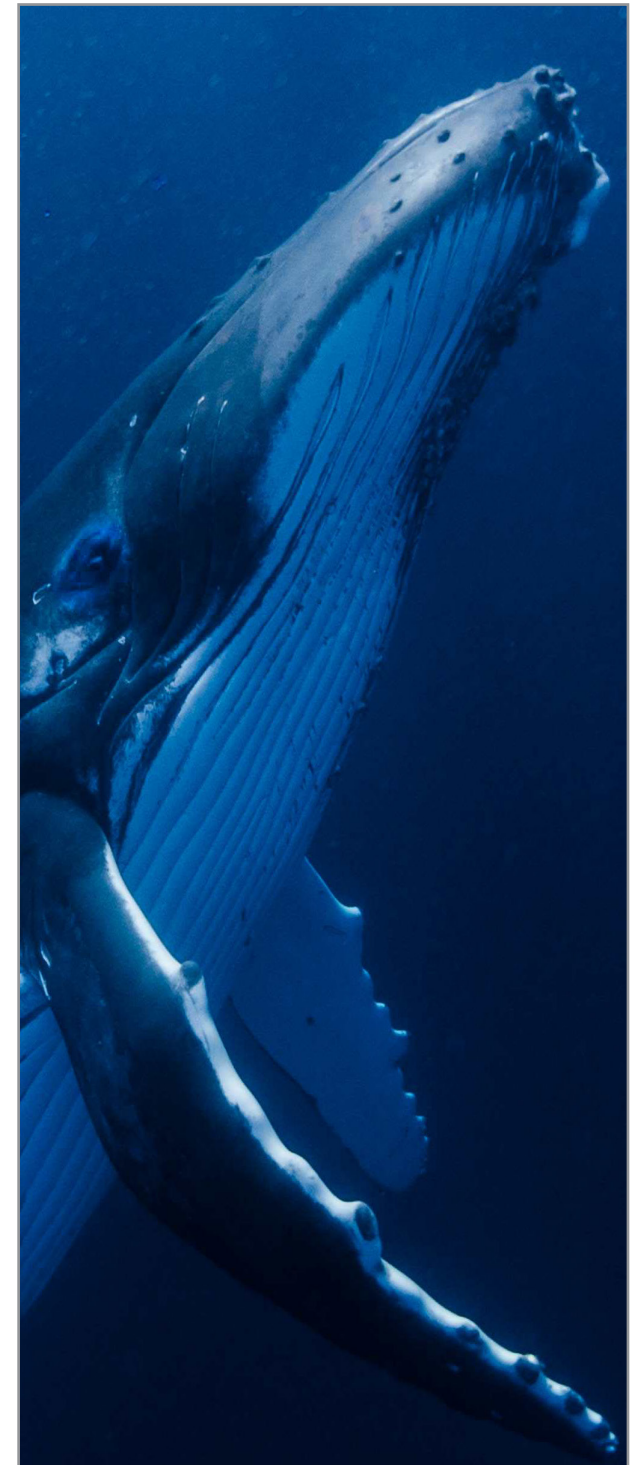
In June of 2013, Bethune agreed to sign an affidavit stating that he lied about being ordered by me to board the Japanese vessel. He stated that he did so as part of a plea with Japan to reduce his sentence. I did not have that affidavit when I was in Germany but now that I do I am confident that I have a strong case to demonstrate that the Japanese request for extradition is political.

My exile bought me time to prepare a solid defense. If I had stayed in Germany I would have been sent to Japan without a hearing and once in Japan, my chances of a fair trial would be non-existent.

During the last week of October I returned to land when I arrived on the Brigitte Bardot in San Pedro, California. I arrived on the same day as the civil charges of contempt proceedings began in Seattle.

Japan had filed for an injunction in the U.S. Courts to stop our interventions. The request was denied by Judge Richard Jones and Sea Shepherd prepared for Operation Zero Tolerance.

We thought it was amusing that Japan would ask a U.S. court to stop Dutch ships from leaving Australian ports to intervene against a Japanese whaling operation in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary that was continuing in contempt of the Australian Federal Court. That was the way Judge Jones saw it, also.







Top: One of the 932 whales saved during Operation Zero Tolerance. Bottom: Operation Zero Tolerance against Yushin Maru No.2. Photographs Courtesy [www.seashepherd.org](http://www.seashepherd.org)



But to our surprise on December 18th after the Steve Irwin had left for the Southern Ocean, the 9th Circuit Court overturned Judge Jones without explanation and granted the injunction.

This caused Sea Shepherd USA to withdraw and I had to withdraw personally. Operation Zero Tolerance continued under the leadership of Sea Shepherd Australia.

Despite that, the whalers claimed that the injunction was violated and now the directors of Sea Shepherd USA and me are on trial for contempt.

One of the Circuit Court judges even went so far as to declare marine protests as piracy and this is a decision presently being used against Greenpeace activists by the Russians in response to a recent Greenpeace protest against Russian oil drilling in the Arctic.

The outcome of the trial will have no bearing on the ability of the Sea Shepherd ships to return to the Southern Ocean. They are fueled, crewed and ready for departure from Australia in December.

Operation Relentless will be the 10th campaign to the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary to defend the whales and it will mark the 7th season of the Animal Planet show Whale Wars that documents the annual encounters.

When people say that we should not be surprised that we are being persecuted for defending the whales, I can only answer that we are not surprised.



In fact we are delighted. The continued Japanese efforts to shut down Sea Shepherd simply reveal how much of a threat we represent.

**In Sea Shepherd we measure our success by the number of and the intensity of our enemies. If we did nothing we would not have a single enemy but numerous enemies are merely a reflection of numerous successes.**



Campaign leaders Jeff Hansen and Bob Brown with crew member wearing the new Operation Relentless T-shirt. Photograph Courtesy [www.seashepherd.org.au](http://www.seashepherd.org.au)

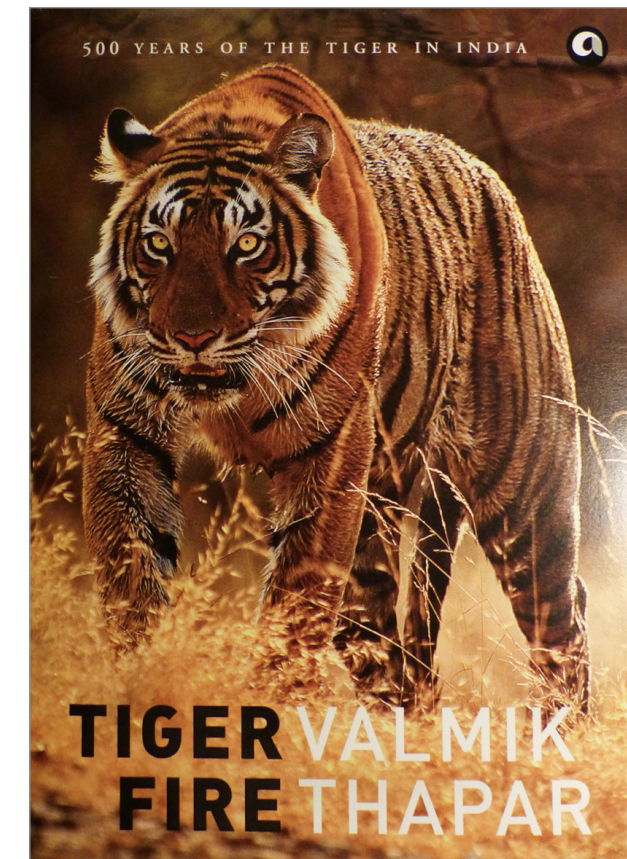
**Operation Relentless - Sea Shepherd's 10th Antarctic Whale Defence Campaign**  
<https://www.seashepherd.org.au/>



This article first published in Live Encounters Magazine, May 2014.



Valmik Thapar. Photograph courtesy Valmik Thapar



## Valmik Thapar

Foremost Tiger Conservationist and Author

### Guardian of the Tiger

in an exclusive interview with Mark Ulyseas

“My message to those who read this interview is that saving wild tigers is like finding a path of peace through a mine-field. It is the greatest challenge to engage in as the tiger is, for me, the most charismatic being on this planet. Therefore, engage in this battle as the future of the tiger rests not on what governments do but how they partner and share decision making with those who serve the tiger without being in official positions. The future is in new partnerships with locals, NGOs, wildlife tourism players, scientists and many more. This interdisciplinary approach in governance will minimise damage to tigers.” - *Thapar*

<https://www.amazon.com/Tiger-Fire-Years-Tigers-India/dp/9384067245>



Corbett National Park in the last two years has dealt with a high rate of poaching and unnatural deaths of tigers. The government needs additional trained manpower to patrol this habitat that extends to the border of Nepal and this is not easy.

**Tell us about your relationship with Macchli and how it impacted your life?**

My relationship with *Machli* was because of my relationship with her grandmother *Noon* who I knew very well in the mid 1980's. In fact she was my most favourite tigress who derived her name from her intense activities in the middle of the day. Some of my rarest encounters of predatory behaviour came by following her. By the mid 1990's her daughter called *Lady of the Lakes* ruled and by 1997 *Machli* was born to command the area of Ranthambhore's lakes. These three generations of tigers impacted my life filling it with more knowledge about tigers and their behaviour.

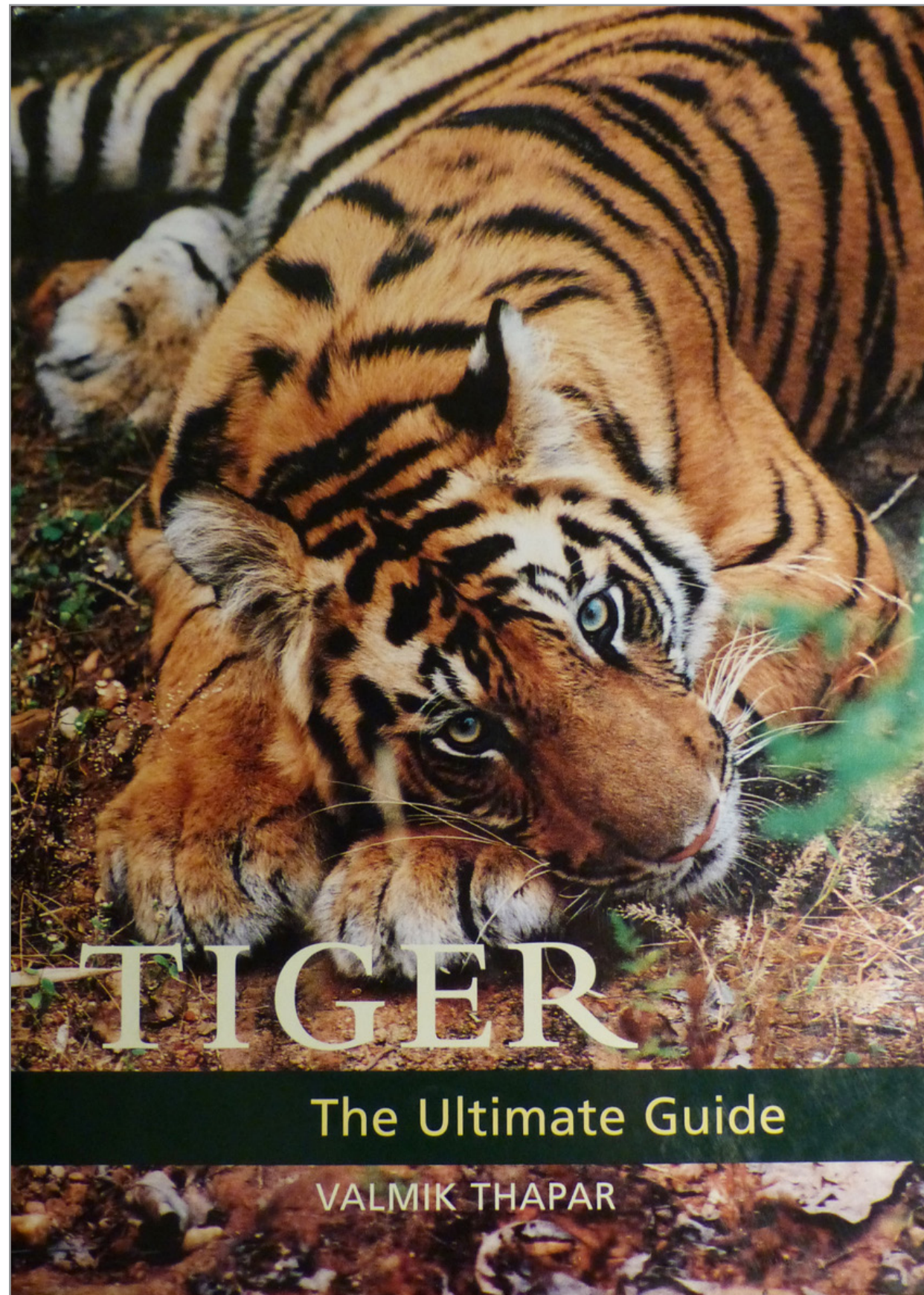
**Reports emanating from Jim Corbett National Park reveal that poaching is rampant. Is this true and if so, why has the government been unable to stop it? Has the legal system also failed in prosecuting captured poachers? And could corruption in the system be one of the reasons?**

Corbett National Park in the last two years has dealt with a high rate of poaching and unnatural deaths of tigers. Poaching is not rampant. The government needs additional trained manpower to patrol this habitat that extends to the border of Nepal and this is not easy. The legal system in India is complicated and time consuming and tiger poaching is not a priority as the major crimes take precedence so convictions suffer. This will only change when special green courts are created only to deal with forest and wildlife crimes. Corruption is rampant in India and affects all patterns of governance so is a vital contributing reason to the tiger's plight.



Photograph Courtesy Aditya Dicky Singh





From 2006-2007 till today there has been a sharp increase in human interference with wild tigers especially by forest managers. At the same time there has been a link with a corresponding increase in man tiger conflict, attacks on man and livestock, man-eating and tigers both old and young leaving the precincts of forests in search of food.

**What have been the shortcomings in Project Tiger and the Tiger Task Force? And has it really protected the Tiger and its habitat? Or, has it been criminally mis-managed? Please comment.**

In 2004 Project Tiger was in a severe crisis and the first information regarding the extinction of tigers in Sariska Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan hit the headlines and was soon followed by the absence of nearly half of Ranthambhore's tigers for similar reasons. Panna Tiger Reserve in central India was also losing tigers and in the years that followed lost all its tigers to poachers.

By 2005 and on my suggestion the Prime Minister of India, Dr Manmohan Singh created a tiger task force. Sadly my suggestions of who should be inducted into it were ignored and of the five people in it only two had some knowledge of tigers. Instead of dealing with the needs of the tiger this task force started to get entangled in the problems of forest people and therefore failed in its mission to either create innovative reform in the governance of our tiger landscapes or in keeping tiger habitats inviolate.

I fought hard to correct this report in the interest of the tiger but the majority were against me and I ended up giving my note of dissent. Therefore the result of this task force was disastrous and never able to solve the tiger's problems.

From 2006-2007 till today there has been a sharp increase in human interference with wild tigers especially by forest managers. At the same time there has been a link with a corresponding increase in man tiger conflict, attacks on man and livestock, man-eating and tigers both old and young leaving the precincts of forests in search of food. We need to carefully examine what is happening to cause trauma and stress in wild tigers.

**Let us look at some indicators in the last 7 years or so.**

- Forest officers have indulged in excessive artificial baiting of wild tigers either to increase their longevity, for watching and photographing them, to aid their natural food supply in case of freshly introduced tigers as in Sariska, Panna and Nagzira etc, artificial feeding of orphaned cubs till adulthood, providing food to injured and slightly injured tigers to aid recovery, and millions of rupees have been spent on live and dead bait and it is difficult to know under which head of expenditure this has been done—science and research perhaps even though no scientific reasoning is followed.

Photograph © Valmik Thapar - Tiger - The Ultimate Guide  
<https://www.amazon.com/Tiger-Ultimate-Guide-Valmik-Thapar/dp/1593150245>



**Draw a graph over the last 8 years between the levels of manhandling, collaring, tranquilizing and feeding of tigers and the levels of man attacks and you will find a close connection. I grew up to believe that nature must take its course and we cannot interfere in the life of wild tigers. We must stick to this principle otherwise unknowingly we are creating the most serious problem for tigers. Handling wild tigers needs to be banned unless there is an emergency or a scientific mission.**

### **What have been the shortcomings in Project Tiger...? Contd...**

- In this period of time the tranquilizer gun seems to have become a fashion and the safe medicine has meant that excessive use has been made of this methodology to sedate slightly injured or sick tigers and treat them with antibiotics before releasing them. Many other tigers have been tranquilized and relocated to new areas like was done in *Ranthambhore, Panna, Sariska, Kanha, Pench, Bandhavgarh, Nagzira*, and several other locations. This handling has increased hugely and none of it for science or knowledge but more for political and bureaucratic ends.

- The impact of all of this on the natural society of tigers in my opinion have been severe as dominant males and breeding females have suddenly been lifted out and this has resulted in possible conflict between tigers, male tigers and cubs and even between tigresses. Sadly the negative impacts have not been addressed by serious scientific study.

- The scars of this kind of severe interference are not only felt at the source level but also in the new home. Relocated tigers are followed, chased, as manmade attempts are made to confine them to specific forest areas and prevent them from going where they want. In this exercise hundreds of people are employed to force freshly released tigers to change direction by using firecrackers, lighting fires, sounding drums, shouting and behaving in much the same way as the hunters of the past did in our recent sordid tiger history. Forest managers have gone to the extent of using water tankers to pour water to what they considered were thirsty tigers! In my opinion the damage and disturbance done to the tiger's world in the last 8 years is shocking; and all this with no base in science. In fact it is a huge missed opportunity where instead of better technology being used for understanding tigers through reliable scientific research it is being used for sharply intrusive impacts in the tiger's natural world.

- I am convinced that what we are following is the wrong approach and dangerous to the future of wild tigers. You cannot tranquilize wild tigers at everyone's whim and fancy as seems to have become the fashion. You cannot feed orphaned cubs and expect that they will not turn on man as prey in the future. We cannot play god to wild tigers otherwise we are directly going to be responsible for both the trauma tigers suffer and their consequences.

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this principle otherwise unknowingly we are creating the most serious problem for tigers. We must minimize the impacts of our forest managers and their decisions. Handling wild tigers needs to be banned unless there is an emergency or a scientific mission. If not the man tiger conflict will grow as traumatized tigers roam both in forests where their kin have been plucked and in new forests that they know nothing of and where they have been placed. Impacts on these tigers and their brethren can be far reaching in terms of their response to man.

### **What is the difference between a Reserve, Park and Sanctuary and how many are there that shelter the remaining tigers? And are the tigers protected in these areas or are they at the mercy of poachers?**

The word reserve has no legal meaning and denotes a tiger reserve which normally includes a national park, a sanctuary and a new legal category of land called critical tiger habitat. Both national park and critical tiger habitat are supposed to be inviolate landscapes where no human disturbance is permitted but this is seldom true of the 70 odd national parks that exist. Sanctuary is a legal category of land that allows for some use be it firewood collection or livestock grazing. The nearly 600 sanctuaries in India are over exploited and abused. Tigers are protected legally but where protection is weak they are at the mercy of poachers. Most of the forest staff in India is demoralised and unfit for active anti poaching duty and require not just fresh recruitment but rigorous training. A tiger protection force announced by the last government nearly 7 years ago is still awaited in several vital tiger landscapes. Our levels of implementing approved government policy are abysmal and shocking. There are 18 local governments who administer tigers and their habitat and our federal government only provides advice and financial resources. It is an administrative nightmare for tigers.

### **Of what use is a dead tiger and to whom? And are the Chinese the main culprits who pay top dollar for tiger parts that are used in aphrodisiacs?**

A dead tiger from skin to whisker to claw to bone has a price across India's borders especially in places like China. For reasons to do with cures and as aphrodisiacs, this demand from China raises the price for the poacher who is further fuelled on his mission. But this is not the only reason why tigers die. They are poisoned off when they kill livestock that come into the forest to graze. These revenge killings take a toll on wild tigers. Poison is mixed into the dead cow or buffalo after a kill and when the tiger returns to feed in the night it dies and sometimes with all the cubs. These are not the poachers' handiwork but of angry locals.





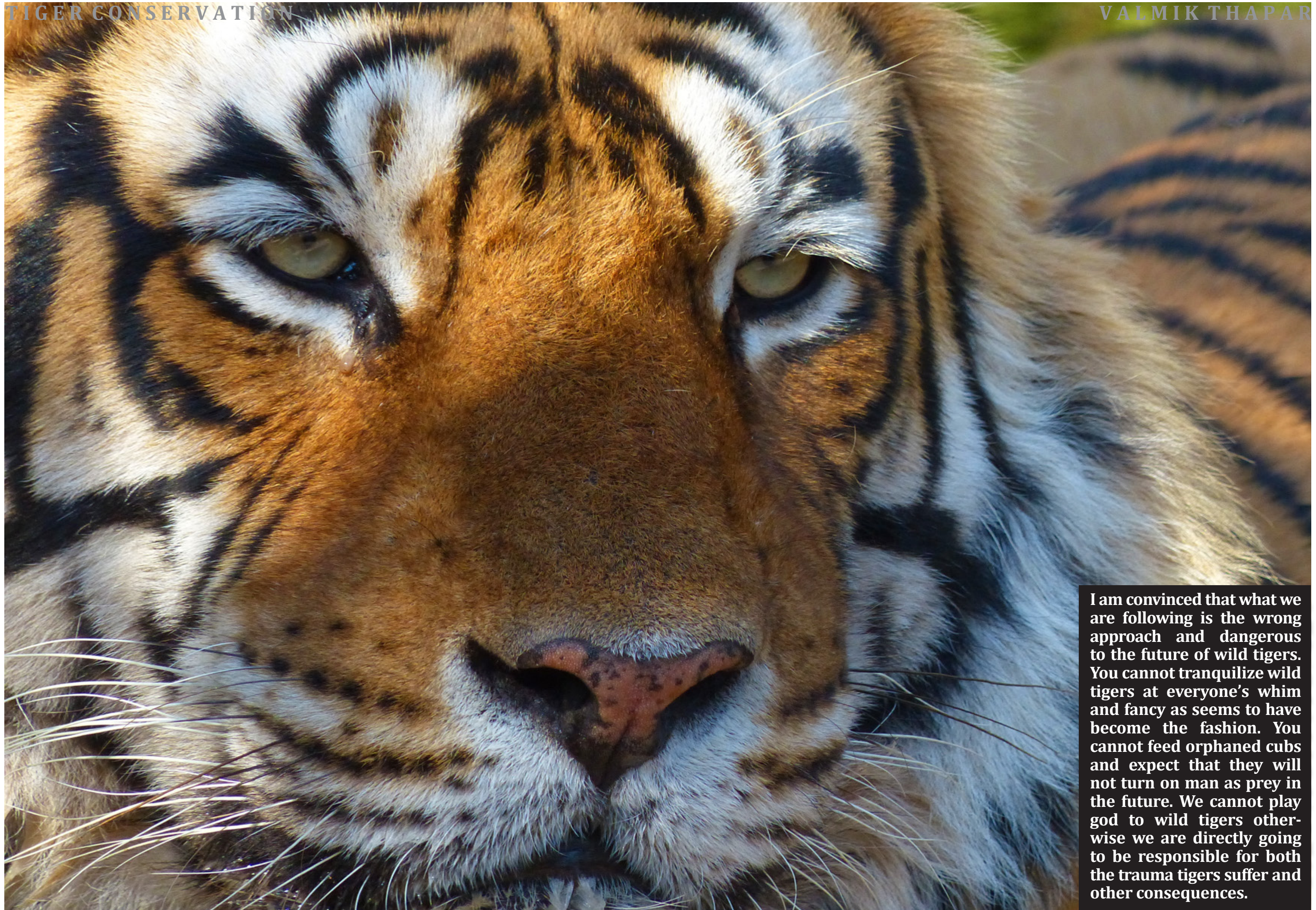
Wild tigers are symbolic of the amazing forests of India that occupy 20% of India's land mass. By keeping them alive you keep all the natural treasures alive so essential for any quality of human life, be it the air we breathe or the water we drink.

**There have been conflicting reports about the Tiger Census. What is inherently wrong with the process and how can this be rectified? How many tigers are there left in the wild in India? What measures need to be taken to protect the tiger by the new Central Government coming to power in May 2014 ?**

There has already been a rectification of the census and the inaccurate method of counting tigers through their paw marks has been replaced by a process of statistical samples through camera trap estimations in some site specific areas. Pug marks are not indicative of individual animals but body stripes are. Sadly the new methodology requires a greater training module for all the untrained forest staff and this process has suffered creating some error in the sampling of both predator and prey. I believe there are about 1200 to 1500 tigers alive in India. The new government that will come into power in May will do little as the bureaucracy that governs India is the same and has little knowledge of what wild tigers need.

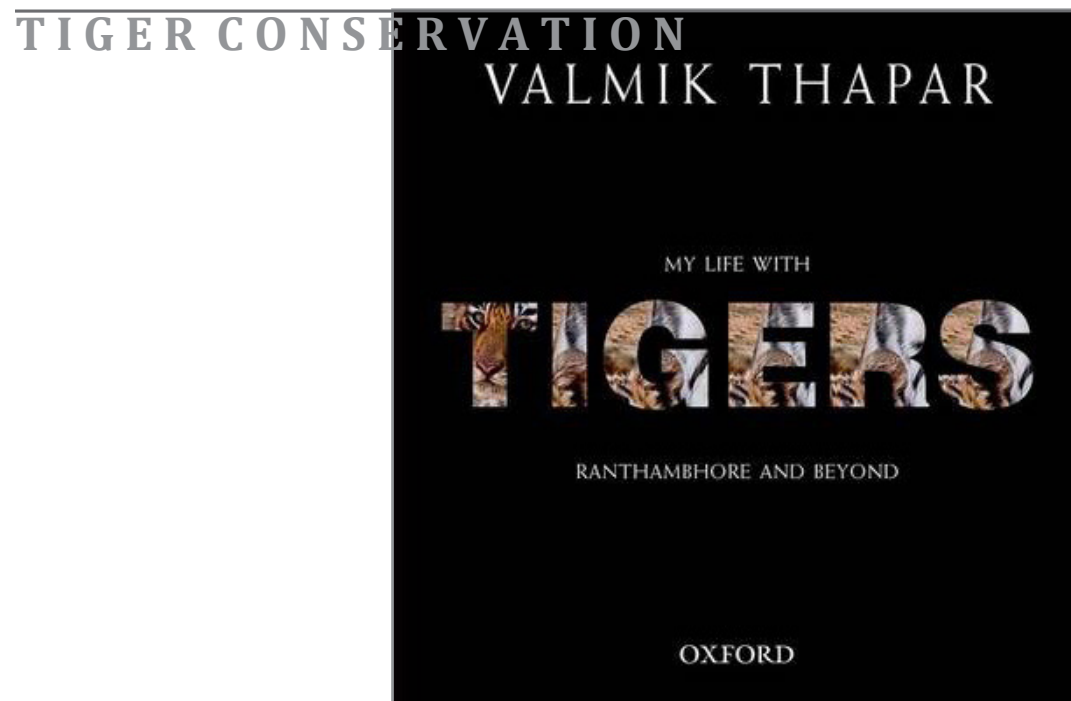
We are in such a mess in this country that to create a path to secure the future of wild tigers will be an enormous undertaking. This country is so deeply fractured, divided and unstable that good governance is turning into an impossible dream. We seem to have sunk into a quagmire of chaos and corruption and little appears on the horizon to pull us out of it. In this political and bureaucratic nightmare very few care about wild tigers. I do, since I have spent 38 years of my life serving them. Wild tigers are symbolic of the amazing forests of India that occupy 20% of India's land mass. By keeping them alive you keep all the natural treasures alive so essential for any quality of human life, be it the air we breathe or the water we drink.





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My Life with Tigers - Ranthambhore and Beyond. [LINK](#)

## There have been conflicting reports about the Tiger Census...? Contd...

The following blueprint is necessary to save wild tigers. There are no short cuts.

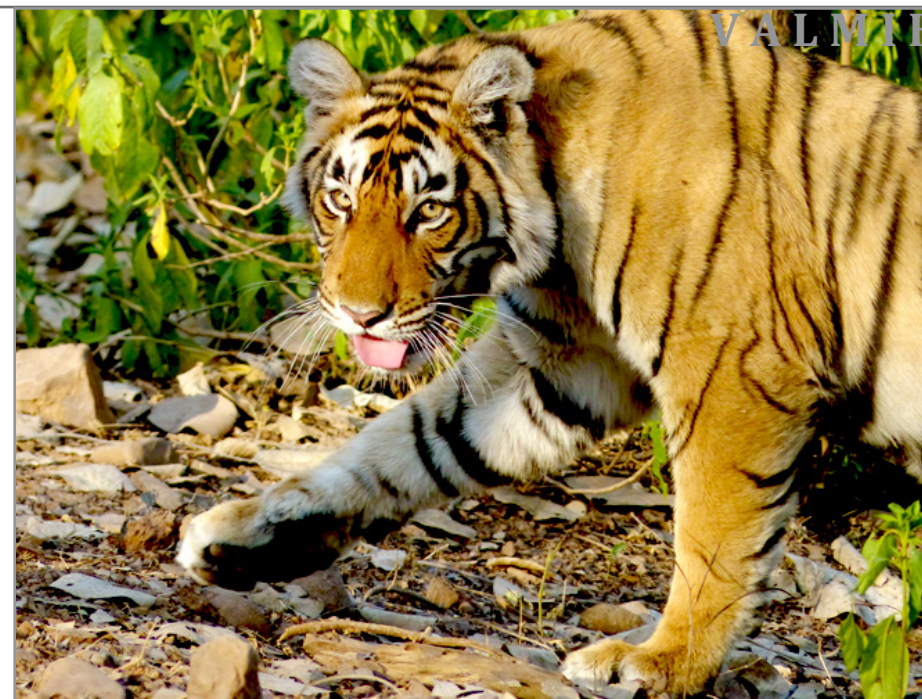
### The Laws

We have a plethora of confusing laws that are now not just fighting each other but the makers and enforcers of these laws appear to also be the first to abuse them. Illegal mining of natural resource has scarred our landscapes forever. We inherited from the British at independence *The Indian Forest Act* which was created in the 19th century to exploit and plunder the natural resources of India and it fed the British with vast supplies of timber and natural wealth and continued to feed the new Republic of India exploiting both wood and wildlife. To control this rampant exploitation Indira Gandhi created *The Wildlife Protection Act* in the early 1970's and *The Forest Conservation Act* in the mid 1980's. This was soon followed by *The Environment Protection Act* and for the first time based on Indira Gandhi's vision India countered the exploitative nature of the British laws that we had ignorantly followed.

We stumbled into the 21st century carrying this package of laws and as 2007 dawned we created yet another act—The Forest Rights Act and this in essence was to serve the people who lived in and around the forests of India. Badly drafted it fractured groups of people, dividing them against each other and has in the end served no one. This Act fights all what Indira Gandhi created and we now have a *Khidchri* of laws from the 19th, 20th and 21st century all working against each other and creating a legal logjam. We need to sit together and draft one law which protects forests and wildlife and serves people. This needs to be drafted by thinking people in and out of government. Wild tigers must have their inviolate space and forest people must also benefit. This one law has to be piloted through Parliament and all the laws that clutter our statute books today need to be repealed.

### Management

Forests and tigers are managed by another British creation—The Indian Forest Service [IFS]. In the late 1970's Indira Gandhi came very close to bifurcating this service and creating an Indian Wildlife Service but sadly the bureaucrats who rule the roost had their way and she was stopped. Today the IFS has run out of ideas and needs serious reform both in the mechanisms of recruitment, and the process of training and specialization. The IFS needs to be bifurcated and disbanded before it takes a



Photograph Valmik Thapar.

toll on our forests. We need new and fresh IFS for the 21st century and with a complimentary Wild-life Service. We desperately need to engage nongovernmental experts especially wildlife scientists to work alongside wildlife managers and share in the process of decision making. They must be empowered to be part of the team like in other services like The Indian Administrative Service where many secretaries to the Government of India have been appointed from outside or The Indian Foreign Service where endless ambassadors have been appointed who were not government servants. In the 45 tiger reserves we need to engage at least 1000 outside experts on short and long term contracts. Tigers need this fresh input now and from those who understand their needs.

### Local People

We need to encourage innovative wildlife tourism models. We need to learn from the plethora of models in play in Africa. We have no models in India and wildlife tourism managed by the government is a nightmare and needs to be outsourced and forest managers need to stick to their job of protection and enforcement. They are not trained to assess the harmful impacts of tourism on wild-life. Create genuine partners with the local communities and tourism experts. Create new partnerships so that the millions of rupees that pour in from tourism reach locals and they feel the tangible benefits of sensible tourism. Creating and managing a good tourism plan for each site specific area is not rocket science.

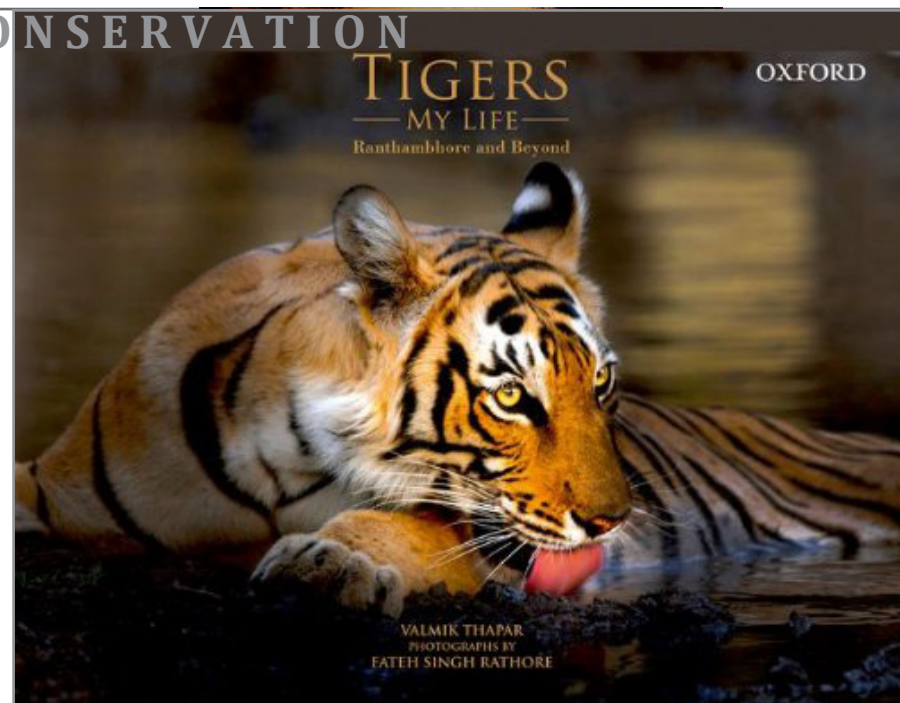
We have enough talent in this country to do this without any government department being involved. Innovative policies will help tigers by converting degraded farmlands on the edges of forests into wildlife havens with locals[and wildlife] benefitting like never before.

### Conclusion

We need one Act or Law that is easy to understand, implement and enforce and not six. We need new forest and wildlife services to manage the wilderness and in tandem with their nongovernmental partners, and we need an innovative policy to attract visitors and use the revenue generated to benefit locals. Today one of the critical reasons for the mess in this country is the endless baggage of both laws [nearly 1000 of them] and civil services [dozens of them] that we inherited from the British and never reformed or repealed.

The future of wild tigers depends on us. Let's change course before it is too late. If we do not, little will be left for future generations.





*Tigers My Life - Ranthambhore and Beyond.* Photos Fateh Singh Rathore [LINK](#)

**Why are tigers straying into inhabited areas? Is this because of dwindling forest cover? Illegal encroachment of humans in the forested areas? And can tigers co-exist with humans or is it vital that reserved areas for tigers be sanitised of humans and their dwellings?**

Tigers stray into human dominated landscapes because of the four legged creatures that humans keep which are easy prey. Man tiger conflicts take place over livestock that either enter forests illegally to graze or which get attacked by tigers in forest villages. It is vital that human dwellings and nomadic graziers are kept out of tiger landscapes as co existence is only possible where the density of humans is low. In India it is very high and complimented by livestock which add to a growing problem.

**What have you done for the Ranthambhore Foundation? And are you still actively involved?**

I founded the *Ranthambhore Foundation* in 1988 and ran it for 12 years till 2000 as its executive director. I left it in 2000 as I did not believe that local governments could partner such efforts in credible ways and NGOs suffer at their hands since both forest officials and local government do not like anyone that watches, criticizes or works on what they consider is their turf.

The mindset and attitude of the government has to change and only when they are able to work with outside talent and share decision making can ideas like Ranthambhore Foundation be effective and viable. In 2014 I am associated with the Foundation by virtue of being its Founder but we still have not created a way to jointly work with a 'possessive' government in the interest of tigers

**Who has influenced you in your work with tigers and why?**

My 38 years of working with wild tigers has been totally influenced by the former director of Ranthambhore National Park the late [Fateh Singh Rathore](#) who taught me my field craft and was like my tiger guru. At age 23 he welcomed me into the folds of Ranthambhore and we worked together with tigers throughout our lives. There are very few government officers who would do the same today. The younger generation today is kept out.

I was also influenced by *George Schaller's* book *The deer and the Tiger* and with his work in central India in the mid 1960's.

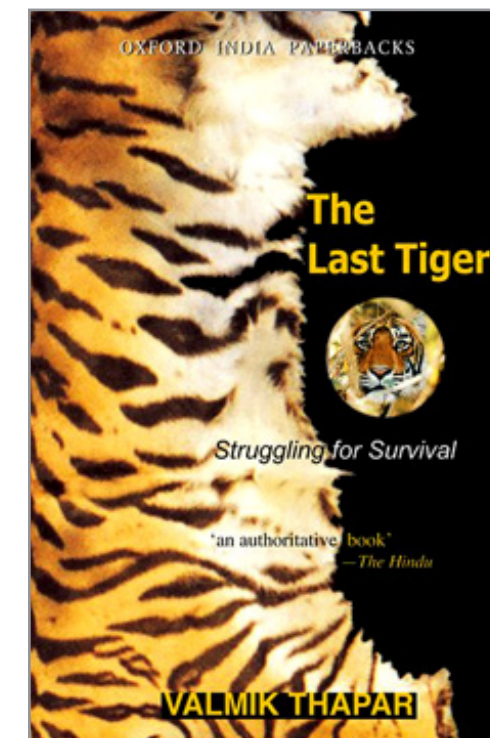


Late Fateh Singh Rathore. Pic Divya Khandal.

**Could you give us a glimpse of your life and works, including the books you have written?**

In 38 years I have written 25 books on tigers their forests and wildlife in general, I have presented more than a dozen films for the BBC and other networks, I have campaigned for the interest of wild tigers, founded one of the first wildlife NGOs in the late 1980's to integrate locals with the mission of tiger conservation. I have since 1990 served nearly 200 policy making committees of the federal and local governments including the central empowered committee of the supreme court of India.

My latest book *Tiger Fire* is my magnum opus about the tiger in India since the early 16th century. I am working on two more books for publication in 2015. I have failed with different governments to achieve what I wanted to in the interest of wild tigers. Maybe some of us over these decades have minimised damage to wild tigers and our successes if any have come from like minded people in and out of government who acted in time.





Mikyoung Cha is a graduate in Oriental Painting from Hyosung Women's University, Daegu, South Korea. She has participated in a number of group art exhibitions in South Korea and Japan. In 2016 she took up photography – the camera becoming her paint brush. This globe trotting photographer is a regular contributor to *Live Encounters Magazine*.

[This article first published in Live Encounters Magazine, July 2016.](#)



Mikyoung Cha



## THE BLUE VILLAGE

### PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKYOUNG CHA

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These are glimpses of *Chefchaouen* in Morocco, which I visited a few months ago.

The Moroccans call this place *Chaouen*, which refers to the mountain tops above the town that look like two horns, *Chaoua* of a goat. Chef Chaouen comes from the Berber word for horns, *Ichawen*. It was founded in 1471 in the embrace of the Rif mountains by Moors and Jews who fled Spain.

One theory as to why the houses are blue is that the Jews introduced the blue when they took refuge from Hitler in the 1930s. The blue is said to symbolize the sky and heaven, and serve as a reminder to lead a spiritual life.

*Above photograph:  
Moroccan men wearing the traditional Djellaba.*





Deserted medina of Chefchaouen.



Deserted medina of Chefchaouen.





Deserted medina of Chefchaouen.



Pigments on sale.





Deserted medina of Chefchaouen.



Cats in the medina of Chefchaouen.





Khboz, Moroccan bread.



Shop in the Medina.



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.

[This article was first published in Live Encounters Magazine, August 2016.](#)

## RECOLLECTING PASTS AND LOOKING AT THE FUTURE; HOW ETHNIC IDENTITIES GET SHAPED

Dr Namrata Goswami.

The other day, I came across a beautiful piece of advice from the Navajo in a small village in Florida, "give constant thanks to the great spirit for each new day..." Significantly, similar advice was offered to me when I met a Sami in Norway in 2007; an aborigine in Australia in 2009; a Cherokee elder in North Carolina in 2013; a Maori in New Zealand in 2015 as well as from elders of Naga, Kuki, Mizo, Hmar, Dimasa, Assamese, Meitei and other ethnic communities in Northeast India. The connecting weave between these ethnic minorities can be located within three important threads: preservation of their language and culture; connection to nature; and adapting to the modern world. For instance, casinos are a common feature in indigenous community (called Native American) reservations in the United States and arguably the largest source of income. Amongst indigenous communities in Australia, New Zealand, Norway or in North-east India, possession of modern amenities have become an essential part of life; yet the thrill of conveying their own cultures, cuisine, music, traditional clothes and jewelry, art, crafts, etc, remains paramount. The same is true about the Creeks, Su, Navajo, Cherokee, etc, in the U.S.



Dr Namrata Goswami





By Jim Bouldin, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1197761>

Traditional lore of these ethnic communities are retold in folktales that are passed on orally from generation to generation. Families and clans will have several different tales of their ancestry; a community will have some common folktales amongst them, as well as several overlapping tales between different clans/families within them. For instance, a Cherokee elder of one family told me a tale of a community dance where a group of young Cherokee men were demonstrating a war dance in the 1600s. In between the dance, a few of the youths went in the wrong direction. The elder said that this lack of coordination provides insight as to why they lost out to white settlers in the United States; a lack of common direction and purpose. Another elder retold the tale in a slightly different form; a group of young Cherokee men were demonstrating a war dance, when they started bickering amongst themselves with regard to which are the right dance steps; this in-fighting provides clues, he believed, to their lack of unity in their fight against an external enemy.

Interestingly, the past is always recollected with nostalgia and melancholy conveying a regret for its loss. Amongst ethnic minority communities, this recollection of the past is an expression of concern that modern life is slowly eroding away their traditional way of life, thwarting their ability to live close to nature, as they did, in ancient times. The entry of outsiders bringing in their customs and way of life, the intermingling of communities, inter-marriages, modern influences, etc, erodes past traditions that existed in its purest forms. Even stories of ancestors, retold orally, are being slowly forgotten or lost in translation.

This desire to ensure the past continues has led to protests for rights, sometimes in violent forms, and these conflicts have drawn in very young takers. I can recollect this aspect by narrating a touching episode that occurred during my visit to a village in Assam on a wet rainy day. The clouds that hung overhead that day were dark and the thunder broke the silence of this quiet mountain village. Soon, the mountains were engulfed with heavy rain and my path to the village turned into a difficult trek. As I walked towards the village barely able to keep my umbrella from being blown away by the wind and the torrential rain, a voice ran out. "Sister, over here". I looked up from the path to where the voice had rang out. There was Pip (name changed), a bright kid from the village and whom I had befriended during my brief two year tenure as a school teacher in one of the local schools, beckoning me to walk up to him and take shelter under the trees. His very presence lit my heart and I trekked up quickly, his smile of sheer warmth bringing joy to my soul. As we both took shelter under the trees on that misty, rainy day with rain drops splashing across our faces, my thoughts drifted to the village's annual festival, that I was about to attend. I always looked forward to these colourful festivals, enjoyed the spectacular dances, the rice beer, the smoked pork and the

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By Retlaw Snellac Photography - Flickr: india - nagaland, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=33464636>

boiled spinach served with laughter; oh that contagious laughter. My mind full of such thoughts, I looked at Pip and asked him whether he was excited about the upcoming village festival. He looked at me and said nothing. The only sound in response was the rain against the trees sounding surprisingly calm. There were a few more seconds of silence before he turned to me and said with emotion "I am going to miss my elder brother this time. You must not have heard but he went away to join the Naga rebel army". His elder brother was 16 years old (Pip was 12).

The year was 2007. The Naga conflict for a separate ethnic homeland had reached its 89th year, starting way back in 1918, and now spearheaded by the National Socialist Council of *Nagaland* led by Isak Chisi Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah (NSCN-IM). Whether Pip's brother succeeded in joining the armed group, we do not know. We do not even know that it was really to join the rebel army that Pip's brother left home. But what we do know that for Pip and his family, it was a version of reality starting them in the face; losing a brother/son to insurgency. It made me wonder what Pip, a young boy of 12, thought about the armed movement. That he would know so much about it, tried to understand what his brother had gone for, and talked about it in such an adult manner made my heart ache.



Social narratives, across minority communities, where children are brought up is fueled with fears of persecution, and the need for self-preservation and cultural preservation vis-à-vis a majority community or state that is perceived as biased towards the majority community which is different. So, for instance, the Naga movement for separate homeland has been based on the premise that Naga culture and tradition is threatened by what the Indian state stands for; a Hindu India, and hence requires independence to preserve it. Interestingly, Naga indigenous traditions as they existed, have themselves undergone massive change with the advent of Christianity propagated by the American Baptist Mission during British colonial rule.

It brought home to me the realization that the story of armed Naga nationalism, the fight for dignity, and self-preservation along with its darker sides, not limited to internecine violence but also daily extortions, was an everyday reality in these rain kissed lands of Northeast India.

So, the fight for preservation of culture when conducted violently, can take lives, affect social narratives, create certain restrictive cultural frames, as well as limit cross cultural interconnectedness. It can draw in young boys and girls, hardly old enough to understand the entire contour of their culture, to fight for its preservation as Pip's brother is believed to have done, leaving his family distraught and melancholy. In this, several factors are at work in the local environment that can motivate such behavior:-the social narratives in existence that frames discourses; peer pressure; ethnic loyalty factor; and ethnic worthiness.

### Social Narratives

Social narratives, across minority communities, where children are brought up is fueled with fears of persecution, and the need for self-preservation and cultural preservation vis-à-vis a majority community or state that is perceived as biased towards the majority community which is different. So, for instance, the Naga movement for separate homeland has been based on the premise that Naga culture and tradition is threatened by what the Indian state stands for; a Hindu India, and hence requires independence to preserve it. Interestingly, Naga indigenous traditions as they existed, have themselves undergone massive change with the advent of Christianity propagated by the American Baptist Mission during British colonial rule.

Fascinating details of how the British and the American Baptist Mission termed Naga animist culture as dark and evil to influence them to convert to Christianity has been documented in an impressive manner in the book by Tezenlo Thong.<sup>1</sup>

So, what Pip's brother is fighting for, believing these are ancient ways of life, is not the animism of Naga culture but 18th century culture and religion that now predominates. Despite that, the fear that what Nagas believe as their ancient way of life being threatened within India, has resulted in a violent ethnic movement that has lasted over 98 years since it first saw an organized establishment in 1918.



Indian Bodo tribal girls. <https://www.voanews.com/gallery/february-7-2020> - AP

### Peer Pressure

Then, there is peer pressure. When you belong to the same ethnic lineage, there is an intense social pressure to demonstrate loyalty. For instance, when I joined courses in higher education in Assam's capital, Guwahati, I was forced by some, if not all, seniors in college during the first month to only wear the traditional Assamese dress, the Mekhela Chador to college, as well as converse only in Assamese, including to those of my friends from my hometown Haflong, who belonged to other ethnic communities, in order to demonstrate my 'Assameseness'.

Significantly, I am an Assamese by birth and upbringing, but having grown up in Haflong, a town in Assam, which represented a microcosm of several ethnic communities, my environment was rather cosmopolitan. Hence, the strict rules imposed upon me as part of a ritualistic 'ragging' in College to demonstrate my Assamese origins stifled me. To my young mind, it was an act of coercion. But, I played along for fear of being seen as disloyal. Such pressures are common and especially in teenage years, it could impact your decision making and personality structures. For instance, in the state of Manipur, it is compulsory for girls, not boys, to wear the phanek sarong (traditional skirt) to colleges. This dress code was imposed by the Meitei armed group, Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL). Added to this dress code was a warning from the KYKL that "the school authorities, student unions and parents would be held responsible for any untoward incident arising out of dishonouring the "appeal".<sup>2</sup> This could amount to physical harm.

Interestingly, the KYKL argued that women have a special role in preserving local traditions, and apparently, forcing them to wear traditional clothes was one way of preserving it. One can only imagine the impact that it had on young girls, by taking away their freedom to choose their own clothes. Such conditions, inarguably, leads to coercion and obsessive control of how women should behave in traditional societies, not dissimilar to the Taliban in Afghanistan who turned women into hidden obedient members of society.

In 2007, President of United Manipur Muslim Women's Development Organisation, Anwari Nurjahan Begum, stated that, such dress codes bode well for women safety, and that provocative dresses worn by girls lead to crime.<sup>3</sup>





<https://pixabay.com/photos/new-zealand-rotorua-te-puia-maori-3083787/>

## Ethnic Loyalty Factor

The third factor that motivates people to rally around a cause is ethnic loyalty. This kind of loyalty is not coerced but is based on a sense of belonging, genuine community feeling, and a deep emotional attachment to that way of life. For instance, when Samis in Norway protested for their rights vis-à-vis the Norwegian government, there was a deep sense of attachment to their way of living, including reindeer herding. In 1989, the Samis established their own Parliament and worked hard to preserve their culture and language, under severe threat from Norwegian state policies attempted at suppressing their rights.<sup>4</sup> The Maoris in New Zealand rallied around as a community to ensure that their rights were won as an indigenous community.<sup>5</sup> The tales of indigenous communities in the Americas is more or less similar. This sense of ethnic loyalty comes from the next factor that motivates, that of ethnic worthiness.

## Ethnic Worthiness

As humans, we all have an innate need to enjoy a sense of self-worth that is respected and recognized by others in the social milieu. Many times, this sense of 'self worth' is based on the prestige of our ancestors, their way of life, as well as traditions that are passed on down the ages. A sense of pride in the past, a continuance of the worth of our ancestors in the present, and carrying it with us into the future have a deep meaningful impact on who we become, what we achieve, and what we value and pass on to future generations. In ethnic minority communities, this attachment to identity, by one's own choosing, or by the context in which one finds oneself, matters deeply for creating a sense of self-worth and respect. Hence, communities stake a lot in ensuring that the sacred environment in which this sense of ethnic/self-worth is fostered is secure from outside external cultural influences or majority community domination. Hence, the politics of ethnic cultural preservation and identity takes center stage, motivating many to take arms.

Identities get shaped by past history, existing social narratives and traditions, peer pressure as well as ethnic loyalty. Loyalty plays a major role in creating incentive structures for ethnic groups to demonstrate a desire to preserve cultures. For the near future, we will continue to see conflicts over preservation of ethnic identities, ancestral land, cultures and tradition. For some like the Maoris, there may be some wins; for others like the aborigines of Australia or the native indigenous communities of America, it will be a harder task as most of them are relegated to reservations.



Girls of the Hmong Tribe, North Laos PDR. Photograph by Mark Ulyseas.

For ethnic minorities in India, the constitution and local state structures offer democratic representation. But the weakness and corruption rampant in institutions, can play havoc with ethnic land preservation and culture maintenance. Ultimately, it will be left to future generations to work out better means to ensure culture preservation, while at the same time, adapting to the growing influences of an interconnected technological world. There is perhaps no other way.

## Notes

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## AFGHANISTAN'S ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE: PATH TO PEACE AND STABILITY

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### Abstract

*As the narratives of pessimism and doom prevail about the future of Afghanistan, alternate approaches to achieving peace and stability in the conflict ravaged country have hardly been explored. Much of the debate on transition (inteqal) in Afghanistan has been dominated by the security approach of the need to quell the Taliban led insurgency. Civilian capacity building, institution building, economic opportunities, trade, transit and investment that has the potential to transform the country from being an aid-dependent state to a self-sustaining economy, has received scant attention. As Afghanistan traverses a challenging path, the economic stabilisation will be critical to bring in long-term peace and stability.*

The *inteqal* (transition) process assumes that Afghanistan will continue to be an aid-dependent state, in need of international financial assistance to sustain its economy, security and development initiatives for at least another decade. Stability in the war-torn country was thereby inherently linked to a secure and uninterrupted flow of international financial assistance to shore up the country's own efforts at utilizing its own resources and capabilities to fend for itself. While the latter remains a project in progress, international financial assistance and commitment has dwindled, posing perhaps a greater danger than the expanding Taliban led insurgency<sup>2</sup> to Afghanistan's stability.



In February 2016, the Obama administration proposed US \$2.5 billion in financial assistance to Afghanistan to reinforce the country's security and development. Aid to support democracy, governance and civil society dropped by more than 50 per cent and from US\$231 million to US\$93 million and the allocation of support for "rule of law" dropped from US\$43 million to US\$16 million.<sup>4</sup> In 2012, the World Bank had warned that such a drop in aid-giving 'could lead to major macroeconomic instability and serious socio-economic consequences.'

Contrary to Afghan government's November 2011 estimate<sup>3</sup>, it requires US\$120 billion (at the rate of US\$10 billion per year) in aid in the post-2014 period, through 2025, at the Tokyo summit in July 2012, however, international community promised to give a meagre US\$16 billion through 2015 to build its economy and make necessary reforms. Even the development assistance from US, the largest donor, has dropped from US\$3.5 billion in 2010 to about US\$2 billion in 2011 and has remained at that level over the subsequent years. In February 2016, the Obama administration proposed US \$2.5 billion in financial assistance to Afghanistan to reinforce the country's security and development. Aid to support democracy, governance and civil society dropped by more than 50 per cent and from US\$231 million to US\$93 million and the allocation of support for "rule of law" dropped from US\$43 million to US\$16 million.<sup>4</sup> In 2012, the World Bank had warned that such a drop in aid-giving 'could lead to major macroeconomic instability and serious socio-economic consequences.' Amidst such a precarious situation, exploring avenues for revenue generation, trade, foreign investment and development of indigenous economic base remains critical to compensate for such shrinkage of external support.

The intrinsic nature of aid-giving and execution of development projects through contracts and sub-contracting, has done little to build on state capacities or local ownership. Afghanistan's problem essentially lies in the lack of 'unity of effort' (UoE) on the part of the international community in developing a well-coordinated and long-term strategy to build and strengthen the institutions and 'bring the state back' into the development process. In rebuilding conflict-ridden states like Afghanistan, aid-delivery through 'alternate delivery mechanisms' like the international Organisations and International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) or direct delivery through embassies, and community-based groups plays a crucial role in providing immediate humanitarian relief and assistance but in the long term have not been helpful in building state institutions of service delivery and implementation. This has impacted on credibility of the state which has worked into the insurgent propaganda of "an ineffective state" or "puppet regime".

The impact of the shrinkage on Afghanistan's economic growth, fiscal sustainability and service delivery is being slowly felt now. The pull out of international troops has led to the loss of 100,000 jobs in the transport sector alone, which had contributed about 22 percent of Afghanistan's GDP. The construction sector and services connected to it had been driven by US military contracts and accounted for 40 percent of GDP.<sup>5</sup> Afghanistan's current state of economic growth, a large chunk of which was driven by the money flowing into the economy from jobs and contracts connected to the US military, has crashed too. It declined to 1.3 percent in 2014, which is a steep fall from an average of 6.9 percent from 2007 to 2012. The average yearly income per person has declined from US\$730 in 2013 to US\$680 the following year.

The second Bonn conference on 'Afghanistan and the International Community: From Transition to the Transformation Decade' held in December 2011 set an extended period of international assistance, 2014-24 and termed it the 'transformational decade', the contours of international assistance and engagement remain highly unclear.



<https://pixabay.com/photos/mantoo-food-afghanistan-cuisine-60647/>

The World Bank's 2016 "Doing Business" report ranked Afghanistan at 177 in a list of 189 economies for the ease of doing business<sup>6</sup>, a decline of two positions from the 2015 ranking. In fact, the ranking has consistently declined since 2012, when it was 168. The huge international spending in Afghanistan over the past decade has dramatically raised domestic prices (particularly of skilled workers and residential/commercial properties) that the country is no longer export-competitive vis-a-vis other South Asian countries. While real estate boom in Kabul was a visible sign, often mistakenly described as an indicator of Afghanistan's progress, the high salaries paid to government employees by all means was unrealistic and unsustainable. It artificially created a huge divide among the Afghans who remained dependent on the traditional sectors of economy and those who enjoyed the benefits of the international development assistance. At least in this respect, the gradual scaling down of foreign spending might help lower prices closer to 'South Asian levels', which may help Afghanistan in increasing its exports although 'transit' issues will still remain a challenge.

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Attempts have also been made to link the prospect of Afghan's self-reliant economic future to its resource potential. The discovery of huge troves of minerals and natural gas has raised hopes of possibility of revenue generation, foreign investment and employment opportunities. The mineral and hydrocarbon sectors are estimated to be worth at between US\$1 and US\$3 trillion. The Mes Aynak copper mines located in the Logar province, just 25 miles southeast of Kabul, for example, is estimated to hold six million tons of copper and is worth tens of billions of dollars.



<https://pixabay.com/photos/boys-family-father-turban-60792/>

A series of international conferences seems to miss the crucial point that stabilising Afghanistan by devising quick-fix solutions and setting arbitrary timelines do not meet the needs on the ground. A successful transition is contingent on the continued, albeit slow, growth in the administrative capacity of government ministries, and on improvements in local governance, civil service, development and employment opportunities at the provincial and district level.

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In November 2007, a 30-year lease was granted to the China Metallurgical Group (MCC) for US\$3 billion, making it the biggest foreign investment and private business venture in Afghanistan's history. However, the project still remains mired in controversy. According to a July 2015 report, "delays have plagued the ambitious project, though

Building on the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA) series initiated in 2005 – and held in Kabul, New Delhi, Islamabad, Istanbul, and Dushanbe – RECCA-VI, was held in Kabul on 3-4 September 2015. Preceding the high-level Ministerial Meeting on 4 September, an Academic Forum and a Regional Business Forum, held on 3 September engaged scholars and business representatives from across the region and beyond around critical regional economic cooperation themes, including in the areas of trade & transport, energy & resource corridors, streamlining customs & border crossings, and attracting investment & technical know-how from the private sector.

the government claims 7,000 jobs are being created, with a \$1.2 billion impact on the national economy."<sup>7</sup>

The first Afghanistan International Investment Conference (AIIC) was held on 30 November 2010 in Dubai. The AIIC took place following a series of high-level international meetings on Afghanistan in 2010, most notably in London, Kabul, Istanbul, and Lisbon. It was followed by the Brussels Euro Mines Conference of 26 October 2011. Both the AIIC and the Brussels Conference aimed at promoting economic investment in Afghanistan and made valuable recommendations. But they essentially put the onus for investment on actions to be initiated by Afghanistan, which was an exaggerated expectation from a country reeling from a host of challenges. The 28 June 2012 Delhi Investment Summit on Afghanistan, on the other hand, taking into consideration the realities and needs on the ground, explored near-term and long-term possibilities in the current environment and at the same time, sought a mechanism to address the needs of foreign and private sector investors and the government of Afghanistan. This is reflective in the efforts geared to catalyse investment decisions and forge cross-country and international partnerships to promote cooperation and greater collective confidence. A collective view of security for foreign investors emerged from the reality of venturing together, rather than individual investors risking an uncertain environment all by themselves.

Afghanistan's tragedy lies in the fact that time and again its internal contradictions have got trapped in the external power agenda. A regional consensus by forging greater cooperation is seen as a way out of the imbroglio. One way of building a cooperative regional architecture is through greater trade and transit, investment opportunities, including energy pipelines. The Istanbul Conference for Afghanistan: Security and Cooperation in the Heart of Asia, held on 2 November 2011, provided a new agenda for regional cooperation, by placing Afghanistan at its centre and engaging the 'Heart of Asia' countries in sincere and result-oriented cooperation for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan, as well as a secure and prosperous region as a whole. The emphasis for the first time on a regionally owned process led by Afghanistan, with support and collaboration from its near and extended neighbours, would make this effort 'sustainable and irreversible' in the long term.

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Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline is another regional collaborative venture that has enormous potential of bringing in economic dividends through mutually beneficial regional cooperation. According to an estimate by the Afghanistan's Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, the TAPI project would not only provide jobs to thousands of Afghans, but would result in annual gain of US\$500 million to the Afghan economy.<sup>8</sup>

The narrative has thus been gradually shifting to regional confidence-building, development, governance, and most lately, trade, transit and investment, aiming to use the country's resource- and transit- potential to build its economic viability, sustainability and self- reliance.

The long term economic benefits, revenue and employment opportunities arising out of investment, trade and transit would help build 'constituencies of peace'. The Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline is another regional collaborative venture that has enormous potential of bringing in economic dividends through mutually beneficial regional cooperation. According to an estimate by the Afghanistan's Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, the TAPI project would not only provide jobs to thousands of Afghans, but would result in annual gain of US\$500 million to the Afghan economy.<sup>8</sup> By forging a greater stake and regional commitment to rebuilding Afghanistan through alternate economic opportunities, foreign investment and local development strategies, capitalising on Afghanistan's location, energy and mineral resources in a mutually interdependent regional framework, could pave the way out of the stability-instability paradox.

Pessimism about Afghanistan's future, would thus be premature. The World Bank predicts Afghanistan's economic growth to rise steadily for the next few years. Noteworthy milestones have been achieved in health and education sectors.

The training and equipping the Afghan military appears to have been a modest success given that a rising insurgency from the Taliban and other groups including the Islamic State have been somewhat successfully dealt with. As Afghanistan traverses a difficult course of transition, there is an immediate need to bridge the perception gap between the Afghans and the international community to build on the gains and address the immediate areas of concern.

A unified vision and effort of putting Afghans in the lead for rebuilding their state and society, which remains the missing link in the decade-long international engagement in Afghanistan, needs priority emphasis. It is critical to set realistic timetables on drawdown based on conditions on the ground. Shoring up the state's capacities and institutions through long-term international commitment, provision of economic opportunities and greater regional integration would remain the key to achieving durable peace and stability in Afghanistan.

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### Notes

1. Dr Shanthie Mariet D'Souza is President & Founder, Mantraya.org, . The author's views and findings are based on her interactions, discussions and interviews with serving and former ministers, potential presidential contenders, government officials, members of think tanks, international organisations, non-governmental organisations, women's groups, entrepreneurs and locals during her field visits to Afghanistan between May 2007 and March 2016.
2. The Taliban led insurgency is a loosely affiliated, and diffused units comprising of multiple networks of anti-government armed groups; followers of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's radical group Hizb-e-Islami; the Haqqani network; Al Qaeda and its affiliates; religious clerics; narcotic traffickers; tribal militias; and self-interested spoilers in the Pakistani tribal areas. While these groups may not all share the political goals of the Taliban, they do share a common agenda in preventing or limiting the writ of the state authority. This inference was derived from interviews, briefings, and discussions with the government officials, security personnel, academia, media persons, and aid workers in various Afghan provinces from May 2007–March 2016. For further details on the insurgency, see Seth G. Jones, Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan, Arlington: RAND Counterinsurgency Study, vol. 4, 2008; Antonio Giustozzi, Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop: The Neo-Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan, New York: Columbia University Press, 2008; Ahmed Rashid, Descent into Chaos: How the war against Islamic extremism is being lost in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia, London: Penguin, 2008, pp. 240–61; Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, Taliban: The Rebels Who Aspire to be Rulers, Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs (JASIA), Sage publications, April 2016.
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## ANDROMACHE FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS: WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM ANTIQUITY?

### DR GRETA SYKES

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The place of women in society is a useful indicator of the extent of equality in that society suggests Wilkinson (2005). Concerns about stagnant (the West) or rising levels of inequality experienced by women globally requires that we look carefully at models of societies in the past and the historical development of male and female power and status differences. The negative impact of low status or lack of power on wellbeing has been sufficiently illustrated by Oliver James in 'Affluenza' (2007). Engels' (1972) essay on 'The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State' brought about a revolution of thinking at the turn of the previous century regarding the place of women in society. Anthropologists, historians, archaeologists and psychologists have since then engaged in debates and research to explore the contribution antiquity made to our understanding of gender roles and a male dominated world by querying the assumption that human societies have always been controlled by men. Goddesses, Angels, witches – which identity do we choose to regain the power and status we deserve?

In this essay I explore some of the key points that are made by researchers of inequality leading to the proposition that the first class struggle in history (Engels) can be won by women through making 'taken for granted knowledge' transparent and developing an epistemology of female power and control. Finally interventions and strategies are suggested that can assist psychologists to use their awareness to guide their clients towards better mental and emotional health through reaching for equality.



Dr Greta Sykes





## Introduction

Nobel Prize winning biologist Tim Hunt described female scientists as lachrymose romantics. After his words, spoken at a conference in Seoul went viral he was asked to resign by the University College London. In a dialogue with Ingrid Tschol (Die Zeit) she criticised this move by saying it did nothing for the rights of women:

‘The gender bias is wide spread – also in the sciences. Tim Hunt is being made a scapegoat. It won’t make any difference to the general malaise (2015)’.

Recent research suggests that the level of underreporting of crimes against women is at 70%. These facts bring to our attention how fragile the rights of girls and women are in spite of the achievements of feminism and anti-discriminatory legislation. Exploring the present nature and extent of equality for women seems therefore to be imperative. Equal pay and equal employment opportunities are vital aspects of equality, however, they do not necessarily translate into equal power and control or, for that matter, a vision of future goals to be aimed for. When we face the reality of women today it does not seem too farfetched to suggest that only a seismic paradigm shift and a reinvigorated epistemology can lead us out of the present impasse which has not changed noticeably during the last thirty years.

In a recent parliamentary debate politicians Jenny Willcott, Elizabeth Truss and Chi Onwurah expressed concern that the ‘pinkification’ of toys for girls was adding to gender inequality in careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (Fine, New Scientist (N. S.) 31.3.14). The gendering of toys for profit is easy to spot when you go into a toyshop. Pink is for girls, other colours are for boys. Action toys, construction sets, vehicles and all manner of weapons are presented for boys to choose from, whereas toys signifying domesticity and beautification are in the girls department, polarising children’s interests into stereotypes. While boys’ toys prepare them for action, power and the occupation of space, girls’ toys prepare them for domesticity. As psychologists we are aware of the powerful influence of early learning and should therefore be concerned about any return to inequality through the backdoor of consumerism and toyshops.

## Women around the world

Inequality for women is a less visible problem in developed countries where women form half of the workforce and therefore can be economically independent. Yet, low paid workers are mainly female (the latest statistics puts them at 22% lower on average than men). In the corridors of power inequality is unmistakable. In the UK House of Parliament there are only 148 women out of a total of 650 MPs.

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During 2014 the German Parliament passed legislation specifying that 30% of staff in top boardroom positions must be women from 2016. The perceived need for such an initiative is a clear indication that just under a hundred years after women got the vote in Germany gender equality has not been achieved. In an analysis of why so many women have failed to maintain their top position the commentators come to the conclusion that women tend to be hired when major problems such as cuts in staffing have to be executed. Unsurprisingly such work entails much conflict, strain and blame. It was argued that men can hold on to their position because of the male network around them which women tend not to have (Die Zeit, 22.11.14). In other words power and the networks of control remain largely out of women’s reach. This is also visible in our own profession where a low ratio of men to women during initial training nevertheless produces a higher ratio of men in positions of power.

Globally discrimination, inequality and violence towards women are ubiquitous. Women at American universities face the threat of rape on a daily basis. Female genital mutilation takes place even here in the UK. In India every fifth woman becomes a victim of rape. In Nigeria the Islamic group Boko Haram abducted over two hundred and seventy young females. Most of them have not been seen since. Women captured by the IS Islamic state are sold for the equivalent of £27 into prostitution. Continuing practices of misogyny take place in Saudi-Arabia where women are not allowed to move about without the permission of a male member of the family. In February 2015 a conference entitled ‘Women in Society’ at Qassim university (Saudi-Arabia) included not a single female participant. Women are not allowed into Mosques together with men. In Jerusalem women are not allowed to pray at the Wailing Wall. Every day women who attempt to pray at the wall are harassed and arrested by police. In many Islamic countries women have to hide their hair and even their face.

## Women in the UK

The widespread use of women to sell consumer goods from chocolate to motorcars goes hand in hand with a stereo-typing of male and female roles, creating subliminal messages about what is expected, in terms of such personal things as body size (size ten), personality (airhead) and preference for macho men. Macleod comments (N. S. 14.2.15):

“Our preferences are personal and flexible, shaped by factors such as our environment, social status and economic prospects. It is time to question the stereo-types and rewrite the rulebook (p42).” Role models act as indicators in a society for the type of prospect a young woman may aspire to as she grows up. The TV screens present men in action roles both in politics and on the football pitches. They occupy large spaces, whereas women are usually portrayed in small spaces, such as the home or the garden.



In the year of 1915 when Albert Einstein developed the theory of relativity a woman called Amalia Noether developed one of the most pertinent theorems about the hidden rules of nature: Symmetries give rise to conservation laws. However, hardly anyone is familiar with her name, although her achievements when described are praised as highly as Einstein's. She worked at Goettingen University but received no financial remuneration for her efforts.

### Women in the UK *contd...*

The notorious predominance of young men working in the city of London stock market briefly reached media attention after the market crash in 2008, when it received criticism regarding the testosterone driven risk behaviour that may have added to the collapse of the banking system. The struggle to include women bishops has nearly torn the Church of England apart. Nevertheless, the first woman bishop was appointed in December 2014. The Nobel price given for excellence since 1901 has been awarded to men 94.5 % of the time. This means only 47 women received it. Even in countries that espouse the rights of women to equality the aim to fulfil that demand has yet to be achieved. Neff et al (2007):

"Despite gains made by the women's movement over the last few decades, inequality in the power and status accorded to males and females is still a prevalent part of our cultural and social landscape (p 682)."

### Are women different by nature?

Claims that women are different from men and therefore cannot achieve the same roles as men are refuted by girls' educational success. The 2014 GCSE results show that girls have pulled ahead of boys in every subject apart from maths. The poor achievements of gender equality in academic science were highlighted in the Psychologist (December 2014). A new report on women in the sciences indicates that the mathematically intense sciences showed that women were underrepresented in university course and post graduate programmes. In 2011 women received only 25% of GEEMP (geoscience, engineering, economics maths computer science) Bachelor degrees. The results of the report apparently suggest somewhat complex trends of certain movements towards egalitarian experiences. Valian, professor in psychology at Hunters College, CUNY comments:

"(The report) ignores the wealth of experimental data showing that both men and women under-rate women and overrate men in professional settings... the subtle daily examples in real life where women's professional contributions are not recognised – including the failure to invite them as keynote speakers at conferences and data showing that female and male students are sensitive to cues indicating whether they will be welcome in a field (p905)."

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achievements when described are praised as highly as Einstein's. She worked at Goettingen University but received no financial remuneration for her efforts.

Epidemiological studies (Wilkinson, 2005) in the developed countries have revealed the type of factors that determine our lives, once material privation has declined. These include the nature of early childhood experience, the amount of anxiety and worry we suffer, the quality of our social relationships, the amount of control we have over our lives and our social status. Our health and wellbeing is determined by these psychosocial factors which impinge on the way we think, feel and act. Fine (2010) comments:

"...those gender gaps can close or even disappear depending on social context, place and historical period... we are still at the beginning of the journey of understanding how the brain enables the mind... The sheer complexity of the brain, together with our assumptions about gender, lend themselves beautifully to over-interpretation and precipitous conclusions (p 900)."

Rather than speaking of nature we need to study the cultural, psychosocial context in which women live and how the social construction of their relative powerlessness has come to be the dominant paradigm in society, often expressed in their economic status and the lack of space they inhabit. Similar to institutional racism institutional sexism lives on subtly in the minds of people without them necessarily being aware of it. However, when language is used it is likely to contain the unconscious perceptions that determine the continuation of the paradigm of powerlessness.

### Economics and culture

Epidemiological studies make the causes of discrimination transparent by showing clear links between poverty and lack of rights.

"Although rich countries have continued to get richer, measures of wellbeing have ceased to rise. Since the seventies there has been no increase in average wellbeing despite rapid increases in wealth" (Wilkinson, 2005 p6).

The differences between the 70s and 2014 are poignantly visible in our high streets. There were no nail studios or hairdressers at every street corner. Shoe shops offered comfortable shoes and very few high heels. In a restless culture of competition women endure pain to have body parts puffed up, tugged, cut off, enlarged or minimised.





### Economics and culture *contd...*

Ever higher heels and shorter skirts are offered in shops. At the recent Cannes film festival women without high heels were not allowed to walk on the red carpet.

“Most of the evidence behind this interpretation has to do with the indication that more unequal societies have a more aggressively male culture... “More unequal societies are tougher, more competitive, dog-eats-dog societies” (Wilkinson 2005, p219).

Wilkinson argues that whether a society is more ‘clannish’ with strong family ties leading to honour killings, vendettas and the sacrifice of dishonoured women “or whether they are closer to the social breakdown found in the concrete jungle of modern urban societies it is easy to see why they are unlikely to lead to improvements in the status of women. When competition between men is intensified, women lose out” (Wilkinson, 2005, p219).

### Gender, sexuality and economics

One of the cornerstones of discrimination through the ages since antiquity has always focused on women’s reproductive and sexual capabilities. Graves (1955) describes how women ruled in ancient Greece. Men were unaware of their role in reproduction. The fertility of women was seen as akin to the fertility of nature generally, empowered by earth, sun, wind and water. Women’s sexual behaviour was then their own property. Price (Brunel University) found in a study that a correlation exists between female economic independence and acceptance of promiscuous behaviour:

“As the gender pay gap has decreased in the UK and other Western countries, women have become more financially independent; the relative costs of promiscuity versus pair bonding have gone down...” (Macleod, NS 14.2.15, p45).

Boak (2013) describes how women came under increasing scrutiny during WW1 for perceived sexually immoral activities involving French prisoners of war and prostitution to gain an income.

“The war had, however, challenged bourgeois standards of sexual behaviour, and the hyperinflation further eroded the belief in a woman’s chastity before marriage which would provide for her economically and in which the paternity of any inheriting offspring had to be beyond doubt” (Boak, 2013, p219). At no point in history has male sexuality ever been an issue for debate; however those same entitlements

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in relation to women run like a destructive current through history and societies from the time of ancient Greece to the attacks on women in many countries today. Currently five women are killed daily in Turkey by mainly male family members. Thus, male dominated society assumes ownership of a woman’s sexuality, a fact that has been interpreted by Marxist researchers as being indicative of the economics of private property, leading in turn to the monetarisation of people, artefacts and values.

The correlation between economic independence and sexual and reproductive freedom for women stands in sharp contrast to the perception of woman as empty vessel for the production of offspring who are to inherit wealth and possessions. To achieve this focus a woman’s sexuality needs to be annulled in favour of her role as mother of her husband’s children. Her sexuality needs to be possessed by a man. The BBC film of Hilary Mantel’s *Wolf Hall* illustrates this situation very well. Henry choses his women on the basis of his perceived need to have a son. If she cannot deliver one, he is found another woman. She does not count as a person, instead she is an empty vessel designed for procreation and his property to dispose of, if not required.

Throughout history speculations and definitions of women’s role and place in society have maintained an ambivalence whereas the role of men as ruler, chief, captain of industry or otherwise person in command with its associated aspects of power, territory and respect have acquired a position of ‘taken for granted knowledge’ (Kelly, 1993). Robertson in his article ‘How power affects the brain’ calls the resultant emotional fallout the ‘winner effect’ (The Psychologist, March 2013):

“Even small induced power levels increase hypocrisy, moral exceptionalism, ego-centricity and lack of empathy for others (p187).”

Not surprisingly we are witnessing such behaviour regularly in the media and politics, as well as at work. Rather than being innate factors the behaviour that arises out of such emotions is socially induced and maintained to the disadvantage of women and ultimately of men as well. A self-perpetuating vicious cycle of corrosive expectations is thus installed. The effect of the current stalemate in achieving the goal of equality can be seen in the global crisis of the environment, the neglect of nature and the catastrophe of families, mainly women and children, having to flee from war zones. The voice of women has been largely silenced. The result is an on-going crisis of morality in which ‘taken for granted knowledge’ guides our governments in day to day decisions, which deny the past as well as the future. In order to envisage the future we need to know the past. It is therefore not enough to ask for equal pay and equal work opportunities women.



“But the male-female conflict subsumes the other two, for while it maintains its own emotive function in the dramatization of human concerns, it provides too the central metaphor which ‘sexualises’ the other issues and attracts them into its magnetic field” (Zeitlin in Wagner-Hasel, 1989, p225). Engels (1972) declared the struggle between matriarchy and patriarchy as the first class struggle in human history.

### Gender, sexuality and economics *contd...*

Instead it is necessary to regain a vision of women’s inherent strength. We need to build on an epistemology of power and control and become vigilant about stratagems that attempt to place women in a ‘quiet corner’ in society. We need to learn to occupy large spaces, literally and metaphorically outside the domestic sphere. We need to learn from history and the examples of powerful women it offers. There is no better place to begin this task than by studying the ancient Greek myths. The most famous is the Orestia which offers insight into how a matriarchic/matristic society changed into a patriarchic/patristic one. So examples from Aeschylus and Homer will need to suffice here.

### Matriarchy, myth and classical antiquity

Myths are early human narratives told and retold by later generations changing them in their course and interpreting them to fit their perspective on society. Warburg (2011) declared in his study of Indian mask dances:

“The fairy story-like thinking of these dancers is a step on the way towards our natural science knowledge... It is, if you will, a Darwinism through a mythical relationship (p 35).”

Thus, myths from antiquity can be viewed as early forms of philosophy and sociology that can guide human behaviour. The concept of a matriarchy has been understood by Marxists as synonymous with an egalitarian type society, not a society ruled by women. For the sake of the deliberations in this essay this meaning has been adopted.

“True myth may be defined as the reduction to narrative shorthand of ritual mime performed on public festivals” (Graves, 1955, p12).

From Robert Graves exploration of the Greek myths Jung developed his theory of the archetypes and the collective unconscious. He declares what was myth in Greece began as ritual in Egypt, thus residing his psychology within the Vygotskian social construction of reality. The initiative to an entirely new epistemology of gender relations came from Bachofen in Switzerland in 1861 and Lewis H. Morgan (1877), the founder of American anthropology. Since then the debate over the existence or nonexistence of early matristic societies has raged and enraged successive generations of anthropologists, ethnographer, historians and psychologists. Bachofen contributed a ‘unique creation of a mythology in our time (Wieacker in: Wagner-Hasel, 1992). Johann Jakob Bachofen’s ‘Das Mutterrecht’ showed that in the codes of Roman law vestigial features can be recognised of a matrilineal order of inheritance”



states Campbell in his Foreword to Marija Gimbutas’ ‘The Language of the Goddess, 1989). Morgan, basing his explorations on Bachofen’s extensive work defined the model of family he found as based on consanguinity in which each child has several fathers and mothers. Such early societies had no knowledge of how procreation took place and lived in polygamous and polyandrous groups. Robert Graves described how women were revered for their power to procreate. Ownership of children for the sake of inheritance was unknown for thousands of years. Out of the wealth of studies that exist in the field Aeschylus’ Oresteia stands out as offering a short guide into the spirit of the Greek mind at the cusp of change from matriarchy to patriarchy. For him civilisation is the ultimate product of conflict between opposing forces, such as the Olympian forces over the chthonic, the Greek over the Barbarian and the male over the female. Zeitlin comments:

“But the male-female conflict subsumes the other two, for while it maintains its own emotive function in the dramatization of human concerns, it provides too the central metaphor which ‘sexualises’ the other issues and attracts them into its magnetic field” (Zeitlin in Wagner-Hasel, 1989, p225). Engels (1972) declared the struggle between matriarchy and patriarchy as the first class struggle in human history.

The Oresteia traces the evolution of early Greek civilisation by placing the polis at the centre and endowing it with the power to coordinate human, natural and divine forces. The events follow a straightforward story: Woman rises up against male authority. By slaying her husband and choosing her own sexual partner she shatters the social norms of the patriarchic/patristic culture. Her son slays her in allegiance with father/husband. In turn he is pursued by the Erinyes. After the matricide Orestes’ ritual rebirth takes place at the ‘omphalos’ (womb) in Delphi. At an earlier stage Omphale was queen of Lidia in Asia Minor. She was dressed in lion skin and carried an olive-wood club, as can be seen on a Roman mosaic in Spain from the third century. Over the course of time, the ‘omphalos’ was appropriated by the rising patriarchy, when Apollo received it as a birthday gift. Thus, Orestes is reborn from the male.

“Cross-cultural ethnographical data confirms that one of the most consistent themes of puberty rites is, in fact, the notion that the first birth from the female is superseded by a second birth, this time from the male” (Zeitlin, 1989, p243).

As Aeschylus plays proceed Clytemnestra, the female principle in the first play, rebels against the masculine regime by asserting her sexuality. By the time when the last play is enacted her representatives, the Erinyes become mere archaic, primitive creatures, whereas the male principle is portrayed in the young god Apollo, champion of society, conjugality and progress. The shift from matristic to patristic society has been concluded.



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## Matriarchy, myth and classical antiquity cont...

In the story of Andromache the famous departing scene between her and Hector Homer includes Andromache speaking seven verses with advice on military tactics (Ilias, fourth song 433-439):

“Stand your people near the fig tree where it is easy to move up and down to the town and the wall that can be climbed...(Pomeroy, 1975). Later researchers often omit these seven verses on the grounds that a woman could not have given military advice. Andromache (whose name means ‘the one who fights men’) was, nevertheless, in a very good position to give such advice due to the reign of women at the beginning of the Trojan War. Only by keeping those same verses in the text can Hector’s reply of refusing her advice and telling her off be understood.

An example from a society that continues to live along matristic gender relationships are the Minangkabau in Sumatra. Minangkabau women cook and wash up, the surprised visitor found out. However, they are the ones who own the land and the rice fields. Their daughters inherit the wealth from their mothers. When a wedding takes place the bridegroom moves into the family home of the bride and from then on belongs to her family. The men only have caretaker roles. They hold meetings, but the decisions have been previously agreed by the women.

The above offers a brief glimpse of the powerful roles women can hold or have inhabited in antiquity, when they were revered and participated at all levels of society. They are indicative of the postulation that human society and perceptions of gender and sexuality have evolved, similar to nature, through stages and that myths play an important part in informing about our anthropological past. The assumption that Abraham and the patriarchic form of social organisation has reigned since the beginning of human existence needs to be discarded. The ancient myths suggest an affirmation of women as full and equal persons and built into a revitalised epistemology to inform a more assertive and powerful paradigm within which to view the place of women.

## What psychologists can learn from antiquity

The current situation concerning gender equality has been stagnating for years and in some parts of the world is arguably deteriorating. Despite gains made by the women’s movement over the last few decades, inequality and low status still dominate the lives of most women. One is tempted to argue that psychology ought to be in the forefront of exposing the ‘frontiers’ in our minds, yet it is not. To quote an example the divisional journal of Educational and Child Psychology last included a paper on gender inequality in 1993.

Liz Kelly’s article ‘What are little girls and little boys made of, the gendering of childhood’ (vol 10(3) p12-21) studied young children and their experience with toys. Kelly declares that there has been a long tradition in psychology to take male behaviour as the norm, as a kind of ‘taken for granted knowledge’ which includes ‘gendered responses to children. Kelly declares that there has been a long tradition in psychology to take male behaviour as the norm, as a kind of ‘taken for granted knowledge’ which includes ‘gendered responses to children.

Girls toys are “small, familial and can be played with quietly in a confined space” (Kelly, 1993, p13).

“When these resources are structured through dichotomous gender stereo-typing it makes play between boys and girls problematic...the outcome of these social processes are gendered psychologies, aptitudes and perceptions...” (Kelly, 1993, p13).

The implication of Kelly’s findings indicate that as psychologists we urgently need awareness training of the gendered psychology in our workplaces, our offices, the classroom we enter, the work and play that is offered to children and the attitudes and perceptions of teaching and support staff. The ‘taken for granted knowledge’ is the invisible frontier in our heads and in our language that continues to make inequality in our society into an accepted and acceptable paradigm. Shifting it will require a constant questioning of ‘taken for granted knowledge’ and substituting it with language and actions that free women from all forms of subjugation, be it verbal, emotional, intellectual or spatial. We have to actively seek to participate in command and decision making domains in society. We will have to work to come out the ‘quiet corner’ ourselves and support girls and female teaching staff in our schools to do the same. Our work should include raising awareness of the need for women to own their bodies, both in terms of reproduction as well as sexuality. Our own perception of ourselves as being powerful, being in control of our inner and outer space, being visible and being heard can then be translated into actions, behaviours and a language that can give hope and confidence to our clients, be they families and children, work colleagues or organisations. The vision of the strong and confident behaviour of Andromache could lead us on the way.



“The word Sioux is not used by the Lakota. Sioux is a derogatory slang word that means devil. Serpent is the original word for "sioux" but was mistranslated as snake. The slang word sioux comes from (Nadowes sioux). The word serpent comes from the Roman Catholic Church. Back when the Catholics first got started anyone that wasn't Catholic was considered a child of Lucifer (Wakansica, Satan, the Devil, Serpent etc...). When you get called a serpent they aren't talking about your physical body, their talking about your spirit, character, personality who you are as a human being. All the Native tribes and members that didn't accept the Catholic Church were called serpents or snakes (devils). This derogatory word "Sioux", translated serpent or snake, means one thing "devil" and their talking about your spirit, not your body. You're calling yourself a devil and saying Satan (Wakansica) is you're God, when you say I'm a Sioux.” - *Lakota Times*.

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## TATANKA IYOTAKE

### Buffalo Bull Who Sits Down (Sitting Bull)

Sun Dancer, Medicine Man and Chief of the non-treaty Lakota

## INTRODUCTION

### Mark Ulyseas

Not long ago Europe was called the Old World and North America, the New World. No one mentioned the indigenous people living on the continent for thousands of years. It was assumed that they were of no significance: Their culture was considered inferior by the marauding white folk who took it upon themselves to civilise the natives by first occupying their lands and then engaging them in battle to seize control. All this culminated in the indigenous people being relegated to ‘reservations’ like animals. The ancient way of life, the languages were all but extinguished. Their young were civilised...Christianised. The invaders had distorted their own truths in their haste to seize the wealth and lands that did not belong to them.

It was a cultural genocide.

Sitting Bull’s real name is Tatanka Iyotake, Buffalo Bull Who Sits Down. He belonged to the Húnkpap̃a tribe of the Lakota Nation. History written by non-Lakota accuse him of leading the indigenous peoples against General Custer at the Battle of the Little Big Horn on June 25, 1876. He was never there. In fact he stayed behind at the settlement to protect the women and children. After the battle of the Little Big Horn, Sitting Bull was declared Public Enemy No.1 and was pursued by the US Government and the media.

Prior to the battle Sitting Bull had a vision that warned him against the desecration of the dead (US soldiers) in a battle in which the white soldiers were defeated... And if this happened great misfortune would befall the indigenous people. Unfortunately, the dead were desecrated by the victorious Natives in the aftermath of the battle of Little Big Horn.

The US Government viewed the traditional customs of the indigenous people as heathenish and quickly enacted the Indian Offenses Act 1883 that outlawed the continuing of their customs that were un-Christian like. It was as late as 1978 that the Indian Religious Freedom Act guaranteeing the right of the Lakota and other tribes to perform their sacred rituals and ceremonies was passed.

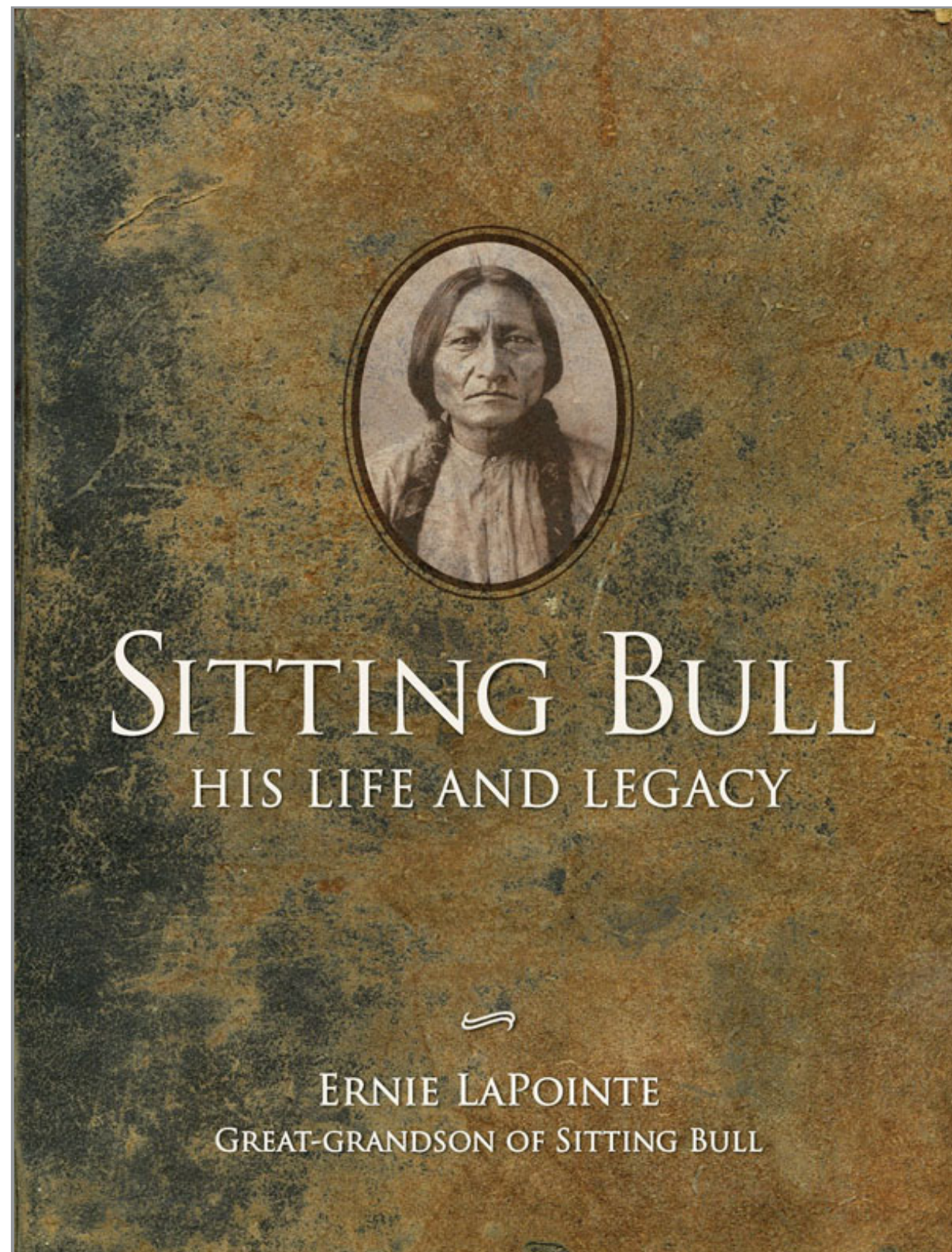
The rest is now history...like the slaughter at Wounded Knee on December 29, 1890, where un-armed Native Americans were gunned down by the US Cavalry two weeks after the murder of Sitting Bull at Standing Rock Indian Reservation. Perhaps the cavalry in their feeble minds sought revenge for the humiliation of Custer. But this was not a victory. It was murder in cold blood of un-armed men, women and children of the Native Americans. The US Government viewed the traditional customs of the indigenous people as heathenish and hastily enacted the Indian Offenses Act 1883 that outlawed the continuing of their customs that were un-Christian like. It was as late as 1978 that the Indian Religious Freedom Act guaranteeing the right of the Lakota and other tribes to perform their sacred rituals and ceremonies was passed. And while control was wrested and lands occupied by white settlers, the US Government signed a treaty in 1868, wherein the Lakota Nation were granted exclusive rights to the Black Hills, in perpetuity. Unfortunately, the discovery of gold in the Black Hills changed the Government’s stance and it forced the Lakota Nation to surrender part of the Black Hills.

The sacred Black Hills were again defiled by a white man from Connecticut who dynamited and drilled the faces of four white men onto Mount Rushmore.

In the following pages you will read about and hear the voice of the great Tatanka Iyotake, Buffalo Bull Who Sits Down, through his great grandson Ernie LaPointe who presents us with glimpses of his life during a time when word was honour and the people lived in harmony with Mother Earth.

Toksa Ake, (See You Again). There are no words for good-bye or farewell in the Lakota language.





## THE CREATION STORY - TURTLE ISLAND

“The reason the Native people identify this continent (North America) as The Turtle Island is because it is a part of our creation story. The creation story starts with a big flood and the Earth is covered with water and the Great Mystery was sitting/floating on a Buffalo robe, when a voice was calling for help.

The voice was of a winged (could be an Eagle, Hawk or any winged brother/sister, according to the story teller) entity circling above.

The voice from the winged entity was begging for a place to land, as he was getting tired, so the Great Mystery took pity and reached into his Medicine bag and brought forth an otter and told him to dive to the bottom and bring some mud, so the otter dove, but returned and told the Great Mystery the water was too deep, so the Great Mystery then asked the Loon and then a Beaver, but all said the bottom could not be reached, so the Great Mystery asked the Turtle to dive to the bottom.

The Turtle was gone a very long time and the Great Mystery, along with the others, were singing sacred songs and waiting. The others said the Turtle had drowned, but suddenly the Turtle broke the surface and was covered in mud.

The Great Mystery took the mud and made a paddy and put it on the surface of the water and clapped, the mud became a vast continent, so the winged entity that was crying for help could alight.

The Great Mystery then took some of the other mud and created human figures and laid them on the ground and then stomped the ground and they became alive.

The Great Mystery told the people to be fruitful and populate, but to take care and nurture the land, because it is their true Mother.

This is why the Native people called this continent The Turtle Island.”

- *Ernie LaPointe*

The book, *Sitting Bull and His Legacy* by Ernie La Pointe, is available on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)





“I would also like to share a vision I had in a ceremony, my great grandfather came to me and told me to tell the World that he was/is a Sun Dancer first and foremost. He was a medicine man (cured with natural plants) and was chosen Chief by the non-treaty Lakota, but wants to be known as a Sun Dancer. He sacrificed his blood, sweat and tears so all things will exist (live). The Sun Dance is a very sacred ceremony, because the pledgers, put the World on their shoulders (similar to the Atlas story) and through their sacrifices the future generations of the Lakota Nation will continue to survive.”

- Ernie LaPointe

## Ernie LaPointe

### Great Grandson of Tatanka Iyotake (Sitting Bull)

who was a Sun dancer, Medicine Man and Chief of the non-treaty Lakota

speaks to Mark Ulyseas

You have written a book on Tatanka Iyotake (Sitting Bull) Buffalo Bull Who Sits Down. Why did you write this book and what do you hope to achieve with it?

I have written a book titled *“Sitting Bull, His Life and Legacy”*. The idea of the book came from a two part documentary titled “Authorized Biography of Sitting Bull by His Great-Grandson”. It was a professor from the Toldeo University, who had seen the documentary, who suggested to me that I write a book.

I informed her that my documentary was based on oral stories passed down from the lineal relatives of Sitting Bull and could not be in written form. She was adamant in her request, so I did a ceremony to ask the ancient Spirits about her suggestion and was surprised to learn from the Spirits that the present generations are not able to learn from oral stories as I had. The most important value of our Lakota culture is sharing/passing the truth about our ancestor’s way of life through story-telling. I learned these stories that are in my book through oral story-telling from my Mother, Angelique Spotted Horse-LaPointe, which were narrated to me in the Lakota language. I had a very difficult time with the translation from Lakota into this American/English language, as this language is a backward language because there are many meanings for just one word or a sentence that distorts the truth. My goal is to tell the true stories about my ancestor and to dispute the stories written about my great-grandfather. The first book, written by Stanley Vestal, was published in 1932. Since then hundreds of novels have come out using Vestal’s book as the main source of information. And this is unfortunate because Vestal’s book is not accurate, because he did not interview any of the lineal descendants living at that time. He interviewed the murders and the supporters of the murderers; they fabricated many of the accounts about my ancestor. My goal is to achieve success in telling the truth about my great-grandfather’s life and legacy.

Photograph of Ernie La Pointe courtesy Ernie La Pointe.



My mother told me the story when he was a young boy — because in our culture you always take your son to your brother to have him raised because the authority figure is a little different. And when he first went on his buffalo hunt, this was one of the ones that really — as a kid his age — she was telling me this and I had no idea what I would've done when I was six years, seven years old, of when he first hunted. And he went in there and he killed a buffalo, this big buffalo bull. And his uncle, Four Horns, said, "Why didn't you take the cow that was closer to the edge?" Because if the buffalo spook they could run the horse down. And the young boy said, "Yeah. I seen the cow," he said, "but I seen this little calf." He said, "If I kill the cow, that little calf would sure to perish too." "So," he said, "I went after this big buffalo." - Ernie LaPointe speaking to Ms Krista Tippett, [Onbeing.org](https://www.onbeing.org/)

**Is it true that as late as the 1970s it was illegal to burn sage or sweet grass or even sing sacred songs of the Lakota nation? So how did the culture survive and when did it come out of the shadows?**

The Lakota Way of Life is not a religion; we live within the realms of the Spirits. We can purify the area and pray to these Ancient Spirits, by using sage, sweet grass, flat cedar or various other natural substances to purify the air. The Ancient Lakota had a sacred song for everything they did and had many sacred songs for ceremonies. The Government feared this, so they outlawed our way of purification and ceremonies. They did allow the people to perform Pow-Wow dancing, but did permit the Sun Dance. The people took the ceremonies underground, and the values were shared through story-telling, usually as bed time stories. The Government allowed the people to return to these sacred ways in 1980.

**Who taught you the history of your tribe?**

I was told through story-telling about the sacred way of the Lakota from my Mother, Angelique Spotted Horse-LaPointe. She told me of our creation stories and about rules of the sacred pipe. She told me of the difficult times the Lakota had to endure... but with humor and respect for the sacred pipe, we survived. The Lakota language teaches the direction for tomorrow and cannot be misunderstood. The American/English language creates controversy and teaches the past. The Lakota language is best taught orally and should not be taught from a textbook.

In our tribe the women were always part of the decision making. There would be a 'listener' posted at every meeting of men. When a decision was arrived at by the men, the listener would report the proceedings to the elder women who would decide to approve or disapprove, accordingly. The Chief had to abide by the wisdom of the elder women.

**Did your service in Vietnam affect your status in your tribe?**

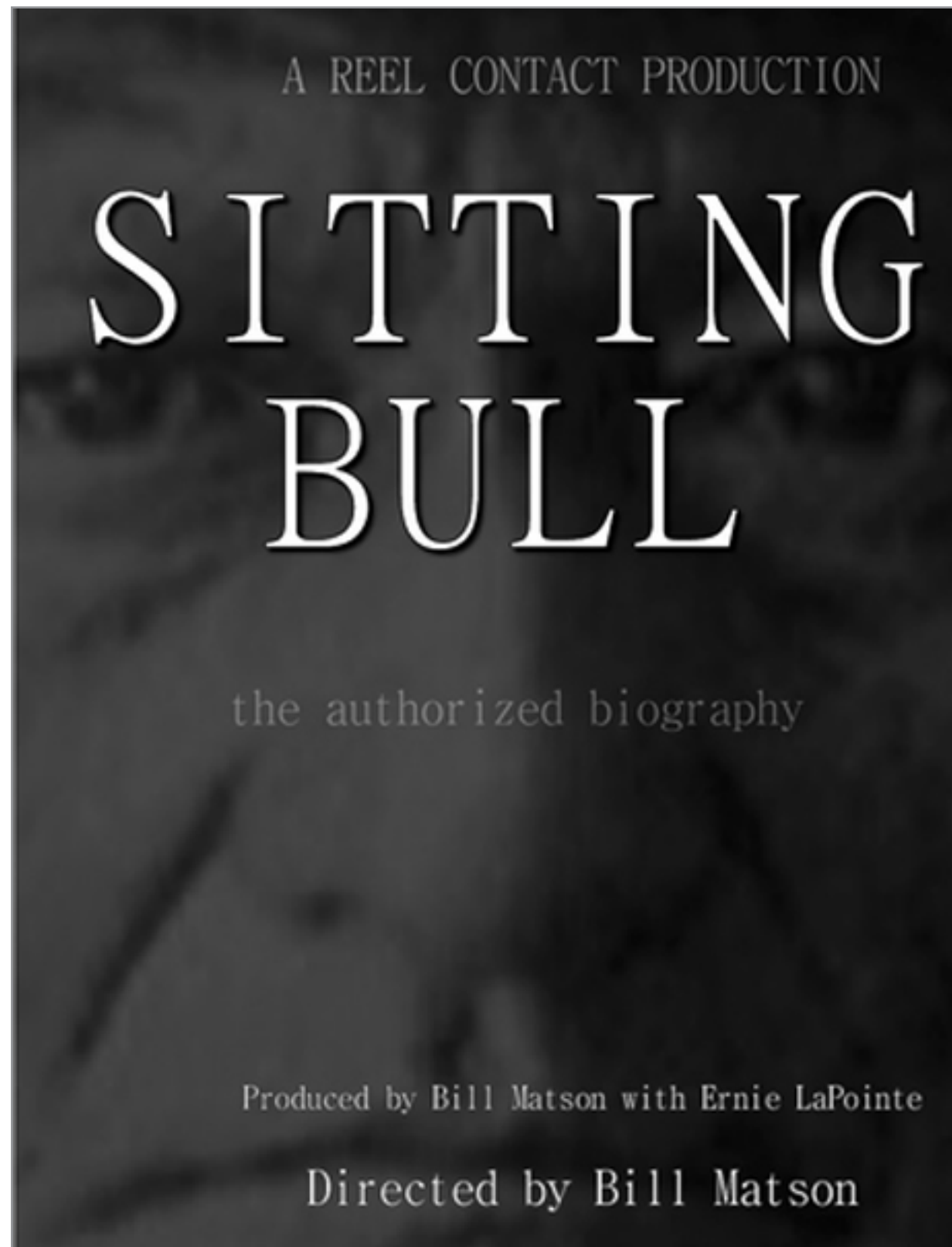
My service in the military did not affect my status within my tribe. I am thankful the Lakota people hold high respect for the veterans and that creates a warm pride within the veteran's heart.

*Ernie suffered PTSD which resulted in alcoholism and later an addiction to marijuana. He was one of the statistics of the Vietnam War. All this happened prior to Ernie coming to know that he was the closest living relative of the legendary Lakota medicine man, Sitting Bull. But after the revelation, his ancestor's spirit has embraced him, nurtured him and made him the Voice that speaks for the great Tatanka Iyotake. It has been made into a documentary titled 'Sitting Bull's Voice'.*



Tatanka Iyotake (Sitting Bull) Buffalo Bull Who Sits Down  
photograph David Francis Barry (1854-1934)





We are promoting a documentary we produced titled *Sitting Bull's Voice* by going through film festivals and trying to get a network to show it, but it is very difficult for a Native themed film to be shown. There are many great Native produced documentaries that are not being shown, because there are no non-Native actors/historians included. The documentary has been selected at many film festivals for showing and has won the best documentary award at various festivals. And though it has received a good response from viewers the film/movie industry will not show it on their screens. **We Natives have been dealing with this racism ever since the encroachment by white people. We are going to get our message out without rage and disrespect.**

**Why do you travel across the USA and Europe to share the oral history of your tribe with the world? Has this oral history been written down and published?**

I came out of the shadows in 1992, to share with the world, that there are lineal descendants of Tatanka Iyotake and we have the real truth about his life and his culture. It is through the word of mouth that I have been invited to speak on behalf of my ancestor, as I have said before; oral history is what it is, oral. I am hoping to reawaken the value of using the ears for the future generations to learn about our sacred way of life of the Lakota and hope they will want to learn our language from listening and not from a textbook. The human brain has many memory banks and this is how our oral stories should be preserved.

Mother Earth is the true center of life, she provides food, water, air and one day we will give our bodies back to her. The stories about Mother Earth center around our real human mothers for giving us life. At one time, the Lakota men held the ultimate respect for their mothers, grandmothers, older sisters and wives. The encroachment of the white man destroyed these sacred values, because the white man regarded their females as nothing more than cooks and children factories. They are showing their disrespect for Mother Earth by drilling into her depths. They are destroying the very values the children need to survive. What can we do as human beings to save our true Mother for our future generations to survive?

My documentary *Authorized Biography of Sitting Bull by His Great-Grandson* can be purchased at [www.reelcontact.com](http://www.reelcontact.com) and my book, *Sitting Bull - His life and Legacy* at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).

We are promoting a documentary we produced titled *Sitting Bull's Voice* by going through film festivals and trying to get a network to show it, but it is very difficult for a Native themed film to be shown. We do not have the usual non-Native actors/actresses or non-Native historians speaking on it, so the networks will not pick it up. There are many great Native produced documentaries that are not being shown, because there are no non-Native actors/historians included.

We decided to try and show our documentary independently of the 'system' by giving it to people willing to show it in their auditoriums, or renting theaters to get our message across to the world. The documentary has been selected at various film festivals for showing and has won the best documentary award at various festivals. And though it has received a good response from viewers the film/movie industry will not show it on their screens. We Natives have been dealing with this racism ever since the encroachment by white people. We are going to get our message out without rage and disrespect.

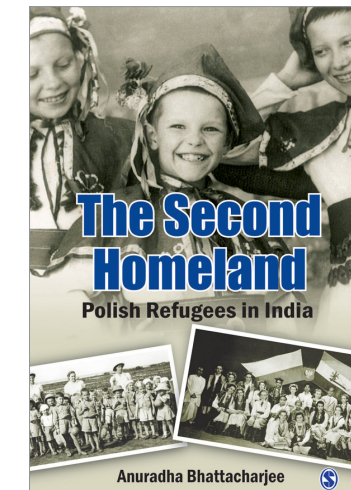
<https://reelcontact.com/products/authorized-biography-of-sitting-bull-by-great-grandson-box-set>



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Dr Anuradha Bhattacharjee



## Polish Refugees in India

### During and After the Second World War

**Dr Anuradha Bhattacharjee**

Author of *The Second Homeland - Polish Refugees In India*

Published by [SAGE Publications](#)

The journey through India of Polish victims of Soviet deportations rescued after the German attack on its erstwhile ally the Soviet Union in 1941, is a familiar story to Poles but not to Western readers. Among those who know something about this significant episode of history, the passage to India and ensuing domicile is usually assumed to have taken place under a British-sponsored and British-financed scheme. A study of relevant documents reveals that it was the Indian Princely State (PS) of Nawanagar that offered the first domicile to the Polish children evacuated out of the Soviet Union.

The first 500 Polish children were hosted in Balachadi in Nawanagar State and were maintained by charitable funds raised in India, subscribed to by several Indian princes and wealthy individuals.

During the 1942–48 period, Indian contributions for the Polish orphans amounted to Rs. 600,000, or 6,765,607 euros in 2008 terms. Even scholarly literature abounds in inaccurate statements, such as “[British] India, which had already agreed to take 1,000 children, increased its offer in December 1942 to accept 11,000 ... [They] were settled at a camp near Balachadi (Kolhapur),” or “In addition to the East African camps, a camp was established for adult [Polish] refugees near Bombay. The latter camp was primarily funded by a Hindu Maharaja.” In reality, Balachadi and Kolhapur were two different camps and they had different antecedents and funding patterns.

The reception of the Polish civilian war victims in India in 1942 was initiated by the Indian Princely State of Nawanagar when no place for the 500 orphaned children could be found in the whole of British India. The State of Nawanagar took the bold step of adopting the children to prevent their forcible repatriation to Soviet-occupied Poland at the end of the Second World War. This initiative played a critical role in the preservation and formation of the Polish diaspora worldwide.





Digvijaysinhji, the maharaja, or 'Jam Saheb', of Nawanagar with Polish children, Jamnagar 1944, courtesy of Tadeusz Dobrostanski. The Second Homeland - Polish Refugees in India/Anuradha Bhattacharjee SAGE Publications. The camp at Balachadi for 1,000 Polish children evacuated from the Soviet Gulag was funded through charitable funds raised in India and not by British contributions. From 1942 to 1948 Indian contributions to the Polish Children's Fund totaled approx. £44,250 (£1.4 million in 2014 terms. Source : Measuringworth.com).



Jamsaheb Digvijaysinghji of Nawanagar was a warm and generous person, had a gift for politics, was energetic and a good public speaker. As Leo Amery, secretary of state for India, put it, he had “practical common sense.” Former residents of the Balachadi camp recall periodic visits by the ruler Jamsaheb and his family to the camp, as well as gifts, donations, and even visits to his summer palace. Charitable funds were raised in spite of a famine in some parts of India at that time.

It should be noted here that the Indian Princely States were a distinct political entity and differed from British India, even though they too were severely subjugated. They ceased to exist after 1947 upon India's independence from the British, when instruments of accession were signed under varying circumstances and they joined the Union of India. British India covered only half the area and two-thirds of the population of India, the rest being made up by the 600-odd Princely States. In 1945 the Labor Party decided against honoring the treaties made between the States and the British regarding reinstatement of their full powers and territories at the time of the British withdrawal from India. Lord Mountbatten, the last viceroy, told the princes that they must join either India or Pakistan upon the departure of the British from India in 1947. In the states of Kashmir, Bahawalpur, Junagarh, and Hyderabad, the ruler and the people had opposing ideas about which country to join. The history of the post-British period of India does not reflect the existence of the Princely States, which were islands of self-rule in the occupied country of India.

Nawanagar and Kolhapur were Princely States, and Balachadi (now part of Gujarat) was then part of Nawanagar. The camp at Balachadi for 1,000 Polish children evacuated from the Soviet Gulag was funded through charitable funds raised in India. According to a communication from the External Affairs Department of the British government of India to the secretary of state for India on July 1, 1947, the Indian public had contributed some six lakh rupees for the maintenance of Polish refugees, an amount that otherwise would have been charged to Her Majesty's Government.

Kolhapur is located southeast of Mumbai in the present state of Maharashtra. At that time, the senior Maharajsaheb served as regent, while in practice two Britishers, Col. Harvey (the political agent) and Mr. E. W. Parry, wielded all the power. Kolhapur was a Princely State only in name, and the British had complete control over the royal family and the State. The camp at Valivade was set up in 1943 and it housed several thousand displaced Polish refugees. It was administered by the government of India acting as an agent of Her Majesty's Government, that in turn were acting on behalf of the Polish government in exile in London. The camp was financed by funds placed at the disposal of HMG by the Polish government in exile. After HMG withdrew recognition of the exiled Polish government the financial responsibility for the Valivade Camp went to the Interim Treasury Committee (ITC) of the United Nations Refugee Repatriation Agency (UNRRA).

Jamsaheb Digvijaysinghji of Nawanagar took over the chancellorship of the Chamber of Princes in 1938. In 1942 when the Polish camp was set up, he was forty-six years old and had been on the throne of Nawanagar for nine years. He was a warm and generous person, had a gift for politics, was energetic and a good public speaker. As Leo Amery, secretary of state for India, put it, he had “practical common sense.” Former residents of the Balachadi camp recall periodic visits by the ruler Jamsaheb and his family to the camp, as well as gifts, donations, and even visits to his summer palace. Charitable funds were raised in spite of a famine in some parts of India at that time. Furthermore,

Nawanagar citizenship was bestowed on the Polish children to “prevent their forcible removal from the camp and return to communist Poland.” The Jamsaheb's welcome statement “You are all now Nawanagaris and I am Bapu, father to all Nawanagaris, including you” had a deep emotive effect amongst the half-starved Polish children. Other such visits, as well as his attendance at camp events and inviting camp residents to the palace only reinforced the warm feelings that the Polish children had developed for the prince.

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The outbreak of the war also showed the princes' loyalty to the British Crown. At its own expense the PS of Travancore built a patrol boat for the Indian navy; the PS of Bhopal spent its entire stock of U.S. securities on the purchase of American fighter planes; the PS of Jodhpur contributed money for a Halifax bomber; the PS of Kashmir donated eighteen field ambulances; the PS of Hyderabad paid for three squadrons of war planes. Altogether, the cost of war materials provided by the Princely States up to 1945 exceeded 5 million pounds. In addition, the States made numerous direct grants of cash and gave generously of their land, buildings, and workforces for war purposes. Rs. 180 million was contributed by the people from the Princely States in subscription to government war bonds, securities, and donations to the viceroy's War Purposes Fund – again, a display of extraordinary generosity in comparison to British India.

In the meantime, in addition to the Polish Christian victims of the Soviet regime that survived deportations and the Gulag, India also became a transit point for Jews escaping Nazi persecution in Germany, German-occupied Poland, and other German-occupied parts of Europe who arrived with little or no money. The Polish Consulate in Bombay, functional since 1933, became a Polish Relief Committee (PRC) that extended relief to Jewish refugees in association with the Jewish Relief Association, to “prevent them from starving.” Several Indian industrialists and charitable institutions, including the Tatas, contributed generously to the fund supporting the Jewish refugees. The refugees arrived with little or no money. The British Government of India was inconvenienced by their presence and communicated this to the Polish Consulate and the Polish Ambassador in London. While some refugees took whatever employment was available, others became the responsibility of the Polish Consulate for relief. The Bombay government kept a strict vigil on the state of finances of the Jewish refugees from Poland coming into India. They wanted the cost of their maintenance to be borne by the central government who could recover it from the British government and in turn bill it to the Polish government-in-exile in England. The matter was taken up by the British Foreign Office when the Polish Relief Committee ran short of funds. The presence of Jews in Bombay who were escaping the conditions in German-occupied Europe has been extensively dealt with by Dr. Anil Bhatti in *Jewish Exiles in India*.





Roman Gutowski in front row with handkerchief on his head. Tadeuz Dobrostanski and Lucian Pietrzykowski in the foreground. Apolonia Kordas, Danka Gracz and Janina Dobrostanska. Courtesy of Tadeusz Dobrostanski. The Second Homeland - Polish Refugees in India/Anuradha Bhattacharjee/SAGE Publications

Under existing rules the Polish Red Cross was raising relief material to be transported to Polish citizens in the USSR. Kira Banasińska, the wife of the Polish consul general to India Eugeniusz Banasiński, became a delegate of the Polish Red Cross. Together with Wanda Dynowska, a Gandhian who was already in India, they lectured on Poland at several locations in India in an attempt to raise awareness about the Polish situation of double occupation. Contributions and relief material poured in. A flurry of telegrams from the Polish Consul at Bombay and Polish government-in-exile in London were exchanged discussing various routes to supply medicines and other necessities to the Polish civilian population newly released from the Gulag in the USSR. Routes via Afghanistan and China required diplomatic arrangements between Poland and those countries, yet Poland was then under double occupation and the Polish government-in-exile in London was obviously unable to negotiate such routes. Finally, the Ashkhabad-Meshed-Quetta route was accepted as the most feasible for carrying supplies for the Polish population. The consulate supplied six of their own lorries in order to help. It was proposed that a Polish delegation be set up in China since some deported Poles had escaped into China from Soviet-controlled Mongolia.

In his telegram of September 1941, A. W. G. Randall of the British Foreign Office, seeking approval for the "Tashkent Scheme" from Sir Stafford Cripps, mentions that the Polish government asked for moral support from His Majesty's Government for the Polish consul general in Bombay to go to Tashkent via Afghanistan and organize a relief center for Poles in Kazakhstan "said to number many thousands and to be in deplorable condition."

On 12 September 1941 the Polish government had informed the British government that Ambassador Stanisław Kot had reported that there were a million and a half Poles released from slave labor by the Soviet government, spread throughout the Soviet Union, and in desperate need of medicine, clothing, and other supplies. The British Red Cross organized a plan for relief for Polish and Czech soldiers, primarily those capable of joining the Polish Army, and their families (the Soviets deported entire families from Poland, husbands separately from the remainder of the family). However, the extent of the problems for civilians was so vast that they felt relief efforts would have to be carried out on an international scale, with American and Indian participation.

The first file on the subject, housed in the India Office Library, London, begins with a letter from Barbara Vera Hodges of the Women's Voluntary Auxiliary services and wife of an I.M.S officer, addressed to "K." It states that "Lord Tweeddale had a reply from the Polish Ambassador in which he said he was definitely interested in the scheme, and was putting it in the hands of people competent to deal with it." In her communication dated 1 November 1941, she outlines a detailed plan to evacuate the Polish refugees and house them in India. The Interdepartmental Conference on Polish Relief held at the Foreign Office on 29 October 1941 refers to Major Victor Cazalet of the British Army, posted at Moscow, who put forward a scheme suggested by Vera Hodges for the evacuation of Polish children from the Central Asian republics of the Soviet Union to India, but it is not known whether any further progress was made in the matter. In fact, study of subsequent documents, including Capt. A. W. T. Webb's exhaustive reports, shows that Vera Hodges' suggestions formed the backbone of the methods and



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administration of the evacuation and camp facilities for the Poles. Hodges mentions that Sir Alan Parsons was about to start working with the Red Cross in the section that was sending supplies to Russia; if the evacuation plan was possible he might be able to help the first group of 272 children and adults. In later communications this was known as the "Tashkent Scheme." Also, the Polish Consul General at Bombay had organized, with the knowledge of British authorities in India, an expedition of six motor lorries to take medical supplies to the Poles in the Tashkent region by October 1941. However, permission for this expedition to enter the Soviet Union had not yet been granted.

Discussions with the Government of India (GOI) regarding bringing in the children had been underway since 10 December 1941. It was proposed that the untried semi-built road route to the USSR be used to reach relief material and bring out the children on the return route. Major Cazalet was pushing for the acceptance of 500 Polish children in India, though the difficulties of transport were formidable. In his memo dated 9 October 1941, A. W. G. Randall wrote to Mr. Clauson of the India Office that Vera Hodges' plan, sent by the India Office, had also been received directly by the Foreign Office. The Foreign Office had consulted the Poles, and they stated that they were prepared to back it officially. "This means that they would be grateful for an approach to the Government of India for permission to transfer to India, a group of 500, mainly Polish children; if the Government of India agreed the Polish Government would be responsible for organizing, paying for the transport and securing exit permits from the Soviet authorities," wrote Randall to Clauson.

A British Minute Sheet entry dated 22 September states that the Polish government expected that the general release of Polish political prisoners from Russian camps might result in their migrating to countries bordering the USSR, such as China or Afghanistan. A report was received that some of these victims of the Soviet regime had already arrived in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Persia, and were interned there. The Minute Sheet goes on to say that the Government of India became nervous about an influx of Poles from the USSR through Afghanistan, and began making inquiries about the numbers involved and their ultimate destination. The same document notes that there was a proposal on hand for a relief expedition organized by the Polish Consul General in Bombay and his wife to take emergency relief supplies to Kazakhstan and institute a special base in Afghanistan. The Poles were making varied and complicated arrangements to send supplies to the Polish refugees by the northern route, Persia, and the Caucasus. In his handwritten entry Millard, an official whose designation cannot be established, notes that the Polish Embassy is ready to send one hundred tons of supplies to Russia, including food, for which they require transport. A consignment consisting of every conceivable kind of supplies, including food, had left a fortnight earlier, all purchased by the Treasury Department and out of Polish credit with HMG. The British Minutes stated that it would be impossible to evacuate a population of 1.5 million people and find accommodation for them in other countries; the Poles thus have to confine themselves to bringing out nationals who were likely to be really useful from the point of view of the war effort.

The late Jan Siedlecki, president of the Association of Poles in India in 1941–1942, stated in 2005 that the ultimate arrangement was worked out by Kira Banasińska in Bombay, with the support of the Government of India promising to raise charitable funds in India to support 500 Polish children. It should be emphasized, however, that ultimately the welfare of these children was underwritten by the Polish government-in-exile. However, Banasińska could only have worked on this plan awaiting procedural clearance from some location as a destination for the children. That location was the Princely States and not British India.

The Minutes suggested that the Government of India would look very unfavorably on any scheme for large-scale evacuation of Poles to India. By 15 October 1941 Secretary of State Leo Amery approved the plan that Polish children evacuated from the USSR would be received in India and maintained out of charitable funds for the period of war, since the reasons for removing these refugees from Russia outweighed the disadvantages of sending them to India. A Polish Children's Maintenance Fund was set up with an initial contribution of Rs. 50,000 by the Viceroy of India from his War Purposes Fund, and subscribed to by princes and other wealthy individuals. It was described as one more contribution toward the war effort. The Government of India was reluctant to receive these additional Polish children on several counts:

1. Weather conditions not conducive for European children
2. Increasing liabilities due to threat of war reaching India
3. Potential of espionage agents coming with these children
4. Diversion of scarce resources away from the war effort for civilian consumption
5. Increased governmental expenditure It also began exploring options for the Polish population in the various States.

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### Royal acceptance

Comparing them to the people escaping Nazi Germany, Jamsaheb Digvijaysinghji, chancellor of the COP and member of the Imperial War Council (IWC), offered Nawanagar as a wartime destination for the hapless Poles caught in Europe's war. The late Jamsaheb Digvijaysinhji's children, Jamsaheb Shatrushalaya Singhji and Princess Hershah Kumari, believe that it was during one of the IWC meetings that their father met Ignacy Paderewski, the former Polish prime minister, who was attending the meeting as a special invitee. As Paderewski apprised the British government about the condition of the Polish civilian population in the USSR and the urgent need to evacuate them, he was supported by General Władysław Anders, commander of the Polish Army being formed in the USSR, as well as by Professor Stanisław Kot, Polish ambassador to Kuibyshev, USSR, from their government-in-exile.





The youngest children at Balachadi with Indian caretaker, 1942, courtesy of Tadeusz Dobrostanski.  
The Second Homeland - Polish Refugees in India/Anuradha Bhattacharjee/SAGE Publications



Dr Ashani and Mr Anant Joshi with Polish nurses, Balachadi, 1942, courtesy of Tadeusz Dobrostanski.  
The Second Homeland - Polish Refugees in India/Anuradha Bhattacharjee/SAGE Publications

Kira Banasińska and Wanda Dynowska (aka Uma Devi) lectured about Poland at several places in India in an attempt to raise awareness about the Polish situation of double occupation.

### Royal acceptance *contd...*

In typical darbari style Digvijaysinghji offered to host them in his state if no other destination could be found. The Nawanagar offer was gratefully accepted by the Polish ambassador to India Eugeniusz Banasiński. He moved quickly to have this plan, codenamed the Tashkent Scheme, approved by the Government of India. This allowed for the securing of transportation via a British convoy bringing military supplies to the USSR, which would then bring the children on its return route.

Jamsaheb's exact role can only be surmised from a number of oblique references, since no document establishes it unequivocally. According to the Report of the Delegate of Poland in Bombay dated July 1944, the case of the Polish children being hosted in India started with an official letter of the HMG dated 15 October 1941, to the viceroy of India, that suggested taking 500 Polish children from the USSR and putting them in British and later Indian foster families to avoid financial problems. This suggestion was not accepted by the officials, and HMG was informed accordingly. The officials suggested that 300 children could be placed in Catholic convents and schools in Central India. The remaining children were to go to South India in Ooty in Anandagiri. But this project was not accepted by the Polish side because the children would be separated. Another proposed location was Kalimpong which had several good boarding schools. This idea was supported for a long time until the planned group of 160 children had to be stopped midway due to the advance of Japanese forces and anticipation that the Kalimpong roads would be closed. Finally, the offer of Jamsaheb of Navanagar to build a campsite in Balachadi was accepted. This information is contained in a report by Captain A.W. T. Webb, Principal Refugee Officer, and the [British] Government of India. Webb wrote that "Government of India had given permission for the entry into India of 500 Polish children from the Soviet territory. . . . Provided the transfer of these children to India was considered essential, the Government of India were prepared to accept them." Webb continues "The next step taken was an attempt [emphasis added, A.B.] to find accommodation for the children in certain convents and schools. Various schemes were examined. Eventually however, since the accommodation was insufficient [emphasis added] and no satisfactory solution for the language difficulty could be found, it was decided to erect a camp and place all the children together therein. His Highness the Jam Saheb came forward with an offer to provide a camp site at his private seaside resort, Balachadi in Kathiwar." In 1942 Balachadi was the summer residence of the royal family of the Princely State of Nawanagar. The Indian Princely States could not deal with foreign countries or their representatives officially, so the matter had to involve the Government of India. The Polish magazine Polska carried an interview with Jamsaheb Digvijaysinhji in its 25 November 1942 issue. In his memoirs Count Raczyński mentions that soon after the news appeared in Polska, Jamsaheb was invited to a social evening at Madame Popielski's home at Belgrave Square. He goes on to mention that a little Polish girl greeted him with a few words of "Hindustani" which amused Jamsaheb.



In September 1942 another group of 220 Polish children who had survived the Soviet Gulag arrived, and in December 1942, another 250 were received. Princess Hershah Kumari recalls being a part of the royal entourage to welcome the children into Balachadi; she remembers the children as extremely thin. “They looked so miserable, and their clothes hung about their frames. I was eight years old at the time and wondered how anyone could be so thin and miserable looking at the time,” she said, “And this was their state, we were told, after they had been fed and cared for a few months.”

## The journey

The aforementioned Kira Banasińska made sure that the trucks taking relief goods to the USSR would bring the children on the return route. The expedition was to be led by Tadeusz Lisiecki, deputy consul at Bombay; and Dr. Stanislaus Konarski, a physician who was to accompany the mission. A collective visa for the children was issued at Meshed. **An experienced Polish driver named Dajek was chosen for this dangerous assignment, assisted by six Sikh drivers.** The children were brought out of the “orphanage” at Ashkhabad [the capital of the Soviet republic of Turkmenistan, Ed.] in groups and quarantined at Meshed for a few weeks, as the lorries went back and forth between Meshed and Ashkhabad providing goods for the Soviets and ferrying back children. Finally, in mid-March 173 people started the journey for India. The party consisted of ninety girls, seventy-one boys, eleven adults and one priest, Fr. Franciszek Płuta, plus the four Polish adults mentioned earlier. The journey was difficult, as described by participant **Franek Herzog**, later a retired engineer in Connecticut, in Journey from Russia to India. They traveled on the Meshed, Birjand, and Zahidan routes being constructed by the Indian Army as one of the Lend-Lease supply routes. On 13 March 1942 the first party of 94 children, four lady guardians, and Father Płuta came Meshed, as reported by Dr. T. Lisiecki. A Polish minister’s wife and daughter were also in this group. The second group of children and seven ladies including the doctor arrived on 20 March 1942. This group included Henryk Hadala of the Polish Education Department.

After medical checks and issuance of a visa, the group made the overland journey from Meshed to Zahidan in Baluchistan via Gunabad, Birjand, and Shusp on an untried road being built by the Indian Army (this road was being built as an alternate route to deliver Lend Lease supplies to the USSR from the Persian Gulf). The children crossed the Indian border at Nok-kundi on 9 April 1942. At Quetta they were received by Mrs. Banasińska, Capt. A. W. T. Webb, and members of the staff of Quetta military station, where the children’s rags were replaced with clothing and they were issued a set of personal belongings and bedding, organized and acquired for them by Mrs. Banasińska. Thereafter the group reached New Delhi. As Franek Herzog recalled, they sang the British anthem, but due to their heavy Polish accent it sounded more like “God shave the king.” They then traveled by train to Bombay, where they were housed in a villa rented by the Polish consulate for this purpose. Later, another villa was also rented and the group was divided into boys and girls, with the boys moving to the second accommodation. They stayed here until 16 July 1942, or until the Balachadi Camp was ready to receive them. In September 1942 another group of 220 Polish children who had survived the Soviet Gulag arrived, and in December 1942, another 250 were received. Princess Hershah Kumari recalls being a part of the royal entourage to welcome the children into Balachadi; she remembers the children as extremely thin. *“They looked so miserable, and their clothes hung about their frames. I was eight years old at the time and wondered how anyone could be so thin and miserable looking at the time,” she said, “And this was their state, we were told, after they had been fed and cared for a few months.”*

Before September 1941 Ambassador Stanisław Kot reported that there were a million and a half Poles released from slave labor by the Soviet government, spread in all parts of the Soviet Union, and in desperate need of medicines, clothing, and other supplies.

## Financial arrangements

Under considerable duress from His Majesty’s Government, Lord Linlithgow, the viceroy of India, replied to Sir Leo Amery, the British foreign minister, from Calcutta on 23 December 1941, stating that the consensus of opinion ruled out private hospitality as a solution to the lodging problem: “We understand from the wife of the Polish Consul General that there are over a million Polish deportees in Russia [deported by the Soviets after the USSR attacked Poland on 17 September 1939, Ed.] and that they [come from] comparatively well-to-do middle class families. I feel, therefore, that I must endorse the majority view that if Polish children come to India they must be accommodated in camps, either specially constructed or formed by requisitioning existing buildings, in which schools would be set up. My conclusions are therefore that we could, subject to the disadvantages described above, accept and arrange for the education of 500 Polish children without great difficulty, that it would be preferable to keep them in largish parties in hostels to be specially arranged. . . . Finally, while a special appeal under the auspices of the Polish Relief Fund may be expected to raise sufficient [sums] to meet part of the cost of maintenance, it could not be relied on to cover all expenditure, and I am not aware whether the Polish Government [in-exile] could guarantee to meet any deficiency. My conclusions are of course necessarily formed in ignorance of the conditions of the Polish refugees in Russia and in the absence of information.” In spite of its own miserable financial condition the Polish government-in-exile agreed to be responsible for any difference between expenditure and receipts from charity, paving the way for them to be evacuated to India by February 1942. Evacuation began before the camp in Balachadi was constructed. Linlithgow sent an appeal to the princes for donations for the Polish children.

The Polish Children’s Fund was set up with an initial contribution of Rs. 50,000 from the Viceroy’s War Purposes Fund. Since it was to be a charitable fund, a letter of appeal for donations went out. A committee was established to administer the finances of the camp. Home Secretary E. Conran-Smith, invited O.K. Caroe, secretary to External Affairs Department, to serve on the committee, along with the Catholic Archbishop of Delhi, Mother Superior of the Convent of Jesus and Mary, representatives of Political and Finance Departments, the Indian Red Cross, and Mrs. Banasińska as the delegate in India of the Polish Ministry of Social Welfare. Capt. A. W. T. Webb was appointed secretary of this committee and initiated detailed reports on its proceedings. He prepared the budgets, maintained the accounts, and wrote the reports of immense historical value to which this study has frequently referred. Money was advanced to Mrs. Banasińska to make purchases of the various items required in the camps, including personal effects for adults and children alike and communal kit requirements of a large group of people. The Finance Department advanced funds as required, with the understanding that they would later be repaid either from charitable subscriptions received or by debit to the Polish government. It was decided that the main source of money must remain the Government of India, acting as agents for the Polish government.



In 1942 the British government made exhaustive efforts to find countries that would accept the refugees. The United States and Canadian governments were approached, as were several South American governments. All were either hostile to the idea or else hedged their offers with such conditions that they proved impracticable. General Władysław Sikorski had appealed to President Roosevelt to accept Polish children, but Roosevelt referred the question to the South African government, promising the financial and material assistance of the American Red Cross.

### Financial arrangements *contd...*

Funds for the Polish Children's Camp were advanced by the Government of India as for other evacuee camps handed by the Home Department. All estimates for construction or recurring expenditure would require the concurrence of the Finance Department. Donations received from the public at large would be credited to the Polish Children's Fund. The committee would act as an advisory body with special reference to the appropriate use of funds donated by the public. For that purpose, it would meet from time to time, have access to budgets and approve the transfer of sums standing to the credit of the Polish Children's Account to the accountant general, Central Revenues, or other suitable authority toward the redemption of the debit being raised by the Government of India against the Polish Government for the maintenance of Polish children in India. By 2 November 1942 the Indian Red Cross Society had raised Rs. 8,424. On 15 December 1942 Lord Linlithgow sent out a solicitation letter to several Indian rulers from Baroda, Hyderabad, Patiala, and Mysore. Another appeal went out on 22 December 1942. . The memorandum attached to Capt. Webb's report covering the period 21 November 1943 to 11 November 1944, as well as the report itself, state that during the 1943 financial year, Indian donations amounted to Rs. 491,660. Webb states that a shortage of Rs. 25,519 had been incurred for transportation and equipping the children, and that this expense should be billed to the Polish government in London or deducted from collections in India. If the Polish government agreed to a transfer of Rs. 25,000 from their fund account in London, Rs. 25,000 could be carried over as a balance for the year to come. Webb also mentions that in 1944 contributions to the Polish Children's Fund had been less than in the previous year due to the famine in Bengal and some parts of Madras Presidency. He maintained that India had supported 500 Polish children through 1943 and would continue to do so through 1944, but much depended on the economic conditions of the country. In a communication dated 1 July 1947, Webb informed Gilchrist that "some six lakhs rupees had been contributed by the Indian public for the maintenance of [the Polish] orphans. In 1943 Gilchrist informed Sir Welford Selby of the Polish Relief Fund that £29,500 had been collected in India for the Polish Children's Fund. Thus from 1942 to 1948 Indian contributions totaled approximately £44,250 (£1.4 million in 2014 terms. Source : Measuringworth.com).

### A workable arrangement

The importance of the Indian offer was not lost on the Poles. On 31 March 1942 Juliusz Maliniak, the Polish Embassy in Kuibyshev's delegate to the Nowosibirsk District, wrote the following in his confidential report on 5,000 Polish citizens, 50 percent of whom were children: "It would be most desirable to direct these children to Persia and India, taking advantage of the generosity of the Indian people." This report was forwarded by Ambassador Edward Raczynski to A. W. G. Randall on 6 July 1942.

In a letter dated 6 June 1942, British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden wrote to Leo S. Amery, MP that "...The Poles argue that between the German extermination policy and the fate of their people in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the basis of their national life is being destroyed. . . . And for the immediate help, I can think of nowhere to turn but India." *[It should be added that at the very same time, thousands of Polish airmen and soldiers were fighting the Nazis under the British flag on British, Norwegian, and African soil. Ed.]*

The news about the starvation and inhuman condition that the Polish civilians endured as they were deported by the Russians began to spread and reached London. In a letter dated 6 June 1942, British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden wrote to Leo S. Amery, MP that "the Poles are pressing us hard over their civilians in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics whom they represent as living in harrowing conditions, diseased and threatened with death from starvation. Our own reports on the condition of those Poles who have reached Persia recently confirm much of what the Poles tell us, and the Polish Ambassador in Kuibyshev has begged his Government to appeal to us and the United States to help in removing 50,000 Polish children. . . . The Poles argue that between the German extermination policy and the fate of their people in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the basis of their national life is being destroyed. . . . And for the immediate help, I can think of nowhere to turn but India." *[It should be added that at the very same time, thousands of Polish airmen and soldiers were fighting the Nazis under the British flag on British, Norwegian, and African soil. Ed.]*

In 1942 the British government made exhaustive efforts to find countries that would accept the refugees. The United States and Canadian governments were approached, as were several South American governments. All were either hostile to the idea or else hedged their offers with such conditions that they proved impracticable. General Władysław Sikorski had appealed to President Roosevelt to accept Polish children, but Roosevelt referred the question to the South African government, promising the financial and material assistance of the American Red Cross. The Americans also suggested South Persia with a promise of American financial and material help, which did not suit the British for military reasons. Randall then understood that while the British could count on the United States for sharing the financial burden, he would have to find British territory for hospitality. Accordingly, he wrote to the India Office, seeking to make the larger Indian Princely States like Hyderabad, Mysore, and Baroda responsible for hospitality toward the Poles. In a cipher telegram dated 25 November 1942, the secretary of state for India wrote the following to viceroy of India:

The War Cabinet for some time has been much exercised over the task of absorbing Polish refugees now in Persia. In spite of a steady flow during recent months, there still remain some 25,000, mostly women and children, who, for military, political and economic reasons must be moved out as early as possible and certainly by the end of March. Arrangements had been made to absorb a large batch in Mexico & the balance in East Africa where room was to be made by the transfer of Italian prisoners to America, but this plan has failed from lack of shipping and military escorts. It is still hoped to transfer several thousand to America on vessels returning via Bombay or Karachi and also East Africa, which has already responded generously, but which will shortly reach saturation point.



Following the success of Nawanagar, the British Government of India consented to take more Polish refugees, not only children but also women and elderly men. They were to be sponsored financially by the Polish government-in-exile in London. But the number of those accepted was small: the suggestion by the India Office to push open the doors of larger Indian States a little more and include a substantial number of adults was not accepted. As the grim situation of those refused entry became clear to Jamsaheb Digvijaysinghji, he spoke earnestly about the need to help these people. Jamsaheb increased his offer to take in 2,000 more Polish children and the PS of Patiala offered to take in 3,000. The PS of Baroda also made an offer, but details are not available.

It will not however be possible to exhaust the number in this manner. I have accordingly been asked to appeal to you to take about 5,000, mostly women & children with some men above military age, till the end of the war. This number is over and above the quota of Polish children you have already agreed to take.

It has been suggested to me that some of the larger states such as Hyderabad and Mysore might agree to come to the rescue as Nawanagar and Patiala have done in the case of children, and if you do not find asylum anywhere in British India perhaps you might care to consider this course. The Russian reaction has surprised me, but I should think that it will still be possible to get the children out. Hence I doubt if it would be wise to assume that accommodation meant for children can now be turned over to the new influx now proposed. New sources would have to be tapped, and loathe as I am to add fresh burdens, I hope that you may find some corners for these unfortunates till the end of their exile.

The Foreign Office at the time viewed India as “the most promising solution . . . either as a destination or a transit territory, or both.” This arrangement also held a political solution for the British authorities. By hosting the Polish civilian population evacuated out of the Soviet Union in territories subservient to the British the Soviets were not embarrassed and the delicate war alliance was saved. Following the success of Nawanagar, the British Government of India consented to take more Polish refugees, not only children but also women and elderly men. They were to be sponsored financially by the Polish government-in-exile in London. But the number of those accepted was small: the suggestion by the India Office to push open the doors of larger Indian States a little more and include a substantial number of adults was not accepted. As the grim situation of those refused entry became clear to Jamsaheb Digvijaysinghji, he spoke earnestly about the need to help these people. Jamsaheb increased his offer to take in 2,000 more Polish children and the PS of Patiala offered to take in 3,000. The PS of Baroda also made an offer, but details are not available. The Soviet government then stopped all further evacuation of Polish children on the grounds of “prestige.” A proposed campsite a Chela in Nawanagar State, abandoned by the R.A.F, was turned down, as was the offer of Patiala to build a new town for the refugees at Simla hills, ostensibly due to inadequate availability of water. Simla was the summer capital of British India. Sayajirao of Baroda was forced to abdicate, whereby his offer to house the refugees became null. Records from the Association of Poles in India (API) for 1942–48 show that fifty girls were traveling at his invitation, but little is known about what happened to them. The API has assumed that the group may have been amalgamated with the Balachadi group. The Polish consul general considered Aundh State as a destination for Polish civilians and for that purpose approached Maurycy Frydman (alias Bharatanandji), a Polish-Lithuanian-Jewish engineer who had come to India before the Second World War in the service of Mysore State. He was drawn into Gandhianism and left the service of Mysore State to join Apa Pant, the ruler of Aundh State, to implement Gandhi’s teachings.

When representatives of the new “Polish government” visited and informed the former prisoners of the Soviets that, according to international law, all orphans were the charges of the country to which they belonged by birth, there was decisive resistance about repatriation to Poland among the children. One teenage boy threatened to jump out of the ship if he was forcibly returned to Poland, recalling his mother dying of starvation in the streets of Russia.

Since the spirit of Indian nationalism was rather strong within the ruling family of Aundh, the destination did not receive the approval of the British government of India. Finally, the Princely State of Kolhapur was chosen as the destination for the new wave of Polish refugees. Since moving the Polish civilian population out of Persia was a pressing matter, it was decided that a large number of Polish refugees would be directed to certain camps in British East Africa. The city of Karachi became the nodal point of transport. Ships laden with supplies for the troops, as well as “Aid to Russia” transport left Karachi and returned with troops from Persia for re-equipping and redeployment in the theater against Japan. The Polish civilian population was hastily removed from Teheran to Abadan in South Persia to await shipping to Karachi, from where they awaited ships to go to Uganda, Kenya, or Mexico, or remain in India. Two camps in Karachi, Country Club and Malir, were transit camps for persons going either to East Africa or to Valivade (Kolhapur). Both the Balachadi and Valivade camps had schooling facilities. For older children schooling was arranged with Catholic institutions in Karachi, Mt. Abu, Mumbai, Panchgani, and elsewhere. At the end of their schooling most boys joined the Polish Armed Forces and were deployed to various parts of the world to fight the Nazis. In 1944 forty boys from Kolhapur and Balachadi camps were granted visas to travel to the United Kingdom for training in the Polish Marine services and fighting in the British war against the Germans. They included six boys who had attended St. Mary’s High School in Mumbai; others had attended St. Mary’s High School at Mt. Abu.

### Adoption and bidding adieu

After the British government unilaterally transferred recognition from the Polish government-in-exile in London to the newly formed “Lublin Government” in Soviet-occupied Poland in 1943, there was a flurry of activity including the closure of the Polish Consulate in Mumbai. The Foreign Office advised the India Office to inform the Government of India that the Polish consul general could no longer continue to perform consular functions even if it caused inconveniences for the local Poles. The Polish Children’s Fund was also closed. Most of the people in the camp were not willing to be repatriated to postwar Poland, which was occupied by Soviet Russia. “It was a hot potato, nobody wanted to touch it,” stated Rev. Z. Peszkowski in 2004. On 19 July 1943, Edward Raczynski, outgoing ambassador of the Polish government-in-exile in London, wrote this to Anthony Eden: “I have the honor to express on behalf of the Polish Government their sincere and deep-felt thanks for the interest taken in the welfare of Poles evacuated from Russia and particularly for the generosity of the Indian Government, the Indian Princes and Indian organizations in undertaking to maintain large numbers of Polish children for the duration of the war. . . . By their decision to offer shelter on hospitable Indian soil to thousands of Polish children, India has rendered possible their preservation for Poland, where important tasks will await them in the future.” Many refugees were deeply apprehensive after having tasted life in the Soviet Union. There was a great ferment in the camps.



Some former Balachadi children like Franek Herzog and Stefan Kłosowski reached the United States and Canada respectively from the United Kingdom after completing higher education there. Today the children from the former Balachadi Camp in India can be found in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and Australia, contributing to the formation of the Polish diaspora in those countries. In the United States they added to the numbers of those accepted under the category of displaced persons, including the residents of the former Santa Rosa camp in Mexico.

### Adoption and bidding adieu *contd...*

When representatives of the new “Polish government” visited and informed the former prisoners of the Soviets that, according to international law, all orphans were the charges of the country to which they belonged by birth, there was decisive resistance about repatriation to Poland among the children. One teenage boy threatened to jump out of the ship if he was forcibly returned to Poland, recalling his mother dying of starvation in the streets of Russia. When shown a letter allegedly from his father asking for his son’s return to Poland, another boy wanted to know why his father would send a typewritten letter to a stranger and not a handwritten one to him if he wished to be reunited with his son. The mood of the adult Polish population in Valivade can be surmised from Webb’s report of 1 November 1944: “The Poles are convinced that there is a plan afoot to transfer them to the clutches of either the Russian (Soviet) or Lublin Governments.” The visit of Special Representative of UNRRA Durrant to the Polish camps caused great unrest and “nearly resulted in a riot”. On 17 March 1945 he was “urged to leave camp in his own interest.” Those Poles who communicated with their friends or relatives in the camps in East Africa were advised against Durrant and “recommended strong personal action, should he turn up in Kolhapur.”

While those over sixteen (the legal adult age at the time) “refused to consider repatriation, guardians were appointed with the consent of Polish Consul General in India just before closing down of the consulate, for those under sixteen years of age.” Legal adoption of the orphaned children was worked out in the courts of Nawanagar between Fr. Franciszek Płuta, the commandant of the Polish camp at Balachadi, Jamsaheb Digvijaysinhji and Lt. Col. Geoffrey Clark, the British liaison officer. The camp in Balachadi and the rest home in Panchgani were closed down due to austerity measures and amalgamated with the camp at Valivade. The “adopted” children were moved out of the Nawanagar court’s jurisdiction, first to Kolhapur and later overseas. The Legislative Department of GOI “considered this transaction valid in law.” Fr. Płuta arranged for eighty-one children to be sponsored by two American missionary organizations: fifty girls were sponsored by the Bernardine Sisters of Pennsylvania, and thirty-one boys by Orchard Lake Seminary, Michigan.

Only those children who chose to return to Poland voluntarily, did so. Roman Gutowski found his mother, who had returned to Poland from the Soviet Union, as did Leszek Trazalski who found his uncle who had insisted that he return. His Majesty’s Government had no objections to such a move, and R. N. Gilchrist of HMG informed Rhea Radin of UNRRA accordingly. The Government of India acted as an agent of HMG and raised no objections to this plan. UNRRA then demanded to know the legal standing of such an arrangement. Selene Gifford, director of the Displaced Persons Division at UNRRA, and Rhea Radin, Chief Repatriation and Care Division of UNRRA, were informed that “the position of the children under present guardianship [was] absolutely safe and easy to defend.”



At the vineyard, Adelaide, with a former Balachadi boy, Karol M and his wife Rosemary.  
The Second Homeland - Polish Refugees in India/Anuradha Bhattacharjee/SAGE Publications

The formal documents of the case were “water-tight from a legal point of view,” according to Webb. One Ms. Burakiewicz, a representative of the government of Soviet-occupied Poland, tried to stop the children’s departure, but they had already left Valivade camp. Fr. Płuta was later declared an “international kidnapper” by the postwar “Polish” government in Warsaw. He left for the United States and remained there until the end of his life. Valivade Camp closed in March 1948. Its residents moved to the United Kingdom under the aegis of the Polish Resettlement Scheme (PRC) in India.

The last remaining camp residents were moved to Tengeru camp in Africa to await resettlement. Some like Tadeusz Dobrostanski, went to Australia where they were accepted as displaced persons (DP). Some former Balachadi children like Franek Herzog and Stefan Kłosowski reached the United States and Canada respectively from the United Kingdom after completing higher education there. Today the children from the former Balachadi Camp in India can be found in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and Australia, contributing to the formation of the Polish diaspora in those countries. In the United States they added to the numbers of those accepted under the category of displaced persons, including the residents of the former Santa Rosa camp in Mexico.

### Conclusions

The 1942 Nawanagar offer to host Polish children is important on two counts. First, it came at a time when no other country in the world was willing to accept Polish refugees. Second, this offer enabled the British to abandon their erstwhile ally Poland and declare themselves on the side of a newfound ally, the Soviet Union. While the refugees were eventually relocated to destinations in British-controlled parts of the world, they were initially in the territory of the Princely States, saving the British from embarrassment vis-à-vis the USSR. In spite of being fully aware of the plight of over one million Polish people deported to the Gulag by the Soviets, the British were willing to extend aid to only a few hundred people at a time. The rate of evacuation was set at 160 per diem at a time when thousands needed help. It is interesting to note that the British Government of India, who controlled at least one-third of 4,225,113 square kilometers of area of the present-day India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh combined, could not find a place to accommodate 500 orphaned Polish children in 1942, whereas the tiny Princely State of Nawanagar could quickly organize the space to build a special camp for them. The initiative of Jamsaheb Digvijaysinghji of Nawanagar paved the way for several thousand Polish refugees to be received in various parts of the world. His State was the first to host 500 Polish children. He extended his offer to another 2,000 children, and galvanized the support of Maharaja Yadavindra Singh of Patiala to extend an invitation to 3,000 Polish people.





Reunion 2004: Members of API 1942-48 with His Excellency Ambassador Anil Wadhwa and Reverend Z Peszkovski at Katowice, Poland. Courtesy of Danuta Pniewska. *The Second Homeland - Polish Refugees in India*/Anuradha Bhattacharjee/SAGE Publications

## Conclusions *contd...*

These offers were the bedrock for the formation of the Valivade Camp in the politically pliant PS of Kolhapur. Furthermore, the adoption of Polish children by Jamsaheb Digvijaysinhgi paved the way for eighty-one children to go to the United States and build a life for themselves there in the free world, after initial assistance from Polish Catholic missionaries.

It is pertinent to note that the Indian people reeling under wartime levies and shortages donated fairly large sums of money for the hapless Polish children to maintain them for several years and continued to do so even during a period of famine in the country. It should also be noted that the Indian Freedom Movement was not xenophobic in nature. There was no antagonism reported from any quarter about the presence of the Polish orphans even during a year of drought and famine.

Not only were wealthy people contributing to the Polish Children's Fund, Mahatma Gandhi was sympathetic to their cause as well. He had a very close association with two Poles: Maurycy Frydman (aka Swami Bharatanandji of Aundh) and Wanda Dynowska (aka Uma Devi) at the time.

The Indian connection has played a critical role in the preservation of the Polish Diaspora in the English-speaking countries.

## Exclusive Additional Input

The subject of Ander's Army (Polish Army fighting alongside British forces) continues to remain rather sensitive in several countries to date. In 1990, an Indian person of Polish descent was awarded the highest Polish civilian honour *Polonia Restituta* by the then newly elected democratic Polish government in recognition of her work in saving Polish lives during the WW II. It is interesting to note that little academic work on the subject, exists or existed between 2000-2005 in Polish communities anywhere in the world, both in Poland and countries promoting free speech.

The publication of the thesis "*History of Polish Refugees in India, 1942-48*" (University of Pune, 2006) and its limited release in 2006 prompted the acknowledgement of Maharaja Digvijaysinhji, the Indian anchor of the evacuation process, by Poland only in 2012. The publication of *The Second Homeland* prompted the first ever reunion of the Balachadi children in the USA in 2013, as reported in *The New York Times*.

More recently, the Polish and Indian governments have commissioned a documentary film on the subject, which does not address the political underpinnings of this largely overlooked side of WW II and is possibly driven only by the growing economic importance of India in the world.





Photograph © Adi Patell

The *Faravahar*, believed to be a depiction of a *Fravashi*, which is the guardian spirit who sends out the soul into the material world to fight the battle of good versus evil. [LINK](#)

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## People of the Good Faith A brief history of the Parsis

Aryaa Naik

A long long time ago under the reign of King Vishtasp in Persia lived The People of the Good faith, they lived in peace and harmony until the prophecy of the saintly Zatosht that "A Tyrant will appear; three times will the Good Creed be shattered and the People of the Faith ruined and worsted," came true. Sikandar (Alexander the Great), came upon them and unleashed havoc. Scriptures were burnt and virtue was reduced to despair, the Faithful were oppressed.

Nearly 300 years later faith was restored and the good people found voice and power when defender of the faith, Ardeshir from the Sassan family took power. Many of the scattered and destroyed texts which had been preserved orally were written down, translated and compiled. It was at once a brilliant, cultured and luxurious civilisation, an open society that was receptive to foreign influences.

Alas, tragedy struck again. The days assigned to Zartosht by Time (Fate) came to an end and not a vestige of the Good Religion remained, when the Millennium of Zartosht was over, the happy days of the Good Creed also reached their limit.



This is the story of how Parsis came to India, as narrated in The Qeṣṣa-ye Sanjān which is an account of the emigration of Zoroastrians from Iran to India. The year of their arrival is still contested; some believe it to be 936 CE and others, 716 CE.

The faith was once again shattered with the arrival of invaders from the deserts of Arabia. The leader of the expedition asked Yazdegard III the young ruler of the land to choose either Islam, or tribute, or war unto death. Yazdegard opted for war and thus The Good Religion or Zoroastrianism was completely routed out from the country of its birth. After the Arab conquest, many embraced Islam, it allowed them to preserve their power and influence. Some converted to avoid the payment of poll-tax and to find relief from the persecution that raged around them. However, a small band of devoted Zoroastrians, set sail and landed in Diu, an island on the west coast of India, off the state of Gujarat. It is believed that this band of Zoroastrians spent nineteen years on the island of Diu, after which they set sail again and landed in Sanjan, Gujarat, India. The ruler of the region, Jadhav Rana who was liberal and wise granted them permission to settle in Sajan. These newly arrived strangers were called Parsis - to denote the region from where they had come - Pars, (Persia).

This is the story of how Parsis came to India, as narrated in The Qeṣṣa-ye Sanjān which is an account of the emigration of Zoroastrians from Iran to India. The year of their arrival is still contested; some believe it to be 936 CE and others, 716 CE.

It is said that Jadhav Rana laid down four pre-conditions before agreeing to grant the Parsis sanctuary: They should use only the local language, the women should adopt the local dress, they must put down their weapons and vow never to use them and, finally, their marriage ceremonies should be conducted only in the evening. This was agreed upon by the Dastur who, renowned for his learning and prudence had approached Rana, for sanctuary. The Parsis were not asked to forsake any significant aspects of their religion. The priests convinced the king that they would be 'Like sugar in a full cup of milk, adding sweetness but not causing it to overflow.' And so they did, the Parsis seamlessly mixed with the Hindus while earnestly following their religion. *'Zoroastrians of India: Parsis: A Photographic Journey'* by Sooni Taraporevala accounts, 'Though they didn't completely lose touch with the Persian language, Gujarati (their version of it), started to become their mother tongue. They adopted many Hindu customs. Parsi women dressed like their Indian counterparts. They even wore nose rings.' The Parsis adapted Hindu style of dressing, but not without their own interpretive modifications. James Hastings in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Part 18 notes that in the early 20th century, the Parsee men were still faithful to the Gujarati dress by wearing the *angarakha* tunic, but nevertheless replacing the Hindu dhoti with trousers and Indian curved shoes with European shoes. The men further distinguished themselves from Gujarati *Vanias* by wearing a turban called a *pagri* over a skull cap. Hastings elaborates that the men's ceremonial clothing included the jama, a double-breasted tunic or coat as well as a muslin waistband called a *pichori* which made them look 'very becoming and distinguished looking'.



Photograph © Adi Patell





The women wore Parsi *Garas* which resembled a sari but were actually quite distinct. *Garas* were Chinese silk fabrics which came in varieties such as *gaaj*, *paaj*, *crepe* and *ghat*. The embroidery depicted the lifestyles of the days, scenes of royalty, market places, river fishing, flowers and birds. Motifs of Chinese pagodas and characters were also used symbolising the artist's signature.

What distinguished the Parsi clothing from that of the Indians were the garments closest to their hearts, the value-laden *sudreh* (a white vest) and *kusti* (a holy thread tied around the waist). The women, according to Hastings, wore the *Vania* sari and covered their head with a thin white cloth called a *mathabana* tied behind the *chignon* (the knot of hair worn at the nape of the neck).

The women wore Parsi *Garas* which resembled a sari but were actually quite distinct. *Garas* were Chinese silk fabrics which came in varieties such as *gaaj*, *paaj*, *crepe* and *ghat*. The embroidery depicted the lifestyles of the days, scenes of royalty, market places, river fishing, flowers and birds. Motifs of Chinese pagodas and characters were also used symbolising the artist's signature.

The Parsis effortlessly merged into the Indian way of living while carefully safeguarding and practicing their various customs and traditions and celebrating their distinct festivals.

An important Parsi custom is that of *Navjote*, or initiation into the religion, which takes place before puberty between the ages of seven and nine for both boys and girls. It is the first time that the child wears the "armour of the religion": the *sudrah* (shirt) and *kusti*, which should then be worn every day for the rest of his/her life. Zoroastrianism believes that children cannot tell the difference between right and wrong, and therefore cannot sin. Once children freely choose to be initiated, they become adults responsible for their own thoughts, words and deeds, which eventually determines the fate of their souls on judgment day.

In the book *The Parsees: Their History, Manners, Customs and Religion* first published in 1858, Dosabhoy Framjee throws light on the various Parsi festivals:

*Pappati* or New Year – Among festivals observed by the Parsis, the first and universally kept is the Pappati, or New Year's Day. This day is celebrated in the honor of Yezdezerd, the last king of the Sassanide dynasty.

*Khordad-Sal* – The second of the Parsi festivals, this day marks the birth anniversary of Prophet Zoroaster, who was born in the city of Rai in the north of Persia, in the reign of Darius Hystaspis, about 520 years before Christ, according to Greek writers.

*Amardad-Sal* – The day following Khordad- Sal appears to have no origin in the book of Parsis but is merely kept as a continuation of the festivity and spent in enjoyment.

Photograph © Adi Patell



To Yazd and the twenty-four surrounding villages, these Zoroastrians of Persia are now almost exclusively confined. From accounts furnished to the writer by trustworthy authority, there were in the year 1854, in the above-mentioned city and its surrounding villages, one thousand houses or families, comprising a population of 6658 souls of whom 3310 were males and 3348 females. Of these about twenty or twenty-five were merchants, but by far the larger number gained a poor subsistence as tillers of the soil. A few of the poorest class worked as artisans, bricklayers, carpenters, weavers, or followed other mechanical occupations.

*Furrohurdin Jasan* – This day is set apart for the performance of ceremonies for the dead. The Parsis are enjoined by their religion to preserve the memory of their dead by annual religious ceremonies performed in the house.

*Ardibehest Jasan* – This festival is maintained in honour of Ardibehest Amsaspund, the controlling angel over the sacred fire; fire being an important element of worship.

*The Nowroz* – The celebrated Nowroz festival is called by some *Nowroz-i-Jamshid*, or the *Nowroz-i-Sultan*, the king's day. This festival falls generally on the 21st day of March and is coeval with vernal equinox and the Hindu festival of *Makar Sankranti*. The Parsis are required on this day to approach the sea-shore or any stream of water, and chant the prayers which are written in *Zend Avesta* – the sacred book of the Parsis.

*Adar Jasan* – Addar, another synonym for fire, is the name by which the ninth month of the Parsi year is called. This is the most religious of the twelve months, and the ninth day of that month is held in great respect and sanctity. On this day, visits are made to the temple where offerings of sandal wood are made to the fire.

The Parsis adapted a new way of life and prospered in India, but what about their fellow People of the Good Faith who had not left Persia? In *The Parsees: Their History, Manners, Customs, and Religion*, Dosabhoj Framjee gives an account – ‘Two centuries had not elapsed from the invasion, before the greater part of the population was converted to Islamism. In the tenth century of the Christian era, remnants of the Zoroastrian population were to be found only in the provinces of Fars and Kerman, and the reader may form some idea of the rate at which that remnant declined, when it is stated that while it numbered about a hundred years ago, one hundred thousand souls, it does not at present exceed seven thousand.

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Photograph © Adi Patell





At Kerman the number of Parsees does not exceed four hundred and fifty, while in the capital of Persia (Teheran), there are only about fifty merchants of this race. A small number of the poorer class, are however employed as gardeners in the palace of the Shah, and at Shiraz a few families are found in the grade of shopkeepers.'

This was the case in 1858 when the book was first published. Closer to the time we live in, news of Zoroastrians being subjected to religious discrimination and persecution is not uncommon. An article published in The Guardian in October 2006 reported how Zoroastrians were finding it increasingly difficult to survive in the land of their origin, now the Islamic state of Iran. The article pointed out how Stringent Islamic laws had ensured that the traditional five day pilgrimage at Chak Chak in the central Iranian desert was not left untouched. The unprecedented government attention paid to that year's event, in the form of a visiting delegation sent by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, along with interior and culture ministry officials ensured that the community didn't celebrate the religious festival without watchful eyes. The Guardian mentioned, 'Some 25,000 Zoroastrians live in Iran, and though officially they -- along with Jews and Armenian and Assyrian Christians - are a constitutionally protected religious minority with guaranteed parliamentary representation, complaints of discrimination are widespread. A law awarding Zoroastrians who convert to Islam their entire families' inheritance at the expense of non-converted relatives has caused misery and bitter resentment. Despite legislation decreeing that all religions are entitled to equal blood money (compensation) awards, Zoroastrians say that, in reality, they still receive only half the sums given to Muslims.'

Fox news in January 30, 2013 covered, 'After the 1979 revolution brought in the hardline Islamic religious government, many Zoroastrians emigrated to the U.S., and their festivals were strongly discouraged. About 20,000 Zoroastrians remain today — down from 300,000 in the 1970s, when many emigrated to the United States. They make up part of Iran's small non-Muslim population, including 150,000 Christians and 15,000 Jews.'

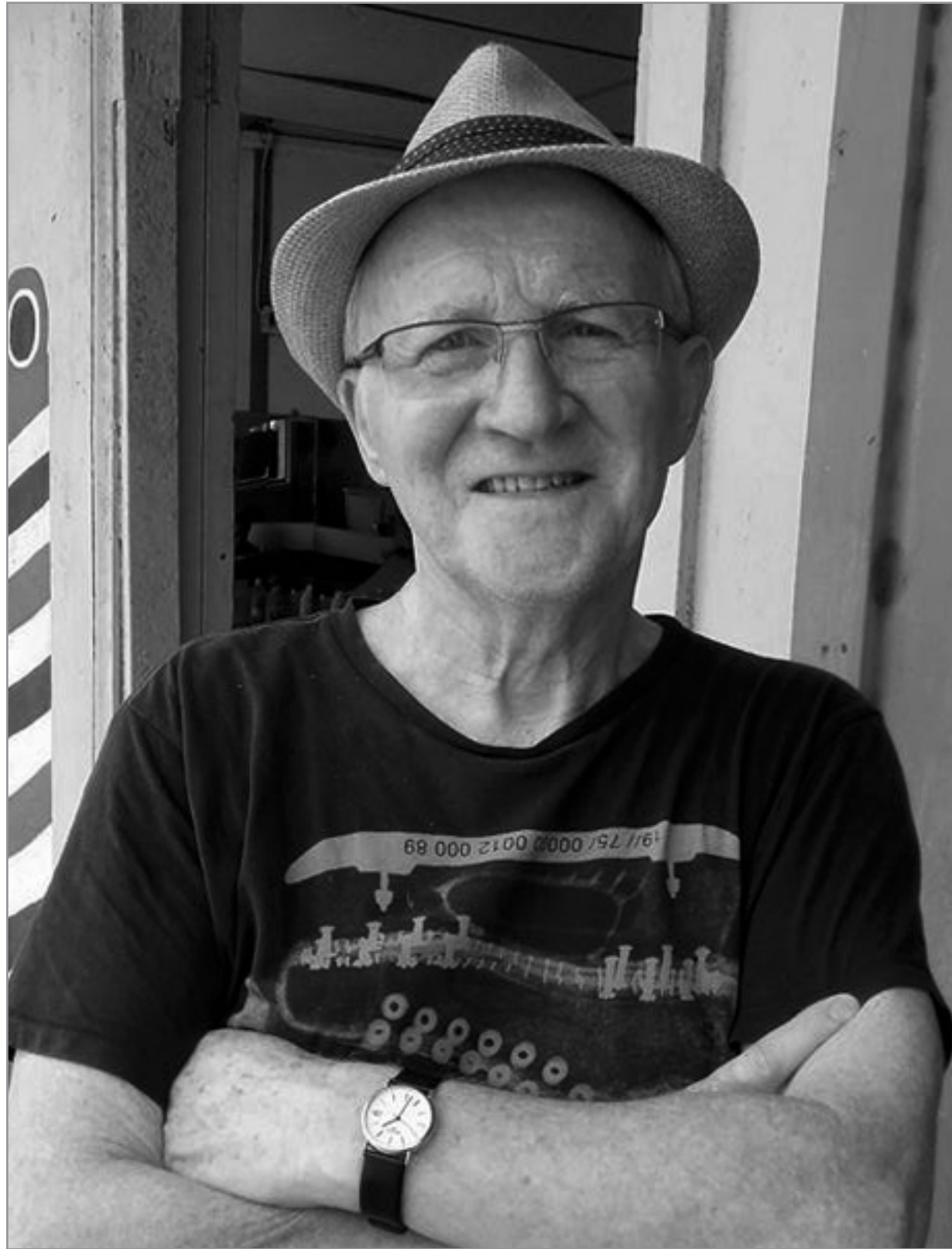
It is not just in Iran but all over the world that the number of Zoroastrians, the followers of one of the oldest faiths in the world is diminishing and this time the evil is not personified.

Photograph © Adi Patell



Terry McDonagh, poet, translator and dramatist has returned to live in County Mayo after almost forty years in Hamburg. He taught creative writing at Hamburg University and was Drama Director at the International School. He tours in Europe, Asia and Australia doing readings, working on education programmes and at festivals. He's published eleven poetry collections as well as letters, drama, prose and poetry for young people. His work has been translated into German and Indonesian. Founder of Pen & Ink Writers Hamburg and Mayo. Some more recent Projects/Publication: 2016: Poetry collection, *Lady Cassie Peregrina* – Arlen House. 2017: Included in *Fire and Ice 2*, Gill Education for Junior Cycle. 2017: Poem, *UCG by Degrees*, included in Galway Poetry Trail on Galway University Campus. 2017: Artistic Director of WestWords, Irish literature festival in Hamburg. 2018: Latest poetry collection, *Fourth Floor Flat – 44 Cantos*. – Arlen House. 2019 Residencies in Dublin, Mayo and Galway.

[This article first published in Live Encounters Magazine, September 2011.](#)



Terry McDonagh

### *Dear Readers,*

*I come from Ireland but live in Hamburg, Germany. I am including poems, one of which is set in Bali when I read at the International Writer's Festival in Ubud in 2004. At that time a selection of my poetry was translated into the Indonesian language by INDONESIAITERA, Magelang, Java. I had a wonderful trip.*

*However, I would like to begin with **Wolfgang Borchert's** declaration of love, in his own words, to his city of Hamburg. He was an author who died of hepatitis on November 20th, 1947 at the age of 26 in Basel, Switzerland*

*His play, *Draussen vor der Tuer* – *The Man Outside* – opened on the night after he died in Hamburg. What is interesting about Borchert is that he was drafted into the army and sent to the front, but he was court-martialled three times for insubordination.*

### **His Declaration:**

That's more than a heap of stones, roofs, windows, carpets, beds, streets, bridges and lamps. It's more than factory chimneys and the hooting of traffic – more than gull's laughter, trams screaming and the thunder of railways – it's more than ships' sirens, crashing cranes, curses and dance music – oh, it's infinitely more.

It's our will to be. Not to be anywhere and anyhow, but to be here and only here between Alster stream and Elbe river and only to be here, as we are, we in Hamburg!

Wolfgang Borchert: Hamburg.  
[www.goethe.de](http://www.goethe.de)



## In a Doll's House

Day after day, year in year out, life after life,  
you and I sit like puppets, or stand at the horizon  
unable to trust our wings.

We make low, uneasy sounds behind frosted glass  
or we toy with balloons  
hoping to find a second wind.

Former lovers saunter along the street below  
like links in a chain of empty cups –  
like glitzy eyes dancing in tandem.

I had a full pipe and swagger then, but we grew  
weary searching for each other in sweat shops,  
data banks, meditation classes and crossfire.

You used to be a good kisser. I had my newspaper  
in my tweed pocket. We were a repeat performance  
turning left, left, left, left, left – only left.

My car was bigger than yours. You were  
more brunette; better on the phone to  
Indian summer resorts – things like that.

We've moved on to become decorations in an  
earthenware pot – a place where  
birds of prey can't stop laughing, and when you

think that – in our day – The Beatles sang  
love, love, love,  
love is all you need...love is all you need.

In a doll's house next door, a healthy boy  
is getting singing lessons  
to make him more tenor, to make him more base,

to suppress his love  
of singing songs,  
to make him one of us.  
I cannot wait for you God,  
but I feel born again.

## As Real As Life Gets

In the city, there are coats on people and jackets on pegs  
in shop windows. There is paint on walls in suburbs,

names above buildings and women on something in  
a goodwill park. The city seems safe, but as sure as

there was a time before cars, some judges go to lunch  
in brothels; a policeman walks up and down dreaming

of a cosy bar with ladies and weapons to trade; a  
tormented professor of philosophy sits next to

breezy troublemakers in a coffee shop. Hints of  
a real world fall into focus like the blue of a pool

seen from up high. An elderly lady leans across into  
her neighbour's garden to pinch a sprig with a smile.

Visiting crowd leave facts and figures on beaches  
in July. Wind blows up the river and waves roll in

with the tides. Symbols have meaning for some.  
Colour blindness sees what it sees and not every singer

is happy. A boy and girl receding into the woods, or a  
child on cloud nine with ice-cream is as real as life gets.

## Proverb

To know the road ahead,  
ask those coming back.

There were few to ask.



## Lady of Japan

I met a lady on a quay in Japan  
and we never spoke a word  
but  
we smiled and sang of lost love  
and  
of flowers in the spring wind.

She pointed up to their mountain  
without as much as a whisper.  
I saw her people in colour  
and she was a seaman's bride.

I am not a seaman, nor do I  
ever want to be,  
but  
I met a lady on a quay in Japan  
and we never spoke a word.

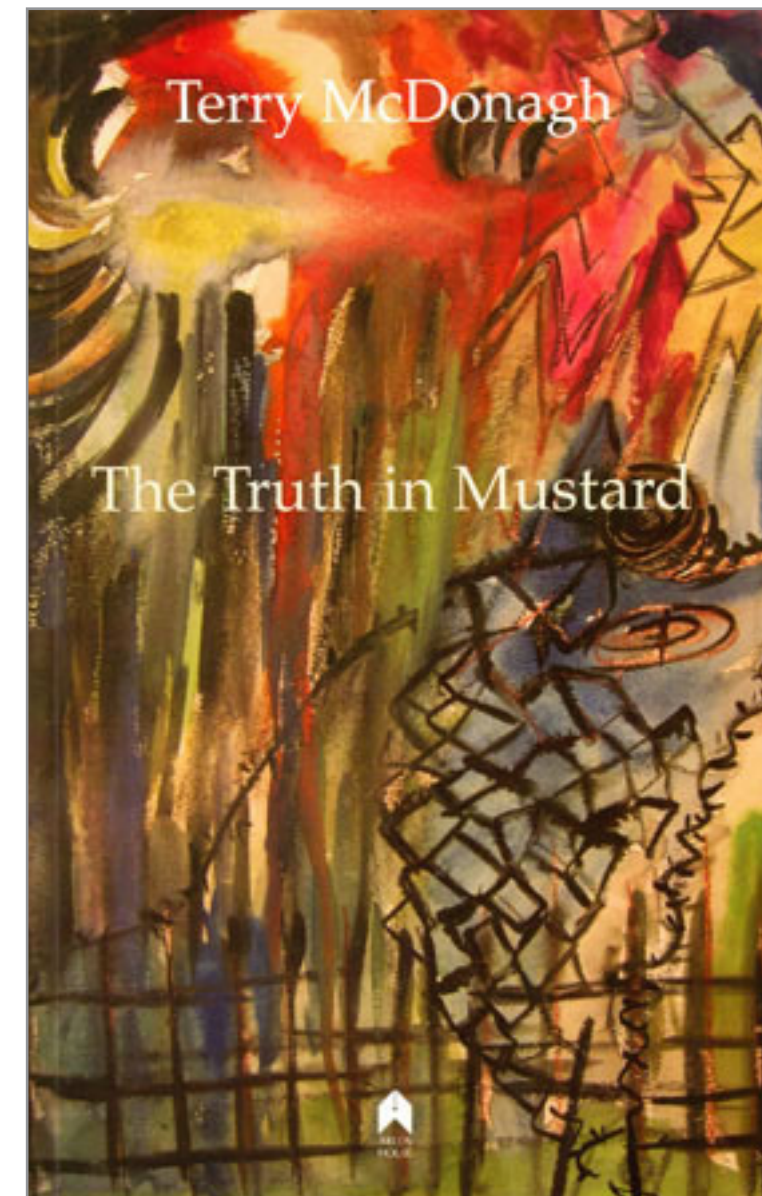
## Lovely Women

Rubens' women were  
round and fat.

Beckham's wife  
is very thin.

Rubens' women  
are alive and well.

With Beckham's wife  
you cannot tell.



<http://www.terry-mcdonagh.com/>



Candess M. Campbell, PhD is the author of the #1 Amazon Best-selling book, *12 Weeks to Self-Healing: Transforming Pain through Energy Medicine*, *Live Intuitively: Journal the Wisdom of your Soul*, and *Live Simply: Less is More*. She is an international Speaker, Intuitive Consultant and Psychic Medium. She specializes in shifting the vibration of the planet by providing 144,000 Strand DNA Activation and Karmic Clearing Workshops working with The Ascended Masters, the Lords of Karma. Candess has a doctorate in Clinical Hypnotherapy from APU, a Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology and a Bachelor's in Psychology with a minor in Religious Studies from Gonzaga University. She has over 30 years as a Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Counselor and over 20 years as a Psychic Reader and Healer. Contact Dr Candess M Campbell at <http://energymedicinedna.com/>

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## Healing from the Other Side

Standing in front of the room I looked out at over a hundred people in the community as I prepared for my first large public Psychic Medium workshop. It was interesting to watch the openness of the participants. I have given intuitive readings as a part of my private practice and international business for many years. It was surprising though to see this crowd in the conservative city of Spokane, Washington. It was even more surprising to know we had booked a room that would not hold everyone and there was a waiting list.

Having worked as a mental health and chemical dependency counselor for over 30 years, it was interesting to watch the openness of the participants. I had given intuitive readings as a part of my private practice and international business for many years. Yet, here I was. My eyes viewed the audience from right to left and I began to get a sense of who I would read. One woman's energy pulled me in and when I looked at her face I heard a yes from my guides. I asked her, "is there someone you want me to talk to that crossed over?" As soon as I said that she appeared shocked and said "my son." I went inward and connected with her son and I got a sense that something was off. There was a miscommunication I heard from him. I saw him as a bright light and full of love. I looked at her and asked how he died. She said it was suicide. I immediately knew that was wrong. I could feel the experience he had when he died in my body. I began to shake and my lungs felt like I couldn't breathe. I sensed that his lungs collapsed. Immediately I heard the words that he had a seizure and his lungs collapsed.

I went back and I looked at him on the other side again and he was this bright light and not at all like someone who had been depressed or committed suicide. As I communicated with him, he shared that he had planned to incarnate for a period of time on this planet, but had not planned to stay. He shared with me that he had completed his special purpose and that and his life had been incredible. This young man was in his late 20's and he was ready to exit. When I told her this, the woman looked at me and she just started crying and she shook her head yes! She knew deep in her heart that she found the truth. At that moment I had clear insight! I understood that what happened for this woman in a few minutes could've taken years of therapy. It was incredible for this woman to understand the truth about her son and shift her confusion to understanding he didn't kill himself. Now she could heal her grief. Although I've been hesitant to totally come out as a psychic medium, I understand now this gift, when shared, can help people in a powerful way I never understood before.

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Dr Candess M Campbell



# Pakoras

## Indian Fritters

by **Ela Gori**

Photographs by Jiten Gori

This finger food is delicious with evening tea, and a great complement to cocktails. They could be made with a variety of vegetables, the most popular being: potatoes, eggplant, onion, cabbage, and jalapeno chillies. To be creative one can also make them with cooked chicken or with Indian cottage cheese.



### Ingredients

1 small potato, sliced thin  
 8 cauliflower florets  
 1 Asian eggplant  
 1½ cup chickpea flour  
 ½ teaspoon baking powder  
 ½ teaspoon turmeric  
 1 teaspoon red chili powder  
 1 teaspoon salt ( to taste)  
 ¾ cup of water (Use water as needed)  
 Canola or Vegetable Oil for deep frying (2 cups approximately)

This article first published in Live Encounters Magazine, October 2015.



### Method

Vegetables are cut into approximately 1 inch pieces; keeping them fairly thin as this ensures they are evenly cooked through. Sift the chickpea flour with the baking powder and salt. Gradually pour in the water until the mixture resembles pancake batter. Add the chili powder and turmeric and stir well. Add the cut vegetables in batches to the batter. Meanwhile put the oil in a small wok or Indian Karhai (round bottomed vessel) and let it heat until it is slightly smoking. Reduce the heat and put a teaspoon of batter in to the oil. If the oil is hot enough, the batter will immediately rise to the top and start turning a light brown. Keep the flame on medium heat to prevent burning. At this point add the batter coated vegetables in small batches to the hot oil. Use a slotted spoon to keep the pieces separate as they are frying. Take them out and put on a absorbent paper to drain the oil. Serve while still hot either with ketchup or mint and coriander chutney.



# Upama

## Savory Semolina

(A popular breakfast food from South India)

by **Ela Gori**

Photographs by Jiten Gori



### Ingredients:

1cup fine semolina  
 2 dried whole red chillies (about 1½ inches long)  
 1 teaspoon mustard seed, 1 teaspoon whole fenugreek seeds  
 1½ teaspoon split chickpeas, ½ teaspoon asafoetida powder  
 5-6 curry leaves, 1 small onion finely chopped  
 1 inch-long piece of fresh ginger finely chopped/grated  
 2 inch wide cauliflower floret finely chopped, 1 tablespoon finely carrots,  
 1 tablespoon finely chopped green beans, 4 cups warm water. Salt to taste  
 (approximately 1 teaspoon), 2 tablespoons clarified butter; could use some canola or vegetable oil with the butter. For the Garnish: Small cup of Cilantro leaves (chopped 2 tablespoons of broken cashews nuts 1½ teaspoon of clarified butter.



### Method

Gently dry roast Semolina over low/medium flame; stirring to prevent cooking unevenly. The semolina should have a pleasant aroma but not become too dark in color. Put clarified butter/oil in deep pan. Add asafoetida powder when it starts turning brown add the curry leaves, red chillies, mustard seeds, fenugreek seeds and the split chickpeas. When the mixture starts sputtering add the onions and ginger and fry to golden brown. Add all the vegetables, with salt. Cook 5-7 minutes on a medium flame and add water. Slowly add the roasted semolina to the water mixture, stirring quickly to prevent lumps forming. Upama is ready when the mixture turns into a soft ball.

Turn onto a serving dish and garnish with the cashews that have been shallow fried and the chopped cilantro. Great to eat at any time of the day, not just at breakfast!





©Mark Ulyseas

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 photo-grapher. 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'* 183 publications (upto May 2020). 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/author](http://www.amazon.com/author)  
<https://liveencounters.net/mark-ulyseas/>



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## Before the Cloud

I grew up in a city which was *then* the cultural capital of India... when the Vietnam War was in its death throes... when daily life mingled with school, Puchkas<sup>1</sup>, and 45s (vinyl) of Get off My Cloud, Ballad of the Purple Inn<sup>2</sup>, The Young Ones and Riders on the Storm. The mix was like Jhal Muri<sup>3</sup>; It was a time - When teenage pregnancies was not a big deal (no one had abortions, they just had children) - When Sundays was for serving mass, reading the gospels and then strolling over to the local Gurdwara for a free meal at the Langar<sup>4</sup>. It was a time when I learned that the terms Hindu and Hinduism were geographical terms...that in truth it was Sanatana Dharma, a perennial philosophy of living, which grew through the eons like a banyan tree, its roots permeating everything it touched... the country being transformed *into* this tree of life. Perhaps this is why the country embraced all those fleeing religious persecution.

We never saw India as a country but a civilisation and accepted that we were living in the era of Kalyug, end of days, and comforted by the thought that it would last thousands of years.

It was at this time that we created our own world with our own rules of engagement. Like me, there were many who were adrift in the cultural soup whose recipe was being constantly changed by the hands of self-appointed gendarmes of society. We were attempting to break out of stifling conventionalism and an insidious form of capitalism disguised as socialism, and other *isms*. Politics was for the puerile. For us it was a time of discarding our own Indianness. We were sandwiched between bell bottoms and dhotis, chillums and Charminar ciggies. We never understood why India, a civilisation, needed a flag and national anthem. The Jesuits worked hard to channel our unbridled energy towards higher learning. To craft our minds into lean mean learning machines. With some they succeeded.

*In Gethsemane: Transcripts of a Journey* [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)



*Our* group looked like a Benetton advertisement - all colours and sizes. Many among us were refugees - Indians who were refugees in their own country, while others were from Iran, China, East Bengal, Tibet, and Armenia, with Baghdadi Jews and the odd German who had been embraced by India. The one common sutra was India. It was our home where we felt an unparalleled freedom of body and soul.

And when the Indo-Pak war<sup>5</sup> came to our border we retreated into a world of self-indulgence of reading, theatre and cycling to far flung villages just for the heck of it. We didn't want to be dragged either into the growing refugee crisis or the bloodiness of the Naxal uprising, of taking sides with the State or Charu Mazumdar<sup>6</sup>. It was a pointless exercise. The war came and went and so did the Naxal uprising, which was brutally crushed by the State. Communism was not acceptable but Nehruvian faux socialism<sup>7</sup> was. Another ruler had taken over the country and it was called the House of Nehru. Indians had swapped a foreign occupier with an indigenously produced one. Perhaps it was in our psyche to be ruled, to be led like a bovine with a rope tied through its nose. Nehruvian faux socialism gave rise to a new caste of Indians who existed on the spoils of corruption fuelled by sycophancy. We called them *pagol kukur* (mad dogs)...they were like jackals hanging around a pride of lions feeding on a kill.

*Our* group looked like a Benetton advertisement - all colours and sizes. Many among us were refugees - Indians who were refugees in their own country, while others were from Iran, China, East Bengal, Tibet, and Armenia, with Baghdadi Jews and the odd German who had been embraced by India. The one common sutra was India. It was our home where we felt an unparalleled freedom of body and soul.

School and college were stages of self-induced enlightenment. The Elizabethan poets jostled with Kerouac, Wilde and Tagore. It was a heady brew of knowledge that seduced us into a reverie of *Being*. We were never part of the *with it* crowd, which resembled clones. We had cocooned ourselves in the gossamer world of great minds and downright enchanting decadence of *Being*.

Come festivals and it was time to savour the delights of homemade cooking with Old Monk rum and Blue Riband gin. There was never a problem with what was being served: pork, beef, mutton, chicken or Machher Jhol<sup>8</sup>. On *Bakri id*, for those among us who were were grass-eaters, vegetarian food was cooked separately but served along *with non-vegetables* (meats).

There was a joke we shared to the effect that – *God gave us Faith but we made a religion out of it*. Festivals like Durga Puja or Christmas were eagerly awaited for it was a time of endless music, dance and traditional delicacies that were always offered at most homes, homes that welcomed all.

No one owned a religion or held exclusive copyright. Faith, like food, was shared, generously. There appeared to be an underlying agreement that we were one...one tribe called humanity. Perhaps the spirit of Sanatana Dharma possessed us all.

Today the Victoria Memorial [09] stands like a vestal virgin waiting for the day of reckoning. The new wave of humanity has all but swept away the rustic-like manner of *Being*. Now it's about symbols, status and religious, that have become the mantra of a generation that follows the sacred cow of consumerism and proliferates at a frightening pace in the ether on *one cloud*. Reality is the number of likes one can get for an inane FB post and not a cup of chai (tea) that is shared with a friend.

Books, working in the trenches and sharing what little we had was our world. And as time flowed on some of us died young, mowed down by a society rushing to catch up with the rest of the world. Others got married and took on the mantle of nurturing new souls, while many more were swallowed up by a burgeoning India spiralling into another dimension.

Today the Victoria Memorial<sup>9</sup> stands like a vestal virgin waiting for the day of reckoning. The new wave of humanity has all but swept away the rustic-like manner of *Being*. Now it's about symbols, status and religious, that have become the mantra of a generation that follows the sacred cow of consumerism and proliferates at a frightening pace in the ether on *one cloud*. Reality is the number of likes one can get for an inane FB post and not a cup of chai (tea) that is shared with a friend.

*Our* world is not lost. It lies nestled in the cracks and crevices of a fragmented society, waiting to sprout when another tribe like *ours* is born, to carry the baton and begin the relay again. Time has not changed for *Yusef, Ashkenazi, Chen, Helmut, Nina, Radhika, Framjee, Joshua, Clare, Ayesha, Krishna, Ramdas* and me. We revel in a time of our own making - good, bad and surreal. We haven't forgotten where we come from...from One Universal Thought.

Not too long ago I revisited some old haunts. Perhaps the feeling I came away with can best be described in the words of Indian Nobel Laureate, Rabindranath Tagore.<sup>10</sup>

“Patriotism cannot be our final spiritual shelter; my refuge is humanity. I will not buy glass for the price of diamonds, and I will never allow patriotism to triumph over humanity as long as I live.”

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

01. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panipuri>
02. <https://www.facebook.com/India-Sixties-and-Beyond-Music-147952891964475/>
03. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puffed\\_rice](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puffed_rice)
04. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Langar\\_\(Sikhism\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Langar_(Sikhism))
05. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indo-Pakistani\\_War\\_of\\_1971](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indo-Pakistani_War_of_1971)
06. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charu\\_Majumdar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charu_Majumdar)
07. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Licence\\_Raj#History](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Licence_Raj#History)
08. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Machher\\_Jhol](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Machher_Jhol)
09. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victoria\\_Memorial\\_\(India\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victoria_Memorial_(India))
10. <https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/asi/tagore-at-home-in-the-world/book240617> - He says this as early as 1908, and puts his position about nationalism succinctly in a letter replying to the criticism of Abala Bose, the wife of a great Indian scientist, Jagdish Chandra Bose, quoted by Amartya Sen in his article, Tagore and His India (1986).



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