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Yun Hi Hamesha Ulajhati Rahi Hai Zulm Se Khalq
Na Unki Rasm Nai Hai, Na Apani Reet Nai
Yun Hi Hamesha Khilaaye Hain Hamne Aag Main Phool
Na Unki Haar Nai Hai, Na Apani Jeet Nai

—Faiz Ahmad Faiz

In the present times, as in the past, protests and struggles have been most essential part of building-up a society. It is in the spirit of democracy the right to protest. It is in the interest of power holders to break the spirit of protests. In the past, as much as in present, governments have crushed movements/protests as per their convenience. Our history is full of stories of many known and unknown struggles of people against the oppressors. This issue of SACH begins with remembering one such struggle.

For a Better Love

by ROQUE DALTON / DECEMBER 1985

Everybody agrees that sex
is a category in the world of lovers:
thus its tenderness and savage branches.

Everybody agrees that sex
is an economic category:
you have only to mention prostitution,
fashion,
the newspaper sections that are only for her or only for him.

The trouble begins
when a woman says
that sex is political category

Because when a woman says
That sex is a political category
She can begin to stop being a woman as such
and become a woman for herself,
to make a woman into a woman
on the basis of her humanity
and not of her sex,
to know that the magical lemon-flavored deodorant
and the soap that voluptuously caresses her skin
are made by the same firm that makes napalm,
to know that the basic household tasks
are the basic tasks of the social class of the household,
that the difference of sexes
shines much better in the profound amorous night
when all those secrets are known
that had us wearing masks and estranged.

THE STUDENT REVOLT, 1960-1961

ANNE BRADEN / JULY-AUGUST 1965

The following is taken from a longer account by Anne Braden on the history of the U.S. civil rights movement that appeared in this issue.

It was the Negro student revolt of 1960 that turned the southern civil rights movement into a Southwide mass movement.

The incident that triggered it was the now famous action of February 1, 1960, when four Negro college students in Greensboro, North Carolina, walked into a dime store, sat at a lunch counter, ordered coffee, were refused service and continued to sit. From there the idea swept the South; by May there had been student demonstrations in at least eighty nine cities, including some in every southern and border state. Hundreds sat at lunch counters; thousands marched in street demonstrations; hundreds went to jail. The Negro South was electrified, the white South was shocked and the nation as a whole, still trapped in the silence, fear, and apathy of the 1950s, rubbed its eyes and realized that the democratic processes of protest, although rusty from disuse, were still available to those with the courage to use them.

Just as it is impossible to explain why the Montgomery bus protest started when and where it did, so there is no clearcut explanation for the timing and development of what became known as the sit-in movement. The sit-in technique was not new. It had been used since the early 1940s by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in Northern cities. In the late 1950s there were, a few small CORE groups staging sit-ins around the edges of the South, in such border cities as Baltimore and St. Louis. In Oklahoma City in 1958, an NAACP youth group conducted a mass sit-in campaign that opened lunch counters there; this was widely publicized, but it did not spread.

Many people refused to believe that the sit-in movement growing from Greensboro was

spontaneous, but it was, and nobody active in the civil rights movement would have predicted it. In fact, the constant lament among adult activists in that period was, "Where is the younger generation?"

The only explanation is that this generation, unbeknownst to its elders, had simply-individually and collectively-had enough, and when somebody struck the right match at the right moment the social bomb went off. Some sociologists have theorized that it happened to this particular generation because they were just old enough to be aware of what the Supreme Court decision of 1954 should mean to them, and when after six years it had not meant anything, their frustrations broke into action. This was also a generation whose parents matured during the earlier ferment of the 1930s and the early 1940s. That generation never developed a full-blown revolt, but they raised their children in a different tradition. "My generation of parents," said the Negro leader in the mid 1950s, "is not telling our children—as our parents told us—that they have to subject themselves to every whim of the white community." Also, some of the students who coalesced into a Southwide movement had been protesting as individuals for a long time. For example, John Lewis, later a leader of the new student movement, says that long before the sit-ins, he tried to integrate the library in his home town in Alabama. Virginius Thornton, another sit-in leader, had several years before organized Negro high school students to stay off a bus sent to take them to a segregated school.

When the students finally merged into a Southwide movement, they had no definite goals beyond the lunch counter, but everyone knew that this was only a symbol and the real objective was much larger. It is doubtful that any participant in the sit-in movement ever really thought the objective was hamburger and a cup of coffee. "We want the world to know," said a mimeographed newsletter from

a small college in North Carolina, “that we no longer accept the inferior position of second class citizenship. We are willing to go to jail, be ridiculed, spat upon and suffer physical violence to obtain first class citizenship.” An Alabama student, arrested in a demonstration, told a reporter: “There are not enough jails to hold us. There are not enough roads for us to leave the state.” When the students met in their first Southwide conference at Raleigh, North Carolina, on Easter weekend in 1960, one of them declared in a meeting: “This is the most significant gathering ever held in America since the Constitutional Convention.” Students of history may feel that this was an exaggeration, but it was the way these students felt on 1960. They burned with a sense of mission and a sense of history.

It was partly because the breadth of their vision often seemed too big to put into words that this movement turned so much to song. Music became the movement's most effective means of communication; students learned old songs from the church and the labor movement, added their own words, and made up new songs. Each jail cell produced its own verses. No other movement in our history, not even the early labor movement, has been such a singing movement as this one became.

An interesting aspect of the movement's music relates to Highlander Folk School, formerly in Monteagle, Tennessee, which the state of Tennessee was then in the process of destroying. It was from Highlander the music of the southern civil rights movement came. The song that later swept the nation, “We Shall Overcome,” for example, was a Highlander song. It came originally from the Negro church, and was adapted by striking tobacco workers in South Carolina, who sang it on picket lines. Zilphia Horton, wife of Highlander director Myles Horton and a talented folk singer, learned it from the strikers in the early 1940s and brought it to Highlander, where she taught it to successive groups of visitors. One of these was Pete Seeger, the folk singer, and he began to sing it around the country. Guy Carawan, a young folk singer on the Highlander staff in

1960, taught it to the emerging student activists; they gave it new verses and soon it was the theme of demonstrations everywhere.

There is something symbolic about this development. By 1961, Tennessee had succeeded in closing Highlander and although it later opened a small center in Knoxville, its main building on the mountain top at Monteagle was burned by vandals at night—as if someone wanted to erase its memory from the face of the earth. Yet by the time “We Shall Overcome” was on the lips of people across the nation and would four years later be quoted by a President addressing Congress. Here is some indication of the indestructible nature of the movement arising in the South and of the futility of the actions, even the worst actions, of those who were trying to hold back the dawn.

The defenders of the Old South were still at work in those early 1960s. Police were using tear-gas to break up demonstrations. At some state colleges, teachers were fired and student demonstrators were expelled. Libel suits were filed against civil rights leaders (and against the New York Times) in Alabama. Many individuals were hurt by these attacks. Some became martyrs-like Clyde Kennard who was sent to jail for seven years on a trumped-up charge after he applied to enter a white college in Mississippi and later died of cancer when early symptoms were neglected in prison. But the movement as a whole pushed forward; in contrast to the 1950s when the segregationists held the initiative, it was now the civil rights forces that were on the offensive; and it was a time of victories.

Within six months after the sit-ins started, twenty-eight cities had integrated their lunch counters; by the fall of 1960 the number had risen to almost one hundred, with protest movements active in at least sixty more. There were kneel-ins to integrate white churches, wade-ins at the swimming pools and beaches. By the spring of 1961, the sit-in movement finally reached Jackson, Mississippi—the first place where police dogs were used against demonstrators. More than 3,500 walked in a

silent march to Nashville to protest the bombing of a civil rights attorney's home and forced a statement from the mayor on the City Hall steps supporting equal rights for all. Eight thousand gathered in mass meetings in Atlanta, and 2,000 students marched in the streets.

Years before, the southern satiric writer Harry Golden made people laugh with his suggestion that since southerners did not object to integration when people were standing up (as in supermarkets or on the street) desks should be taken out of schools and "vertical integration" initiated. No one thought then that it might ever happen, but sure enough—although not in schools it began to happen after 1960, some lunch counters removed their stools and integrated. More often they integrated with everybody sitting down and many southerners were startled to find the sky did not fall in at all; businessmen reported in surprised pleasure that their business went up instead of down. "I used to say this town was not ready for desegregation," said one Nashville white man, "but the sit-ins made it ready." A prominent white southern attorney, Marion Wright, said: "Many people have said it takes time to change customs. They should look at the South now. In eight months' time we have completely altered the customers of our public eating facilities." It was a daily newspaper in North Carolina, and not a civil rights publication, that first in referring to the student sit-ins quoted Victor Hugo: "There is nothing so powerful in all the world as an idea whose time has come."

Permanent organizations coalesced around the student movements in some communities. One of the most remarkable was in Nashville, Tennessee, where entire student bodies participated, and where the first breakthrough on citywide integration of lunch counters occurred in May 1960. The Nashville students developed a system of "group leadership" under the guidance of a young Negro minister, the Rev. James Lawson. Often they would meet all night until in the dawn hours they could reach unanimous "sense of the meeting" decisions. Because they were ready to go to jail and stay if necessary, they won the trust of the

other students, so that when the time came for mass action the masses were there. Out of this Nashville group came many of the students who emerged as Southwide leaders later the Rev. James Bevel, Diane Nash (later Mrs. James Bevel), Bernard Lafayette, John Lewis, Marion Barry, Lester McKinnie, and others and also the young ministers, C.T. Vivian and Kelly Miller Smith, who rose to leadership in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

Regionally, the lasting organization that came out of the sit-in movement, which probably changed the course of history in the South, was the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) pronounced SNICK). This organization was set up at the 1960 Easter conference in Raleigh, to which students from the various sit-in movements came. The Raleigh conference was called by SCLC when it became obvious that some sort of coordination of the sit-in movement was indicated. There were 142 southern students present, with every southern state and about 40 campuses represented. SCLC provided some speakers and workshop leaders; and the woman who was to become a kind of godmother, adviser, helper, and a patron saint to SNCC, Miss Ella Baker, organized the conference as an SCLC staff member. But when the students gathered, they grabbed the reins for themselves, and it became apparent that they wanted their own independent organization. This became a position that they maintained with dogged determination, and under great counterpressures.

Thus, with the development of mass movements around the sit-ins, the South now had four major civil rights organizations working to organize southern Negroes: the NAACP, SCLC, CORE, and SNCC. These were in addition to the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF) which had been working for many years to involve white people in the movement for equality.

The NAACP was the pioneer. Theoretically, the NAACP was a mass organization, with its basic support supposedly the \$2-a-year membership. In practice it never

really became that, and its work was usually carried on in each community by a select few. In the South, these few were an elite only in terms of courage, and they struggled against great odds to involve more people. But the principal thrusts of the organization were through the test cases in the courts, the demand for justice for an individual under attack, the fruitless but persistent push for national legislation, and the steady if largely unsuccessful effort to get Negroes registered to vote.

When direct action broke into the streets in 1960 and afterward, these methods looked very conservative to many people; and the NAACP although still a devil in the eyes of the segregationists, developed the reputation of being the most conservative of the civil rights groups.

In a region as large and varied as the South, it is risky to make generalizations, and in some communities it was the NAACP youth councils that led direct action campaigns. Southwide, however, after 1960, the conservative image of the NAACP became self-perpetuating and it tended to attract more conservative Negroes—those who wanted change but with as little fanfare as possible and who were not much concerned with involving many lower-income Negroes in the process. They concentrated on voter-registration campaigns and court action. Their preferred court action was in aggressive test cases battering down the legal walls of segregation, as in the repeated school cases. They were less interested in the defense of demonstrators who got arrested, because they did not always approve of the demonstrations that brought on the arrests. But after SNCC began turning to the National Lawyers Guild for some of its legal work, and after SCLC began to set up its own legal defense foundation (the Gandhi Society), the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund (a separate organization from the NAACP but its legal wing) took on the mass legal defense of both SNCC and SCLC demonstrators and became again the major legal arm of the Southern movement.

SCLC (as previously noted) was formed in 1957 under the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr., and other Negro ministers. Its objective was to develop mass movements in southern communities and make use of direct action; its channel of work was primarily the Negro church where much of the ferment of the period was brewing. It was not very successful at first in creating mass movements, but its ideas were circulating. One of the healthiest developments of the period was the seemingly spontaneous development of grassroots social action organizations in Negro communities across the South. Many of these associated themselves with SCLC and some coordination developed.

SCLC's greatest weapon was King himself, for he had captured the imaginations of Negroes and could go into any Southern community, draw a crowd, and electrify it. The organization had no staff initially and depended on communication among the various militant minister-leaders. Then organizational foundations were laid by Dr. John Tilley and Miss Ella Baker, a former director of branches of the NAACP who had pioneered in organizing in the South. Later the Rev. Wyatt Tee Walker, a young Negro minister who had risen to leadership in the Virginia sit-in movement, came and applied both Madison Avenue techniques and a good bit of hard work to welding SCLC together. As civil rights action increased, the organization became more prominent and built a full-time staff. Later it branched from direct action into voter, registration, leadership training, and legislative action. But its main thrust remained mass direct action, and its greatest successes were mobilizations of entire communities in a way that attracted national attention.

CORE, like NAACP, was an old organization, but before 1960 a tiny one, concentrated almost entirely in the North. Its Southern work prior to the sit-ins was almost wholly in Nashville where it did a remarkably good job of encouraging Negroes to apply to the supposedly integrated schools; in South Carolina where it developed voter registration

drives; in Miami where it began some direct action; and in the border city of St. Louis. After the Greensboro sit-ins, CORE grew rapidly. It knew more about sit-in techniques than any other organization, and had more calls for help than it could handle. It expanded its staff and sent organizers onto the South. CORE chapters then sprang up in considerable numbers. These sought to lead mass movements, but the basic CORE organization was a relatively small group of well-trained individuals, dedicated to direct action. In the beginning CORE placed some stress on making its Southern groups interracial. Subsequently, it became less of a Southwide force and began to concentrate in the Deep South and in Negro communities, especially in voter registration in North Florida, parts of Mississippi, and Louisiana.

Another organization which is often mentioned nationally as a "major" civil rights group is the Urban League. Chapters of the Urban League have long existed in the South. When the segregationists were on the offensive in the 1950s the Urban League came under vicious attack along with all other groups identified with the Negro cause. However, among people in the movement, the Urban League was thought of as a real civil rights organization. Its original purpose, as its name suggests, was to help rural Negroes adjust to urban life. Its specialized effort was to open up job opportunities to Negroes, mainly through quiet negotiations. Sometimes the Urban League worked in the background in cooperation with more public campaigns sponsored by more militant groups, but it was not in the main current of Southern revolt.

If there was any one single factor that shaped Southern history in the early 1960s, it was the unexpected turn that SNCC took. For SNCC attracted the young, the unencumbered, the daring, the image breakers and the pioneers; and they became the catalysts as only the young can be. The important turning point came when SNCC looked away from the campus and into the community.

For its first year and a half, SNCC was exactly what its name implied--a coordinating

committee. After the Raleigh conference it set up a tiny cubbyhole office on Auburn Avenue in Atlanta and had one full-time, although rarely paid, employee. The center of SNCC was an actual coordinating committee with representatives from each southern state, who met approximately once a month between April 1960 and the summer of 1961.

By the spring of 1961, most Negro campuses were quiet. In some places, lunch-counter victories had been won. In others, movements had been crushed by expulsions of students and firings of sympathetic faculty. Everywhere there was realization that those who continued in the movement would have to take on bigger issues than lunch counters and that the next stages of struggle would be harder. "The glamorous stage is over," said one student at the SNCC conference in late 1960. "From now on, the need is for people willing to suffer."

The Rev. James Lawson was a main speaker and a key influence at the conference. Lawson was a pacifist who had been to India and studied Gandhi's methods. During the 1950s he worked in the South for the Fellowship Reconciliation and traveled about the region seeking to bring small groups of whites and Negroes together to act. Later he decided that this kind of activity was not the key to social change, and turned instead to the organization of Negro mass movements for direct action in which his efforts coincided with the rise of the student sit-in movement.

Lawson constantly argued the students to define deeper issues and long-range goals beyond the lunch counter; he advocated what he called "nonviolent revolution" to revamp the entire society. One tactic he advocated was filling the jails and refusing to make bond. This had been talked about from the beginning of the sit-ins but rarely practiced for long, as older Negro leaders and parents, feeling that it was not quite respectable for the college youngsters to be in jail, raised bail by the thousands of dollars and got them released. Lawson himself had reluctantly agreed to make bond after his arrest in the Nashville sit-ins

when white faculty members at Vanderbilt University where he was a graduate student came to the jail with the bond money. "I left jail," he said at the time, "because the approach of the Divinity School faculty marked the first time the white community had come to the Negro's help in the sit-in. For me, it was symbolic."

Later, Lawson apparently felt a greater imperative had been sacrificed and at the 1960 fall SNCC conference he said in his speech:

We lost the finest hour of this movement when so many hundreds of us left the jails across the South. Instead of letting the adults scurry around getting bail, we should have insisted that they scurry about to end the system which had put us in jail. If history offers us such an opportunity again, let us be prepared to seize it.

History newer has not for the student movement as such. In the late winter of the school year 1960-61, there were some efforts at a jail-instead-of-bail movement on southern campuses, and at one point there were in various towns as many as 100 students serving sentences instead of appealing. But the student movement, as a campus uprising, had by then passed its peak, and still in the spring of 1965 no campus-based movement comparable to 1960 has yet appeared again in the South.

What happened by the spring of 1961 was that a group of students connected with SNCC emerged from the sit-in movement with the realization that efforts to change the South must, for them, be a serious adult Commitment. There were only a handful of them, but within four years they were to become the core of a new army of young people who would not only invade the Deep South but the ghettos of the North and to poverty-stricken areas of Appalachia. By 1965 this army had grown to such proportions that the federal government devised a domestic peace Corps (VISTA) and developed semi-official governmental groups such as the Appalachian Volunteers in obvious efforts to absorb the energies of youth looking for something meaningful to do with their lives. People in control of society would prefer that youthful energies go into efforts more easily

controlled by the power structure and therefore not likely to challenge the present control.

It was February 1961, when the first group of SNCC pioneers experimented with the concept of going beyond their own community to challenge segregation. Students were arrested at Rock Hill, South Carolina, for attempting to integrate lunch counters. They chose jail instead of bail and served out 30-day sentences. Meantime, four SNCC leaders from elsewhere went to Rock Hill, demonstrated, were arrested and joined the local students in jail, and then sent out a call to other students across the South to join them there. The four were part of the vanguard who would become full-time crusaders later—Charles Jones of Charlotte, North Carolina, Charles Sheerrod of Richmond, Virginia, Diane Nash of Nashville, and Ruby Doris Smith of Atlanta. Their call for other students failed, but the idea of the traveling challenger of segregation and the technique of concentrating many people from many places at one point of challenge was to become important in the Southern movement later.

Meantime, in May, CORE launched its Freedom Ride—a pilgrimage of whites and Negroes riding Southward from Washington, D.C., bound for New Orleans, planning to integrate bus station facilities all along the way. The ride was relatively uneventful until it reached Alabama. Then a bus was burned in Anniston and the riders were attacked by mobs there and in Birmingham; and yet another phase of the Southern struggle was underway.

The original riders, many beaten and bloody, abandoned the ride at Birmingham, but the Nashville student group picked it up, rode a bus on to Montgomery where they were beaten by a mob; from there riders proceeded on to Jackson, Mississippi, where they were quietly and efficiently arrested. Throughout that summer Freedom Riders continued to roll South—all of them destined for the jails of Jackson and Mississippi's Parchman State Prison. By the end of August, more than 300 had come, three-fourths from the North, about half students, and over half of them white.

Most got sentences that would amount to six months if fines were not paid, and most stayed in jail for forty days, the deadline to appeal convictions.

The Freedom Rides were a good illustration of the symbolic nature of the Southern struggle. This was pointed up by a Southern journalist who commented on the difficulties he and other newspapermen had in trying to explain the Freedom Rides on a program recorded for overseas broadcast by the Voice of America. "We had to try to explain, among other things," he said, "how some of those white people who joined the mob that beat the Freedom Riders at the Montgomery Greyhound station rode on integrated city buses to get there. We were not at our most lucid best."

Other newspapermen pointed out in their reports that the Greyhound station in Montgomery had actually been integrated quietly several weeks before the Freedom Riders arrived by a small group of Negroes who came without fanfare from another Alabama city.

Some southern white liberals wrung their hands and wondered wistfully why the Freedom Riders had to be so flamboyant in their assault on the segregated waiting rooms.

"I'm no gradualist," one said. "I know somebody has to challenge these things. I don't say there shouldn't be an organized campaign to integrate the bus stations. But why all the advance publicity? That's what stirs people up. Most of the terminals in the South could be integrated if it were just done quietly."

He was probably right. Those white men the journalist found it hard to explain to people abroad the ones who rode the integrated Montgomery buses to get to the Greyhound station and beat the Freedom Riders—very likely did not consider it a life-and-death matter whether Negroes sat in the "white" waiting room of that station. But they had been aroused to rage by the advance newspaper stories saying the Freedom Riders were coming and their rage resulted from an instinctive knowledge that much more was at stake than

seats in a bus station.

The Freedom Riders knew it too, and that, rather than any desire for publicity for its own sake, is why they had to do what they did with flamboyance and publicity and would not, if they could, settle for the quiet one-by-one integration of the South's bus stations. The bus station was the symbol, and the real stakes were much higher equality, human dignity, a place in the sun. The mobs knew it, and the police in Jackson knew it, and the Freedom Riders knew it. And that is why they all responded as they did—those who felt threatened by the drive for equality reacting in fear and hatred, those identifying with the movement for freedom reacting with a willingness to risk their lives for seats in Southern bus stations.

Finally in the fall, the Interstate Commerce Commission ruled that all bus and train stations must integrate. Thus, although compliance was not immediately complete, the Freedom Riders won their specific objective.

In their broader symbolic significance, they did a good many other things too. They widened the southern struggle into the national arena, for the first time giving northerners something direct they could do in the South. They also brought encouragement to thousands of southern Negroes, and the term Freedom Rider became legendary; even today many a Negro sharecropper in remote areas of the South refers to all civil rights workers as Freedom Riders. The rides also introduced and popularized a new concept which became proverbial in the movement: "Put your body into the struggle." That concept was one factor that helped propel those searching SNCC students from the campus into the community.

They were further propelled, although indirectly, by forces in the national power structure which the freedom riders unintentionally set in motion.

*Source : History As It Happened
selected articles from Monthly Review*

A Reminder of How Deep Today's Subcontinental Rift Runs

Shivshankar Menon

INDIA

Nisid Hajari, the Asia editor of Bloomberg View, has written a dramatic and fast paced account of developments in India in 1947 and 1948, concentrating on the Partition riots, the process and personalities involved in Partition, and the mayhem that accompanied that separation. Hajari also describes events related to the more complex and disputed episodes of Partition — the accession of Junagadh, Jammu and Kashmir and Hyderabad and the use of force by both Pakistan and India. He has a riveting story to tell and he tells it well.

Midnight's Furies: The Deadly Legacy of India's Partition is an impressive work in many respects, with deft touches showing the nature and character of the leaders involved and how they appeared to their contemporaries. At a time when anyone in either India or Pakistan with memories of Partition is already 70-years-old or more, a narrative like this is useful to inform subsequent generations, who are now the overwhelming majority of our population, of the facts of the past — a past that has been so heavily and contradictorily mythologised in both countries.

The strength of this book is in its narrative strength, its marshalling of facts, and its objectivity in presenting them. It even manages to maintain, for the most part, a conversational tone despite the grimness of much of what it describes. For those of us born after those events, it goes some way to set the basic narrative straight. And Hajari's fine ear for dialogue seldom lets him down: "You are heading for disaster, I wish you Godspeed!" shouted Jinnah to Khizar Hayat Tiwana, while slamming the phone down on the disobedient Punjab Chief Minister.

It is also an accessible reminder of how confused and bewildering the march of

events that led to and resulted from Partition were to all concerned, whether ordinary people or their leaders, and of the speed and simultaneity of major developments. The story is clearly and well told of how Partition-related communal riots spread west — from the organised violence in Bengal of the Muslim League's 16 August 1946 Direct Action Day to the Punjab to Delhi in September 1947. It is a useful reminder of what communal passions once aroused can do to society and to people's lives, and of how the instigators of communal violence and hatred have no control over the course of events and their outcomes. This is a lesson that each generation in India seems to have to learn for itself, even though the searing experience of Partition should have sufficed for several generations.

If anything the story is almost too coldly told, for it is hard to read of such brutality by all the communities involved without moral outrage. Hajari has made a tremendous effort to be even-handed in his treatment of Muslim, Sikh and Hindu leaders and groups involved in the violence. No one comes out well in this story of brutality and violence. It may well be too soon to come to definite historical judgments on the events of Partition which are still playing themselves out. But it seems unlikely to me that even-handedness is an accurate reflection of the reality of those troubled times. While a journalist tells all sides of a story, without judging them, a historian should go further. For instance, it is one thing to describe the violence, but I have yet to see a satisfactory answer to how order returned after such carnage and mayhem in both Punjab and Bengal, or in Lahore and Delhi.

Hajari chooses to tell the political story of Partition primarily as a quarrel between Jinnah and Nehru. He ends his narration by saying that Nehru's long battle with Jinnah had ended with Jinnah's death and the

action in Hyderabad. Indeed, personalities are given free and full rein in this telling of events. This has the advantage of heightening dramatic effect by bringing two very different but commanding figures to centre stage in the story. Hajari is also often critical of Gandhiji and Nehru and seems to consider them as responsible as Jinnah for Partition even though he never actually says so. Here again the moral equivalence that Hajari establishes between these leaders is something that will irk many. He has managed to do so even though we live in a time when the legacies and consequences of Partition are still with us in so many ways.

Interestingly, the British come out relatively unscathed in Hajari's account, with little mention of their agency or responsibility, probably because most of his sources are British. For instance, Olaf Caroe as Governor of NWFP had a direct hand in the demonstrations and attacks on Nehru during his visit, and in ensuring that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's ANP lost the referendum and power, thus making possible Pakistan's creation. But these facts find no mention in the book. There are good reasons for the British version of events to prevail in collective memory. Indians involved in significant events have not recorded them with the same meticulous care and detail or flair as even minor British officials, the archival practices (or lack thereof) of both the Indian and Pakistani governments have been limited and sporadic, and leaders have been routinely deified in the sub-continent. Unless this changes, we must be prepared for widespread illiteracy about our own history even among the educated, and what they know will be what outsiders write about our history. Which is one more reason to be grateful to Hajari for his book.

Hajari has done us all a service by reminding us of how deeply the roots of so many of our present preoccupations, particularly in Pakistan, go back to the formative period of Partition. Pakistan's paranoia that India is determined to eliminate her, the dysfunctional nature of Pakistan's politics, the outsize political role of the Pakistan Army, Pakistan's use of insurgents and jihadis

and tribesmen as state policy, the use and abuse of religion in politics, and her active seeking out of external powers as patrons for her anti-Indian obsession, can all be traced directly back to Partition. Even today, as in 1947, it is in Pakistan's interest to argue, as Jinnah did in letters to Attlee, that the subcontinent is the most dangerous place on earth and a threat to international peace and security that requires intervention by the big powers. Well before Pakistan is formed Jinnah is offering Pakistan to the Viceroy as a permanent foothold for Britain in the subcontinent, and a way of keeping 'the Hindus' from meddling in the Middle East.

For India as well, the ever-present risk and dangerous consequences of communal polarisation, the hostile relationship with Pakistan, the long running distraction of the Kashmir issue in international fora, the wars with Pakistan, cross border terrorism from Pakistan, the encouragement of the Khalistan movement by Pakistan (what would Master Tara Singh have thought of that?) — all are foreshadowed or have their origins in the events surrounding Partition.

The seeds planted then have borne deadly fruit for decades, and show no signs of dying out. Hajari's account of the seminal period from 1946 to 1948 is therefore redolent with resonances when read today.

One would have wished for more analysis after the ten narrative chapters, though Hajari does weave his own analysis into the narrative. Hajari does draw some conclusions in an Epilogue. One is left hoping for more, that the conclusions that he alludes to in the Epilogue would be spelt out in detail. But perhaps that is another book, for a less fevered time.

All in all this is a book that I would recommend as a good, readable introduction to a critical period on our history, well written and with enough colour to interest a new and younger generation of Indians and Pakistanis who need to get away from the myths that they have been fed about Partition. This book could help to start that process.

Shivshankar Menon was India's National Security Adviser from January 2010 to May 2014
source : *thewire.in*

Stupidity And Intelligence : Science, GMOs And Our Food

Vandana Shiva

INDIA

“Science” is derived from the scire – “to know”.

Each of us should know what we are eating, how it was produced, what impact it has on our health.

The knowledge we need for growing food is knowledge of biodiversity and living seed, of living soil and the soil food web, of interaction between different species in the agroecosystem and of different seasons. Farmers have been the experts in these fields, as have ecological scientists who study the evolution of microorganisms, plants and animals, the ecological web and the soil food web.

In industrial agriculture the knowledge of living systems is totally missing since industrial agriculture was externally driven by using war chemicals as inputs for agriculture. Soil was defined as an empty container for holding synthetic fertilizers, plants were defined as machines running on external inputs. This meant substituting the ecological functions and services that nature and farmers can provide through renewal of soil fertility, pest and weed control, and seed improvement. But it also implied ignorance of the destruction of the functions by the toxic chemicals applied to agriculture.

This complex knowledge of interacting, self-organizing, self-maintaining, self-renewing and self-evolving systems that farmers have had is now being confirmed through the latest in ecology. At the agricultural systems level, agroecology, not the mechanistic and blind paradigm of industrial agriculture, is the truly scientific approach to food production.

At the level of organisms, epigenetics and the new knowledge that cells are in constant communication with each other is leading to the emergence of a new paradigm of life as communication and intelligence. Living systems are not dead matter, assembled like a machine.

Yet in recent times only one kind of knowledge, the Mechanistic Reductionist paradigm based on seeing the world as a machine,

and reduction of a system its parts, has been elevated to the status of science.

The emerging sciences of complexity and connectedness expose the oceans of ignorance in which the mechanistic fundamentalism is steeped. Because living systems are self-organized complexity—and not machines— knowledge of a small fragmented part in isolation of its relationships with the rest of the system, translates into not-knowing.

This epistemic violence is now being combined with the violence of corporate interests to viciously attack all scientific traditions, including those that have evolved from within Western Science and transcended the mechanistic world view.

Industrial-scale farming, in this way, is actually becoming anti-science.

No where is this more evident than in how reductionism has been used to colonise the seed. Seed is self organized intelligence – it reproduces, it multiplies, and it constantly evolves. Farmers, specially women, have combined their intelligence with the intelligence of the seed, and through breeding as co-creation, they have domesticated wild plants, increased diversity to adapt to diverse climates and cultures. Additionally, they have improved both nutrition and taste as well as increased resilience, which is the evolutionary potential of the seed. Seeds have been improved on the basis of ecological and social criteria.

The rhetoric for taking over food systems and seed supply is always based on “Improved Seed.” But what is not mentioned is that industrial seeds are only “improved” in the context of higher dependence on chemicals, and more control by corporations.

The latest in the anti-scientific discourse of industrial agriculture is by reducing everything to “GMOs.”

Genetic Engineering is used to redefine seed as a corporate “invention” to claim patents and collect royalties. Farmers suicides in the cotton belt of India are directly related to the extraction of super-profits from farmers as royalty. And this is

illegal since Monsanto never had a patent on Bt cotton.

It is claimed the GMOs will increase food production but the technology does not increase yields.

It is claimed that genetic engineering is a precise technology. This is false for four primary reasons. First, genetic engineering is based on the false assumption that one gene gives rise to one trait. Second, it is so imprecise that antibiotic resistance marker genes have to be added to even know if the gene was actually introduced in the cell of the plant and genes from virulent viruses have to be added to promote the trait being introduced. Third, because the genes come from unrelated organisms, and include bacterial and viral genes, there are unknown impacts on the organism and the ecosystem in which it is introduced. This is why there are multidisciplinary sciences involved in Biosafety, and an international UN law to regulate GMOs for their Biosafety impact called the Cartagena Protocol to the Convention on the Conservation of Biodiversity.

Fourth, the anti-scientific claim that GMOs are accurate and selection and conventional breeding are inaccurate ignores the intelligence of plants and of farmers which is at play in evolution. In fact, the emergence of antibiotic resistance indicates the intelligence of bacteria to evolve under the pressure of antibiotics. Bacteria, as intelligent beings, are remaking themselves in response to antibiotics. The emergence of superpests resistant to Bt toxin in plants, and superweeds resistant to Roundup with the spread of Roundup Ready GMOs indicates the intelligence of insects and plants to remake themselves under the pressure of toxins associated with GMOs which are designed to kill them. But it is precisely on the denial of intelligence of humans and other species that the edifice of mechanistic reductionism is based.

“Intelligence” is based on the Latin *inter legere* – “to choose”. From the slime mold and bacteria, to plants and animals, including humans, intelligence is the choice we make to evolve in order to respond to changing contexts. Life is a cognitive system, with communication constantly taking place in a network on non-separable patterns of relationship. Living beings innovate all the time to deal with environmental challenges that face them. As evolutionary biologist Richard Lewontin says, “The characteristic of a living

object is that it reacts to external stimuli rather than being passively propelled by them. An organism's life is constant mid-course corrections.”

As a species, we as humans are falling behind the slime mold and bacteria to make an intelligent response to the environmental threats we face. And our intelligence is being thwarted by the false construction of the living Earth as dead matter, to be exploited limitlessly for human control, domination and greed.

The mid-course correction we need is to move beyond the mechanistic paradigm, and beyond exploitation which is manipulating not just living organisms, but knowledge itself.

It is claimed that the Bt toxin in GMOs degrades, but it has been found to survive in the blood of pregnant women and fetuses. It is claimed that Roundup and Roundup Ready crops are safe for humans because humans do not have the shikimate pathway. This is outright violence against science. Ninety percent of the genetic information in our body is not human but bacterial. Out of the 600 trillion cells in our body only 6 trillion are human, the rest are bacterial. And bacteria have the shikimate pathway. The bacteria in our gut are being killed by Roundup leading to serious disease epidemics, from increasing intestinal disorders to neurological problems such as the increase in occurrence of autism and Alzheimers. The soil, the gut and our brain are one interconnected biome – violence to one part triggers violence in the entire inter-related system. The US Centers for Disease Control data shows that on current trends one in two children in the US could be autistic in a few decades. It is not an intelligent species that destroys its own future because of a distorted and manipulated definition of science.

As Einstein had observed: “Two things are infinite: the universe and human stupidity; and I’m not sure about the universe.”

Vandana Shiva is a philosopher, environmental activist, and eco feminist. Shiva, currently based in Delhi, has authored more than 20 books and over 500 papers in leading scientific and technical journals. She was trained as a physicist and received her Ph.D. in physics from the University of Western Ontario, Canada. She was awarded the Right Livelihood Award in 1993. She is the founder of Navdanya <http://www.navdanya.org/>

Source : Commondreams.org

A Page from My Diary

My Personal Composite Heritage

Mahnaz Rahman

Aurat Foundation, PAKISTAN

My parents had also shifted to Karachi. As a result of Bhutto's nationalization policy, Vanaspati ghee factories were also nationalized and my father was transferred to Karachi. Bhutto's policy of nationalization proved to be a failure as in place of industrialists and capitalists; the bureaucrats were running the industries. 'Our bureaucracy has always been incapable of running businesses. By not bringing in professional people to run the nationalized sector, the first round of nationalization failed due to the corrupt bureaucracy and pressure of trade unions. In the second round of nationalization, Bhutto made the mistake of nationalizing small and medium sized industry. This led to annoying the small trader who then became the backbone of the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) movement, which also included the propertied class who were already against Bhutto because of land reforms and nationalization.' Educational institutions were also nationalized. It seemed to be a revolutionary step but in practice the results were not good.' Nationalizing schools and colleges in 1972 was a good move by Mr Bhutto. It was the haphazard way in which it was done that unraveled a good policy. Most private schools and colleges in Pakistan were run by missionaries. Once they were nationalized, most missionary teachers left and we were unable to replace them with qualified staff. The lack of teacher training programmes was another factor that contributed to the fall in the standard of public education' (Suleman Akhter). Personally

I think that through nationalization, workers should be made owners or shareholders of the mills and companies so that they could get shares in the profits. The capitalists and industrialists run these institutions better than bureaucrats so they should be allowed to run these institutions by making them part of the management board and making them shareholders as well. My father also became a victim of corrupt bureaucracy but that will come later.

As mentioned earlier, I could not find a job after doing Masters in Economics as I had gone to Shikarpur to join my parents and now after coming back to Karachi I was still jobless. My column that published regularly in monthly Harem had drawn lot of appreciation from the small but committed readership of the magazine. Senior journalist and ideologue Khurshid Alam had contacted me after reading my column and soon we developed a strong bond with each other. He became my ideological mentor. One day I received his letter, telling me that daily *Mussawat* that was being published from Lahore is going to be published from Karachi as well and famous writer Shaukat Siddiqui (whose novel *Khuda ki Basti* was a craze among educated people) had been appointed its editor and Khurshid Alam Saab told me to go and meet him. When my father came to know about this job offer, he asked me, how much salary I would get.

In late sixties and early seventies, college lecturers and journalists used to get 300 per month salary, at this my father said that I should start coaching my youngest brother Faraz and my father would pay me 300 per month. When I insisted, he said, if

you have to go into journalism then go in English journalism. But my heart was in Urdu journalism.

Shaukat Siddiqui lived few lanes away from our house in North Nazimabad so I went to meet him with my mother. His wife Surraiya welcomed us. When my mother told Shaukat Siddiqui that my father does not want me to do this job; instead he is ready to pay me the same amount for coaching my youngest brother. He was much amused to hear this and later on would often narrate this to other colleagues. The temporary office of daily *Mussawat* was set up in the office of Writers Guild and then it was shifted to a shabby old building near Denso hall. I was reconnected to my leftist friends, and the dreams of revolution were revived. Leftists of Pakistan esp: pro Beijing groups found themselves in a strange situation. Young communist leaders like Mairaj Mohammad Khan and seasoned socialist leaders like Shaikh Rasheed had joined hands with Z.A.Bhutto and strengthened his party. While some of the Pro-Beijing and most of the Pro-Moscow groups wanted to keep their individuality and identity intact and were not ready to accept Bhutto as a true socialist and leftist because of his feudal background. However, his slogan "Roti, Kapra aur Makaan" had attracted common people. Bhutto had provided them a sense of self-respect and they flocked around him. To cut a long story short, now (1973) he was in power and I was working in his party's organ "Daily *Mussawat*". As I mentioned earlier, famous progressive writer Shaukat Siddiqui was its editor and his novel "Khuda ki Basti" was a craze with literature loving people. PTV had telecasted it in 1969. Let's read what Wikipedia now says about it: "In 1974, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto ordered the re-telecast of *Khuda Ki Basti* (KKB) as it was Bhutto's favorite serial and had mass appeal and message. But the

Pakistan Television had problems as the video tape recordings of KKB on spool in 1969 had long been erased due to scarcity and re-recording of other programs. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto insisted that the serial must be re-telecast even if fresh recording was needed. The 1974 version of re-recorded *Khuda Ki Basti* was 50-minute episodes which lasted 13 weeks and created the same impact that the 1969 version did. For the viewers it was again a smash hit. Bakhtiar and Qasim Jalali did a fine job. This time the entire serial has been well maintained by Pakistan Television with a repeat telecast in 1990 which termed the adaptation of Shaukat Siddiqui's novel *Khuda Ki Basti* as "Mother of All Serials" at Pakistan Television Corporation". So those were the days, we used to think ourselves as characters of 'Khuda ki Basti' and wanted to bring change in the society. Saqib Shaikh who played the hero in the serial was also working with us in daily *Mussawat*. I was in-charge of student and youth page and later on was given the charge of the Women's page as well. I started translating 'Origin of Family, Private Property and the State' by Friedrich Engels into Urdu for my page. Shaukat Sahib noticed it only when three episodes had been published and stopped it. He was quite angry: "These leftists have joined this newspaper to bring revolution".

This was an important policy issue : Peoples Party had come into power and wanted to put forward a moderate and centrist image. Soon ideological differences started arising among higher leadership as well. Mairaj Muhammad Khan resigned and became victim of Bhutto's wrath. J.A.Rahim, one of the senior most members was manhandled by law enforcing agency.

Bhutto wanted to recognize Bangladesh so *Mussawat* newspaper started publishing articles in its favor. Bhutto hosted the Second Islamic Summit in Lahore from February 22

to 24, 1974. The summit was attended by thirty five member states of the Organization of Islamic Conference and Palestine, represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization. The summit helped cement the recognition of Bangladesh when Sheikh Mujib was invited to attend the meeting. Pakistani people were so fascinated to see so many heads of the state to arrive in Lahore to attend the conference. Many parents named their newborns after Qazafi of Libya or Yasir Arafat of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), who were very popular among Pakistani people in those days. In February 1974 Pakistan recognized Bangladesh. Diplomatic relations were established in January 1976, followed by the re-establishment of communications and transportation links later in the year.

This was the period when I had to decide about my personal life as well. My mentor was of the view that it was difficult for girls to continue their political and revolutionary activities after marriage. But I did not agree with him as I thought that I should marry a revolutionary person so then it would be easy for me to work for the downtrodden masses. I often wondered how easily our Pakistani leftist men married girls of religious and rightist families. As for me I could not imagine in my wildest dreams that I would marry someone from say Jamat-e-Islami, but our men especially writers, poets and leftists were used to double standards. In public life they were modern but in private life they needed a typical eastern housewife. Outside their homes, they liked to befriend modern girls but never wanted to marry them. Perhaps, they were conditioned to be comfortable with double standards. Few generations ago it was normal for a PhD man to marry an illiterate woman chosen for him by his family and live a normal life but can now a PhD woman of

this entire subcontinent marry an illiterate man? Centuries old division of labor between men and women has created problems for women. Men were given superior status in the family because they were breadwinners but when women also started working with them in public sphere, the men could not accept that they have lost the justification of being superior. I think the issue faced by feminists all over the world is that they are doing equal work with men in public life but men are not ready to share domestic work with them. Childbearing is a biological process but child rearing should be the responsibility of both parents. Men still think that their only responsibility is to earn money and they conveniently forget that now women are earning money too. The urban woman in Pakistan has progressed leaps and bounds over the last two decades. From being competitive in education to achieving professional success. Many women now walk shoulder to shoulder with men, if not a little ahead. But in marriage and relationships, power dynamics haven't changed much over the years and many women are vulnerable to psychological abuse and/or physical violence.

In subcontinent, the girls are conditioned in such a way that they think that getting married is the ultimate objective of their lives, nothing else is important. Even I could not find any other way to fulfill my dreams except to get married to a progressive and leftist person and do political work along-with him.

Progressive poets like Kaifi Azmi were also telling us:

*Arise, my love, for now you must march with me
Flames of war are ablaze in our world today
Time and fate have the same aspirations today
Our tears will flow like hot lava today
Beauty and love have one life and one soul today
You must burn in the fire of freedom with me
Arise, my love, for now you must march with me*

The BJP destroyed the idea of Bombay in 1992, and all I could do was watch

Lindsay Pereira

INDIA

I was a college student in December, 1992, when the Babri masjid was demolished. My life, until that point, had been a fairly sheltered one, growing up as I had through the 70s and 80s, untouched by the malice of militant political parties like the Shiv Sena that had, by then, already begun the slow process of destroying a once beautiful city.

When the masjid fell, it took with it an innocence that had long clung to Bombay; at least it seemed that way to a 16-year-old. A number of things changed dramatically that month. For one, almost overnight, one's surname and religion mattered more than anything else.

The school I went to, a public institution in the then TV soap actor-free suburb of Malad, enabled me to grow up with people of all faiths. The friends I made—Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, the only Parsi in the area—continue to be close despite the decades that lie between us. And yet, I was forced to confront their faiths, and my own, for the first time that December.

Another thing that acquired an inordinate amount of importance was a piece of skin tissue that had never meant anything to me until then.

I was circumcised in the late 70s, apparently. I don't remember the act, luckily, but knew it had something to do with an over-zealous doctor who insisted it was for the best. It certainly made an impact in the boys' toilets where, as 5 or 6-year-olds, we could gladly display our genitalia to classmates and engage in exciting games involving who could pee the furthest. It wasn't entirely our fault; all we had by way of entertainment was *Doordarshan* after 6.30 pm.

In 1992, decades after I had considered circumcision with anything other than mild curiosity, I was told to stay away from some parts of Malad after dusk to avoid being attacked. Circumcised men were terrorists, apparently. There were rumours of boys and men being accosted by groups of people, and forced to pull down their trousers. Those who were circumcised were, allegedly, stabbed. In that pre-internet and smartphone era, there was no way of figuring out the truth and disseminating it via WhatsApp.

What I do know is that Malvani, a locality that lies off Marve Road, was one of the worst affected. For a teenager, the idea of murder was

obviously hard to come to terms with. I saw bodies with some regularity during those bloody weeks, covered in white linen, lying unattended on Marve Road while buses taking me to the nearest railway station moved unhurriedly past.

What also shook me was the need for night-long vigils across my neighborhood, by well-meaning folk intent on protecting residents of minority communities. I spent hours on the terrace of one such building, home to one of my closest friends. I remember those nervous walks, lit only by the moon, as neighbors kept an eye out for any hint of a mob coming down the street.

I put aside all the thoughts of the masjid and its aftermath with the arrival of 1994. Millions of Bombayites did, because living in the past is a luxury no Indian city can afford. So I trucked away those fears and anxieties, hiding them away in a corner of my mind while I got on with the business of living.

They surfaced a little over a year ago, when the BJP came to power in 2014. Suddenly, social media platforms began to take on sinister hues with the birth of terms like 'libtard,' 'Congi', 'AAPtard', 'sickular' and 'presstitute.' The more popular platforms had existed for a while, but were suddenly awash in an enormous amount of vitriol that tied in with the Narendra Modi campaign.

It is naive to assume that other political parties have never used the religious card to polarize voters, of course. It is also naïve to assume that, without genuine electoral reform, the notion of nurturing a vote bank by using any means necessary will ever go away.

Today's Bombay is a suspicious place. A place of anger more than understanding. A city where your surname now matters more than ever before, and where the religion you practice defines where you can and can't own a home. We no longer have localities with character. All we have are townships and ghettos. It reminds me of a rather pertinent question once posed by the journalist Aroon Tikekar. "How," he asked, "have we gone from a city where Mohammad Rafi sang songs in praise of Hindu Gods to a place where Muslims are denied houses?"

The political parties who currently rule Maharashtra and the Centre have answers to that question. Bombay may forgive them. But some of us will never forget.

source : medium.com

Irula Tribes- Still Under Darkness

Mugilan Perumal

ISD, INDIA

The tribal population constitutes nearly 8% of the total Indian population. One of the largest tribes in Tamil Nadu is Irulas and they have been facing several socio-cultural-economic problems for decades. In Peruvalur village, Gingee Taluk, Tamil Nadu, the Irula tribes are still working under other caste people or landlords in brick kiln, rice mills, on farms etc. These jobs are attached with a lot of stigma and discrimination when compared to people from other caste. Irula tribes are still branded as untouchables and have no harmonious relationship with other community members. They were traditionally snake trappers, but with the ban on trading snake and its skins, without any alternative rehabilitative measures, their living conditions have been affected. Problems of illiteracy, negative attitude towards education (particularly of girl child), inadequate housing conditions, no job security, low income, indebtedness, majority of them live under below poverty line, none of them have banking facilities, toilet facility at home, most of them do not have community certificate to avail government welfare measures, alcohol dependence is seen among men folk, poor quality of life, poor health care facility and overall poor living condition.

Culturally the Irula Tribe is a very closely knit society. They used to follow joint family system (however now things are changing to nuclear family but still closely connected), do not promote dowry, have inter-caste marriage, men and women enjoy equal social status, live in harmony and actively participate in self-help group. They have traditional treatments for the illnesses. The traditional medicines for snake and insect biting are Siranangi, Perungayaveru and Pacchailai, for skin diseases - Thumbathazhai, Seruppuvazhai, Sirukunchanthazhai, for mild illnesses home remedies are Nandurasam

(Crab soup) for cold & fever and Vendhayam (Fenugreek) for stomach ache etc. even sick people from other communities seek traditional treatment done by the Irula tribes.

Belief in good and evil spirits is integral to their cultural practices. Kannimar God is worshipped by breaking a coconut, burning camphor and incense. The Irula beats the drum, sprinkles turmeric water over sick person. After a few minutes, bells are tied to that person's right wrist. In about a quarter of an hour the person begins to shiver and breaks out in a profuse perspiration. This is a sure sign that the person is possessed by the evil spirit. They also believe that the smallpox disease can be completely cured by their God "Kannimar".

"I treated the lady who got panicked near the well in the night time. The lady came to the village, stripped her dress and ran through the street. I took her to the community God Kannimara and treated within two days by doing the black magic in MukkuttuVazhi (the road which has three ways)". – Mr. Sekar

The Irula tribes celebrate harvest festival called Kannimar in the month of June for ten days. They would take the statue of their God and go around the other communities' living places and others also would get along with them to worship the Kannimar God. That is the time when all the communities get together to celebrate their God without any discrimination. Almost everyone in the surroundings worship their God because all of them have a demand to get rain. Every year, June month is the prosperous month for the Irula tribe communities.

"We enjoy celebrating our community festival which usually happens in the month of Adi (Tamil month of June). We invite all our relatives, neighbours and friends for the festival. At first day we inform to common people by using the instrument called "Melam". On second day we do puja in front of God followed by making pongal to

worship the God. The way of celebrating the festival is that the virgin people (male as well as female) would do all the pujas without talking to each other and it has to be done in proper and hygienic way. This goes on for ten days with other communities like this and at the end of the festival we would get rain". – Group of Irula Tribes

The issues of Irula tribes of Peruvallur village can broadly be classified into two categories that are socio-cultural and economic issues. The socio-cultural issues are mainly related to social contacts, and many times followed by socio-cultural shocks such as dreadful events (death, accidents and conflicts among the community) in the community and traditional values of Irula tribes. Most of the Irula people feel nervous to mingle with other community people. They even experienced that the doctors would treat them differently due to their physical appearance (they wear dhoti with a bare upper body). The economic issue of the Irula tribe is an inevitable one. They are engaged into the traditional work since their childhood but are unable to save the money or resources for their future. They would get the money only to fulfill their basic needs such as food and clothes. The tribes are marginalized from the society and their participation in the main stream society is very minimal. They work under a landlord who would offer only food and not money. They would be given low wages for their work which was very less to run their family.

"In my childhood time I would go for work as a rice mill operator with my cousin which was owned by the higher caste person called "Reddiar". I had to work hard but paid less amount of money and during night time I would go for hunting rabbits and rats with my cousin to generate income".- Mr. Padavettan, Irula Tribe

"The food, a landlord gave to me was indigestible. The rice seemed bigger and could not swallow it so easily and sometimes I would vomit after having that. I am always being paid very less money for my work". –

Ms. Lakshmi, Irula Tribe

"I am really disappointed with my landlord for paying less assistance for my work. I do all that I can which is to irrigate the farm, cultivating and harvesting the paddy. Sometimes I feel like stop working under a landlord but this is my fate". – Mr. Ravi, Irula Tribe

They have different community life styles from people of other castes. They would not interact with other community members unnecessarily. In the community they would never help or interact with each other even at their leisure time. They usually spend their time with the family members after the work or leisure time. The traditional marriage system of Irula community is rather unique because they do not have any dowry system and no domination between men and women. After marriage, the new couples would start living separately from their parents, which is according to their cultural and community way of living.

"After my marriage, I started living separately with my wife in another place. This is the kind of culture we have because we do not have dowry system or any piece of land. We could not afford to live in a joint family due to economic problems". – Mr. Ravi, Irula Tribe

The people are living in small places that are not their own legal property. The government provided them some land next to lake to build cottages. In each cottage about five to eight people live and find very difficult to adjust during winter and springtime. The personal needs such as privacy and peace are not there for them. Irula tribes have their own community union to negotiate and make a decision for the betterment of the community. The Irula tribe union lays emphasis on various community issues like human rights violation, some cases of domestic violence etc.

The community union, with the help of the government, needs to be strengthened by looking into all dimensions of Irula's life and collaborate with other organizations or agencies to avoid being socially excluded.

CHAPTER V
ENGLISH POETS
(II. THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION)

Christopher Caudwell

...Continued from previous issue

I

The bourgeois illusion now passes to another stage, that of the Industrial Revolution, the “explosive” stage of capitalism. Now the growth of capitalism transforms all idyllic patriarchal relations – including that of the poet to the class whose aspirations he voices – into “callous” cash-nexus.

Of course this does not make the poet regard himself as a shopkeeper and his poems as cheeses. To suppose this is to overlook the compensatory and dynamic nature of the connection between illusion and reality. In fact it has the opposite effect. It has the effect of making the poet increasingly regard himself as a man removed from society, as an individualist realising only the instincts of his heart and not responsible to society’s demands – whether expressed in the duties of a citizen, a fearer of God or a faithful servant of Mammon. At the same time his poems come increasingly to seem worthy ends-in-themselves.

This is the final explosive movement of the bourgeois contradiction. The bourgeois illusion has already swayed from antithesis to antithesis, but as a result of this last final movement it can only pass, like a whirling piece of metal thrown off by an exploding flywheel, out of the orbit of the bourgeois categories of thought altogether.

As a result of the compromise of the eighteenth century, beneath the network of safeguards and protections which was characteristic of the era of manufacture, bourgeois economy developed to the stage where by the use of the machine, the steam-engine and the power-loom it acquired an enormous power of self-expansion. At the same time the “factory” broke away from the farm of which it was the handicraft adjunct and challenged it as a mightier and opposed force.

On the one hand organised labour inside the factory progressively increased, on the other hand the individual anarchy of the external market also increased. On the one hand there

was an increasingly public form of production, on the other hand an increasingly private form of appropriation. At the one pole was an increasingly landless and toolless proletariat, at the other an increasingly wealthy bourgeoisie. This self-contradiction in capitalist economy provided the terrific momentum of the Industrial Revolution.

The bourgeoisie, who had found its own revolutionary-puritan ideals of liberty “extreme,” and returned to the compromise of mercantilist good taste that seemed eternal reason, now again found its heart had been right, and reason wrong.

This revealed itself first of all as a cleavage between the former landed-aristocracy and the industrial bourgeoisie, expressing the rise of the factory to predominance over the farm. The landed aristocracy and the restrictions it demanded for its growth, was now confronted by industrial capital and its demands. Capital had found an inexhaustible self-expansive power in machinery and outside sources of raw material. So far from any of the earlier forms being of value to it, they were so many restraints. The cost of labour-power could safely be left to fall to its real value, for the machine by its competition creates the proletariat it requires to serve it. The real value of labour-power in turn depends on the real value of wheat, which is less in the colonies and America than in England because there it embodies less socially-necessary labour. The Corn Laws, which safeguard the agricultural capitalist, therefore hamper the industrialist. Their interests – reconciled during the period of wage-labour shortage – are now opposed. All the forms and restraints that oppose this free expansion of the industrial bourgeoisie must be shattered. To accomplish this shattering, the bourgeoisie called to its standard all other classes, precisely as in the time of the Puritan Revolution. It claimed to speak for the people as against the oppressors. It demanded Reform and the Repeal of the Corn Laws. It attacked the Church, either as Puritan (Methodist) or as open sceptic. It attacked all laws as restrictive of equality. It advanced the conception of the naturally good man, born free but everywhere in chains. Such revolts against

existing systems of laws, canons, forms and traditions always appear as a revolt of the heart against reason, a revolt of feeling and the sentiments against sterile formalism and the tyranny of the past. Marlowe, Shelley, Lawrence and Dali have a certain parallelism here; each expresses this revolt in a manner appropriate to the period.

We cannot understand this final movement of poetry unless we understand that at every step the bourgeois is revolutionary in that he is revolutionising his own basis. But he revolutionises it only to make it consistently more bourgeois. In the same way each important bourgeois poet is revolutionary, but he expresses the very movement which brings more violently into the open the contradiction against which his revolutionary poetry is a protest. They are "mirror revolutionaries." They attempt to reach an object in a mirror, only to move farther away from the real object. And what can that object be but the common object of man as producer and as poet – freedom? The poignancy of their tragedy and pessimism derives its bite from this perpetual recession of the desired object as they advance to grasp it. "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" has them all in thrall. They wake up on the cold hillside.

II

Blake, Byron, Keats, Wordsworth and Shelley express this ideological revolution, each in their different ways, as a Romantic Revolution.

Byron is an aristocrat – but he is one who is conscious of the break-up of his class as a force, and the necessity to go over to the bourgeoisie. Hence his mixture of cynicism and romanticism.

These deserters are in moments of revolution always useful and always dangerous allies. Too often their desertion of their class and their attachment to another, is not so much a "comprehension of the historical movement as a whole" as a revolt against the cramping circumstances imposed on them by their own class's dissolution, and in a mood of egoistic anarchy they seize upon the aspirations of the other class as a weapon in their private battle. They are always individualistic, romantic figures with a strong element of the poseur. They will the destruction of their own class but not the rise of the other, and this rise, when it becomes evident and demands that they change their merely destructive enmity to the dying class to a constructive loyalty to the new, may, in act if not in word, throw them back into the arms of the enemy. They become counter-revolutionaries.

Danton and Trotsky are examples of this type. Byron's death at Missolonghi occurred before any such complete development, but it is significant that he was prepared to fight for liberty in Greece rather than England. In him the revolt of the heart against the reason appears as the revolt of the hero against circumstances, against morals, against all "pettiness" and convention. This Byronism is very symptomatic, and it is also symptomatic that in Byron it goes with a complete selfishness and carelessness for the sensibilities of others. Milton's Satan has taken on a new guise, one far less noble, petulant even.

Byron is most successful as a mocker – as a Don Juan. On the one hand to be cynical, to mock at the farce of human existence, on the other hand to be sentimental, and complain of the way in which the existing society has tortured one's magnificent capabilities – that is the essence of Byronism. It represents the demoralisation in the ranks of the aristocracy as much as a rebellion against the aristocracy. These men are therefore always full of death-thoughts: the death-thoughts of Fascism fighting in the last ditch, the death-thoughts of Jacobites; the glorification of a heroic death justifying a more dubious life. The same secret death-wishes are shown by these aristocrats if they turn revolutionary, performing deeds of outstanding individual heroism – sometimes unnecessary, sometimes useful, but always romantic and single-handed. They cannot rise beyond the conception of the desperate hero of revolution.

Shelley, however, expresses a far more genuinely dynamic force. He speaks for the bourgeoisie who, at this stage of history, feel themselves the dynamic force of society and therefore voice demands not merely for themselves but for the whole of suffering humanity. It seems to them that if only they could realise themselves, that is, bring into being the conditions necessary for their own freedom, this would of itself ensure the freedom of all. Shelley believes that he speaks for all men, for all sufferers, calls them all to a brighter future. The bourgeois trammelled by the restraints of the era of mercantilism is Prometheus, bringer of fire, fit symbol of the machine-wielding capitalist. Free him and the world is free. A Godwinist, Shelley believed that man is naturally good – institutions debase him. Shelley is the most revolutionary of the bourgeois poets of this era because Prometheus Unbound is not an excursion into the past, but a revolutionary programme for the present. It tallies with Shelley's

own intimate participation, in the bourgeois-democratic revolutionary movement of his day.

Although Shelley is an atheist, he is not a materialist. He is an idealist. His vocabulary is, for the first time, consciously idealist – that is, full of words like “brightness,” “truth,” “beauty,” “soul,” “aether,” “wings,” “fainting,” “panting,” which stir a whole world of indistinct emotions. Such complexes, because of their numerous emotional associations, appear to make the word indicate one distinct concrete entity, although in fact no such entity exists, but each word denotes a variety of different concepts.

This idealism is a reflection of the revolutionary bourgeois belief that, once the existing social relations that hamper a human being are shattered, the “natural man will be realised” – his feelings, his emotions, his aspirations, will all be immediately bodied forth as material realities. Shelley does not see that these shattered social relations can only give place to the social relations of the class strong enough to shatter them and that in any case these feelings, aspirations and emotions are the product of the social relations in which he exists and that to realise them a social act is necessary, which in turn has its effect upon a man’s feelings, aspirations and emotions.

The bourgeois illusion is, in the sphere of poetry, a revolt. In Wordsworth the revolt takes the form of a return to the natural man, just as it does in Shelley. Wordsworth, like Shelley profoundly influenced by French Rousseauism, seeks freedom, beauty – all that is not now in man because of his social relations – in “Nature.” The French Revolution now intervenes. The bourgeois demand for freedom has now a regressive tinge. It no longer looks forward to freedom by revolt but by return to the natural man.

Wordsworth’s “Nature” is of course a Nature freed of wild beasts and danger by aeons of human work, a Nature in which the poet, enjoying a comfortable income, lives on the products of industrialism even while he enjoys the natural scene “unspoilt” by industrialism. The very division of industrial capitalism from agricultural capitalism has now separated the country from the town. The division of labour involved in industrialism has made it possible for sufficient surplus produce to exist to maintain a poet in austere idleness in Cumberland. But to see the relation between the two, to see that the culture, gift of language and leisure which

distinguish a Nature poet from a dumb sub-human are the product of economic activity – to see this would be to pierce the bourgeois illusion and expose the artificiality of “Nature” poetry. Such poetry can only arise at a time when man by industrialism has mastered Nature – but not himself.

Wordsworth therefore is a pessimist. Unlike Shelley, he revolts regressively – but still in a bourgeois way – by demanding freedom from social relations, the specific social relations of industrialism, while still retaining the products, the freedom, which these relations alone make possible.

With this goes a theory that “natural,” i.e. conversational language is better, and therefore more poetic than “artificial,” i.e. literary language. He does not see that both are equally artificial – i.e. directed to a social end – and equally natural, i.e. products of man’s struggle with Nature. They merely represent different spheres and stages of that struggle and are good or bad not in themselves, but in relation to this struggle. Under the spell of this theory some of Wordsworth’s worst poetry is written.

Wordsworth’s form of the bourgeois illusion has some kinship with Milton’s. Both exalt the natural man, one in the form of Puritan “Spirit,” the other in the more sophisticated form of pantheistic “Nature.” One appeals to the primal Adam as proof of man’s natural innocence, the other to the primal child. In the one case original sin, in the other social relations, account for the fall from grace. Both therefore are at their best when consciously noble and elevated. Milton, reacting against primitive accumulation and its deification of naive princely desire and will, does not, however – as Wordsworth does – glorify the wild element in man, the natural primitive. Hence he is saved from a technical theory that conduces to “sinking” in poetry.

Keats is the first great poet to feel the strain of the poet’s position in this stage of the bourgeois illusion, as producer for the free market. Wordsworth has a small income; Shelley, although always in want, belongs to a rich family and his want is due simply to carelessness, generosity and the impracticability which is often the reaction of certain temperaments to a wealthy home. But Keats comes of a small bourgeois family and is always pestered by money problems. The sale of his poems is an important consideration to him.

For Keats therefore freedom does not lie, like Wordsworth, in a return to Nature; his returns

to Nature were always accompanied by the uncomfortable worry, where was the money coming from? It could not lie, as with Shelley, in a release from the social relations of this world, for mere formal liberty would still leave the individual with the problem of earning a living. Keats' greater knowledge of bourgeois reality therefore led him to a position which was to set the keynote for future bourgeois poetry: "revolution" as a flight from reality. Keats is the banner bearer of the Romantic Revival. The poet now escapes upon the "viewless wings of poesy" to a world of romance, beauty and sensuous life separate from the poor, harsh, real world of everyday life, which it sweetens and by its own loveliness silently condemns.

This world is the shadowy enchanted world built by Lamia for her lover or by the Moon for Endymion. It is the golden gated upper world of Hyperion, the word-painted lands of the nightingale, of the Grecian urn, of Baiae's isle. This other world is defiantly counterposed to the real world.

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty" – that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

And always it is threatened by stern reality in the shape of sages, rival powers or the drab forces of everyday. Isabella's world of love is shattered by the two money-grubbing brothers. Even the wild loveliness of *The Eve of St. Agnes* is a mere interlude between storm and storm, a coloured dream snatched from the heart of cold and darkness – the last stanzas proclaim the triumph of decay. "*La Belle Dame Sans Merci*" gives her knight only a brief delight before he wakes. The flowering basil sprouts from the rotting head of Isabella's lover, and is watered with her tears.

The fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf! ...
Was it a vision or a waking dream?
Fled is that music – do I wake or sleep?

Like Cortez, Keats gazes entranced at the New World of poetry, Chapman's realms of gold, summoned into being to redress the balance of the old, but however much voyaged in, it is still only a world of fancy.

A new vocabulary emerges with Keats, the dominating vocabulary of future poetry. Not Wordsworth's – because the appeal is not to the unspoilt simplicity of the country. Not Shelley's – because the appeal is not to the "ideas" that float on the surface of real material life and can be skimmed off like froth. The country is a part of

the real material world, and the froth of these metaphysical worlds is too unsubstantial and therefore is always a reminder of the real world which generated it. A world must be constructed which is more real precisely because it is more unreal and has sufficient inner stiffness to confront the real world with the self-confidence of a successful conjuring trick.

Instead of taking, like Wordsworth and Shelley, what is regarded as the most natural, spiritual or beautiful part of the real world, a new world is built up out of words, as by a mosaic artist, and these words therefore must have solidity and reality. The Keatsian vocabulary is full of words with a hard material texture, like tesserae, but it is an "artificial" texture – all crimson, scented, archaic, stiff, jewelled and anti-contemporary. It is as vivid as missal painting. Increasingly this world is set in the world of feudalism, but it is not a feudal world. It is a bourgeois world – the world of the Gothic cathedrals and all the growing life and vigour of the bourgeois class under late feudalism. Here too poetic revolution has a strong regressive character, just as it had with Wordsworth, but had not with the most genuinely revolutionary poet, Shelley.

The bourgeois, with each fresh demand he makes for individualism, free competition, absence of social relations and more equality, only brings to birth greater organisation, more complex social relations, higher degrees of trustification and combination, more inequality. Yet each of these contradictory movements revolutionises his basis and creates new productive forces. In the same way the bourgeois revolution, expressed in the poetry of Shelley, Wordsworth and Keats, although it is contradictory in its movement, yet brings into being vast new technical resources for poetry and revolutionises the whole apparatus of the art.

The basic movement is in many ways parallel to the movement of primitive accumulation which gave rise to Elizabethan poetry. Hence there was at this era among poets a revival of interest in Shakespeare and the Elizabethans. The insurgent outburst of the genetic individuality which is expressed in Elizabethan poetry had a collective guise, because it was focused on that collective figure, the prince. In romantic poetry it has a more artificial air as an expression of the sentiments and the emotions of the individual figure, the "independent" bourgeois. Poetry has separated itself from the story, the heart from the

intellect, the individual from society; all is more artificial, differentiated and complex.

The poet now begins to show the marks of commodity-production. We shall analyse this still further when, as in a later date, it sets the whole key for poetry. At present the most important sign is Keats' statement, that he could write for ever, burning his poems afterwards. The poem has become already an end in itself.

But it is more important to note the air of tragedy that from now on looms over all bourgeois poetry that is worth the adjective "great." Poetry has become pessimistic and self-lacerating. Byron, Keats and Shelley die young. And though it is usual to regret that they died with their best works unwritten, the examples of Wordsworth, Swinburne and Tennyson make fairly clear that this is not the case, that the personal tragedy of their deaths, which in the case of Shelley and Byron at least seemed sought, prevented the tragedy of the bourgeois illusion working itself out impersonally in their poetry. For the contradiction which secures the movement of capitalism was now unfolding so rapidly that it exposed itself in the lifetime of a poet and always in the same way. The ardent hopes, the aspirations, the faiths of the poet's youth melted or else were repeated in the face of a changed reality with a stiffness and sterility that betrayed the lack of conviction and made them a mocking caricature of their youthful sincerity. True, all men grow old and lose their youthful hopes – but not in this way. A middle-aged Sophocles can speak with searching maturity of the tragedy of his life, and at eighty he writes a drama that reflects the open-eyed serenity of wisdom's child grown aged. But mature bourgeois poets are not capable of tragedy or resignation, only of a dull repetition of the faiths of youth – or silence. The movement of history betrays the contradiction for what it is, and yet forces the bourgeois to cling to it. From that moment the lie has entered his soul, and by shutting his eyes to the consciousness of necessity, he has delivered his soul to slavery.

In the French Revolution the bourgeoisie, in the name of liberty, equality and fraternity, revolted against obsolete social relations. They claimed, like Shelley, to speak in the name of all mankind; but then arose, at first indistinctly, later with continually increasing clarity, the claim of the proletariat also demanding liberty, equality and fraternity. But to grant these to the proletariat means the abolition of the very conditions which secure the existence of the bourgeois class and the exploitation of the proletariat. Therefore the

movement for freedom, which at first speaks largely in the voice of mankind, is always halted at a stage where the bourgeoisie must betray its ideal structure expressed in poetry, forget that it claimed to speak for humanity, and crush the class whose like demands are irreconcilable with its own existence. Once robbed of its mass support, the revolting bourgeoisie can always be beaten back a stage by the forces of reaction. True, these forces have learned "a sharp lesson" and do not proceed too far against the bourgeoisie who have shown their power. Both ally themselves against the proletariat. Ensues an equilibrium when the bourgeoisie have betrayed their talk of freedom, and compromised their ideal structure, only themselves to have lost part of the ideal fruit of their struggle to the more reactionary forces – feudal forces, if the struggle is against feudalism, landowning and big financial forces, if the struggle is between agricultural and industrial capitalism.

Such a movement was that from Robespierre to the Directory and the anti-Jacobin movement which as a result of the French Revolution swept Europe everywhere. The whole of the nineteenth century is a record of the same betrayal, which in the life of the poets expresses itself as a betrayal of youthful idealism. 1830, 1848 and, finally, 1871 are the dates which make all bourgeois poets now tread the path of Wordsworth, whose revolutionary fire, as the result of the proletarian content of the final stage of the French Revolution, was suddenly chilled and gave place to common sense, respectability and piety.

It was Keats who wrote:

"None can usurp this height," the shade returned,

"Save those to whom the misery of the world
Is misery and will not let them rest."

The doom of bourgeois poets in this epoch is precisely that the misery of the world, including their own special misery, will not let them rest, and yet the temper of the time forces them to support the class which causes it. The proletarian revolution has not yet advanced to a stage where "some bourgeois ideologists, comprehending the historical movement as a whole," can ally themselves with it and really speak for suffering humanity and for a class which is the majority now and the whole world of men tomorrow. They speak only for a class that is creating the world of tomorrow willy-nilly, and at each step draws back and betrays its instinctive aspirations because of its conscious knowledge that this world of tomorrow it is creating, cannot include itself.

to be continued...

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