

A Statement of Aims

SHAKTI is a new monthly journal which deals with the contemporary intellectual challenges that face modern Indians.

For a country like India, the relationship between traditional ideas and the empirical phenomena of today's world of rapid change is fourfold. **Shakti** aims to develop this relationship creatively.

FIRST, creative achievement requires identification with the ultimate source of emotional energy of our country. This is the unique experience of our own people crystallised in our self-determined ideals. Studies produced by visiting scholars are often sadly out of focus. These studies must be re-examined by a country's own scholars before they can yield operationally valid ideas. **Shakti** seeks above all an understanding of Indian politics with reference to the state of our own social and political doctrines.

SECOND, to effectively fight dogmatic opinions and to create conditions for reviving "frontier" thinking, **Shakti** tries to examine the entire range of our traditional social culture in order to discover organising principles which will be in sympathy with

our new needs. We reject reckless iconoclastic behaviour which has in the past marred inter-cultural contact.

THIRD, the traditional Indian Mind was evolved in an atmosphere which did not fear death and mass destruction in which today's humanity finds itself caught. The traditional points of view if sensibly interpreted can lead the way to truly modern ideas. **Shakti** believes that Indian intellectuals can avoid the frenzy and violence which are the product of narrow and selfish nationalism alien to our tradition. Indian thought should make an effort to cope with problems presented by today's technology through developing a form of communication which restores fearlessness.

FINALLY, the Indian philosophical and political tradition is so clearly committed to maintain human rights and freedom that it can play an important role, by way of example, to communities which have experimented with revolutionary ideologies and are now facing ideological exhaustion and confusion. This has resulted from developments which were needlessly destructive of individual rights.

Our Programme for Forthcoming Issues

SHAKTI's editorial direction is limited to encouraging our writers to ask fully and freely the right questions. We believe that Indian intellectuals need to be relieved of the burden of absolescent questions based upon issues which are devoid of significance. **Shakti** uses the English language but the climate of its journalism will always be that which exists under the clear blue sky of our

own land. We endeavour to provide serious readers with authoritative articles on subjects in fields like : politics, economics, philosophy, art, culture, foreign policy and strategic studies.

Shakti aims at excellence rather than at building up a circulation which extends to all and sundry.



CONTROLLING THE BUREAUCRACY: *L. M. Singhvi*

INDIA AND THE SINO-PAKISTAN AXIS: *M. K. Chopra*

FROM NON-ALIGNMENT TO NON-
APPEASEMENT: *Vishnugupta*

LIBERATION—A DRAMATIC FANCY: *tr. P. Mahadevan*

WORDS TO THE LISTENING AIR *T. K. Doraiswamy*

THE DISTRICT GAZETTEERS OF
INDIA: *P. C. Roy Choudhury*

EXISTENTIALISM AND THE PHILOSOPHY
OF CULTURE: *Cedemil Veljacic*

and

BOOK REVIEW: *Ambika*

SHAKTI

should make the District Gazetteers unnecessary or an expensive project cannot hold ground. As a matter of fact, the very mass of Government publications and the Publicity Literature by every State Government make out the necessity of re-writing the District Gazetteers all the more insistent. Lord Curzon's observations that few have time to refer to these original references, have a hundred-fold more significance now.

In the task of the re-writing of the District Gazetteers, the valuable data in the shape of memoirs written by administrators, travellers, missionaries, etc., will form valuable source materials. Many of these books written in the course of the last one century have already become extremely scarce.

Archaeological, geological, historical researches etc., will have to be looked into. Another valuable source will be the old English Correspondence Volumes kept in the District Archives and the various Consultations and Discussions, original letters and documents maintained in the National Archives at New Delhi, etc. There are also valuable data scattered in many periodicals and reviews both in English and in the vernaculars. All such

materials should be fully utilised after a proper appraisal, personal investigations and contacts with other knowledgeable persons and the District Gazetteers should be so written that they should not be merely an administrator's guide book. It should be much more than that and should give all that is worth knowing regarding the district to form an authoritative reference book for the administrator, the traveller who has more than a fleeting interest in the country he sees, the social workers, the public man and the student who wants to go in for further research. A new alignment of the collective facts will be necessary to suit the requirements of the Welfare State. It has to be remembered that these books will remain authoritative for at least the next 3 or 4 decades. Investigations at the countryside have also to be simultaneously carried out. The various development projects and the Community Development Projects need an appraisal and the present series of the District Gazetteers have an important section—the role of the district in the country so far as national policies are concerned. The re-written District Gazetteers should give the past, the present and the future of the district.

MAHARASTRA pioneered the work of re-writing the District Gazetteers in 1949 followed by Madras and Bihar in 1952. The Ministry of Education took up the idea in 1955 and a common pattern was evolved to be followed by the different States. The States opted to work within the pattern as far as possible and the Centre stipulated to give a subvention for the work to the States. The record of progress of the re-writing of the District Gazetteers has been very uneven since. Bihar leads in the work and has already published twelve District Gazetteers and has completed three more Gazetteers which are in the Press. As Bihar has only 17 districts, the work is almost complete, Maharashtra, Madras and Kerala have published four District Gazetteers so far. Uttar Pradesh has published only two while Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh have published one Gazetteer each. The States of Andhra, Assam, Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Mysore, Punjab etc., have not yet published a single Gazetteer. The Centre is committed to publish four Central Volumes in place of the old Imperial Gazetteers. The first volume is likely to be published in 1966.

THE CHANGING PERSPECTIVE FROM ABROAD— A Yugoslav View

SHAKTI deals primarily with contemporary intellectual challenges that face modern Indians and accordingly contributions to SHAKTI are chiefly from Indians living at home or abroad. Our editorial view is, however, neither inward looking nor chauvinistic. In the "Changing Perspective from Abroad", we shall from time to time present contributions by scholars from other countries whose approach to inter-cultural contact permits modes of co-ordination between the so-called modern (really western) thought and traditional and modern thought in India. This article provides some remarkable insights to help our understanding of existentialism in the context of the philosophy of culture. The task of interpreting and evaluating the subject matter is by no means exhausted, but the author shows that with the help of inter-cultural comparisons many theoretical weaknesses can be avoided.

Existentialism and the Philosophy of Culture

Cedemil Veljacic

EXISTENTIALISM is a philosophy of culture. In its actual stage it constitutes the essential part thereof. However it does not comprise the entire problem of a possible and explicit philosophy of culture, one adequate to the requirements of our time.

The "anthropological", "humanist", or "personalist" aspect is essentially the constitutive part of any philosophy of culture, its "perennial scope" (Jaspers), or "sanatana dharma" (Auro-

bindo) the integrating principle of cultural values. Yet, existentialist "subjectivism" often tends to affirm itself in conflict with the very formulation of problems which cannot be totally rejected or ignored by any integral philosophy of culture for being of non-humanistic origin. Such are very often problems formulated or created by science.

As long as the conflict arises from a radical critique of the modern "objectified"

civilization (as in the case of Jaspers—"Man in the Modern Age"—and in several different existentialist trends), it often may confirm our belief that even the formulation of problems in existentialism is not possible prior to, or abstracting from, an analysis of basic facts within their cultural backgrounds which always have to be "made transparent" and to remain so. An excellent example can be found in Berdyaev's thesis on the "social character of knowledge" as opposed to the "criterion of truth" and "existential experience"¹.

Yet, this does not exhaust the contents of the antinomy



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1. "The Beginning and the End", Harper Torchbooks, 1957.

of culture in existentialist philosophies. To-day the danger of human alienation and the direct responsibility of science and of the scientist positivism in philosophy has brought the existential consciousness of the crisis to a state where its "passionate" commitment results in a complex of nihilistic resentments against some structural parts of culture itself, and not only of the unsatisfactory and threatening achievements of civilization unfortunately engineered thereupon. As man has been "abandoned by Gods", so, it seems, science has to be abandoned by man, and a part at least of the rational structure of the human being has to be sacrificed for the sake of personal integrity, which is believed to be attainable only in the irrational sphere of human *existence* (the term "consciousness" being often purposely avoided in such contexts, since Heidegger's

precedent in "Being and Time").

There prevails the consciousness that man's autonomy and freedom is more valuable than any (whatsoever) cultural value of his creation. The divorce of pure inwardness as absolute and integral creative essence from any accidental and partial "projection" or "congealment" in any sphere of objectified existence is considered as the ultimate act of "inner revolution". It is often interpreted in terms of cultural nihilism. The absolute essence of truth which is the "concrete, individual universal" (Berdyayev), truth which "cannot be repeated" (Krishnamurti), is not only irrational but becomes anti-rational in its reluctance to be translated in terms of knowledge, within a process of time, limited to the resources of our egocentric memory¹. This is the

interpretation of existentialist integralism in terms of absolute essentiality of the truth.

A peculiar nihilistic attitude seems to become acute in the sphere of education. It could be compared with a Rousseauism without the corresponding positive notion of Nature. The statement that being a follower of any leader or teacher (*guru*) has become immoral, that "the very idea of leading somebody is anti-spiritual" (Krishnamurti) has undoubtedly and not without good historical reasons become a fact and a truism for the post-war generation, particularly in Europe. The justification of the "inner revolution" of man against the authority of "things and ideas", the 'uprooting of all values', has to be taken into account as undeniable fact.

Starting from analogous considerations, one of the

1. The concept, in its social function, serves mainly "as a limitation and protection against the 'creative newness which overthrows objective being'" (Berdyayev, *o.c.*, pp. 52, 77 ff. 157, 167 ff.).

Most striking and extremist formulations of theses discussed in this paper can be found in Krishnamurti's recent books. The following summary may be useful for the orientation of readers who are less familiar with other versions referred to throughout this paper:

Thought: "The fundamental reaction of thinking is a process of isolation." "Thought is the result of environment, of social and religious influences which is all part of time. Now, can thought be free of time?"

"One of the fundamental causes of the disintegration of society is limitation, and one of the disintegration factors is the leader, whose very essence is imitation."

Self: "Most of our thoughts spring from the self-protective instinct."

"The self is self-enclosing." "To be integrally intelligent means to be without the self."

Time: "It is only when you have complete cessation of the time process, of the activity of self, that there is a revolution, a transformation, the coming into being of the new." "Time is not the way of creation".

Memory: "That which is cumulative, accumulated is memory, and through memory you can never find truth, for memory is of time." "How can you discover the new if you have the burden of the old?" Negative thinking is the highest form of understanding." "To understand that which is crumbling, we must examine it negatively."

Truth: "Reality, truth is not to be recognized. For truth to come, belief, knowledge, experiencing, the pursuit of virtue—all this must go."

"Truth is being from moment to moment."

Culture: "The state of creative emptiness is not a thing to be cultivated."—"Life being relationship to the whole, does the understanding of that relationship demand specialization? Obviously not." (From "The First and Last Freedom", London 1961, pp. 116, 241, 40, 38, 76, 79, 129, 286-7, 39, 40, 82, 287, 142, 94)

most genuinely religious existentialist thinkers. K. Jaspers, has come much earlier to the conclusion that religion, having been "objectified" in Churches has irreparably lost its moral ground and ideal meaning for our civilization. In his view, only philosophy can perform, in the actual situation, the function treacherously abandoned by religion—and philosophy should not have any other purpose than that¹. Nietzsche is, therefore, as important to him for a moral regeneration as Kierkegaard. Sartre's deep views on the importance and undeniable authenticity of religious problems, resulting from a direct influence of Dostoevsky², are not much different, (from another viewpoint) as far as essential consequences are considered.

In order to understand the state of facts concerning the problem of education, we should first consider the question: In what sense is existentialism supposed to be the philosophy of a generation?—After the second world war, much more than already after the first one, existentialism is supposed to satisfy not only the philosophical and psychological needs but also the artistic aspirations of a new generation whose cultu-

ral heritage has been reduced very often to bankruptcy and empty autocratic imperatives of their "heroic" fathers. It appeals to one (or two) generations fed up with strategic slogans of doubtful moral values that the old generation wants to impose on the coming one. This new generation, in Europe at least, purposely wants to doubt the social morality of their fathers in a more radical way than was the case in earlier, "normal" changes of generations. The reputation of the existing political philosophies has therefore been still more degraded, in the eyes of the existentialist youth, than the subservience of "logical positivism" to the science of nature. The crisis of that generation is due to this legitimate distrust. We must not deny their capability of very serious seeking for more honest ways in life.

Existentialism is the expression of an interior crisis in which each individual mind is primarily driven to identify itself with the question of existential importance for its own being—a question rather than a solution, this latter being still awfully lacking. Therefore Heidegger felt it necessary to formulate at the beginning the problem of the question as more urgent than

any metaphysical answer to a question. His standpoint, in "What is Metaphysics?", is expressed almost in the same terms as the requirement to be fulfilled by a student of Zen Buddhism before he can be admitted by a teacher. He who has not identified himself with his existential question, who *is* not, or at least has not *become a question*, who is not living in this sense a deep interior crisis, he is not fit to *ask* any philosophical question.—Existentialist philosophy in Europe is still a negative moral background consisting in deep and sincere questioning with satisfying solutions. In this sense I dare anticipate that the existentialist standpoint in its basic and most serious structure can be considered as satisfying, apart from any academic implications.

Actually, the problem of education should be considered only under these premises, from the view-point of a philosophy of culture.

THE most important circumstance which usually is taken into account is that the war generation and the immediately following one have lacked a normal and proportioned school and family education. This should not

1. "It is questionable whether faith is possible without religion. Philosophy originates in this question. The significance of philosophising to-day is our attempt to confirm ourselves in a faith that arises independently of revelation." (O.c. 142)

2. Cfr. "Existentialism and Humanism", comment on Dostoevsky's words: "If God didn't exist, everything would be possible."

be understood necessarily in the sense that the new generation has been demoralized due to this fact, or that it had to remain uneducated. Social welfare, state, social differences and individual capacities have provided most often and in various ways means of compensation. The most puzzling consequence consists, however, in the fact that the generation whose early education has been neglected for the benefit of "farther ideals" shows now an embarrassing lack of sense and respect for standard common-sense "truisms". They are not resisting, not doubting them. This fact can be considered as negative or even disastrous only by a conservative older generation of those who in this century have fought their "heroic wars" and have been somehow gratified for it. The attempt of educational readjustment has not to face here, as in normal changes of generations, a certain resistance but rather a sheer nihilism which is not always equally conscious and visible. Various characters react in various ways. Many do join political parties for easier living, many are attracted by other kinds of adventure in a technically prosperous, or technically developing state, but hardly anybody can believe, or even consider the importance of any typical tenets of juvenile ideals.

Existentialist theories of nothingness have always been primarily moral theories. The sphere of their origin is *conscience*¹. Therefore, the disbelief in the "matter" of the materialists is also a moral disbelief in truisms which have become non sensical since the social origin of the "objective" knowledge has been revealed—and distrusted. (See Sartre's "Nausea" for the existentialist meaning of physical matter.)—And resistance against nonsense is usually considered not to be worthwhile.

Such is the apathy of the new generation; the reluctance to take over the burden. No part of it is considered good enough to be transformed, rebuilt or remade.

SHOULD then, the philosophy of man still be considered to be at the same time a philosophy of culture? If philosophy of culture has to deal with human heritage transmitted in time and throughout times, can it then, in spite of being purely humanistically minded, coexist with the existentialist absolutism expressed in the principle of subjectivity? Under such conditions should philosophy of culture survive at all, or does culture itself become not only a non-essential but a completely useless burden and hamper to the purely in-

ward and unique existential experience.

In these limits the question is reduced, to begin with, only to the possibility of retaining for the philosophy of culture a secondary and subservient place as *ancilla ontologiae*, or may be as an inadequate means of "expression"².

Before proceeding further to determine the elements of the relation between existential "inwardness" and cultural "outwardness", we should ask, is there not a misunderstanding about the meaning of culture in the two approaches. In the negative approach to the problem the accent is laid on the need "to disencumber the dross" of the reflective and retrospective analysis performed by the disintegrating intellect through the refractive medium of time and memory. The discursive process is considered since Bergson as a secondary distortion of the integral act of creativity. The new is new because it transcends "time and memory" to which discursive knowledge is bound.—On the other side, the positive approach still insists on the proper place for the rational function and on the natural impossibility to exclude its critical interference. This is so in spite of the historically justified resentment against its exorbitant claims

and its intrinsic inhilating power.

The first concession to the cultural function of the analytical reason is implicitly contained in the first requirement, pointed out at the beginning of this paper, for a pre-existing cultural background whereupon the formulation of man's existential problem can be traced. The awareness of nothingness cannot arise prior to the disintegrating process of the analytic reason. This is the process of discursive thought. However, in existentialist philosophy, reason is not considered primarily under its aspect of discursive continuity, but rather from the side of its intermittent dialectical effects. Thus the scope of reasoning transcends the limits of its immanent antinomies and creates the effects of existential absurds. It is evident that the essential nature of these absurds is not a transcendental-logical one. (Remember Kierkegaard's "credo quia absurdum"). They are historically conditioned and their scope can therefore be dialectically increased or decreased. Their subjective amplitude varies with their sus-

ceptibility to the effects of historically objectified dramatization. That is also the reason why Sartre's ontology of "situations" reminds us of the Indian theory of *lila*, though it tends rather towards pantheism. To a Rousseauism without Nature corresponds a *lila* without a playing God.

Kierkegaard finds his existential absurd expressed adequately enough in Socrates.¹ But, its historical dramatization was brought to its climax only in Christ. Does such increasing of dramatic tension serve ultimately to the purpose of strengthening the dialectical argument from its essential side, or does it rather diminish its absolute value by transferring the accent from man's purest inward necessity to some outward historical accidentality?

The eschatological dogmatism of a religion becomes, with the growth of that religion in time and space, prejudicial also for the fundamental formulation of problems specific to the philosophy of a culture, beyond any apparent dialectical tension between divergent attem-

pts to solve them. Thus the intrinsically human core of a problem becomes involved in and obfuscated by indirect and accidental circumstances. In a different cultural ambience the same problem may find a better fundamental formulation. Or, will it then still be the same problem? Existentialist restriction of the scope of perennial philosophy (*sanatana dharma*) to purely human inwardness presupposes a positive answer. Does not the origin of the problem perennially consist in the unsatisfactoriness of life (*dukkha*) in the Buddhist formulation reflected in a permanent anguish from the "void" (Nagarjunas *sunya*) and, still more primordially, from nihilation and of the Being's-aware-self Buddha's *nevasannasaññā* and *ākincaññāyatana* in the reductive process of *arūpa-jhāna*? Can we still maintain that the dialectical "absurd" is due only to the defective nature of the critical reason and that discursive rationality is of no avail in dealing with essential problems of philosophy; that Kierkegaard's version of the "credo quia absurdum" is the only possible solution and not just a historically conditioned but essentially

1. "In the principle that subjectivity, inwardness, is the truth, there is comprehended the Socratic wisdom, whose everlasting merit it was to have become aware of the essential significance of existence. For this reason Socrates was in truth by virtue of his ignorance. The expression for the objective repulsion constitutes the tension and the measure of the corresponding inwardness. So far the Socratic principle. The eternal and essential truth, the truth which has an essential relationship to an existing individual because it pertains essentially to existence) all other knowledge being from the Socratic point of view accidental, its scope and degree a matter of indifference) is a paradox." ("Concluding unscientific Postscript.")

1. The central part of Heidegger's "Being and Time" are the chapters on Conscience.

2. Cfr. Berdyaev's critique of existentialist ontologism, in his discussion following J. Wahl's lecture "A Short History of Existentialism" (Engl. transl. in the Philosophical Library, New York, 1949).

accidental expression of the problem?

In ultimate consequences all this can be understood again as an argument in favour of critical caution in the process of removing the "offuscating dross", or cultural "congealment".

COMPARATIVE philosophy is not in high esteem among existentialists.¹ Even if knowledge is considered, for its technical implications, as a necessary evil, comparative knowledge is nothing but the reduplication of the offuscating power. In spite of that, Kierkegaard, who was most conscious of the essential uniqueness of truth, has compared his passionate Christian alternative with the more reasonably quiet one of Socrates. The implicit consciousness of possible alternatives to Christian existentialism should incite us to extend the comparative attempt also to the cultural birth-ground of the philosophical theories of nothingness—Buddhist India. There is some passion in Nagarjuna's dialectics too. However, the rational, purely logical pre-existing structure of the "middle way" happened to be more adequate and soothing. This had no negative effect on his clear and insistently sharp formulation of the essential problem of nothingness and its existen-

tial implications for human conscience. The underlying logical principle of *catuskotika* was historically one of the many philosophical improvements performed by Buddha in the field of his spiritual origin—the cultural heritage of the Jains. Buddha's ontological version of the *anekānta-vāda* "neither being, nor non-being, nor being-and-non-being, nor neither-being-nor-non-being") could still serve us as a model, at least to the ontologically oriented existentialism. Buddha's insight was, however, more primordial and genuine than Nagarjuna's dialectical elaboration. It was based on pure *jhana*, the way of meditation, as quoted above.

This exactly was envisaged in the foregoing as the basis of a new formulation of the problem of rationality in establishing basic cultural relations. The insistence on the educational aspects of culture as cultivation aims at this end: The value and the purpose of cultivation, for a mind seeking the spontaneity of truth, is the essential, and also the existential, problem of the contemporary philosophy of culture. To use a pattern of Kierkegaard's argumentation concerning God: Neither the definition of freedom, nor the constel-

lation of values, nor the "practical" principles and casuistic standards for their moral use, are essential for the survival of culture and of cultural continuity throughout the revolutionary uprootings of all values. Negation of values does not imply negation of culture as long as the stress is laid on the process, even on the continuity of cultivation, whatever the "seed" (*bija*) may be and require objectively for its growth.

As far as Asian view-points are actually taken into consideration, some reluctance can be noticed against the adoption of *yoga*, in a modern version (as that of Sri Aurobindo) as a general term for the required integral cultivation of mind's alertness and awareness. Direct arguments against such tendencies of "cultivation" can be found in Krishnamurti². More and more popular in the West are the arguments for which Japanese Zen, due to its extreme irrationalism, is understood by some existentialists (E. Fromm, but also Heidegger) to be the most suitable Asian realization of existential integrality. Western instinctive reluctance against "discipline" as a rule of "reason", even if it tries to take the form of a "practical reason", is mainly due to psychoanalytical conceptions

and lack of different European precedents that would correspond to Zen.

Would could and what should be comprised in the meaning of cultivation in the sense suggested above, has not yet been cleared up explicitly enough. Should we insist on conveying a deeper meaning to the envisaged possibility of a Discipline of the Practical Reason (which seems very improbable in the actual cultural atmosphere in Europe) then its formalism could be interpreted in terms of freedom from the heteronomous authority of mind-killing and barrier-creating material values from the past, for whose enforcement teachers are notoriously accused of being immoral. It need not be a cultivation of "knowledge" with its unavoidable effect of increasing and stiffening the protective barriers of the self. But, why should, on the other side, any cultivation of alertness and open-mindedness be considered superfluous and detrimental, or impossible and absurd, in view of the material uniqueness of the new?

THE fallacy of the existentialist absolutism seems to consist in the apparent exclusiveness of the following arguments: Truth is irrational because its essence is transcendent in its timeless and spontaneous uniqueness. Since truth in its pure human inwardness cannot be repeated, it cannot be derived from antecedents of any

rational discursive process limited to resources of the "known" through time and memory. Truth cannot be attained at all. It only can be obtained by passive alertness, but not reached by any device. It appears as an unexpected gift. Therefore it is always an absolutely new creation.

Granted the essential character of the truth in the exclusiveness of its privacy, there still remain some open questions on the reverse side. Along side with these arguments it is asserted that it has to "mature" (Bergson's *vedantism!*). Its "seed" (*bija*) has to be "sown". We have to be receptive. But, receptiveness too can be cultivated, the same way as the sense of freedom.

Heidegger speaks of the effort of destroying rational outgrowth which is a positive task, though technical in a purely rational sense. Buddha spoke of the essential effort of swimming against the "stream of becoming". Bergson speaks simply of a "*torsion*" which ultimately will occur spontaneously, if we are alert and pliable, if "the seed" progresses well in the uniqueness of its peculiar nature.

Buddha speaks (not alone, but may be in the clearest terms) of a method of disburdening and purification from the fatal weight accumulated through time and memory, in the "*Sati-patthana sutta*". It is the cultivation

of distention, effortlessness and alert stillness. There is no "mind-killing" purpose, either of a *guru* or of a "Self".

Are previous experiences of disencumbering, of extricating oneself from intellectual barriers and from their stiffening impact on the self, to be considered as useless examples because they belong to different historical perspectives or individual situations? Creation, too, attains its purpose only if it is communion. Should we condemn *a priori* as useless and uninspiring any "attempt of establishing an ideal, almost essential communion of free spirits throughout history, beyond their chronological order (as Jaspers contemplates it in "The Great Philosophers")?

Is truth really so simple, also in its expression, as it appears in the spontaneity of the creative act, so rootlessly independent in its essential newness? Is it exclusively the product of an innate artistic talent, or even not of that? The notion of "innate" usually has not the meaning of unprecedented, particularly not in India. The analogy with the art does not exclude cultivation, it implies it in various meanings. Does the simile of the art limp just at this point, or does it not?

Let us stress again that the cultural continuum is not considered here to be essential for the creative outbreak

1. The exception of Jaspers should be stressed, particularly in view of the importance and the place he gives to Asian philosophers, in "The Great Philosophers."

2. In direct references too much stress is laid on the etymological meaning of *yoga* as bondage, as concentration on material principles ('a thought which you have chosen, and you try to ward off all the others') and therefore as "the cultivation of resistance" and of the "dead mind". (Cfr. o.c., p. 16)

of the new. It may be as much hampering as inspiring under different circumstances. But as long as this outbreak is felt as "revolutionary", it is existentially still connected with a cultural process of maturing. The value of culture is therefore not only instrumental for it, it is also vital, which indicates at least that the positive contribution of culture should not be reduced to technical civilization alone where it has become very doubtful too. Absolute essences in all their uniqueness can still be contemplated from a cultural perspective as immanent to a comprising horizon wherefrom they cannot be eradicated for long. *Via negativa* has always been cultivated with this understanding.

The last question to be mentioned is: Has the existentialist meaning of a humanist culture to be reduced exclusively to the function of a negative approach?

Let us remember that, at the time of the appearance of the new existentialist thought in our century, the idea and the scope of a humanist philosophy had been defined in Europe most explicitly by a philosopher of culture who by his mental training was very close to the existentialist current, which he however preceded by a decade. It was Max Scheler, the author of the "Position of Man in the Universe". For him "philosophical anthropology is a fundamental science and essential structure of man",

but also "of his relation to the realms of nature (the inorganic plants and animals) as well as to the basis of psychical and spiritual beginning in the world; of the forces and powers that move him and which he sets in motion, of the basic directions and laws of his biological, psychical, cultural-historical and social development, of their essential possibilities as much as of their actualities." "Man is a direction of movement of the universe itself."¹ Hence, he can not be acosmic.

This scope of humanism still sounds fuller than any of its existentialist echoes. How far is the decrease in effect due to cultural resentment?

THE INDIAN STRUGGLE 1920-42

by Subhas Chandra Bose

(Asia Publishing House 1964)

CROSSROADS

The Works of Subhas Chandra Bose 1938-40

(Asia Publishing House, 1962)

Compiled by
the Netaji Research Bureau

Reviewed by Ambika

The Netaji Research Bureau has performed an invaluable task in compiling these two volumes of Subhas Chandra Bose's works, and presenting them to a public which has hitherto been denied an opportunity to know this eminent personality better. Indeed one might almost suspect a conspiracy during the Nehru era, to suppress the image of Subhas Bose, who but for his untimely death in 1945, would have constituted a most powerful rival to Nehru's bid for national leadership.

Today, the lucky charms of the Nehru age, non-alignment and the take-off to material prosperity, have lost their magic in the harsh

daylight of our relationships with our neighbours and the rest of the world. We are driven to search for a new formulation, and it is a unique opportunity to turn to the works of Subhas Chandra Bose to discover therein already existing alternative formulation to what might otherwise appear as an inevitable historical process from the later-day Gandhi to the Prime Ministership of Jawaharlal Nehru.

The particular environment today is different from the complex of problems that faced Netaji, but his mode of operation holds out fresh possibilities. Nehru is often quoted as being the only Congress leader with any under-

standing of Foreign Affairs, but a quick glance through these books shows that Netaji possessed a keen awareness of foreign affairs. Apart from his summings up of international situations *per se*, his account of any political event inside India was always described in a total context—the particular political configuration in Europe at the time, in England in particular, the bias of the particular personalities in power both at home and abroad, and then the balance of political movements and personalities in India, which formed the context of, say, the Municipal Election in Calcutta. This appraisal and assessment of the enemy, and of the strength and weakness of one's own side, was an invaluable political asset, one in which we are sadly lacking today. When China attacks India we cry 'Perfidy' instead of linking it to the power structure, ambitions and conflicts of the Chinese leadership. We do not know the enemy, nor do we know ourselves vis a vis the enemy.

As a foreign relations commentator, Netaji was relatively free and flexible in that he was innocent of any 'isms'. His guideline was purely and directly Indian national interest, and this to a most intense and concentrated degree. Thereby he was enabled to take a clear and distinct view of

1. "Philosophische Weltanschauung", München, 1954, pp. 62, 96.