

and preserve the 'finely wrought cultural fibre' she has made this laudable effort.

Like the journey undertaken by the mediums, *Between Worlds* is the author's voyage in time and space – mentally. She has tried to convey her experiences as best she could but as the trance mediums often assert, it is not possible to transcribe the experience in mundane idiom.

Published by Penguin, the book is a valuable addition to the library of any book-lover. It is authenticated by photographs and has a useful glossary at the end. However, there are a couple of printing errors (eg. P. 51 On for One; p. 136 'Hema's began her whispered introduction' for 'Hema began' and bare for bear), which one wishes were not there in a Penguin production.

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*Unity in Diversity: The Indian Experience in Nation-Building*, by MS GORE, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 2002, pp. 246, Rs. 475.

This collection of eleven essays by Professor MS Gore are either commemorative lectures or seminar papers given by him between 1986 and 1995. These were delivered or presented at different times, different places, on various occasions and for different audiences. Given the compulsions of the situations and constraints of such addresses, it is difficult to find one continuous stream of argument in these essays. Nevertheless, since the author is singular, it is possible to identify not one but a few streams or some issues that are central to his thought.

Gore himself points out: 'Most of the papers in this collection deal with one or more of the problems that

our society is facing in consolidating itself into a nation and in living up to the ideals of democracy, secularism and social equality.' (p. 8) This pursuit in itself is laudable since it comes from a senior sociologist who has reflected on those issues that are central to contemporary India. More importantly, unlike the sociologists of his times who believed in value neutrality and abstained from giving prescriptions or solutions, Gore is both critical of the societal afflictions and also provides his own prescriptions for correcting the wrongs.

The book opens with 'The contemporary social situation' and ends with 'India's unity in diversity' traversing through discussions on Nehru and Gandhi, Indian nationalism, ethnicity, secularism, social transformation and social development. All these issues are central to our polity and society that is trying to consolidate itself into a modern nation-state in its postcolonial phase.

One issue that stares glaringly at the reader is the range and intensity of problems that the Indian nation has developed over the last fifty years. No doubt, as Gore points out, that there are numerous achievements too to our credit, like sustaining democracy and avoiding authoritarian rule, increasing development of science and technology and manpower, raising literacy and certain other indices of modernization. But these achievements are belittled in the face of communal riots, social polarization, increasing violence, in fact 'breakdown in the process of social development'. He puts blame not only on the politician and the government, but 'the entire elite in our society—the politician, the bureaucrat, the professional, the financier, the industrialist and the rich cultivator—must share that

responsibility.' (p.22)

What is most striking about this collection is Gore's comments on the very title of this book that makes the last chapter. He writes: 'our claim to having achieved unity in diversity is at best patchy.' (p.238) 'What we have succeeded in achieving is a state without a religion but not a political system which is insulated from religion. We have not been able to secularize our social life.' And finally, 'Unity in diversity thus is not a contemporary social reality.' (p. 239) This remark to my mind is to be taken seriously in the light of the post Godhra political developments in Gujarat especially when the Hindutva is trumpeting the rich cultural heritage of 'unity in diversity' and Hindu pluralism.

When Gore discusses Gandhi and Nehru in two chapters each, I believe this speaks of his underlying streak that addresses to the problems of Indian society and polity. If I may say that when reference is made to Gandhi he means by it that politicians in particular and other elite too should practice idealism, high morality, personal integrity, simple and clean life and service to others. If we are able to produce such statesmen like we had before independence, only then we may see India developing and prospering.

And, when he refers to Nehru and quotes at length from his *Discovery of India* to throw light on his concept of nationalism, he seems to argue for a strong nation-state with a strong centre which is what Nehru stood for. Gore not only supports Nehru's viewpoint but also criticizes D.L. Sheth for questioning the utility of the very concept of a nation-state as the social-political model for India. He argues: 'If Indian leaders had opted for a loosely knit and weak centre with greater autonomy for the

federating units, we might have found the regional units fighting with each other and with the central authority for more land area or for a particular geographical area.' (p. 112) He argues that 'the nation-state, with all its limitations, is the most viable and flexible instrument available to a people to organize their polity today.' (p.116)

Sheth's argument of 'inherent tendency towards centralization of political decision-making' in the nation-state model has been proved right when we look at the politico-economic developments steered by the Indian state over the past fifty years. The rising unrest of regional, ethnic, linguistic, religious minorities growing to the level of seeking secession from India are evidences sufficient enough to prove the fears of persons like Sheth come true. Interestingly, Gore is aware of all such so-called anti-national phenomena yet upholds political liberalism and nation-state model of governance for a continent like country that India is.

He is also aware that the two terms 'socialist' and 'secular' were incorporated in the Constitution by an amendment during the period of Emergency (p.183), and also notes that 'the Indian political leadership was never really committed to socialism as a political or economic doctrine, whether before independence or after.' (p.182) Yet he fails to recognize the political gimmickry and manipulative powers of the ruling political party that may easily hijack a centralized state.

At another place Gore asks a very pertinent question, as to why there is 'non-emergence of politicians of stature, of persons of vision, who could be called statesmen in our life?' And, he answers: 'because of the nature of the political process

that has come to be established in the country.' (p. 66) One may ask, how does one distinguish this particular process from the particular model of politics accepted and implemented by our leaders?

Gore strongly believes that secularism and that too of the rational variety is most suitable for the modern society. He is not comfortable with Rege's justification of Indian version of secularism, namely *sarva-dharma-samabhava*. Instead, he provides his own definition: 'To be secular means being engaged in the practice and development of a personal and social ethical code which is consistent with rationality and which aims at attaining a humane society in which every individual will have an opportunity to develop to his highest potential.' (p. 194)

It is rightly pointed out by Gore that the two dominant paradigms of development—capitalist and socialist—currently practiced the world over, concentrate on the material and objective parameters that lead us to look at human beings as instruments. What is truly required in social development is an element of subjective consciousness. It implies 'the dimensions of self-perception and perception of the outer world by the individual, his understanding of his relationship to it and of his relation to other individuals.' (p. 220)

Gore is not only criticizing our society and polity but also makes prescriptions for its reconstruction. No doubt he claims, 'I am not a Gandhian' (p. 35) yet his prescription is very much Gandhian. He laments that 'the loss of idealism and ideology are at the root of our present social crisis, we must act to restore them to a central place in our personal and national life. . . Our

idealism must emanate from our nationally articulated values of secularism, social equality and democracy. But idealism cannot be nurtured in a society by preaching about it. It has to be lived and seen to be lived for it to arouse and help mobilize others.' (p. 29)

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*Psychology in Human and Social Development: Lessons from Diverse Cultures*, edited by JOHN W BERRY, RC MISHRA AND RS TRIPATHI, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2003, pp. 310, Rs. 295

The most prominent change which characterizes psychology, if we look at the span from the early sixties to the present is how much the perception about psychology has changed from using it as another science for predicting behaviours to a human-centered, culture-centered indigenous discipline. Debates on freedom, empowerment, tradition and community growth have resuscitated culturally contextualised 'home-based' and cross-cultural approaches.

The volume *Psychology in Human and Social Development: Lessons from Diverse Cultures* is a festschrift brought out in honour of Durganand Sinha one of the leading Third World psychologists. Durganand Sinha was among the early psychologists of India who noted (1965) that most Indian psychologists used American models and had largely ignored the rich intellectual tradition of their own culture. He made considerable contributions towards the study of socio-cultural development, and also