

have been an important legacy in shaping the managerial philosophy and practices adopted and propounded by corporate leaders in Chinese societies such as Hong Kong. The authors Henry SR Kao and Ng Sek Hong attempts to ascertain how authentic Chinese cultural values, especially the classic scholarly prescriptions, are being conserved in corporate enterprises and to what extent managerial practices and ideologies have been amenable to reshaping and modification under the impact of Western influences.

In *School-based social services as a strategy for community empowerment and human development* Wayne H Holtzman starts with looking at the major conferences which took place since the eighties on psychology and comments that the emergence of major social trends affecting psychology and its impact on national development is now accelerating into global movements. Community psychology, which was first recognized as a new approach in the mid-1960s, is based on systems and ecological thinking that integrates into one strategy for health, human resources, education, social interventions, citizen empowerment and cultural values. The 'school of the future' project was based on both qualitative and quantitative data collected annually from children and intensive structured interviews with the parents of nearly 300 children in their homes. The study focuses on four communities in Texas—Austin, Houston, Dallas and San Antonio.

Although psychology is primarily a human science, its possibilities as a policy science have been recognised. Psychology has meaning to the extent it can contribute to enhancing quality of life of people in developing

systems and organizations which would protect persons from losing their personhoods. In 'Culture as factor in community interventions' RC Tripathi examines the problems and issues associated with the notions of social change and development, nature and type of psychological and social interventions. He also reviews some important studies in which community interventions were made in India to enhance the overall effectiveness of systems in different sectoral areas. The review done, according to the author, is to illustrate where cultural factors enter the intervention process and how they influence outcomes of such interventions. Lastly some reflections are made on what possible lessons could be drawn for developing communities on the basis of studies of community interventions.

There is a complete list of references at the end of the book, and also a separate list of figures and tables, which makes reading easier. Overall, this volume impresses the reader for variety of thoughts and variety of instances from different cultures and community experiences, all emphasizing directly or indirectly the need for culture-centric and cross-cultural psychologies for development. The paper on leadership strikes a different note by relating leadership research with exploring the basis of transformational influence. The historical analysis, and the critical appraisal which Anand Paranjape makes of the current situation in India towards accepting Indian ways of understanding mental health invites compulsive attention. One would only wish that if there were a few more papers with case studies based in India and also specific studies on Indian (traditions) ways of under-

standing individual and community experience, the larger cause for the festschrift would have been served better.

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Documenting Dissent: Contesting Fables, Contesting Memories and Dalit Political Discourse, by BADRI NARAYAN, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, 2001, pp. 165, Rs. 250.

In the last decade low-caste people have slowly gained political power. In this important study, Badri Narayanan tells us the way low-caste people have built on their myths, symbols and rituals to subvert Brahminical orthodoxy and to create a space for their dignity and empowerment. The author tells us how Dalit castes such as Dusadhs are deifying the memory of Chuharmal in the Mokama region of Bihar and how in Uttar Pradesh parties like Bahujan Samaj Party are valourizing Dalit heroes and heroines like Raidas, Balmiki, Shambuk, Eklavya and Jhalkarbai (p. 112). They are also engaged in a new interpretation of Indian tradition and history from the perspective of the low-caste and the marginalized. The rising political mobilization of the Dalits in North India, mainly Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, is accompanied by search for new symbols, new myths and a new interpretation of Indian history. The present study explores the work of memory in the dynamics of contemporary social, cultural and political struggles. What the author writes in his introductory section 'A Story of One's Own', deserves our

careful attention: "Memory in this study will go beyond its role as a mere faculty and will incorporate the process of remembrance and its effect within and without. One of my efforts will be to explore processes of remembrance and myth-making as denial and defiance of dominant cultural symbols". (p. 18)

The first chapter 'Documenting Dissent', presents us a detailed description of invocation of the defiant memory of Baba Chuharmal among the Dusadh castes of the Mokama region in Bihar. Chuharmal is a low-caste hero and the legend goes that he was killed because of his love for the Bhumiari girl Reshma. But over the century this legend has been interpreted differently by different social classes and castes. Now some high caste intellectuals claim that Chuharmal belongs to the Bhumiari caste—a land-owning high caste. But at the same time, with the ascendance of Dalit politics and a new sense of identity, many neighbourhoods in different cities most notably Patna, are named after Chuharmal. For the last many years there has been celebration of festival—*mela*—in honor of Baba Chuharmal and in the last one decade this festival has got a political connotation as political leaders are being invited to inaugurate this as a platform for their quest for power.

In the subsequent chapters, 'Mela, Leela and Politics', 'Heroes, Histories and Booklets', and 'Myth, Memory and Political Discourse', Narayan tells us the way the rising Dalit political mobilization in North India is searching for a new knowledge and new myths of assertion and dignity. These chapters provide us detailed description of contemporary political dynamics in Bihar and

Uttar Pradesh revolving around contestation over myths and symbols between the Brahminical and the anti-Brahminical forces. Narayan tells us how a political formation like BSP creates new *melas*—festivals—in the name of new heroes such as Shambuk muni—sage Shambuk—who was killed by Rama for reading Vedas. BSP is also engaged in a reinterpretation of Indian culture and tradition. BSP, as well as many other Dalit cultural organizations, celebrate Ravana and the *rakshasas*—the so-called demons. For them, it is the *Rakshasas* who were the original inhabitants of India and they had fought against the Aryans to protect the poor. "They were against offering grains, ghees etc. and sacrifice of animals during the Yajnas."

In this field of emergent self-realization there is a search for new knowledge of self and society. Narayan deserves our heart-felt gratitude for providing a description of the new kinds of books and booklets which are now emerging in this region and how books such as *Mul Vansha Katha*—stories of one's origin—are providing a new sense of rootedness and history of self and community. He provides not only description but important analytical insights when he discusses the work of memory in the context of rituals, performances and festivals. In an insightful passage on myth and transmission, Narayan writes that lower-castes make use of a variety of representational media in telling their story—"exhibitive performance in ritual, contextual communication, non-verbal, relatively archaic forms of communication like drums and other aural-means". (p. 66) "On the other hand, the castes [...] use only the technique of *Vak* [oral communication] and so it is less

effective". (p. 66) Again Narayan's following elaboration is deeply insightful and is of help in study of counter-hegemonic social and cultural struggles more generally: "Myth and ritual have a close relationship. The performance of rituals perpetuates the myth, and myth maintains the circle of rituals. Ritual establishes memory in the consciousness of the people. The memory of Chuharmal recurs through the ritual of his worship. If this folk tale would have been just a tale, then it probably would not have become an effective factor in struggle. However, its transmission in ritualized verbal and non-verbal forms imbues it with subversive power." (Ibid.)

In the introduction to the book Narayan himself writes: "The dynamics of such contestation is not to be explored as binary opposites between one section and another" (p. 19). But a fuller realization of this admirable goal calls for an exploration of the way sensitive actors from outside the depressed castes and within, have converged and diverged for the sake of emancipation of these castes. Narayan presents a portrait of the discursive formation of the growing influence of new myths and legends among the Dalits. But it is a discursive portrait and lacks a subjective dimension—it lacks voices. True, Narayan quite admiringly presents us the diversity in the way the same Chuharmal legend is being related to: while in the Mokama region he is a hero, in Magadh he is an anti-hero. But there is no further discussion of the way these new myths such as Shambuks create a new vision of self-empowerment and self-realization beyond the politically valorized discourse. Kanshi Ram

and Mayawati celebrate *melas* in honour of Shambuka Muni but in what way this newly valourized myths help in the quest for learning, self-development and social transformation of Dalit boys and girls in the poor Dalit locales? How do common Dalits feel about such new symbols especially when it is being used for narrow political gains by the elites among them? Such an inquiry calls for a new ethnography of human subjectivity beyond valourized political discourse. The objective of engagement with discourse is not only to valourize its own terms but to subject these to further critical interrogations. Thus the links between myths and human emancipation have to be explored beyond the valourized logic of what political leaders do or say for their own power and aggrandizement.

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Melting Moments, A Collection of Punjabi Short Stories by RAGHBIR DHAND, translated and edited by RANA NAYAR, Unistar Publishers, Chandigarh, pp. 220, Rs. 295

Diaspora of educated Punjabis to United Kingdom in nineteen sixties was no less than an historic event. They went there in search of greener pastures but had to face many difficulties. The strugglers, after many years of toil, could find the jobs which could provide them honourable place in the society. Raghbir Dhand was among the lucky few who could get artistic repose, after some years of struggle, and enrich Punjabi literature with their writings. His sensitive mind

experienced social, racial and cultural tensions in the foreign land. He was bitter about the treatment meted out to the immigrants but he did not recoil from the unsavoury situations and unpleasant individuals. Rather he tried to understand the scheme of things and come to grip with the ground realities.

Nostalgia gripped his mind with great intensity all through his stay in UK. Not that he longed to come back to India, he was simply reminded of ethical values and cultural ties dear to his heart. In *Leaves of Acacia*, Dhand relates the story of two old friends who are disillusioned with the materialistic culture of the West and decide to return to India for good. The homeland is no longer a safe haven and they find to their dismay that the communal ties are no more as strong as they used to be. Towards the close of the story, Chain Singh gives vent to his feelings, to which his friend Des Raj replies, "Look Chain Singh, what you're saying is hundred per cent correct. Who has the heart to cut off his roots? You tell me, did we want to do it? After all, it's only when things reach a flashpoint that a man is forced to chew leaves of acacia." *No Exit* focusses on the plight of a youth who shuttles between his homeland and the foreign land in the hope of settling down somewhere comfortably. The end result is that he is neither here, nor there – "But the car wouldn't even move backwards. Now the wheel was rotating in the reverse motion. Forwards-backwards, forwards backwards; the rotating wheel cut a deep trench there. But the car would move neither forwards, nor backwards."

Raghbir Dhand was born on November 1, 1934 at Jandiali Kalan

in Sangrur district. His formative years were spent at Ahmedgarh where he received much of his formal education. He was hardly thirteen when partition took place and the upheaval left indelible imprints on his mind. He passed Gyani from Panjab University and started his career as a school teacher at Majitha (Amritsar). While teaching, he did his graduation privately and then joined Khalsa College for Education, Amritsar for the degree of Bachelor of Training. Later he served in different schools and, in the meanwhile, passed his MA in History from Panjab University, Chandigarh. In 1965, he migrated to England and worked in factories and offices for some years. On completing his teacher-training course from the Leeds University, he ventured forth on his coveted path of a school teacher. His quest for knowledge earned him PhD degree from Kim-U-Sung University, Pyongyang, North Korea in 1979. All these years he had been deeply associated with Progressive Writers Association of Great Britain. His untimely death in 1990 snuffed out the flame that had started burning bright in the field of Punjabi fiction.

He had in his kitty many collections of short stories when he departed from this earth. He published his first collection of short stories, *Boli Dharti* (The Deaf Earth) in 1972. In 1975 appeared *Us Paar* (Across the Shores) that highlighted his cosmopolitan outlook and presented the double perspective of a cultural outsider. His third collection *Kaaya Kalap* (The Metamorphosis) was published in 1980 wherein the dark clouds of Emergency in India loom large. His fourth collection *Kursi* (The Chair) appeared in 1988 that vouchsafed his