

SPECIAL NUMBER EDITORIAL

In our editorial announcement and letters inviting contributions to this special number of Indian Philosophical Quarterly, we had boldly asserted that K. C. Bhattacharya's discourse *Svaraj in Ideas* (1929) was "no less fundamental in its analysis of Indian bondage and its possible cure" than *Hind Svaraj*, Mahatma Gandhi's revolutionary text of 1909 whose seventy-fifth anniversary of publication is marked by this just-ending Orwellian year of Indian and global turbulence. We stand by our juxtaposition of the Mahatma and the philosopher on the theme of *svaraj*, not in absent-minded forgetfulness of the differences between revolutionary writing and philosophical inquiry, but on the basis of our conviction that the neglect of *Hind Svaraj* by Indian intellectuals down the decades (avant-garde fringe celebration of it notwithstanding) is the consequence precisely of that loss of *Svaraj in Ideas* — independence and autonomy of thought — which KCB laments and warns against in his quiet discourse, bondage more enslaving than political subjugation because of its invisibility and silent creeping paralysing power, unforgivably persistent even after political independence. The lessons of the philosopher's discourse must be learnt if we would respond to the summons to civilisation and realisation represented by Mahatma Gandhi's writings or by Sri Aurobindo's and Śrī Rāmaṇa Maharṣi's or Svāmi Vivekānanda's testaments of timeless, timely, Indian, universal truth. Behind them all, and still in quite recent modern times, is that unique explosion of light and love and truth — the fact of Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahansa. Such is our unfreedom of mind, however, that there is not yet amongst us even a fringe academic celebration of the *Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Kathāmṛta*, that wellspring of metaphysical and spiritual wisdom, apart from ritual recitations of bhakti in circles that do not set cognitive goals and directions of inquiry. Our bhakti need not be anti-intellectual and archaic, and our rebelliousness ought not to be ignorant and borrowed — this is

the minimum important lesson we learn from *Svaraj in Ideas*. We are not here editorially propogating metaphysics and spirituality, not even their matchless Indian manifestations, at least one of us mightily resisting the temptation to do so. We only lament and seek limitedly to correct our indifference to self-knowledge.

The response to our invitation has been substantial and pours in even as we go to press, and ranges widely from un-hedging enthusiasm for the idea of Svaraj in Ideas (it is this idea, and not only KCB's exploration of it, that this number seeks to examine) to unhesitating rejection of it, in-between positions also receiving serious attention. Our aim was to provoke serious thought, not to pronounce or evince the whole truth on the question of autonomy and thought. We welcome the diversity of vigorous thought¹ represented in this volume and thank all contributors solemnly editorially, having unfor-givably failed to do so informally individually (Sorry!) In the interest of uniformity, we have editorially imposed a single spelling for the word Svaraj following the standard inter-national transliteration of Sanskrit words into Roman script and a single system of referring to K. C. Bhattacharya's text using paragraph numbers.

We would like to thank Dr. Kalyan Bagchi and Shri Pradyot Mukherjee, both of Visvabharati University, for making available to us for reproduction in this issue the KCB texts (*Svaraj in Ideas* and the review of Ethel May Kitch's *The Origin of Subjectivity in Hindu Thought*) as well as the 'Introduction' from Kitch's book. KCB's review of Kitch's work is a paradigmatically lucid and powerful defence of traditional Indian thought and life against prejudice and ignorance in high places.

Readers poorly acquainted with the name of K. C. Bhattacharya would like to know that the learned philosopher was born in a renowned Brahmin family of Bengal on May 12, 1875; graduated with triple honours (English, Philosophy and Sanskrit) from Presidency College, Calcutta, in 1896; was awarded

¹ But see also 'Editorial Postscript'.

Calcutta University's Premchand Raichand Scholarship in 1901; served the Education Department of West Bengal as a Lecturer in Philosophy, retiring as the Officiating Principal of Hooghly College in 1930; was the Director of the Indian Institute of Philosophy at Amalner from 1933 to 1935; was George V Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy at Calcutta University from 1935 to 1937; died on December 11, 1949. We have not been able to secure a bibliography of Professor K. C. Bhattacharya's writings more complete than what is contained in his *Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. 1 and 2, recently reproduced as one Volume, Delhi 1983, by M/s Motilal Banarasidass.

We apologise to regular readers of IPQ for the eleventh-hour appearance in December of this October-December issue, the unpunctuality attributable to special number demands; and for the absence of a Students Supplement to this issue due to exigencies of scheduling.

We hope a national seminar on the theme of 'Svaraj in Ideas' (if not on Svaraj as such), and a sequel to this special number, will materialise in the not too distant future.

This volume we dedicate to the memory of two distinguished Indian philosophers who have recently died — Professor T. M. P. Mahadevan and Professor Kalidas Bhattacharya (a son of K. C. Bhattacharya).

A happy new year to all our readers, filled with gifts of autonomy and universality, gifts of svaraj.

K. J. Shah
(Guest Editor)

Ramchandra Gandhi
(Guest Editor)

S. S. Deshpande
(Organising Editor)

Probal Dasgupta
(Guest Editor)

Special Number Editorial Committee.

TO BE RELEASED SHORTLY

The Philosophy of Kalidas Bhattacharya

Proceedings of a seminar organised by the Department of Philosophy, Rajasthan University, the book contains a critical appraisal of various aspects of the late **Kalidas Bhattacharya's** philosophical thought; and includes his own final formulation of his philosophical position.

Edited by **Daya Krishna, A. M. Ghose, P. K. Srivastava** (et al).

The book includes contributions from **K. L. Sharma** (A Step Beyond K. C. Bhattacharya), **Daya Krishna** (Kalidas Bhattacharya and the Logic of Alternation), **S. K. Chattopadhyaya** (Professor Bhattacharya's "Alternative Standpoints" of Philosophy), **K. Bagchi** ('Subjective and Objective' Attitudes as Alternatives : A Study of Professor Kalidas Bhattacharya's view of Knowledge-Object Unity), **N. K. Sharma** (Kalidas Bhattacharya's Philosophy : Alternative Absolutes) **R. S. Bhatnagar** (Philosophy and Meta-Philosophy : Study of a Fundamental Dichotomy in Kalidas Bhattacharya's thought), **Mrs. Yogesh Gupta** (Pre-suppositions of Science and Philosophy : A Critical Study), **Mirinal Kanti Bhadra** (Kalidas Bhattacharya's View of Freedom and Existentialist Thought), **Rajendra Prasad Pandey** (Kalidas Bhattacharya on the Indian Concept of Man), **K. J. Shah** (Religion — Sophisticated and Unsophisticated), **J. N. Mohanty** (Kalidas Bhattacharya as Metaphysician).

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Contact : Organising Editor,
Department of Philosophy,
Indian Philosophical Quarterly,
Poona University, PUNE 411 007.