

BOOK REVIEWS

CULTURE, Orissa Cultural Forum; Rashtrabhasha Samabaya Prakashan, Cuttack, 1978, 8vo demy, hard bound, PP 156, Rs 15-00.

The anthology not only provides a general over-view of the present state of affairs in the rich Orissan culture, simultaneously at least in a couple of essays it tries to derive some conclusions irrespective of their rightness or otherwise. The author of the essay 'Tribal Art of Orissa' makes a valuable point when he says that the patterns on 'Gadabā' clothes are imitations of similar patterns on a leopard's back. But he does not stop there. Rather the sense of communion with nature is further extended from the tribals to the non-tribals. By making 'involvement' the catchword the writer distinguishes between tribal attitude to art which is based on their 'fancy, fear, sensation and imagination' and nontribal view of art who believe these things just to be 'enigmas, illusions and products of meaningless labour.' The distinction is true yet developed as a contrast as it is, a bit exaggerated. But the real truth is arrived at only with the sentence: "In spite of such impression due to non-involvement, we cannot avoid admitting that there has been extensive infiltration of tribal art and culture into our social and individual habits." The several examples that follow merely testify to this account.

G. C. Panda's essay 'Odisi Music' which champions the cause of the trilogy of music i. e. 'Nrutyā', 'Geeta' and 'Vadya' while expressing happiness over the state of affairs in Odisi 'Nrutyā' which is gradually being considered as a classical dance expresses concern over the comparative lack of popular recognition to Odisi 'Geeta' and 'Vadya'. But to my mind, the concern is wholly confounded since non-visual arts like 'Geeta' and 'Vadya' can never be so popular as their visual counterpart 'Nrutyā' is and additionally, popularity at the cost of distortions beyond a limit may be perilous to the future of these classical artforms.

D. Pathy's essay on contemporary Indian Art is a welcome departure from the smaller precincts of Orissan culture to that of Indian. In portraying Amrita Sher-Gill to be the first modern Indian painter after the neo-primitivism of Jamini Roy he indeed strikes the right note. Sher-Gill is the obvious choice because she led the crusade against the theory of faithful reproduction of the Bombay School

describing it as impotence in art and secondly, the marked Indianness of her art inspite of her vast western background makes her position somehow outstanding. Besides, the writer's blurring of distinctions between figurative and abstract art is understandable because as he says—'Figurative art is also abstract, since we admire it not because of its resemblance to reality or representation but for those intrinsic qualities which make it a work of art.'

Amongst the other essays K. Mohapatra's 'Jagannath Puri as a Centre of Culture through the Ages' describes Puri to be a centre of religious, philosophical and literary activities, N. Mishra's 'The Ramayana in Orissan Art and Literature' depicts the epic's pervasive influence on the culture of the state, 'Anti-British Rebellion of 1817' by M. P. Das pays tributes to the bravery of the state Willitia, 'The Evolution of Sanskrit Lyrics in Orissa' by B. Panda enumerates the contribution of Orissa to the treasury of Sanskrit literature and finally A. Pattanayak's 'Typical Oriya Festival Khudurukuni' highlights the importance of a folk festival of eastern Orissa. These essays are well-documented and thus help achieve the professed aim of bringing to limelight the culture of Orissa but hardly there is any effort to draw some conclusions to enable the particular culture fit into the broad sphere of culture as a whole. Thus intellectually they fall flat upon the readers and do not serve any purpose other than giving a good deal of information on the subject.

The whole book abounds in grammatical, lexical mistakes and mistakes of other types. The absence of an index, a bibliography and non-use of diacritical marks are some of the blemishes which catches the reader's attention at the first glance. Anyhow, as a well-informative maiden venture it anticipates more erudite publications by the Forum in the times to come.

Dhiren Das : *Catara Jathara Jatra—The Theatre* Published by Smt. Padmini Das, Bhubaneswar (Orissa) 1976. 1/8 Double Crown, pp. 56 Hard bound Rs. 15/- .

Mr. Das, who has made performing arts his career and cultural upheaval of the country his target, has given here a new insight to his readers. In claiming the Ranigumpha of Khandagiri at Bhubaneswar to be a middle-sized rectangular Play House, which perhaps fulfils all the conditions prescribed by Bharata Muni, he has investigated a lot of materials from the history of ancient Orissa to the Sanskrit dramaturgy and has sufficiently shown his probing mind capable of penetrating perception. He is tempted to suggest— "It could also be that 'Nāṭyaśāstra' was written by Bharata Muni after studying the measurements of

Ranigumpha Theatre built by Kharavela” (P. 34) but avoids any critical analysis or comment being aware of his limitations of historical speculations. Nevertheless, it is unfair on the part of a scholar to assert an inference about something non-existent : “For me and from now on for all, it is going to be identified for all times to come, what exactly it is, for which it was built by king Kharavela..... It is a Play House or Theatre.”

Anyhow the comparison is meticulous and the author has described the similarities between the two with the gusto of a seasoned lawyer even through the lawyer sometimes interprets meaning to his advantage. Ranigumpha, the author advocates, possesses all the features prescribed by Nāṭyaśāstra such as Raṅgapitha, Raṅgaśirṣa, Supiṭham, Mattavāraṇi, Ṣaddārūka, Nepathya Gruha, etc. In making this and similar other claims for other caves in Khandagiri—Udayagiri hills the plea of a theatre complex that he has made embraces almost all types of performing arts and these include Nāṭa, Gita, Vadita, Usava and Samaḥja of Kharavela’s inscriptions as well as their popular modern variants such as Jātarā, Dhuduki, Nabaraṅga, Nāṭa, Dāsakāṭhia, Paṭa and Daṇḍanāṭa. Thus a solution to the origin of the age-old Catarā or Jatharā or Jātrā has been found (!) and in doing this if the author has committed certain stylistic errors such as use of frequent question marks (pp. 10-11) or deliberate avoidance of diacritical marks (which is inevitable for the works of this type) or spelling errors like, ‘pronunciation’ and ‘it’s’ (p. 6) this is to be brushed aside by the author’s thematic singlemindedness and technical plus-points of the book such as neat printing, appropriate photographs and imaginary illustrations. Indeed in the pages of Mr. Dash’s book the caves of Khandagiri and Udayagiri re-live and resound with the music of Dundubhi, Mridanga and Panava to remind the people of Orissa of their glorious past.

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G. C. Nayak, *Essays in Analytical Philosophy*, Santosh Publications, Cuttack, 1978, hard bound, 8vo demy pp 210, Rs 35/-

The analytical trend of philosophy does not aim at giving us any new 'idea' of speculation, rather in a way, it aims at destroying the so-called 'ideas'. Most of the philosophical problems, it believes, arise out of misuse of language and the troubles due to them are over when this misuse is detected by means of linguistic analysis. This is thus more a method than a theory which has been a very attractive fashion in the history of post-war European thought.

Language is a miraculous discovery of man to avoid the difficulties in expression and communication of his feelings, emotions and thoughts and is undoubtedly a great advantage over his primitive fore-fathers who used gestures and postures for this purpose. But to a modern man the problems of language have been so great and complicated that, he feels, his discovery has turned into a labyrinth for him. When language is incapable of expressing most of our thoughts and feelings the attempt at judging the validity of our thoughts by the analysis of language that expresses it is certainly paradoxical. In stead of being a therapy in most cases it has been a disease—a futile intellectual gymnasticism. But though practically futile or immediately unproductive, as all gymnastic performances are, it is of great help in at least sharpening our intellect, and the most important profit of such exercise is that it challenges our accepted ideas, thoughts and beliefs, it inspires an impulse for rethinking.

The impact of this analytic method on the recent scholars in Indian Philosophy is a very healthy sign : it frees one from dogmatic conservatism. If some have tried to trace the method itself in the ancient schools of Indian philosophy like *Mīmāṃsā*, grammar and neo-Nyāya, others have applied the western method in studying their philosophical thoughts. Scholars like B. K. Matilal, H. K. Ganguli and J. N. Mohanty have successfully found that this linguistic analysis of the philosophical problems was not unknown to our great thinkers. Centuries ago they were vigorously engaged in debates on the point though they did not agree that language analysis is the only aim of philosophy or philosophical problems can simply be dispensed with by language analysis as language itself is limited and truth eludes language.

In the present volume under review Professor G. C. Nayak has analysed some of the very fundamental problems of Indian philosophy in the light of western analytical method. The volume contains ten essays on : the Mādhyā-

mika school of Mahāyāna Buddhism, Upanisadic philosophy, Sāṅkara's monistic idealism theory of causality in Nyāya and Sāṅkhya systems, Aurovindo's idea of the supramental language, personal identity, subtle body and rebirth, the future of metaphysics and reason.

The Author's erudition is obviously vast and his capability for free thinking is manifestly sufficient and the volume is a valuable addition to the analytical studies of Indian philosophy.

Professor Nayak interpretes the famous Upanisadic uttrance *tattvamasi* as something different from ordinary or descriptive language and something above the Ayerian criticism of the demonstrative use of language. Āruni's demonstration that multiplicity, a matter of only empirical information is unreal since it is a difference in name arising from speech. The author's analysis of 'Self-consciousness' or the Knowledge of the knower in the philosophy of yājñavalkya is striking by original. He aptly observes that Yājñavalkya has drawn the attention of Maitreyī from the irrelevant metaphysical questions regarding consciousness after death or liberation and pleads for philosophical enlightenment i.e. self complete knowledge of the non-dual reality.

Dr. Nayak's analysis of the problem of personal identity is perhaps the most original portion in the volume and his correlation of this concept with problems of reincarnation and subtle body based on Sāṅkhya exegesis is also very suggestive. He rightly states that subtle body (*Sūkṣma śārīra*) is a logical necessity for making survival, rebirth and reincarnation meaningful. The age-long dispute of the Sāṅkhya and Nyāya theories of causality i. e. whether the effect pre-exists in the cause or is something newly 'produced' is discarded very convincingly by the author as merely a verbal dispute without any factual significance. It is immaterial whether we should use the word 'manifestation' or 'production' when both of these refer to the same fact.

Except for the incomplete transliteration of Sanskrit terms the printing is good. The book is indispensable for the students of Indian philosophy.

A. C. Sukla