

der of science leaving no room for the time order of human experience:

... man *needs* the timeless order of experience if he is not to let his personality and self disintegrate completely under the impact of what I might call 'commodity time' – time which is money, time which we hire, mortgage, buy and sell; time which, when used up, is fit only for the garbage heap (...) *Productive* time is precious, time consumed worthless.

Time as experienced by man in modern technological society increasingly exhausts itself in quantitative units measurable here and now. Therefore there is an inner distance from the past which obliterates its forms and divests it of meaning. The past is not only behind us, it has slid into limbo; it is also *psychologically* dead (...)

When we consider this psychological situation with the parallel fact that we never knew so much about the past as we do today, we are confronted with a paradox. We know more about the past, but the more we know about it the less it means to us: there is no feeling of continuity or identity. Indeed, we may even work up some kind of academic enthusiasm for our relationship with Pithecanthropus or the australoid ape, but from our own civilized human past the estrangement seems complete and irrevocable (p. 32).

However, the main object of Vatsyayan's essay is the problem of communicating human experience as it poses itself to modern literature as well as to the other arts. The book, therefore, is of great interest for all who want to learn more about contemporary Indian writing and thought.

Rainer Kimmig

**Ajneya (Sachchidananda Vatsyayan):** *Unterwegs zum Fluß. Erzählungen, Betrachtungen, Gedichte, zwei Briefe.* Edited by Lothar Lutze and Rainer Kimmig. (Neue Indische Bibliothek, 11). Freiburg: Wolf Mersch, 1986. 282 pages, DM 30.-

**Ajneya (Sachchidananda Vatsyayan):** *Lebenwollen. Erzählungen und essayistische Prosa.* Edited by Wolfgang Herwig. Hildesheim: edition collage, 1986. 79 pages, DM 12,80.

A series of first translations from Indian regional languages – this we owe to the publisher Wolf Mersch. The first book is dedicated to the learned poet S.H. Vatsyayan, known as "Ajneya", who wrote in Hindi and English. His creativity covered a wide range of literary genres. The selection in hand gives examples of his works in prose and verse, of essayistic texts, and of "reflections" from his

diary on questions of identity and cultural self-definition from a cosmopolitan point of view. An autobiographical sketch and a short essay on Ajneya's importance for modern Indian literature by the (mainly Hindi-)translator Lothar Lutze is followed by a superfluous lecture on the problems of translating by Rainer Kimmig (which could have been avoided by at least giving one example for the various possibilities of rendering a single sentence – for the non-expert reader). A bibliography that even satisfies scientific standards and carefully compiled notes on Indian terms occurring in the texts conclude the book.

The second volume under review is a booklet on one of Ajneya's recurring themes: the wish to live (a short story), then, an interesting interpretation of the Pygmalion myth, and the important lecture on "man in technological society". There follow entries from his diary, notes, and a short biography. (Three annoying misprints.) An essayistic introduction has been written by Lothar Lutze.

Both selections were prepared by the author himself in co-operation with Lothar Lutze – which is a fact to be kept in mind when an interpretation is attempted. The booklet would here be indispensable.

The German language of the translations is consistent and convincing, the capacity of Lothar Lutze especially obvious in his rendering of the poems. But Rainer Kimmig's prose translations are not less competent.

The appreciation of Ajneya's oeuvre by Lothar Lutze gives the German reader an idea of the innovative creativity of this poet in the Indian context. But I disagree decidedly with Lutze when he draws a comparison with Goethe in the German context. If analogies cannot be avoided, then Ajneya's mind shows more affinity to Schiller's than Goethe's 'synthetic thinking'.

Ajneya's 'synthesis' is one of two systems of thought and values into one supposedly humanistic morality. It is effected by an (eminently Indian) search for universals of ethical behaviour and an acute sense, a remarkable sensitivity for values without which the life of man would not be human. The tension produced by 'the western mind' declaring that morality is not universal and never can be – and the fundamentally unquestioned assumption of 'the Indian mind' that there is such a morality, is one of the most prominent features of this complex mind, expressing itself consciously/analytically in his reflections and artistically in the short stories.

Another central problem for Ajneya (as for any modern European writer) was that of self-definition and/or the artistic ego-identity, foremost represented by his poems and, in relation to society, in his reflections. This does not mean that the poet was of an abstract idealistic provenance, far from it. Any German reader will find access immediately to the stories – their liveliness of style and subtlety of observation display Ajneya's consummate artistic skill. His ethical attitude is anything but naive, he is well aware of the dangers of deception. This too accounts



for his lucid understanding of one 'unmapped region' of the European psyche which could startle most of his readers. Two letters are meant to stimulate the peace-discussion here.

I found it easier to write a whole volume on this "fascinating personality" (so Lutze) than to restrict myself to these few remarks.

*Irmtraud Höhn*

**Klaus Seeland (ed.):** Recent Research on Nepal. Proceedings of a Conference held at the Universität Konstanz, 27-30 March 1984. (Schriftenreihe Internationales Asienforum, 3). München-Köln-London: Weltforum Verlag, 1986. 351 pages, 24 plates with b/w prints, DM 74.-

The book presents contributions to the conference "Recent Research on Nepal" which was held at the university of Konstanz in March 1986. Klaus Seeland, author of the valuable book "Ein nicht zu entwickelndes Tal. Bambustechnologie und Subsistenzwirtschaft in Ost-Nepal" (1980) was responsible for the conference and for the edition of this book. It comprises eleven contributions by the participants and on pp. 221-349 a bibliography with 2300 titles of books and articles published between 1975 and 1983. This bibliography continues those of H. Heuberger and A. Höfer "Deutsche Forschung in Nepal 1950-1975", Heidelberg/München 1976 and of L. Boulnois "Bibliographie du Nepal 1963-73", Paris 1975.

Most of the participants were ethnologists, two were geographers, one an Indologist, one an architect, one a development expert and one a sociologist. This composition shows the broad multidisciplinary interest in Nepal which is indeed necessary in order to do justice to such a complex subject.

The bibliography is of particular value because it also contains Nepalese government bulletins, conference papers, feasibility studies and evaluation reports. For these concrete references Nepal-experts will be especially thankful since everybody who has worked intensively in and on Nepal knows that there is indeed a lot of material existing in Nepalese institutions and in those dealing with Nepal. Now, thanks to this bibliography it is easier to gather material as at least the titles are at hand. Some day, when the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is fully established such a search will be less onerous, one of the tasks of ICIMOD being a comprehensive collection of such materials in its library.

The major part of the eleven papers is ethnological, including an interesting article from the field of parapsychology (Walter A. Frank). Veronique Boullier deals with initiation rites and wandering ascetics. Joanna Czarnaiecka writes about