

RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

A Journal in the Study of Religion

VOLUME 2 No. 1

APRIL 1979

GLORY OF INDIA

'GLORY OF INDIA' is published four times a year, in March, June, September & December.

Editors : Prof. J. L. Shastri & R. K. Shastri
Executive Editor : N. P. Jain

Subscription Rates :

	Annual	Single Copy	Life
India	Rs. 20.00	Rs. 6.00	Rs. 200.00
Foreign (Airmail)	US \$11.00	\$3.00	\$110.00

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Contributions to the journal may be sent for publication to the Editor. The authors are requested to send the Manuscripts typed in double space.

Editorial Correspondence (Articles, Books for Review etc.) should be addressed to the Editor, Glory of India, Motilal Banarsidass, Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi-110 007 (India).

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Full Page	Rs. 500.00	\$75.00
Half Page	Rs. 300.00	\$40.00
Quarter Page	Rs. 200.00	\$25.00

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There are not so many journals promoting a study of religion that one more is too many. The discipline is too recent of arrival in our academies for that. This is especially so in Australia where the discipline is just beginning. Hence, an initial need for a forum for scholars in Religion, as distinct, say, from Theology or Philosophy, here in Australia, is plain to see — the need any academic community with definable boundaries of interest, even perhaps, of geography, has for a venue through which creative exchange may happen in print. No such forum or venue exists in Australia, and this Journal hopes in some measure to provide one.

Naturally, contributions from places other than this one will be encouraged, indeed, sought. There could be no other way to promote a more wide understanding of Religion in Australia, than this. The Journal, in other words, though meant in part to be the product of a need felt among Australian "religionists", must, by dint of that very fact, take its place beside other International Journals in the field.

The title is indicative of a certain stress — the desire of the editors to provide a venue for a wider understanding of Religious *knowledge*, of, that is, the "truth" or "wisdom" Religions seek to convey. Many Journals pride themselves on their standard of scholarly excellence, and often, it would appear, on that alone. Our hope is, whilst sacrificing nothing of substance in scholarship, nonetheless to produce, indeed, promote something more — writings which, in being read, effectively stimulate insight. We express this hope to indicate our earnest policy of producing something that matters, and not yet another place for scholarly self-indulgence. We are concerned, in other words, not merely with knowledge of religion, but as much with religious knowledge.

The first few issues will be indicative of the approach of the Journal and will include papers by: —

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Religious Traditions is published twice a year, in April and October. Subscription rates in Australia: \$6.50 per issue, \$12.00 annual; outside Australia: U.S. \$8.00 per issue, U.S. \$14.00 annual, \$20.00 for 2 years' subscription. Special subscription rates for students: \$9.00 annual, \$16.00 for two years. Special rates for Asian subscribers (excluding Japan): \$6.50 annual, \$12.00 for two years' subscription. All figures are in Australian dollars unless specified otherwise.

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Wrongly, perhaps, on some views, though plausibly on others, the greatest threat to the flourishing of religion in our times has been thought to be “the secular”. We use the term advisedly, for, as those contributing to this issue make clear, important distinctions are lost if we ignore the different *grammar* our language gives to the terms “secular”, “the secular”, “secularization”. For certainly in one sense, “the secular” must be thought of as opposed to authentic religion — the sense in which it merely means “the profane”, our worldly contrast to “the sacred”, in the twosome so much spoken of in our time by Mircea Eliade. But in this sense, there always has been “the secular”, and that it stands opposed to “the religious” is a formal fact which likewise always has been with us. Nothing at all “modern” or “contemporary” here.

The problem which many see as “modern”, or much of *our* times in some new way — though, we wonder — is “*secularization*”, a term some use as simply synonymous with “modernization”. As Margaret Chatterjee demonstrates, this link is misleading, and finally wrong; modernization is merely what’s happening to us, today, to make us what we are, differently from what we were. That is, to make us in many ways a brand new kind of creature. (“Modernity” is not, for instance, a synonym for “contemporary”.) The question whether this new creature leaves much to be desired, and how, if he does, he does, is the question philosophers of modernity should be facing.

But “secularization” is not quite this; or at best, it is only a part of this. And the question as to whether it flouts the best interests of man’s religiosity need not be the same question as to whether Modernity does so. Secularization is “the process by which the nature and spheres of politics and education (and culture) are separated from religion and are thus defined in relation to it”, in the words of Professor Saran in this issue. And if one views it, further, as “the modern expulsion of the transcendent from the ground of knowledge”, in the words of another contributor, Professor Arapura, clearly it becomes a deeply real challenge to the life and health of man and his religion.

It is these issues, intermingling “Modernity” with “the secular”, and “secularization”, that contributors to this number are much concerned about. And two facts are stunning: that none of these authors were *asked* to write about these matters, a fair witness enough to their force on the minds of present-day religionists. Clearly these questions are much vexing, and very present real ones; as anyway anyone who bothers earnestly these days to immerse himself in matters religious would surely agree they must be. The squeeze at least of Modernity is felt nowhere more acutely than in religion; or at least, in the ways and places man still tries *to be* religious.

But perhaps more striking is the fact that every single offering here is about the impact of secularization, not on Western communities expressing their religiosity, but quite squarely on Eastern ones, and most notably (though not

only) on the Indian. We are accustomed to finding "the secular" making its presence abundantly felt, almost gargantuanly, in the West. We little realize quite how much this also is true of the East. Or if we do — pointing to China, and recently "Communist" countries — India at least, we often feel, remains not nearly so troubled. India often seems at least a little haven for those who find Modernity even, perhaps, "the secular", a scourge. We believe it still is to some extent, though perhaps less so than once it was. Nothing escapes the Twentieth Century — a rather important platitude. The analytical implications of this for India and Japan in a historical perspective are analyzed by Prof. F. J. Streng and Prof. Kitagawa respectively.

It is clear we must take much account in our programmes of education of these very present facts of "the secular" and "secularization" — as Professor Burke's description of the teaching vision at Temple well illustrates. Briefly, to survive, and do forcefully, religion too must face our Age, and live quite squarely within it. Much perhaps will have to change; but part of the trick will be its preservation in these new terms, so that only these terms are new.