



Altered Destinations

Self, Society, and Nation in India

Makarand R. Paranjape

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Description

Addresses the complex inter-relations of state, nation, and identity in India through the medium of culture and the Gandhian concept of *swaraj*.

Altered Destinations addresses the complex interrelations of state, nation and identity in India through the medium of culture, and compellingly reframes the debate in the context of the Gandhian concept of *swaraj*. Engaging with Gandhi's classic text *Hind Swaraj*, (written in 1909), which envisioned an entirely new form of identity and governance in India in opposition with the colonial past, Paranjape extends the discussion on *swaraj* by addressing the field of culture to see how ideas of autonomy, selfhood, and cultural independence have been expressed, depicted and studied.

A nation, Paranjape suggests, is also a destination, a goal, an objective, with a built in teleology and an ultimate aim. Many forget what the destination of India is. They think it is economic or social advancement, freedom, democracy, justice, and so on. These words, however, still do not express the underlying purpose for which this nation was imagined into being. This is where the indigenous concept of *swaraj* comes into its own. Simultaneously encapsulating autonomy, empowerment, dignity, selfhood, it focuses on not just rights, but responsibilities and commitments to one another and to our highest selves as well. *Swaraj* in literary texts means the preservation or assertion of cultural identities. All told, cultural *swaraj* can be a fertile field of inquiry and discussion. In Paranjape's analysis *swaraj* becomes a struggle for intellectual freedom and autonomy, and an attempt to resist both Western and Indian forms of colonisation or domination.

Readership: This book should speak to a wide range of scholars, cutting across disciplines such as literature, history, political science, sociology, and philosophy, who are concerned with the meaning of modern India.

Contents

Preface; Self, Society and Nation: Indian Notions of Responsibility; 1857: The Religious Roots of Indian Anti-Imperialism; Indian Alternations: Aurobindo, Ambedkar and After; Interrogating Indian Post-Nationalism: Culture, Citizenship and Global Futures; Hindi Hain Hum: An Account of a Vibhashi's Romance with the National Language; The Case for Sanskrit as India's National Language; National Education? Problems and Prospects; Regaining the Indian Eye; Secularism vs. Hindu Nationalism: Interrogating the Terms of the Debate; Plurality, Tolerance and Religious Conflict in India; Towards a Common Future? An Indo-Pakistani Story; The Availability of Mahatma Gandhi: Towards a Neo-Gandhian Praxis; Notes; Works Cited/References; Glossary; Index

About the Author

Makarand R. Paranjape is an Indian English academic, critic, literary theorist, poet, fiction writer, columnist, and reviewer. He was educated at the Bishop Cotton's Boys' School, Bangalore, St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he obtained a Masters and PhD in English. He moved to the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi as an Associate Professor before being invited to apply for a Professorship at Jawaharlal Nehru University, which he joined in 1999. He served as Chair, Centre for Linguistics and English, and then as Chair, Centre for English Studies (2006-2007) and as the Coordinator of the UGC Special Assistance Programme (2003-2008).

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