

Barun Roy—an Artist of 'Visible Memories'

by Samir Dasgupta



Clouded Hills



Fallen Leaf Lake, California



Sail Boats



Lady in Yellow

Every self-trained artist faces the obvious limitations imposed by the fact of their not having gone through a rigorous process of schooling, especially in the techniques of capturing the surface reality of visible objects. Although this tends to constrain their ability to manoeuvre movements of the pen or the brush in a more or less preconceived manner, the unschooled artist does enjoy certain advantages not usually given to those who have gone through the mill. Happily, Barun Roy's works show that the artist has made successful and effective use of this precious freedom of unpremeditated self-expression. The process, eclectic as it is, has how-

ever led to varied creations, often unrelated to one another, either in style or mood. But then, it may be said in defence of the artist—who likes to describe his works as 'visible memories' rather than 'visual impressions'—that the shapes and forms of things conceived in the world of memory are not likely to be similar or continuous. The canvases thus, quite naturally, fall in separate categories, representing more than one artist, as it were, in the same creator. It is for Roy himself to decide whether he wants to retain this seemingly divided image of the artist.

Speaking of the exhibits mounted by the Chittrakoot Art Gallery, which are done in oil,

acrylic, water colour and pencil, what struck me most was the unifying role of the brilliant, vibrant, and usually contrasting colours set in harmonious juxtaposition. The 'sketches' done in black pencil, are meditative and soothing for the eye. In fact, 'Trees at Night' (No. 20, in pencil and charcoal) makes a deeper impact on the viewer than 'The Buds' done in colour pencil, although the piece titled 'Entranced' (No. 24, showing trees swept by wind) certainly reveals the particular strength of the colour pencil. Other black-and-white pencil 'sketches', notably 'Before the Storm' (No. 14) and 'Hidden Valley' (No. 16) are delicate

pieces. 'Fallen Leaf Lake' (No. 27) is another example of the inherent powers of expression of the common pencil. Roy is no less adept in the handling of water colours, the most telling examples being 'White Sand Beach, Boracay' (No. 30 & 31), 'Coconut Grov' (No. 42) — the conceptualisation of the subject/image being strikingly fresh, and 'Grass Flowers' (No. 33). The piece du resistance, however, is 'Sail Boats' (No. 47), a work of uncommon beauty. Roy's several essays in water colour & acrylic/oil on paper, interestingly, do not seem to fall in any distinct category in the sense that more often than not these turn out to be a stylistic combination of the artist's other major formal types. I have liked 'Rhapsody in Yellow' (No. 62) and 'The Waterfall' (No. 65) the best in this group. In all these the artist has avoided treating Nature for its own sake. Instead, Nature has been made to appear as a variegated backdrop to the artist's 'visible memories'. To quote Roy: 'In my memory world, colour and composition exist, and reality is not exactly without its semblance. But they exist only as vehicles for an inner quest to seek the truth behind the reality, the soul behind the form, the feeling behind the impression. If, in the course of that search, the colours and compositions deepen to assume abstract form and meaning, they do so not from any sleight of the intellect, but out of the force of emotions condensed.'

A Nazrul Concert with a Difference

by Waheedul Haque

CHHAYANAUT is almost universally famed in the country and even across the border in Calcutta as the mother protector of Tagore song and the guardian angel of culture and good taste. Such superlative accolades quite fit a thirty-year-old organisation that frontally took on Pakistani army dictators and their predatory cultural policies — and were vindicated by the outcome of the Liberation War. And their victory in the unequal war was 'rightly' attributed to their wonderful weapon: Tagore song.

And yet — wonder of wonders — for more than a two decades Chhayanaaut has been churning out more successful Nazrul singers than crooners of Tagore melodies — their hall-mark. A natural corollary to that was that of their numerous stage presentations round the year the soirees devoted to Nazrul Songs turned out more satisfying than their other offerings.

Monday's Chhayanaaut presentation on the occasion of the 16th death anniversary of Kazi Nazrul Islam was no exception to that interesting rule. Anyone having even a smattering of subcontinental music knows that while most of Tagore's musical creations lend very eminently to homophonic choral — even polyphonic — performance because of their wonderful use of chords, songs modelled on kheyal and thumri styles are very difficult to perform in chorus. And Nazrul's melodic outpourings were mostly in the free and loosely composed styles of kheyal and thumri. It has been a glorious tradition with Chhayanaaut to do these songs in chorus. On Monday at the National Museum main auditorium they gave us six such chorus pieces full of verve and musicality. Very enlivening

indeed. While 'Ruma jhooma jhoom baadal nupur', 'Doley bone tomaler jhulanaty' and 'Meghero hindole' were of the more familiar numbers with the usual Nazrul lilt — which is but a very artistic borrowing by the hyper talented Kazi from dehati light-classicals of the rural regions of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. But then there were those more serious numbers at which Chhayanaaut excels. The opening piece of the concert 'Baaje midanga of in teora set the tone of what was to follow. The swinging kheyal piece 'Barosha of elo barosha' was done in the way only possible by a season Chhayanaaut team. The finale came with 'Bha-boney aashlo othli shudur' was also done exquisitely but it didn't sound quite right for a closing song. There was a very nasty production snag in the first of the two dance offerings. But that was more than made up for it, mostly by a wonderful costume-colour-light combination as also by the perfect rendition in unison with the song it was portraying.

Shuman Choudhury was his masterful reincarnation of Inam Goswami and Khairul Anam Shakil was forceful and efficient in his favourite piece. Nishat, Shirley, Fancy and Shimu were up with their steady and melodious and lively performances while Faqir Shahidul Islam was particularly good in 'Ajhor Dhara' — and he was quite a surprise for me.

Two things left much room for improvement. Pronunciation, also, of many of the solo performers, was, to say it softly, atrocious. Two — the production suffered from such looseness as to allow a section among the Philistine listeners to go for half-hearted hand-clapping, marring very badly wonderful musical ambience.

litical arena, many questions arise as to the real meaning and effective applications of international law. This book provides an outstanding evaluation of its achievements a clear assessment of the role played by international law in the world today, and its future prospects as new needs arise as a result of unforeseen changes in the geopolitical scene and world development. Contents include:

Subjects of international law: The concept of legal personality; states; international organizations; peoples and national liberation movements; individuals; transnational corporations.

Sources of international law: Treaties; custom; unilateral acts of states and international organizations; non-conventional concerted acts; equity; jurisprudence and teachings; international public law in municipal legal systems.

Competence and responsibility of states: Jurisdiction of states; immunity of states; international state responsibility; succession of states.

The law of friendly relations between states: The concept of co-operation; diplomatic and consular relations; recognition of states and governments; the principle of non-intervention; promotion of friendly relations by international organizations.

Peaceful settlements of disputes: Methods of diplomatic settlement; methods of obligatory settlement of disputes;

settlement of disputes within international organizations.

The law of international economic relations: Permanent sovereignty over natural resources and economic activities; international law and development; commercial relations; monetary relations; international law and investment; transfer of technology.

The law of conflictual relations: The use of force by states in international law; the use of force by international organizations; the law of international armed conflicts; the law applicable to non-international armed conflicts; disarmament and arms control.

The law of the seas: The adjacent sea; the continental shelf; the high seas; the seabed outside the limits of national jurisdiction.

Air and extra-atmospheric space: Air; outer space; the moon and other celestial bodies.

Other systems: Antarctica; international rivers and lakes; international canals, protection of the environment.

Human rights and rights of peoples: Civil and political rights; economic, social and cultural rights; women's rights; refugees' rights; international mechanisms for the protection of human rights.

Community-oriented rights: The right to development; the right to decolonization; the right to peace; future of international law.

Also published in French

Pessimistic but Indelible Vision of Life and Living

by Fayza Haq



truly content with what he was learning about from and the handling of materials. He also enjoyed to the hilt the ability to experiment at will.

Kabir did not formally inaugurate his works, as he had no patience with formalities. Neither were his works for sale. In his display, he wanted the

people of Bangladesh to view his works and get whatever message they could derive from it.

The artist termed his paintings 'life and fantasy', and gave none of the works a name or number. In one of the items from a set of a series, one found old cloth, sponge, metal

squares and wax put together to delineate the condition of life in Bangladesh. The white sponge in the backdrop held symbols of 'Plus' and 'Minus' to represent the vicissitudes of life.

In that piece Kabir had used different colours and forms, to depict the varied social conditions of the people, differentiating their sexes and ages. Mankind's feelings were represented in the college of the white heart in the forefront which, in turn, was depicted as almost disappearing in the waves of water. The collage was an interesting blend of colours and forms, and well represented the present situation of the life of some of the people of Bangladesh.

About the next piece the artist insisted 'Our feelings and sympathies are lost or dying.' There was a sea-green cut-out flower motif. The blue and purple of the different figures were to denote the different individualities. The gorgeous pattern at the back, which continued in the foreground in scraps of burnt silk images stood for lost standards of ethics among many in Bangladesh.

In another entry was shown people tugging one another with a gold piping. The flower motifs in beige and purple, with blue heart patterns, were

seen in the background. A tall image in green, with paisley motifs plastered on was seen in the extreme left. These were simply impressions of mankind.

The figures in front in yet another piece had the family theme with the child kept in a plastic case. 'A child has to be protected all its life,' the artist explained. The figure in green too symbolised disharmony. The flowers in the backdrop were depicted as floating away; the calyx in the right forefront was shown as a geometrical form — dropping and gradually disappearing.

More interesting than the rest perhaps the entry which was yet again a collage, with Japanese handmade paper as the background, silver paper and burnt cloth. Kabir had tied the images with a copper wire. The red colour was used to symbolise a target and bloodshed. There was black for contrast. Falling heart patterns in the foreground stood, repeatedly, for destruction and degeneration.

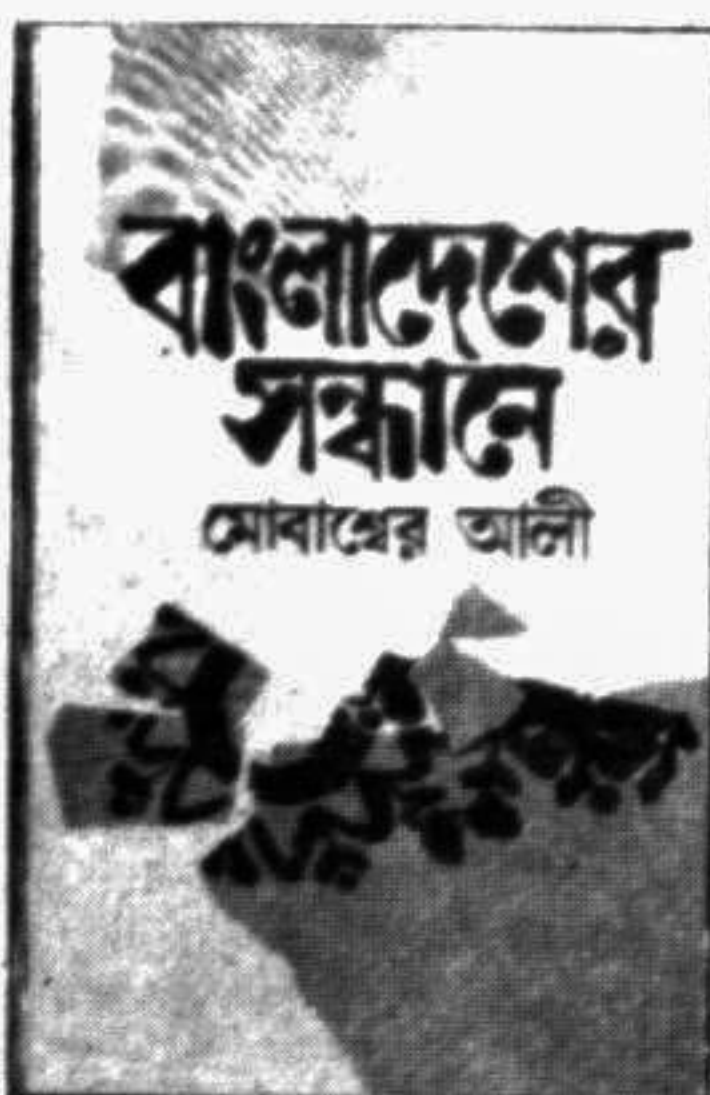
In the unique exhibition of the portrayal of people like slum dwellers, rickshawpullers, 'razakars', drug addicts, the lackadaisical bourgeoisie, the suffering students and oppressed average women of Bangladesh, there were many more entries stressing the theme of 'Wasteland'.

Evolution of Bangladesh: A Chronology

Book Review

BANGLADESHER SANDHANE (In Quest of Bangladesh) By Mobasser Ali, Cover design: Hashem Khan. Published by Muktaadhara, Dhaka. 232 pages, Taka 50.00.

Reviewed by Md Mahub Hassan.



European traders initiated a new era for this part of the sub-continent. As a result of it, this country came in contact with a new and separate culture and civilisation. And in competition to be the lord of this country, Britain finally defeated her European rivals.

Was the defeat at Plassey merely an accident taken place by betrayal of the Nawab's commanders? Or the overall situation at that time made it almost inevitable for this sub-continent including Bengal to be gradually conquered by the British (who were more developed in military techniques and weapons, political far-

sightedness and diplomacy? Arguments, as the writer indicates, go more in favour of the latter.

The British were the first rulers to consider this resourceful country only as the land to exploit and plunder. Their extensive economic exploitations led to the destruction of indigenous industry, immense loss in agriculture that resulted in repeated famines snatching away millions of lives and causing indescribable sufferings of people.

However, wonderful transition towards better and upward lines is done as a consequence of foreigners' intrusion and subsequent interactions that occur between the customs, tradition, language, culture and politics of the conquerors and the conquered. As a result of British rule, the people of this country were introduced to modern science and technology, rational outlook and spirit of integrated nationalism. It is mass awakening out of political consciousness initiated by the British (though not willingly) that made this sub-continent free from British yoke.

Disparities during the semi-colonial Pakistani rule, and hard realities, that led to the cessation of most peculiar state and birth of our dear motherland, as an indepen-

dent sovereign state, have been discussed in brief.

The writer gives a vivid depiction of traditional industry (mainly handicrafts) of ancient Bangla. From time before the birth of Christ, textile industry developed here and the Muslim of Bengal earned worldwide reputation for its fineness, delicacy and utility. Muslim, maintaining its glorious tradition for centuries, met first crushing blow from the British who planwisely destroyed it just to serve their business aspiration. Gradually, industrial revolution and widespread supply of cheap factory-produced cloth resulted in the final ruin of Muslim. And almost similar development took place in case of other enriched industries including ship-building, indigo, salt, sugar etc.

Travellers' (Chinese, Muslim and European) accounts have been considered to be rich and authentic sources of the history of this country. Their inclusion has added to the accountability of the book.

Short description of the main cities and regions of ancient Bengal and a few rare maps have also been included in the book.

Our glorious past and achievement of independence after strenuous struggle has filled the mind of the author with pride and he has expressed his utter optimism about our dignified position in world community.

The book, though lacking penetration into decisive socio-economic factors of history, is a comprehensive approach to understand the root and evolution of the people of this country. Plain language and lucidity of narrative style has made it extremely reader-friendly.

BOOKS

International Law: Achievements and Prospects

General editor: Mohammed Bedjaoui
1992, 127 pp., 16.5x24.5 cm, hardback
ISBN 92-3102716-6

Co-published with Martinus Hijhoff Publishers, Netherlands

A remarkable compendium of works prepared under the direction of Mohammed Bedjaoui, Judge at the International Court of Justice in The Hague. Nine years of in-

tensive research and consultations by a team of over seventy world-renowned specialists were needed to accomplish this book. At a time of rapid change in the international po-

A Discussion on the Law of Evidence

Book Review

SHAKKHA AIN O ALOCHANA
by Dr (Professor) Nurul Huq

Published by Ain Grantho Prokashani, Dhaka
428 Pages, Tk 300.00 (W) & Tk 225.00 (N)

Reviewed by Md Humayun Kabir Choudhury

Dr Huq, a scholar of quality attained a rare academic achievement — first of its kind in the Dhaka University. Besides, he has devoted more than 24 years of his legal and academic career in this study of Law. Dr Huq is also the author of the Sampatti Hastantar Ain O Alochana (the transfer of property Act), Agrakroy Ain O Alochana (Law of pre-emption), Suntridista Paratikar Ain O Alochana (The Specific Relief Act) and Paribarick Ain O Alochana (the family Court Ordinance and family laws), etc which were already published.

Among the existing laws of this country, the Shakkha Ain O Alochana (the Evidence Act) occupies a very important place. The field of enforceability of this act is very wide. The civil and criminal trials are regulated by this Act. Many

years ago, this law has been adopted and enacted in English language. Till recently its commentaries and textual interpretations have been written in English. But at present with the introduction of Bengali in every sphere of our national life, the author keenly felt the necessity of writing law books in Bengali.

To write a book on Law in Bengali is very difficult but Dr Huq has overcome these difficulties admirably. Moreover, the principles in which the sections are based, are also discussed in their details. Judicial decisions and other supporting principles have been



given in appropriate places. The important case laws — old and new — of the Sub-Continent have been included in this book.

The subject has been sincerely dealt in the book with necessary interpretations, explanations and commentaries. The reported decisions of the superior courts have been added to elucidate the principles of law. That is the book has extensively dealt with the Law of Evidence with particular reference to the case laws,

In this book, the Law of Evidence has been interpreted, expounded and elucidated in a very practical manner to meet the special requirements of the lawyers, judges and the students. Professor Huq's commentary is well ordered, systematic, coherent and unambiguous. The inclusion of the up-to-date decisions of our Supreme Court will be of immense help to the judges and practising lawyers. I believe the students of law too will be benefited by studying this book. Needless to say that this book is a contribution of a scholar to the nation.