

industry in the telecom sector which has seen most rapid changes during the nineties. According to her the challenge now is to create new demand for services. Ashok Jhunjunwala in "Looking beyond NTP 99" argues for local and small scale solutions of the telecom sector if we are to achieve the target of 100 million subscribers. He pleads that Indian technology can be used and the shackles of international credit and technology need to be broken if a fast pace of development is desired.

The IIR 2001 has many other interesting articles on finance and functioning of urban local bodies, urban and inter-urban road designs, vehicular air pollution, water and waste water sector, rural drinking water supply, bus transport in Delhi and dealing with drought.

Indeed the editor and the subscribers of the various articles have done a wonderful job in bringing out this report which is quite research based and contemporary. The editor mentions that they could not go deep into certain issues and even omitted subjects like land use, housing sector, industrial parks etc. In spite of these shortcomings IIR 2001 is certainly a land mark publication in discussing the issues on regulation of the market structure of the infrastructure sector.

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The Politics of Cultural Practice : Thinking through Theatre in an Age of Globalization by Rustom Bharucha, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2001. Rs. 545.00

Indian cultural studies are rapidly becoming known all over the world. Although they do not enjoy the academic support and official recognition cultural studies have in the USA, still Indian protagonists

of cultural studies can boast of penetrating analytical talent, social sensibility, a deep concern to understand and communicate this understanding, and a genuine democratic temperament. Rustom Bharucha's present book is a little difficult to classify, but I do not hesitate to regard it as a major contribution to cultural studies for the following reasons. The work deals with cultural practice in a wide and creative sense, in this case theatre; it deals with the ways in which culture works in society; it is (auto-) biographical; it criticises elitism, power, social and political hierarchies and economic inequalities; and lastly it illustrates through life experiences the insidious workings of globalisation. All these critical elements form part of cultural studies everywhere.

Furthermore, Bharucha approaches his subject from a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary angle : at times he is looking with the anthropologist's gaze, never forgetting that he is a creative artist as well; at other times he is making sharp sociological and economic observations, weaving his different approaches into a highly personal narrative, a rich critique of lived cultural practices, simultaneously playing the role of participant and of observer.

The seven chapters of the book had gone 'through many incarnations' (p. IX) as lectures held in different countries such as the United States, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Indonesia, Japan, Canada and Slovenia; and of course in India. Thus these chapters are exercises in what are Bharucha's main concerns : interculturalism, intraculturalism, multiculturalism and secularism. The meaning of these terms unfolds 'in the process of being explored'; we get to see how they 'mutate and metabolize in the course of their transportation, translation, and specific uses in other cultures' (p. 2). Underlying much of this is Bharucha's deep concern about the impact of globalisation on non-western cultures that lack the money and the power to make themselves known to the world.

In spite of the usual positive rhetoric about globalisation as offering new opportunities and freedom, Bharucha observes that 'there is no free movement of workers worldwide'. Globalisation is nothing but unchallenged Western free-marketeting, and good old Western liberal elitism under a new name. Goods and money may travel everywhere, victims of poverty may not. As forms of resistance to the obviously anti-poor and anti-Third World undercurrent of globalisation, Bharucha advocates popular nationalism and the democratically controlled nation-state (p. 6, 35-6, 168, 189). But equally important, if not more so, are cultures themselves; when they meet and mingle they have the potential to liberate. Especially 'interculturalism is alive and well'. It is a struggle 'beyond the making of culture to a confrontation of those global and national forces that ... control and obstruct ... the meeting of different cultures'. For without 'the creative dynamics of meeting, the intercultural imaginary is stunted' (p. 202).

In Bharucha's view this intercultural meeting across borders is much needed in order to make us aware of the 'social and economic predicament of underprivileged communities and indigenous peoples in the Third World'. Otherwise we face only the 'neo-orientalist fascination for the Other' (pp. 204-5). Bharucha wonderfully illustrates Western elitist fascination (and fear?) for the Orient in chapter 2 "When Eternal India meets the YPO" (YPO = Young Presidents Organization). Not only does this chapter tell us about elitist insensitivity, it actually shows how the global rich and successful (including some privileged Indians!) are feasting at their banquets while the rest of the (lesser privileged) world is either kept out of sight or dehumanised into theatre props (pp. 64-77). The neo-liberal answer to this charge is that rich and poor always existed and that the poor are to blame themselves for their poverty. Basically, the neo-liberal does not want to be disturbed with these minor issues. Neo liberalism often prefers to ignore questions of poverty, inequality and lack of

democracy, altogether. But sometimes (mostly Western) neo-liberals welcome and even embrace the exotic and the 'indigenized non-west' as long as the latter remains harmless and compliant. Neo-liberal versions of post-modernism have neatly swept differences of power, wealth, class and race under the carpet of deconstruction. Thus also the poor of the Third World can become sources of amusement for the global elite. It is in this context that Bharucha pleads for the 'cognition of the social and economic predicament of underprivileged communities and indigenous peoples in the Third World [sic], without which the recognition of their cultural identity and heritage becomes somewhat redundant' (pp. 204-5).

The mixing of politics and culture in this book is perhaps its only serious weakness. The title announces politics. The book itself contains cultural analyses and social observations, no genuine politics. Perhaps Bharucha has followed the post-modernistic fashion to call everything politics. But real politics, especially of the oppositional type with which Bharucha would be in favour, should minimally entail solid moral leadership, a will to radical change, egalitarian socio-economic ideals, a radical democratic temperament, extraordinary organisational talent and lastly a mass following. But all this seems to have gone out of fashion. The voice of protest in Bharucha's book sounds genuine enough and should be listened to, even if the voice occasionally suffers from post-modernese hoarseness.

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Environmental Economics, Edited by Ulaganathan Sankar, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2001. Rs. 595.00

The rapid depletion and degradation of renewable and non-renewable resources coupled with increasing levels of air, water and soil pollution