

(a psychiatrist and then inspiration for the ‘democratic psychiatry’ movement) or Thomas Szasz (trained as a psychoanalyst and then critic of the medical model of ‘madness’). The references to these other traditions of work are fleeting, and some of the contributors seem as certain about the truth of psychoanalysis as psychotics (seen from within the frame of Lacanian theory) are about their delusions. Together, though, these Lacanians illustrate the truth of the founding premise of the book that there is something impossible not only about ‘madness’, but also about psychoanalysis itself, even that impossibility comes to define it, that it is not a case of discovering that, yes, you can use psychoanalysis to make sense of madness or, no, you cannot, but rather ‘yes, you can’t’.

Ian Parker

Psychoanalyst, Manchester Psychoanalytic Matrix

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Made in India

Capitalism: a ghost story, by Arundhati Roy, London, Verso, 2014, 125 pp., £7.99 (paperback), ISBN 978-1-78478-031-9

India is often portrayed as a poster child of the globalization process, with its rapid industrialization, gigantic metropolises and commanding growth rates combining to propel it into the fast lane of the global economy. Behind the glitzy capitalist ‘success’ story, something altogether more sinister is going on, something which generally goes unreported in the West, and it’s this something that Arundhati Roy has made it her duty to uncover in a series of books, of which this is the most recent, written in her characteristically brave, succinct and devastating style.

Roy is someone who could have so easily chosen a life of comfort for herself as a Booker Prize winning novelist. Instead, she has chosen the path of truth telling – especially truth of the inconvenient variety – in the process sacrificing a life of potential safety, elitism and comfort for one of peril, notoriety and harassment, as she bravely risks the very real ire of the Indian authorities in order to bring the story of India’s ‘secret wars’ to the wider world.

The war in Kashmir, which has long since lost the interest of the Western press, is only part of the story here. It is easy to forget, as Roy reminds us, that the reason we hear so little about that troubled province is the half a million troops that India has permanently deployed there. Roy reveals, in a number of sharp and horrifying vignettes, how a series of show trials, complete with trumped-up charges and fabricated evidence, combined with the violent repression of Kashmir militancy by these troops and militias, has kept a lid on this most beautiful but tragically conflict-ridden region.

But the real ‘ghost’ story that Roy uncovers is that which connects the obscene disparities in wealth in India with the virtually total control of governmental policy exerted by a handful of the uber-rich and their corporations – Tata, Jindal, Essar, Vedanta etc. – and the forced expropriation of huge swathes of land – a modern-day ‘enclosure

movement' – in central India, so that the mineral rights can be sold to – you guessed it – the said corporations. In the process, hundreds of thousands of peasant farmers have been forcibly dispossessed; those who resist are dismissed by government and the media – media generally owned by the same mega-corps – as 'terrorists' and/or 'Maoists', and hunted down by government troops and government-backed militias; thousands have been killed and 'disappeared' (yes, this is modern India!), incarcerated or detained without trial (Roy tells us: '... in India we all know the process *is* the punishment', p. 64), and anyone who, like Roy, attempts to whistleblow gets harassed, threatened and vilified by the press as a 'traitor'. In fact, it is only Roy's international celebrity that protects her, thus far, from detention without trial, or worse.

In case one is tempted to think that all this might be forgiven to a degree if, in the hideous scramble for land and mineral rights, some of the accrued wealth were to 'trickle back down' to the poor in India, lifting them out of abject poverty, Roy coins the phrase 'Gush-Up' to describe the actual direction of travel of all this money: the Ambanis, Tatas, Mittals etc. of modern-day India are becoming some of the wealthiest people on the planet (100 billionaires own assets equivalent to a quarter of the nation's annual Gross Domestic Product), while the poorest of the poor, often including the bottom of the heap in India's still-existent caste system, are stripped of what little land they still had, and forced into choosing between a life of urban poverty, suicide (at the last count, 250,000 debt-ridden farmers had committed suicide) or a perilous life of resistance in the dense forests and jungles of central India.

Roy also describes how the myriad non-governmental organizations (NGOs), many of whom started off in India with the best of liberal and sometimes radical intentions, have ended up becoming part of the system: 'the corporate or foundation-endowed NGOs are global finance's way of buying into resistance movements... They sit like nodes on the central nervous system, the pathways along which global finance flows' (p. 33).

Roy's account allows us to see the workings of untrammelled capitalist 'development' as it is, in all its gruesome rapaciousness and inhumanity. Meanwhile, Bollywood tempts us with 'Slumdog Millionaire' and the like! Arundhati Roy, with her rare and very real passion for all of humanity, including the most downtrodden, despised and dispossessed, invites us to look behind the scenes to see the real picture for ourselves.

David Kalisch
S & S co-editor

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Joy of being

A philosophy of walking, by Frederic Gros, London, Verso, 2015, 288 pp., £9.99 (paperback), ISBN 978-1781682708

Frederic Gros has done a typical Gallic job on walking, combining his own ideas about walking with accounts of what walking meant to various philosophers. His