

Editorial

N Mukunda, Chief Editor

A couple of months ago, in our February 1996 issue, we introduced a new department titled 'Reflections', and presented a contemporary translation of a classic 1931 essay in Bengali by S N Bose on 'The Crisis of Science'. Our intention in this department is to provide interesting material on the history and philosophy of science, and offer a broader perspective than can be realised in specialised articles. In this issue we present the first of a two-part series on 'The Origin of Science' by Gangan Prathap.



Many years ago the physicist Erwin Schrödinger, in his beautiful book titled 'Nature and the Greeks' arising out of his 1948 Shearman Lectures, quoted these words from John Burnet: '...it is an adequate description of science to say that it is "thinking about the world in the Greek way". That is why science has never existed except among peoples who came under the influence of Greece'.

Whether we like it or not, most teaching of modern science emphasizes this point of view, with Europe as the sole inheritor of Greek philosophical thought. On the other hand, we learn from historians of science that the Greek flowering was part of the Egyptian - Phoenician tradition; and that for centuries there had been continuous contact among the peoples of India, China, Central and West Asia, and Greece.

Fortunately there are revivals today of attempts to provide accounts of early Indian efforts and achievements in science and mathematics. It is to be hoped that our own students will have easy access to such studies, written in a balanced way and without exaggeration.

We are pleased to welcome the incomparable R K Laxman to *Resonance* from this issue onwards — our readers are sure to look forward with anticipation to his wry comments on the world of science.

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