

Making the New Indian Citizen in Times of the Jawan (Soldier) and the Kisan (Farmer), 1962–1965

Anandita Bajpai

ABSTRACTS

Der Artikel befasst sich mit der Figur des „Neuen Menschen“ im unabhängigen Indien und dessen Veränderung und spezifischen Formung unter Kriegsbedingungen und Nahrungsmittelknappheit. Es nimmt die Kategorie des idealen Staatsbürgers eines „Neuen Indiens“ in den Blick, wie sie während der Amtszeit von Jawaharlal Nehru, dem ersten Premierminister des unabhängigen Indiens, propagiert wurde. In den Jahren zwischen zwei militärischen Konflikten mit China bzw. Pakistan (1962–1965) und vor allem in Zeiten akuter Nahrungsmittelknappheit in mehreren Bundesstaaten prägte der zweite Ministerpräsident, Lal Bahadur Shastri, den Slogan *Jai Jawan! Jai Kisan!* (Sieg für den Soldaten! Sieg für den Bauern!). Dieser Slogan feierte beide Figuren als ikonischen Helden der Nation. Alle anderen Register des Nationenaufbaus wurden in dieser Periode den übergreifenden Themen Verteidigung und Entwicklung zugeordnet. Der Artikel fragt danach, wie Unsicherheit und Nervosität des Staates Diskurse über Wachsamkeit und Opfer hervorgebracht. Er zeichnet die Veränderungen des Topos vom idealen Staatsbürger durch die Konstruktion eines Raumes der Ehrfurcht nach. Ehrfurcht vor den Bauern, die Getreidespeicher der Nation füllten, und den Soldaten, die Grenzen verteidigten. Aber auch diejenigen, die nicht in der Armee dienten oder in der Landwirtschaft arbeiteten, wurden aufgerufen sich zu „Neuen Menschen“ einer Nation in der Krise zu entwickeln. Anhand von Abbildungen aus den englischsprachigen Wochenzeitschriften *Link* und *New India* analysiert der Beitrag die Vorstellung des Staates über den „Neuen Menschen“ und damit verbundene Einschreibungen von Selbstaufopferung, Nationalismus, Wachsamkeit, Bereitschaft und Arbeit für die Nation.

This article engages with the shaping of the “New Man” figure in independent India and how this image was morphed and re-shaped by conditions of war and food shortages. It traces the category of the ideal citizen of a “New India”, as expounded during the term of Jawaharlal Nehru, independent India’s first Prime Minister. During the interim years between two wars with

China and Pakistan respectively (1962–1965), and especially in times of acute food grain shortages in several federal states, the second Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, raised the slogan *Jai Jawan! Jai Kisan* (Victory to the Soldier! Victory to the Farmer!), hailing both as iconic heroes of the nation. During this time, all other nation-building registers merged into the overarching categories of defence and development. How did the mood of insecurity and the nervousness of the state produce discourses of vigilance and sacrifice? The article traces the transformations in the trope of the ideal citizen, the revered space accorded to farmers as men who supplanted the nation's granaries and soldiers as men who defended its borders, and, finally, how the non-farmers and non-soldiers were also called upon to become the "New Men" of a nation in crisis. The last section analyses images from two English-language weekly newspaper magazines – *Link* and *New India* to shed light on the state's vision of the trope of the "New Man" and how it was inscribed with the qualities of self-sacrifice, nationalism, vigilance, preparedness and work for the nation.

This article engages with the shaping of the "New Man" figure in independent India and how this image was morphed and re-shaped by conditions of war and food shortages. It probes into the making of the category of the ideal citizen of a "New India" during Jawaharlal Nehru's prime ministership. Further, it shows how citizens who were neither soldiers nor farmers, both of whom had been hailed as the iconic heroes of the nation, were called upon by the state to become the "New Men" of India.

The first section outlines some of the important co-ordinates of Nehru's envisioned "New India", a roadmap for the nation to progress along the lines of economic self-sufficiency, industrialization, higher education and agricultural productivity. The register of growth and postcolonial nation-building was intertwined here with the figure of the ideal citizen, the "New Man" of the state-tutored New India. The article traces how the tropes of scientific temper and expertise, unity in diversity, development through the so-called "Temples of Modern India" entangled and mutually informed the category of the ideal citizen, as envisioned by the state. The second section points to the gradually changing geo-political contexts. In terms of foreign policy, the Non-Aligned Movement and peaceful coexistence had been hailed as the cornerstones of the Nehruvian consensus. The border dispute between India and China in 1962 altered the vocabulary of mutual non-aggression, which would in turn impact the expectations ascribed to the nation's "New Men".

The next section specifically sheds light on the time period between 1962 and 1965, when the overall mood of nationalism was defined by the context of two wars (with China in 1962 and Pakistan in 1965) and acute food grain shortages in several parts of the country. Here I emphasize the merging of all other nation-building registers into the overarching categories of defence and development. A mood of insecurity and the nervousness of the state merges into discourses of vigilance and sacrifice through the second Prime Minister's famous slogan of "Jai Jawan! Jai Kisan!" (Victory to the Soldier! Victory to the Farmer!).

The last section analyses images from two English-language weekly newspaper magazines – *Link* and *New India* during the interim period of the two wars. The objective here is to elucidate how in times of “national crises”, citizens who were neither soldiers nor farmers were called upon to serve the nation and become the “New Men” of India.

1. Nehruvian India’s Ideal Citizen – Some Historical Insights

*We must start with the machine which makes the machine.*¹

In a newly independent India, the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, a “founding father figure”² of the postcolonial state, played a central role in designing the vision of a ‘New India’. An important constituent of this nation-building vocabulary was what Nehru called the ‘Temples of Modern India:’ new dam projects, new laboratories, new industries. New centres of research (universities and laboratories), energy (dams) and production units (new industries, plants, Public Sector Units) were projected as the stepping-stones to a much-desired ‘self-sufficiency’³ for an envisioned socialist democracy. These were seen as a natural pathway that would materialize the nation’s dreams to “step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance”, as Nehru noted in his famous speech *A Tryst with Destiny* on the eve of independence in 1947.⁴ Thus, *manufacturing* engineers, atomic energy reactors, research institutes, dams, or even steel was seen as part of manufacturing a New India. Whereas the nation’s trajectory of progress was framed in an overarching register of economic self-reliance through a planned economy and increased production, it was the figure of the new citizen that became the active site of investment in performing the ideal nation. Crafting “New India” thus simultaneously also entailed the making of the new Indian. This idealized prototype was not just a figure fabricated overnight, but one whose constitution embodied the laborious work of transforming colonial subjects into citizens of a nation-state through a plethora of statist channels. In the Indian context, the making of the “New Man” is therefore intricately tied to the shaping of state visions and neither can be seen exclusively. In this section, I list some of the entangled and parallel registers that informed the category of New India as well as that of the ideal new citizen during the first decade after independence (1947–57). Both become entwined instruments for producing (1) a sense of nation-ness and national belonging, and more importantly, (2) the legitimacy of the postcolonial state as the organizer, unifier and authoritative face of the nation.

1 J. L. Nehru, Open-Minded Approach, Address to the Conference of the All-India Manufacturers’ Organization, New Delhi, April 14, 1956, in: Jawaharlal Nehru’s Speeches, Vol. 3, 1953–57, New Delhi 1958, pp. 87–88.

2 P. Ahluwalia, Founding Father Presidencies and the Rise of Authoritarianism. Kenya: A Case Study, in: *Africa Quarterly* 36 (1996) 4, pp. 45–72.

3 This phrase acquires a figurative quality in contemporary India, symbolic of the socialist habitus and phraseology much associated with Nehru’s visions and policies.

4 J. L. Nehru, *A Tryst With Destiny*, Speech delivered on the eve of India’s independence, 00:00hrs, August 14, 1947.

Two key characteristics that Nehru emphasized were the inculcation of ‘scientific expertise’ for the nation and that of ‘scientific temper’ in the ideal national citizen. Scientific expertise related to the “[i]dentity of the new India [...] defined in terms of the privileged place it accorded to science and technology in all arenas of life. For instance, techno-scientific artifacts such as dams, steel plants, and atomic reactors were hailed as the icons of the new nation-state.”⁵ This implied developing scientific manpower through institutes that produced qualified individuals to implement and design development plans, the Indian Institutes of Technology being a prime example of the same. Scientific temper, on the other hand, was defined as “the search for truth and new knowledge, the refusal to accept anything without testing and trial [...]” “[...] scientific approach and temper are, or should be, a way of life, a process of thinking, a method of acting and associating with our fellow men.”⁶ The vision behind the critically thinking, scientifically-tempered, “New Man” was, however, marred with inherent contradictions. On the one hand, Nehru was critical of the ‘unscientific scientist’, qualified scientist-citizens who were nonetheless marred in ‘superstitions’ and religious worlds in their everyday lives. They had still not internalized the spirit of scientific temper in their private lives. On the other hand, the state generally discouraged participation by the same scientists in politics proper through political mobilizations and trade unionism.⁷ Citizens were thus encouraged to be curious, critical and raise questions in general, but never quite question the intentions and doings of the state.

This discouragement of questioning the state’s development plans can be graphically captured in the 1954 production of the Films’ Division of India (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting), titled *The Case of Mr. Critic*,⁸ a documentary that shows the caricature of a common man, who is skeptical and critical of ‘the good visions’ of the state. The film is a journey of the figure of Mr. Critic, who by the end realizes the futility and ills of ‘unnecessarily’ critiquing the state, a message made all too clear to receiving Indian citizens in a period when there were no other television channels except for the state-run *Doordarshan*. Nehru’s New India was a place of manufacture, productivity, self-sufficiency and scientific manpower and the “New Man” of New India was a scientifically tempered individual, who would be quick to question the limits of his superstitious private life but never the objectives of the state.

5 S. Roy, *Beyond Belief: India and the Politics of Postcolonial Nationalism*, Durham, NC 2007, p. 114.

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 123–124.

7 This is well pointed out in Srirupa Roy’s *Beyond Belief* through the case of the Association of Scientific Workers, a collective of state employed scientists who criticized the Planning Commission for not inviting their participation in the third five-year plan, “The Association was asked to bear in mind the difference between science and industry, and to consequently resist from organizing scientific workers along trade union lines. The argument was that they would be better placed if they devoted their energies to the pursuit of science, since ‘thus only they can advance themselves. When scientific expansion takes place in India, there will be more opportunities for work and more jobs’” (*ibid.*, p. 121).

8 R. Prakash, *The Case of Mr. Critic*, Films’ Division of India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1954, See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Co7Vf9LLD4g&t=338s> (accessed 17 July 2018).

Another theme that subsumed diverse Indian identities and became a recurring coordinate of the “New Men” of independent India, as can be captured in state produced documentary films, classroom wall charts and political oratory, was the trope of “Unity in Diversity.” In a context where independence was accompanied by the violence of Partition and the simultaneous birth of two nation-states India and Pakistan, based on religious lines (Hindu and Muslim), this trope offered the much-needed clever solution to merge and cement religious, class, caste, regional and linguistic divides. Rather than pitch for flattened commonalities, or least common denominators, which were impossible to locate across the highly heterogenous sub-continent, Nehru used the trope to forward the “logic of newness as bricolage”⁹, with diversity as the one commonality and founding principle of nationhood and Indian uniqueness. In this way, diversity was not concealed –neither in classroom wall-charts, which showed different kinds of Indians, nor in the cultural tableaux of the Republic and Independence Day parades in New Delhi, that exhibited the diverse regional cultures spread across the geographical length and breadth of the country. Rather, difference was naturalized, emphasized and even celebrated. The trope became a useful instrument in two ways (1) It encouraged the idea that one did not need to be identical to other citizens in the nation along class, caste, religious, regional or linguistic lines in order to lay claims to being *Indian*, with development being the overarching grid of nationhood that defined and encapsulated all Indians; and (2) the trope helped consolidate the authority of the state as the legitimate unifier and manager of the nation with all its encompassing multiplicities. The new citizen of the new India was thus, from the very outset, a category that rose above divides and diversities, that stood in a spirit of unquestioned unity of the nation, and which subordinated or submitted itself to the larger entity called the nation-state. It was the state that became the care taker of its citizens and the project of making the “New Man” was essentially a statist project.

2. Geo-political Contexts

Internationally, the Indian state’s self-positioning was informed by the larger context of the Cold War. The Non-Aligned Movement became a crucial hallmark of the Indian state’s international self-positioning. With its iconic beginnings at the Bandung conference of 1955, and with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru as one of its founding figures (along with Yasser from Egypt, Tito from Yugoslavia and Sukarno from Indonesia), non-alignment became a political means, especially for the newly decolonized nations across Africa and Asia, to maintain an official political stance of not becoming a satellite of either of the two power blocks during the Cold War. The movement is often criticized for merely being an official position maintained in state rhetoric within the international comity of nations, which in effect, showed signs of a tilt towards the Soviet bloc in the

Indian case. Nonetheless, it did become an umbrella space for a collective international voice, replenished with the vocabulary of “anti-imperialism”, “anti-colonialism”, “anti-fascism”, “world peace” and especially “Afro-Asian solidarity”. When asked about the Non-Aligned Movement, Nehru had publicly declared that “[i]t is not a wise policy to put all our eggs in one basket.”¹⁰ Important for the context of this paper, is the movement’s vocabulary of mutual non-aggression and mutual co-existence.

Precedents of the same, that is, mutual non-intervention (in domestic affairs of other nations) and non-aggression can be found in the landmark Panchsheel Agreement, which was signed between the states of India and China in 1954. The five principles (*Panch* connoting five, and *Sheel* standing for virtues) emphasized – (1) Mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty; (2) Mutual non-aggression; (3) Mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs; (4) Equality and cooperation for mutual benefit; (5) Peaceful co-existence. These registers of world peace and non-intervention, which were celebrated themes in Indian foreign policy and a persistent feature of its political leaders’ oratory, would recede in national importance during the period of 1962–65. The border dispute with China was seen as a breach of the Panchsheel Agreement and would lead to the development of a new nationalizing vocabulary whereby the focus shifted from mutual benefit and non-aggression to a discourse of insecurity, vigilance and discipline. This renewed and gradually embroiling context becomes important in understanding the backdrop that informs transitions in the trope of the “New Man”.

3. *Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan!* Histories of a Slogan and the “New Man” in Times of Conflict and Scarcity

It is in times of perceived national, especially territorial, crises that the need to protect, produce, re-iterate nationhood and its encompassing nationalism(s) becomes a pressing necessity for states. Perceived threats and insecurities often become instruments that are utilized by states to forcefully re-induce sentiments of belonging and the need to belong. If, following Anderson, nations are “an imagined political community –and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign”¹¹ then parades, flags, national anthems, state bureaucracies, government offices, television and print media, state-produced documentaries and political oratory are instructive material sites where the nation is performed daily. They are, to borrow Achille Mbembe’s metaphorical vocabulary, part of the state’s

10 J. L. Nehru, Speech in Constituent Assembly, March 8, 1948. Over the decades following the initiation of the Non-Aligned Movement, it would become lucidly clear that welcoming aid was visibly not relegated to one of the power blocs solely by the Indian state. This can graphically be inferred from the example of the several Steel Plants or the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), which were part of the imagined Temples of Modern New India and which saw a flow of technical and financial assistance from the USA, USSR, Britain as well as West Germany (Each of the five of these institutes was funded by one of the powers).

11 B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London/New York 1983.

“liturgical calendar” and a repertoire that “makes state power highly visible.”¹² Similarly, sports (one needs to imagine the tensions running high in football/cricket world cups or Olympics) or the daily vocabularies of ‘us’, ‘we’, and ‘them’, are expressions of banal nationalisms.¹³ Wars and the legitimizing rhetoric for warfare re-ignite national solidarity *par excellence*.

The time frame between 1962–65, witnessed reinforced vocabularies of nationalism, which resulted from the context of two wars with China and Pakistan, and a nervousness of the state that built upon territorial and cartographic anxieties over border disputes. This period also marks a national sense of insecurity and loss due the death of the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (May 27, 1964), who had become the iconic face of the state and the nation for 17 years as the political head of India. The sense of urgency was surmounted further with acute food grain shortages faced in several federal states of the country. It is in such circumstances that the second Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri (in office after Nehru’s death from June 9, 1964 – January 11, 1966) coined the slogan “*Jai Jawan! Jai Kisan!*” – Victory to the Soldier! Victory to the Farmer! (particularly during the war with Pakistan in 1965)¹⁴. The slogan brought the farmer and the soldier to share the same revered space as national heroes at the time of war and scarcity of food grains. In a speech delivered in October 1965, Shastri stated:

*The nation cannot afford to relax. It is difficult to say what the future holds for us. Pakistan has not yet given up her policy of aggression. The duty of the nation is, therefore, clear. The country’s defences have to be strengthened. The people should spare no efforts to strengthen the defences. Side by side, food production has to be increased. Food self-sufficiency is as important as a strong defence system. It is for this reason that I raised the slogan: Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan. The Kisan is as much a soldier as the Jawan.*¹⁵

Whereas soldiers were called upon in times of war to defend the motherland, farmers were deemed equally important in filling the granaries of the nation in times of food shortages. Both the figures were metaphorically and literally merged into the trope of the “New Man” and projected as the common emblem of ideal citizenship. That the slogan has continued to inform the repertoire of Prime Ministerial oratory since its coinage is reflective of its continual lexical weight in India. Besides being re-quoted very often by several Prime Ministers after Shastri, decades later, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee used it with an addition – “Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan aur Jai Vigyan (“Victory to the Soldier! Victory to the Farmer! Victory to Science!”) in the aftermath of nuclear tests that were conducted in May 1998. More recently, the current Prime Minister, who like Vajpayee

12 A. Mbembe, Provisional Notes on the Postcolony, in: *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 62 (1992) 1, p. 17.

13 M. Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, London 1995.

14 The term *Jai* may be translated both as Hail or Victory.

15 L.B. Shastri, *Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan*, Speech delivered at the 83rd death Anniversary of Swami Dayanand Saraswati in New Delhi on October 24, 1965, in: *Selected Speeches of Lal Bahadur Shastri*, June 11, 1964 – January 10, 1966, New Delhi (1974), pp. 359.

belongs to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the key opposition party to Shastri's Congress, added yet another extension to the slogan – “Jai Jawan! Jai Kisan! Jai Vigyan! Jai Anusandhan!” (“Victory to the Soldier! Victory to the Farmer! Victory to Science! Victory to Research!”).¹⁶ Two statues also commemorate Lal Bahadur Shastri and the slogan in present day Mumbai (for example, see figure 1 below).



Figure 1: Shastri's statue in Mumbai, India with the slogan *Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan* inscribed on it, which is also depicted through a rifle and a sickle.¹⁷

16 N.D Modi, Future India: Science and Technology, Speech delivered at the 106th Science Congress, Jalandhar, January 3, 2019.

17 Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mumbai_Shastri_statue.jpg

4. The “New Man” betwixt the *Jawan* and the *Kisan*

Whereas the soldier and the farmer became the iconic figures of sacrifice for the motherland, a daunting task facing the state was how to address the vast majority of citizens who were neither farmers nor soldiers in order to make crisis a lived, felt reality that required them to play their part as well. In order to call upon *all* citizens to support the nation in times of war and food grain scarcity, the state-driven vision of the “New Man” was announced through a plethora of channels like documentary films, political rhetoric and iconography. In all of these projections, those not belonging to the soldier-farmer duo were made to fit statist visions of the “New Man”. This was a trope squeezed between the farmer, who was toiling for India on the fields, and the soldier, who was laboring to defend it at the borders.

Shortly after his usage of the slogan in 1965, Prime Minister Shastri, appealed to *all* citizens to play their role for the nation as can be ciphered from the following excerpt from his speech delivered in the Indian parliament during the war:

*I know that at this hour every Indian is asking himself only one question; what can I do for my country and how can I participate in the nation's endeavor to defend our freedom and territorial integrity? To all Indians, to all our people, I want to address this appeal: Wherever you are and whatever your vocation, you should work with true dedication, bring out the best in you and serve the country selflessly. The supreme need of the hour is national unity – unity not of the word but of the heart. All Indians, of whatever faith or profession, have to stand solidly together and prepare themselves for hardships and sacrifices. Let us give no quarter to any ideas that tend to divide us. Let us all work together with a new sense of national discipline and with an inspired feeling of dedication to the cause of the country's freedom and integrity.*¹⁸

We thus find the Prime Minister appealing to citizens to be united. Keywords that repetitively occur in his oratory, as in the lines above, are national unity, selflessness, dedication, sacrifice and discipline. As this section will show, these also inform the world of images.

As an illustration of how the trope of the “New Man” was produced for the non-soldier-farmer citizen, this section will analyze images published in two weekly magazines *Link* and *New India* during 1962–1964. The weeklies were edited by Edatata Narayanan and Kunduru Iswara Dutt respectively, both of whom had prolific careers in Indian journalism. Narayanan had been a member of the Congress party during the nationalist movement for independence and eventually came to join the Socialist Party in 1948, eventually moving to the Communist Party of India (CPI) which he also quit in 1956, following Khrushchev's denouncement of Stalin. He maintained a pro-left, pro-CPI but also a pro-Nehru stance throughout his journalistic career. He was also the founder of

18 L.B. Shastri, Pakistan's Designs, in Kutch, Speech delivered in Lok Sabha, New Delhi on April 28, 1965, in: Selected Speeches of Lal Bahadur Shastri, June 11, 1964 – January 10, 1966, New Delhi 1974, p. 294.

the daily newspaper *The Patriot* (1963). K. Iswara Dutt was known for his prolific writing through books like *The Street of Ink* (1956) and the renowned *Congress Cyclopaedia: The Indian Nation Congress, 1885–1920* (1967). He had previously served as the editor of the newspaper *The Leader* and was one of the founding members of the Journalists Association of Delhi (1949). Both the weeklies show a pro-Nehru, and generally a pro-government editorial policy, with greater sensitivities towards the Left rather than the Hindu Right. This also explains the presence of these images in the magazines.

The caricatures, textual messages or a combination of both, were published on a regular basis during 1963–1965 and each weekly issue is replete with illustrations. Whereas in some cases, the sponsors of the advertising space can be discerned (for example, federal state governments, or specific ministries within the government), in most cases, this crucial information is largely missing. Usually no credits are provided for the creators of the cartoons and the repetitive phrases that accompany them. Thus, the inventors of the slogans used, selectors of the quotations published beside the images (for example one by Nehru which repetitively appears next to the images), designers of the text messages and the sketchers of the caricatures remain anonymous to consumers.¹⁹ Readers, a specific audience which could read in English, could have had the impression of either being addressed by the state directly or that the magazines were used as a medium by their sponsors and editorial boards for furthering statist visions. This especially so because there are striking parallels between the messages conveyed by the images and the political oratory of the time.

All citizens were called upon by the state to be like the sacrificing soldiers, who had devoted their lives to the motherland. This message of dedication and sacrifice materialized in the call to the common man to donate for the nation. Gold, which also has a specific cultural weight in the Indian context, especially became a means for proving one's spirit of sacrifice. The "New Man" of an India at war was one who unhesitatingly donated gold to the reserves of the national banks. The advertisement below, published in *New India* for example (figure 2), tells readers where and how to donate gold for the nation, also making it explicit that this sacrifice is necessary to support warfare. The lighter background shows several faceless hands donating gold ornaments in order to make for the main darker image which is a hand (of a soldier) that firmly holds a gun.

In fact, sacrificing gold is equated with directly investing in one's freedom as can be seen in figure 3. The ideal citizen was therein one who valued freedom and selflessly donated gold to the nation.

19 This calls for a deeper study of the creative designers and their relationship to the magazines as well as the government authorities, which is beyond the scope of this paper. It would be rewarding to engage in a micro-history of political iconography during the Cold War years, the underlying details of everyday creative processes and how these did or did not speak to other iconographies transnationally. Though caricature history has been the focus of some research (see for example, R.G. Khanduri, *Caricaturing Culture in India: Cartoons and History in the Modern World*, Cambridge 2007), it has rarely been researched in the Indian context in terms of transnational entanglements and artistic circles of creators especially during the Cold War years.



Figure 2: *New India*, November 28, 1962, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.

This spirit of sacrifice is also lucidly depicted in the 1962 Films' Division documentary titled *Gift for the Nation*, where one sees a woman, who has recently been gifted a gold necklace, reminiscing the sacrifices of the soldiers of the nation. Her facial expressions transform in the one minute thirty-six seconds long film clip from those of a soft smile to a resolute look, as audiences are made to hear war trumpets and what appears to be the sound of gun firing. It is clear that she has resolved to donate her latest gift to the nation. A voice-over announces "A necklace given, a ring donated, a bangle placed on the national altar. Each shall be a shining diadem, each a contribution to the certain victory."²⁰ One sees a collection of gold jewelry, whereby different ornaments form the word "Victory" to mark the end of the video. The nation becomes the holy space that demands the donation of the citizens' gold ornaments to ensure victory at war.

20 D. Jamdar, *Gift for the Nation*, Documentary produced by the Films' Division of India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi, 1962, See: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_PVmuRmgzrs (accessed 17 July 2018).

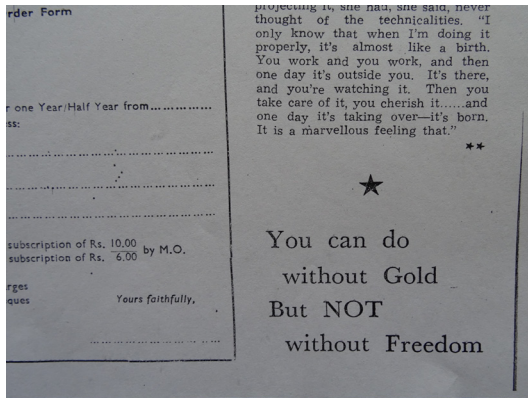


Figure 3: *New India*, March 20, 1963, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.

This subordination of the citizen through the act of sacrificing personal wealth for the nation, especially in times of war, is also known from other contexts. For example, the “nail men”, which became material markers of performing such self-sacrifice across the German Empire during WWI.

[C]itizens hammered large nails into wooden statues placed in all the larger towns on town squares and market squares in exchange for a donation (to fund the war effort). The martial sculptures with their millions of nails, covering them in a kind of nail armour, became cult objects to which one made a pilgrimage and, accompanied by ritual oaths of devotion, made a financial offering for the war, in order to have one's own nail driven in among the others.²¹

In India, during both the wars, citizens were called upon to invest in war efforts by purchasing National Defence Certificates which would be a direct contribution for supplies and equipment for defense. The “New Man” was thus one who did not hold himself back from devoting all his resources to the government defense securities. In the image below, for example, we literally see money donated by smiling citizens being transformed into missiles. The caption “They also serve who save” may misleadingly appear to be a call to save but, in fact, is a plea to save in order to then only invest in the nation. The non-soldier and the non-farmer could thus prove their loyalty to the nation by “investing in freedom.” (figure 4). Similarly, as shown in the figure 5, citizens are told that it is good to save and be thrifty, but it is even better if those savings are invested directly in national defense.



Figure 4: *New India*, August 14, 1963, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.

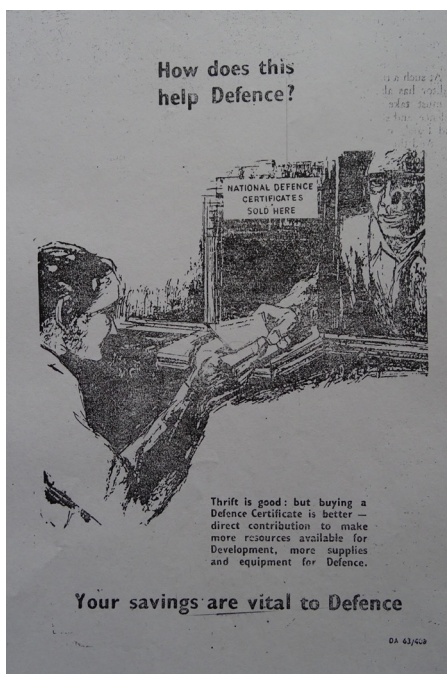


Figure 5: *New India*, February 5, 1964, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.

One of the images depicts the picture of a knitting woman, with the question in the frame reading “But what can I do to help?” A long text beneath the image encourages women to contribute to the National Defence Fund. A special call here is “[d]o not buy gold. Give your gold for country’s cause” (figure 6). In another such image, this time picturing a man, the message is “Give your gold in the country’s service – Buy Gold Bonds. Rouse yourself from Apathy, and Take Action” (figure 7).

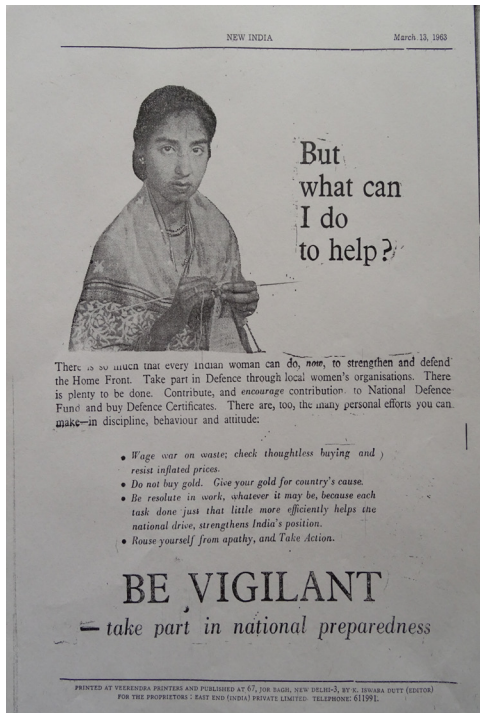


Figure 6: *New India*, March 13, 1963, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.

In both the adverts, several messages are combined within the same frame. The theme of donating gold for the nation smoothly runs into another important message for the non-farmer-soldier citizen. The nation is called upon to “Be Vigilant”, and, “[–] take part in national preparedness.” Though war and conflict are not used explicitly as terms, a general mood of insecurity is produced. Preparedness here, on the one hand, stands for supporting the Indian state for its defence policy, but it also hints at the presence of an inherent insecurity, a disquiet and anxious uneasiness.

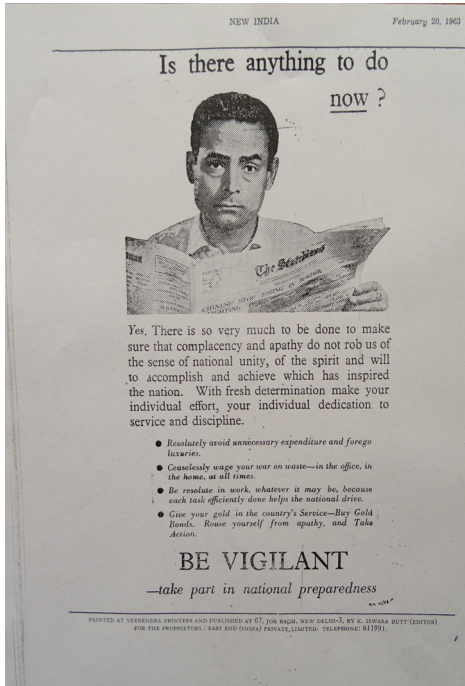


Figure 7: *New India*, February 20, 1963, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.

This sense of uncertainty becomes essential to produce the necessary link between what is happening at the borders or on the fields, in times of war and food shortage respectively, and the otherwise disconnected citizen. The images illustrate how an English speaking and reading audience, that did not belong to the category of the soldier-farmer duo, were made to relate to conditions of crisis. Once this mood of crisis had been made relatable, the urgency of the moment established, citizens could then be asked to come into action and be the “New Men” who would subordinate themselves to the nation. In another telling image, we find a man quite literally being vigilant by keeping guard at night with a lantern in his hands.

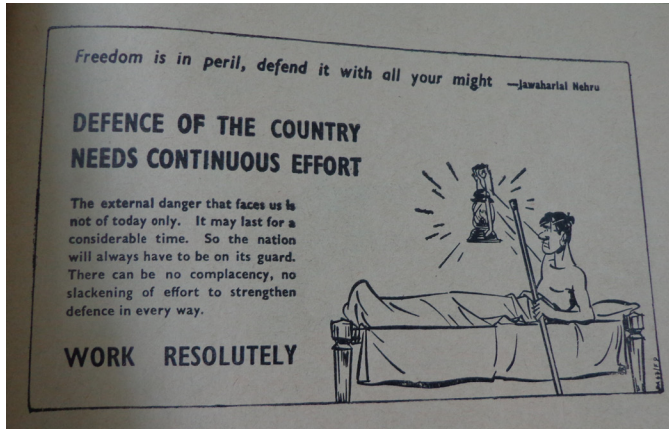


Figure 8: *Link*, September 29, 1963, P.C. Joshi Archives, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

The “New Men” of India are asked here to be on guard, to show “[n]o complacency, no slackening of effort to strengthen defence in every way.” The main instruction is to be aware of the external danger (here referring to China) and to ensure that each citizen of the nation keeps a vigilant eye on that danger. In several images this sense of danger is further sanctioned by relying upon the words of the Prime Minister, which are usually placed in the top part of the frame, and remind citizens of the threat to national freedom (“Freedom is in peril. Defend it with all your might.”).

The slogan *Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan* was also inscribed into the shaping of “New Men” who were neither farmers nor soldiers. This translated into the message of labouring or toiling like the iconic farmer and being disciplined and self-sacrificing like the iconic soldier. Hence, all citizens were asked to “Work Resolutely.” Regardless of their professional standing, ideal citizens were those who toiled for the nation to produce “[t]wice as much as before and then SOME MORE.” This idea of exceeding one’s capacities to produce, whether in the field, the factory or any other office for stronger defence services of the nation also attests that citizens were called upon to sacrifice not just materially, through donations to the nation, but also by devoting their bodily labour towards strengthening the country’s security forces. The individual (whether an office-goer, a farmer or a factory worker) depicted in the two images below with a smiling face, was thus subordinated to the nation and becomes a cog in the wheel of national movement and development.

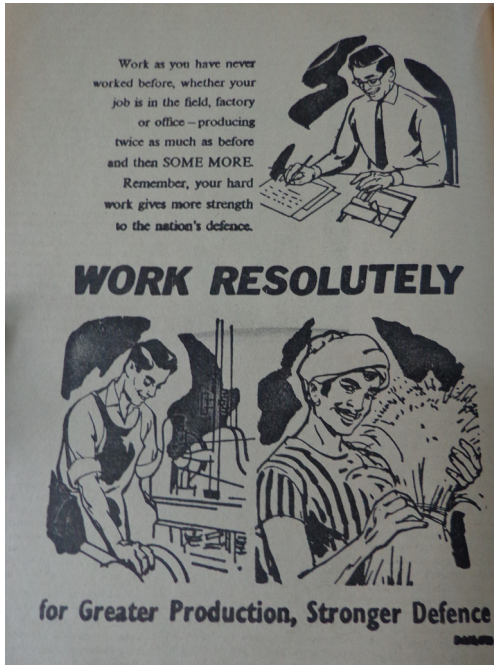


Figure 9: *Link*, August 30, 1964, P.C. Joshi Archives, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

The “New Men” of the nation therein appear to be almost faceless in the images, in spite of being photographed or caricatured individuals from real-life (in that they could be anyone and anywhere in the country and would still be similar to their co-professionals everywhere). They could indeed be defined as a monolithic entity, as imagined and shaped by the state, and characterised by the common trait of striving endlessly for the nation. Thus, an ideal citizen was one whose existence was subordinate to that of the nation, as is emphasized in the advert below where the message in the frame makes it very clear that “[y]our job is a job done for India. [...] You, your life, the work you do – all are part of an India striving today for efficiency.”

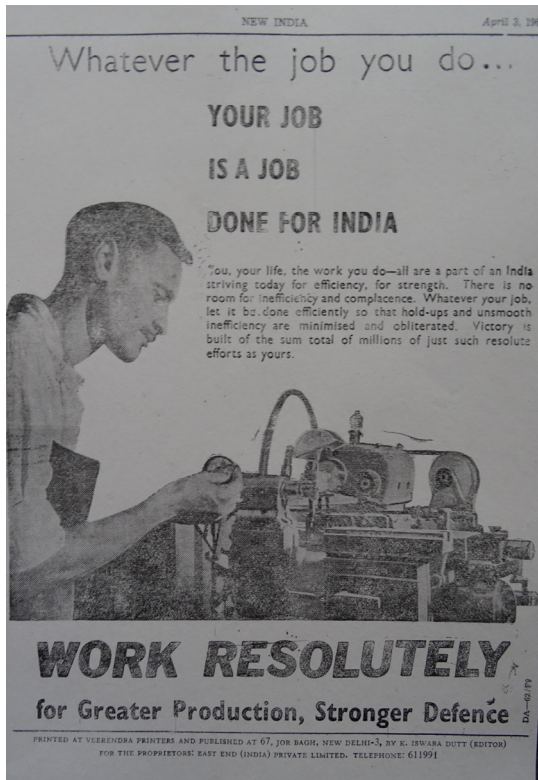


Figure 10: *New India*, April 3, 1963, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.

The spirit of devoted labour in times of war was explicitly attributed to the strengthening of defence above all else. Hence, we see in the text below, how subscribers of the two magazines, an English speaking / reading audience, are explained that they need to work resolutely so that the *jawans* at the war fronts could be equipped in order to defend the nation.

Whereas the farmer's hard labour on the field was written onto the trope of the "New Man" on the one hand, it was simultaneously fused with the soldier's discipline on the other. The body of the non-farmer-soldier was thus inscribed with the ethic of hard work and determination as well as unflinching discipline that had no room for "slackness" (figure 12). Thus, the two qualities associated with the *jawan* and the *kisan*, also came to be translated for the "New Man", regardless of what he or she did professionally.



Figure 11: *New India*, November 13, 1963, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.

However, it was also made lucidly clear that national defense and security took precedence above all else and were clearly the first among equals. In the image below, we see how discipline is inscribed on to the “New Man”’s body whereby an army of faceless civilians quite literally carry the weight of a soldier’s arms and ammunitions (a grenade, cartridges and a rifle) on their shoulders. The size of the soldier’s figure in the image is disproportionately larger than that of the miniscule human figures that carry his weapons for him. They are also clearly following his lead and respond to his commands, indicating how a sense of discipline is necessary in order for the nation to be strong. Besides, the size of the ammunitions they shoulder (in comparison to their own bodies) suggests that they carry more weight than that allowed by their physical capacities. Thus, while being disciplined like the *jawans*, they are working resolutely like the *kisan* in surpassing their physical limits.

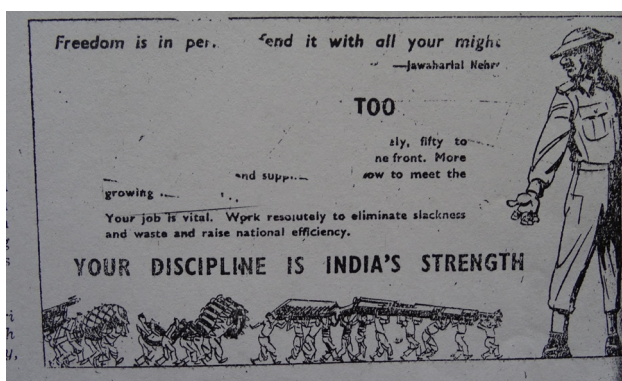


Figure 12: *New India*, September 4, 1963, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.

That the trope of the “New Man” was duly impacted by a statist discourse of insecurity and threat to the integrity of the nation and its boundaries, which need to be guarded and defended, is also captured in the image below. One sees citizens belonging to varied professions— a scientist, a lawyer, a farmer and a factory worker— all reporting to the soldier. All stand at guard and attention. The text in the frame clarifies that “[A] nation which is economically strong and productive can meet any danger.” Security thus becomes top priority and the “New Men” of India are called upon to produce more in order to contribute in making the nation more secure.



Figure 13: Link, October 27, 1963, P.C. Joshi Archives, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Another important message for the “New Man” was to conserve resources and avoid any waste and extravagance. In the figure below (14), the smiling citizen is quite literally materializing Nehru’s words on the top left corner of the frame, that is, defending freedom with all his might, by building a wall that keeps the threat of the Chinese dragon at bay. Extravagance is projected as an ill that “[w]ill injure the nation.” Conserving and being cautious of waste is produced as necessary for protecting national freedom. This slogan (“Preserve freedom with all your strength”) also hints at the weight of the word freedom, at a time when independence was barely two decades old, for a generation that had witnessed the nation’s liberation from colonial rule, which was not too distant a reality. Thus, “New Men” were instructed to preserve resources so that they could be used for the nation and help preserve freedom.

Whereas it is common that citizens are called upon to spend more and contribute to public expenditure in times of economic crisis, in the Indian context, the message to

citizens was a different one. Here the state called for a fundamental shift in the citizens' life style. New men were called upon to spend only on necessities, in order that savings could then be used for the overall benefit of the nation.

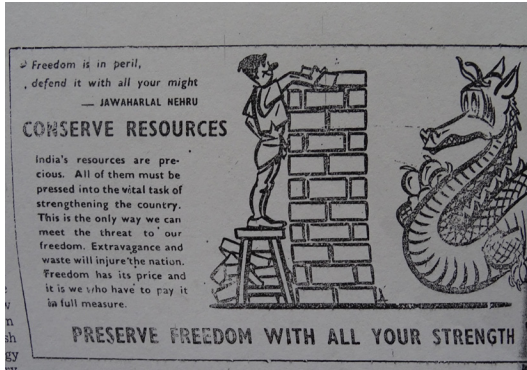


Figure 14: *New India*, July 31, 1963, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.

Women especially became the target audience for the messages of donating jewelry and avoid waste, almost generalized and solely bracketed into the role of home-makers, who had control over their own as well as their families' consumption patterns. A telling illustration of this message can be seen in the image below (figure 15), where we are informed that a woman refuses to throw a lavish party at her only son's wedding in order to avoid waste. She thus sets an example against "hoarders and profiteers." The main message is to be austere, simplistic and to consume only as much as "necessary."

This overall message of being austere, almost in an ascetic minimalism was projected as a necessity for the nation's ongoing independence and development. In figure 16, we see a woman, clearly tempted to purchase what looks like an expensive saree, being directed by her partner to not consume unnecessarily and indulge in extravagance (as indicated by his firm grip on her elbow). The text reads "By avoiding all extravagance and wasteful expenditure, you help make more resources available for rapid development of the country." It is, however, only left for readers to infer that making resources available for the country effectively stands for material contributions to the national funds.

At stake here in the three figures 14, 15, and 16 is a basic understanding of consumption as an exercise fundamentally rooted in selfish, individual-centric interests, which incorporates usage and depletion (of resources) rather than contribution and productivity. New men and new women of India were asked to not consume and deplete but to contribute and donate.

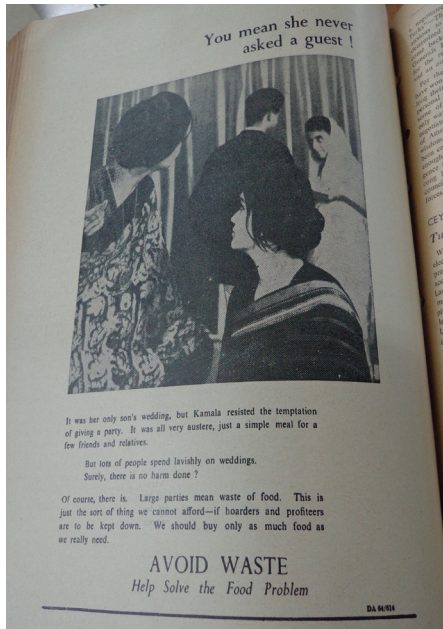


Figure 15: *Link*, February 28, 1964, P.C. Joshi Archives, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

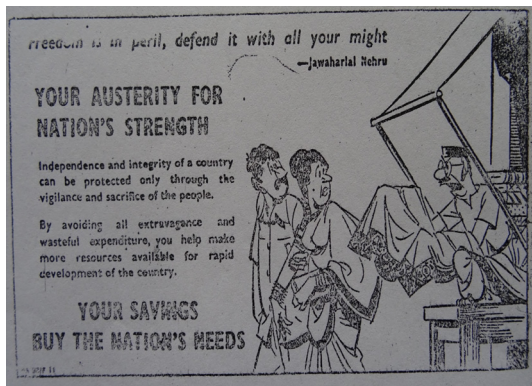


Figure 16: *New India*, October 10, 1963, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.

Conclusion

This article has traced the trajectory of the figure of the “New Man” in independent India and how it was morphed, transformed and recast in times of crises. In postcolonial India, the making of the “New Man” has been intricately tied to the shaping of state visions and neither can be seen exclusively. Nehru’s envisioned “New India” was a roadmap for progress along the lines of economic self-sufficiency, industrialization, higher education and agricultural productivity. This register of growth and postcolonial nation-building was intertwined with the figure of the ideal citizen, the “New Man” of the state-tutored New India. The article has traced how the tropes of scientific temper and expertise, unity in diversity, development through the so-called “Temples of Modern India”, entangled and mutually informed the category of the ideal citizen as envisioned by the state.

The time frame between 1962–65, witnessed reinforced vocabularies of nationalism, which resulted from the context of two wars with China (1962) and Pakistan (1965), and a nervousness of the state that built upon cartographic anxieties over border disputes. The death of Nehru in 1964 and acute food grain shortages compounded the sense of insecurity. It is in such circumstances that the second Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri coined the slogan “*Jai Jawan! Jai Kisan!*”—Victory to the Soldier! Victory to the Farmer! (particularly during the war with Pakistan in 1965). The slogan brought the farmer and the soldier to share the same revered space as national heroes in times of war and scarcity of food grains.

A noteworthy transition from the Nehruvian period was the change in the figure of the “New Man” from being the citizen-subject to the subordinate, self-sacrificing citizen; from the questioning citizen (who is paradoxically asked not to participate in politics proper) to the uncritical, unquestioning citizen who follows the interests of the nation lineated by the state as irrefutable. We also see a dramatic shift from discourses on scientific expertise, temper and self-sufficiency to those prioritizing defense and security above everything else.

Whereas the soldier and the farmer became the iconic figures of sacrifice for the motherland, a daunting task facing the state was how to address the vast majority of citizens who were neither farmers nor soldiers in order to make crisis a lived, felt reality that required them to play their part as well. In order to call upon *all* citizens to support the nation in times of war and food grain scarcity, the state-driven vision of the “New Man” was announced through a plethora of channels. This was a trope squeezed between and betwixt the farmer, who was toiling for India on the fields, and the soldier who was laboring to defend its borders.

The advertisements from the magazines have shown how the (non-farmer-soldier) “New Man” was circumscribed and defined within the ambit of national freedom, which when in peril, needed to be defended by him. Hence, the vocabulary of being vigilant and prepared at all times and sacrificing oneself for the nation if freedom was in danger. Regardless of his profession, the “New Man” worked resolutely, was disciplined and did not engage in luxurious extravagance. She/he was called upon to donate materially to the

nation by investing in defence bonds and certificates, donating gold and respecting the army. All his efforts led to the singular aim of strengthening defence. The non-soldier / farmer “New Men” were envisioned to labour or toil like the iconic farmer and be disciplined and self-sacrificing like the iconic soldier. They were asked to be austere and introduce a fundamental shift in their life styles, whereby the nation became the revered holy space of toil and endless sacrifice. All that was saved was for the nation. The trope of the *jawan-kisan*, popularized by the second Prime Minister, was thus also inscribed onto the body of the “New Man”.