

# PUBLISHING IN INDIA An Analysis

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G. ALTBACH



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PUBLISHING IN INDIA  
*An Analysis*

PHILIP G. ALTBACH

DELHI  
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS  
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS  
1975

*Oxford University Press*

OXFORD LONDON GLASGOW NEW YORK  
TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON CAPE TOWN  
DELHI BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS KARACHI LAHORE DACCA  
KUALA LUMPUR SINGAPORE JAKARTA HONG KONG TOKYO  
NAIROBI DAR ES SALAAM LUSAKA ADDIS ABABA  
IBADAN ZARIA ACCRA BEIRUT

© Oxford University Press 1975

382-450705  
9879

Ac. No. 51046  
Date 7.11.75

SHIMLA

 Library IAS, Shimla

131



00051046

Printed in India by P. K. Ghosh at Eastend Printers,  
3 Dr Suresh Sarkar Road, Calcutta 14 and published by C. H. Lewis  
Oxford University Press, 2/11 Ansari Road, Daryaganj, Delhi 6

For EDWARD SHILS

# Preface

This study stems from a long-standing interest in the intellectual process and it is related to earlier work in India. I am indebted to the Graduate School of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, which provided a small grant for the preparation of the manuscript. Otherwise, this project has been conducted entirely on the initiative of the author. A number of individuals have assisted in the preparation of this volume. Most important, the cooperation of the Indian publishing community was indispensable for conducting the research. Interviews with more than 100 individuals involved at all levels with the publishing enterprise provided much of the 'raw data' for this study. Publishers, editors, printers, and others gave unstintingly of their time and provided the required information. This book has been written in the hope that it will be of some assistance to the publishing community.

A number of individuals were kind enough to comment on early versions of the manuscript. I am particularly indebted to Edward Shils, John and Ruth Useem, Samuel Israel, Datus Smith, Jr., Lewis Coser, P. C. Manaktala, Sadanand and Ramdas Bhatkal, Dina Nath Malhotra, Dr Sujit Mukherjee, and R. E. Hawkins. The encouragement and comments of Ravi Dayal and A. Tyabji of Oxford University Press were also very helpful. The responsibility for this volume remains entirely with the author.

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# Introduction

This volume is largely concerned with publishing in Third World countries, and particularly India. It consists of three parts. The first part is a general discussion of the role of publishing in the 'intellectual system' of society, and it is generally applicable to both industrialized and developing nations. The second part relates specifically to Third World publishing and the third is a detailed discussion of this with special reference to India. It is hoped that both the general analysis in the first part and the progressively more specific discussion in the second and third will be of value in understanding the important elements of publishing. This volume is 'exploratory' in that it is not a definitive consideration of the topic. Further research is needed, not only on India but on the general role of publishing in modern society.

The sociological and historical literature on publishing in developing countries is very sparse, and this volume is intended to provide a preliminary understanding of some of the roles and functions of publishing in the Third World.<sup>1</sup> The first part of this volume is a general consideration of the role of publishing in developing countries. The data for this section comes, in general, from the available literature. The second and third sections which constitute the major part of the book are more detailed—but still exploratory—description and analysis of publishing in the Third World in general with particular reference to India.

Our concern is with only part of the publishing enterprise. In general, this volume concentrates on that aspect of publishing which contributes directly to the creation and diffusion of knowledge. We have omitted important aspects of publishing such as mass market fiction, journals, etc. which do not deal directly with this central theme. A final section includes a bibliography on publishing, focusing to a considerable extent on developing countries.

India is a useful focus for analysis. Not only is it one of the largest of the developing countries but it has a long history of publishing. Indian publishing exhibits most of the problems and possibilities that exist in other developing countries. There is an active intellectual

life, a large educational system, and a fairly large and articulate publishing infrastructure.

This study is based on no single methodology. Because of the nature of the study, a variety of methods are used. Fieldwork in India included detailed interviews with over 100 individuals involved in publishing and observation of aspects of the enterprise. In addition, documentary records, where available, were also used. The major methodologies are sociological and historical, although it is important in a study of this kind to maintain considerable openness. The questions asked are necessarily broad—to discern some of the important roles and functions of publishers in developing countries, and to discuss the ‘reality’ of the publishing enterprise. Thus, the theoretical concerns of this volume are at the same time simple and complex. The questions being asked are straightforward, but the reality of the situation is highly complicated. It is furthermore uncharted by previous research. Indeed, the whole field of the study of intellectual enterprise is a fairly new one.<sup>2</sup>

The contributions of this study are in several areas. It will shed some light on the general problems of publishing in developing countries—a topic which has not received much attention in its broader social and intellectual context. Further, this study will discuss the role and function of the publisher in the overall intellectual and educational situation of the Third World. A specific focus on India will permit some of the generalizations which are made to be elaborated with data from a single country. Detailed discussion of such subjects as the relationships between the public and private sectors in publishing, scholarly publishing, the role of industrialized nations in the Third World, and others may also sharpen discussion concerning publishing particularly and broader intellectual currents in general.

While every effort has been made to maintain an ‘objective’ view of the subject under discussion, there are no doubt a number of biases which enter into this analysis. The limitations of data may constitute a source of bias or error. This study was based on two relatively short field trips and on a consideration of available documentary information. Further, there is relatively little up-to-date statistical information available, almost no comparative or historical data, and few interpretative studies. The author is committed to the view that publishing is an important enterprise, and indeed one of the foci of this volume is to indicate how and why. Further, this

study is undertaken with the conviction that an independent publishing enterprise is crucial for developing countries. While publishing no doubt has international dimensions, it is critically important for developing countries to build their own indigenous book industries and all of the infrastructures, intellectual and economic, which relate to publishing. The role of industrialized nations in developing areas, often referred to as neocolonialism, has been evident in publishing.<sup>3</sup>

This volume is not specifically prescriptive in nature. It provides few policy recommendations. Indeed, the author feels strongly that it is not the role of foreign scholars to provide direction to Third World policy-makers. Nevertheless, the discussion and analysis will probably point to some, perhaps contradictory, policies which might be usefully followed. Such conclusions may be a useful outcome of this research, but they are not its intention. The main focus here is on an analysis of a topic which is seen to be important and one which has received very little analysis to date. It is hoped that this volume will provide stimulation, understanding, and that it will lead to further research and analysis.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The best general consideration of publishing in developing countries is Datus Smith, Jr., *A Guide to Book Publishing* (New York: Bowker, 1966). See also Ronald Barker and Robert Escarpit, *The Book Hunger* (Paris: UNESCO, 1973).

<sup>2</sup> I am indebted particularly to Edward Shils and Lewis Coser for their insights concerning intellectual life. See Edward Shils, *The Intellectuals and the Powers and Other Essays* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), and Lewis Coser, *Men of Ideas* (New York: Free Press, 1965).

<sup>3</sup> For an elaboration of the general notion of intellectual neocolonialism, see Philip G. Altbach, 'Education and Neocolonialism', *Teachers College Record*, 72, May 1971, pp. 543-58.

## PART I

# Publishing and the Intellectual 'System'<sup>1</sup>

Publishing is an integral part of the intellectual and cultural system of any country. This system includes such diverse elements as bookstores, printing establishments, universities, libraries, newspapers, radio, television and the cinema. In some countries, the intellectual system is highly complex and includes a dense assortment of institutions and agencies with large mass audiences. In others, the system is rudimentary and limited to a small educated minority. There is also an international aspect to the intellectual system which includes the import and export of books and other mass media, copyright arrangements, and translations. Publishing is only a small part of the intellectual system in most nations, particularly those which are highly industrialized and have a variety of accessible alternatives to books. Publishers compete with the mass media—particularly television—for attention and for a share of the financial returns on the cultural product. Publishing is part of a complex system of institutions and relationships which are rapidly changing in a world of speedy technological development. The purpose of this introductory section is to examine the publishing industry and the way it fits into increasingly complex international networks which oversee the development of intellectual 'products' for a society.

Thus, our overriding concern is with books. Since we are primarily concerned with intellectual or knowledge distribution systems, our focus will be mainly on scholarly books—volumes which contribute to the total store of knowledge in a culture or to the advancement of such knowledge. Thus, we are concerned primarily with studies in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities, with textbooks, particularly at the post-secondary levels and with belles-lettres. We will not consider popular fiction, comic books, or most other elements of mass culture. This latter material is very important to any society, but is beyond the scope of this section.<sup>2</sup>

Books are not the only means of advancing the 'high culture' of a society. Indeed, traditional 'printed' media are increasingly being supplemented by television and other forms of mass communication as educational and cultural media. Many cultural figures argue that the novel and poetry have moved from the centre of the creative arts and have been replaced, in part, by film as a medium of expression. Although books are no longer the only means of advancing the 'high' culture of a society, they remain central to the development and distribution of knowledge. Because scholarly works are now one of the most important elements of the book market in terms of contributing to culture and technology, they are the focus of this analysis.

An ancillary to books are journals and magazines. This is especially true for scholarly materials, where journals are a primary means of introducing new material to specialized readers. Because of their frequent publication, journals have the advantage of presenting materials quickly and to a specific audience. Journals also review books and thus are a means of publicizing and criticizing research and analysis. They are a relatively inexpensive means of disseminating knowledge.

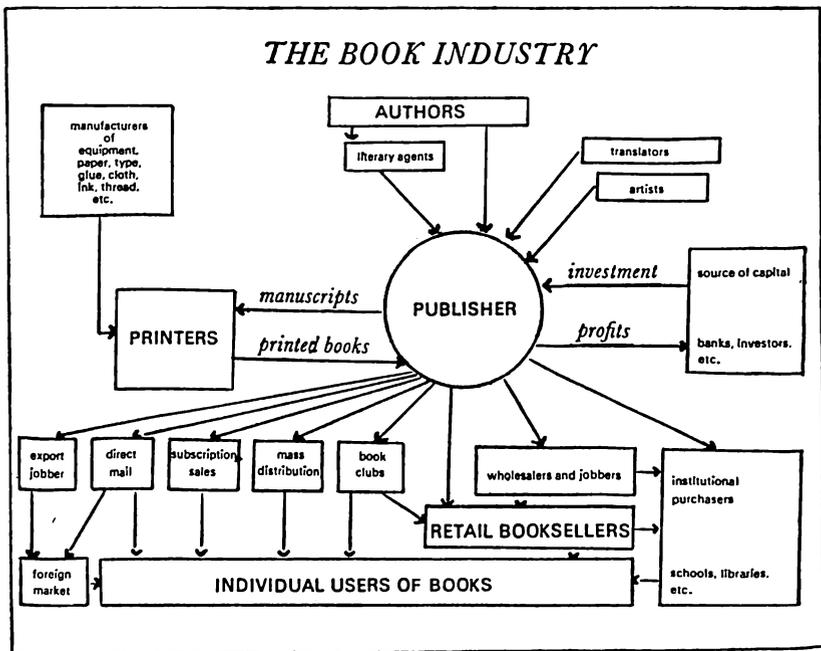
Despite challenges from other mass media, rising costs and inherent difficulties of production and distribution, books remain one of the most important means of intellectual communication and continue to be at the centre of the intellectual 'system' of most societies. This is perhaps even more true of nations which are not as technologically advanced as the United States.

#### THE INTELLECTUAL 'SYSTEM'

Books are not published in a vacuum. Publishing is affected directly by many social, economic and political elements, and by both national and international conditions and trends. The publishing firm is bounded by the physical constraints of production and distribution—for example, labour and transportation, availability of outlets, printing presses, and the cost of paper. The publishing firm must also cope with the complexity of creative and scholarly networks—discovering new talent, pioneering fresh fields, judging the quality and saleability of manuscripts, arranging for editing, working out relationships with individual authors. The publisher is also greatly affected by broader social conditions. The nature of the educational system, the condition of libraries and other book pur-

chasing institutions, the rate of literacy in the population, the accessibility of alternative media all influence publishing. Publishing is vitally important to the intellectual system, but it is only a part of a complex network.

The complexity of the intellectual system depends very much on the society of which it is a part. But in almost all countries, the system is complicated and diffuse. The following figure delineates some of the agencies and institutions necessary to bring a book from an author to the reading public.



SOURCE: Datus Smith, Jr., *A Guide to Book Publishing* (New York: Bowker, 1966), p. 17.

The educational system is a key consumer of printed materials. In the United States, at least 30 per cent of all books sold are textbooks. An additional 11 per cent go to libraries, and many libraries are connected with schools and colleges. Elementary and secondary school texts alone account for 16 per cent of book sales.<sup>3</sup> In many developing countries, the proportion of books sold to educational institutions is even higher, because relatively few individuals can afford to purchase books and channels of retail book distribution

are generally inadequate. It has been estimated that more than 90 per cent of book sales in India are made to institutions—mostly schools, colleges, and libraries. In recent years, as university enrolments have risen dramatically in most countries, the market for textbooks at the post-secondary level has also become an important aspect of the publishing equation.

In many respects, the textbook market is the 'tail that wags the dog' in the publishing industry; a very large part of a publisher's stable income comes from textbooks. Textbooks permit large editions and fairly steady sales over the years. Distribution is relatively easy because the educational institutions—whether at the request of individual professors or curriculum experts—act as the middleman between the publisher and the public (in this case the students). Moreover, textbooks are guaranteed an audience. And in many countries the discount allowed on textbooks is small, thereby allowing publishers maximum profits. It is probably fair to say that without the educational market for books, many publishers could not survive without outside subsidy or control.

Little is known of the ways in which textbooks are selected, or about their authors. For the most part, textbooks are not written by the most outstanding authors and although publishing houses often place considerable editorial stress on producing well-written and saleable textbooks, standards in many countries, including the United States, are not outstandingly high.<sup>4</sup> Textbook selection processes remain something of a mystery. In a process involving professors, curriculum experts, publishers, editors, and perhaps others, relevant topics are identified, and become major areas for textbook emphasis. In the United States, college and university texts in such areas as black studies, student protest, 'alternative' education and other fields are stressed for a short time and quickly lose their popularity. Competition for textbook adoption in the U.S. is sharp, and many alternative books often exist for a single field. The advantage of the American system is that new books are quickly published that reflect current curricular trends. Publishers are eager to meet new curricular demands or to present books which are centred around new teaching materials because more sales are involved. In fact, many textbooks are commissioned by publishers. They identify areas of current curricular concern and solicit authors to prepare texts in academically popular fields where materials are lacking.

In many other countries, where textbook production is less competitive or in the hands of centralized agencies, books are often less

responsive to changing needs. In many of the developing countries, and of course in the Socialist countries, textbook publishing is in the hands of government agencies, which have control over both decisions about what is published and the means of production.

Libraries constitute another key market for books. In the United States, the direct library market is about 11 per cent of the total.<sup>5</sup> In developing countries, the library market often constitutes an even larger proportion of the total book market. Libraries are particularly important for certain types of books. For example, about 80 per cent of the children's books published in the United States are purchased by libraries. Scholarly books are also very dependent on libraries. In the U.S., about half of the books published by university presses are purchased by libraries, and in India the proportion runs as high as 80 per cent. Without library sales, it would be impossible to publish scholarly books. With current cutbacks in library budgets in the United States, and rising costs for books, it is becoming increasingly difficult for libraries to purchase as many current and scholarly books as in the past.

The existence of journals, book reviewing media, bibliographies, and other ancillary materials is quite important to publishing and can greatly facilitate the distribution of books and help to create a general 'book consciousness' in a society. In addition to acting as an independent outlet for intellectual work, magazines and journals provide a medium for advertising books, and perhaps more important, are the key means of reviewing books. Book reviews are very important for a number of reasons. Reviews publicize books and provide useful information and analysis to potential book buyers. Further, reviews contribute to good authorship by criticizing books and subjecting them to public scrutiny. This kind of scrutiny contributes to high levels of intellectual attainment. Many countries do not have adequate book reviewing media, and this is especially the case for general books.<sup>6</sup> At the level of popular mass market books, book reviews in newspapers can contribute to book sales. But in many countries, newspapers do not feature many book reviews.

Bibliographic tools are also an important element of the publishing infrastructure. It is necessary to know about the existence of a book in order to purchase it, and full information concerning its availability and price is also necessary. While most industrialized countries are reasonably well provided for in terms of national bibliographies, book trade journals, and other means of information, many

countries are less well endowed in this respect, and the book trade suffers as a result. Such elements as book reviewing media and bibliographies are small matters, but they are an integral part of the intellectual system which supports publishing. If they are inadequate, the entire publishing enterprise is weaker.

The rate of literacy in a society is a key variable with regard to publishing. While most industrialized nations have nearly universal literacy and levels of schooling are quite high, these countries are in a minority in the world. Low literacy rates characterize many Third World nations. Furthermore, even the minority of individuals who are literate often cannot afford to purchase books. Consequently, book sales are limited, and the publishing enterprise is constricted. In a sense, many Third World publishers are serving only the tiny minority of their populations that is literate and can afford to buy books. A small audience means small and expensive editions; high costs means books are available to fewer people. A vicious circle of restricted publishing is created. As a result of these and other factors, the growth of publishing in developing countries has been slow and intellectual life, the educational system, and other elements of society have suffered.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to literacy, language is often an important issue in publishing. While seldom considered in such linguistically homogeneous nations as the United States, Britain, France or West Germany, language is a key intellectual, educational and even political problem in many countries. Particularly acute in the Third World, language is also an issue in such industrialized nations as Belgium, Canada, and even the Soviet Union. Some countries have competing languages which are used by large minorities of the population. This situation often leads to political strife and conflict, and of course to a bifurcation of the market for books and to divisiveness in the educational system.

Another aspect of the language problem concerns Third World countries which continue to use a European language for educational, scientific, and often commercial purposes despite the fact that this language is spoken by only a small minority of the total population. This situation has implications for many aspects of a society, including levels of political participation, and prospects for democracy. For education and publishing, the continuous use of a 'foreign' language which is known by only a small proportion of the population (about 2 per cent of India's population is literate in English,

but about half of the books are published in English) necessarily limits the circulation of books and circumscribes the market considerably. Typically, books about politics, science, and technology, and other 'intellectual' subjects continue to be written in the European language even after some changes in the linguistic situation begin to occur. Despite the coming of independence and a sense of nationalism in most Third World countries, reliance on written materials in European languages continues to be widespread. Some efforts have been made to establish journals, publish books, and in general to create a modern intellectual life in indigenous languages, but progress has been slow. Even Indonesia, which has been particularly active in stressing the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* as the national language, continues to rely on books from abroad for the higher levels of its educational system.

Publishing has an important international context. Publishers, particularly in the industrialized nations which use a 'world' language, export large quantities of books. Books are also frequently translated from one language to another. The transmission of written materials is a key aspect of intellectual life, and the availability of books to an international audience is a key element in the international circulation of ideas and technology. Questions of access to books, of the costs of obtaining permission to translate books, of copyright, of commercial arrangements across frontiers are all important to publishers, and, indirectly, to intellectual life.

In general, the industrialized nations which use a 'world' language dominate the flow of books, and to a considerable extent the flow of knowledge and ideas as well. In a sense, these nations, especially the United States, Britain, France and to a lesser extent West Germany, Spain, and the Soviet Union, constitute the intellectual 'centres' of the world. Most other nations, and particularly the Third World, are the 'periphery', and are dependent to varying degrees on knowledge, and often books, produced at the 'centre'.<sup>8</sup> There are some exceptions, such as the smaller highly literate nations like Japan, Sweden, Holland, and Czechoslovakia. The widespread use of books from abroad has implications for local publishing industries, for the growth of authorship, and indeed for the basic intellectual life of a nation. Without an indigenous publishing enterprise, a nation is doomed to 'provincial' status and will continue to be dependent on outside elements for its intellectual sustenance. The existence of a publishing enterprise will not guarantee an active intellectual life

but publishing is a necessary condition for indigenous scientific and literary activity.

Copyright is a key issue which has international ramifications. Most countries abide by one of the major copyright agreements, and publishers attempt to protect their own interests and those of authors through copyright. Copyright arrangements, however, work in the interests of the major publishing countries and to the detriment of the developing nations.<sup>9</sup> After much discussion and controversy, there have been some changes in these agreements which permit developing countries to reprint educational and scientific materials more freely.<sup>10</sup> Copyright regulations control intellectual traffic, and their nature has widespread indirect implications for the shape of the international publishing community.

This discussion has outlined some of the key elements of the intellectual system as it affects publishing. It is not possible, in the context of this discussion, to evaluate the weights of these, and other elements, in the system. But it is clear that publishing is very deeply enmeshed in a complex system which extends far beyond the doors of the publishing house. With this broader discussion, it is possible to turn to a more detailed consideration of the internal aspects of publishing.

#### THE ROLE OF THE PUBLISHER

Most simply, the publisher is a coordinator of the processes by which a book is produced.<sup>11</sup> This coordination, however, requires considerable expertise, and the manipulation of many diverse economic, administrative, and intellectual factors. A publisher must understand enough about the market for books so that he produces the kinds of books which will be purchased. This is even the case for non-profit publishers such as university presses. Such publishers need not make a profit but at the same time they must meet expenses, so they cannot issue books which have no attraction even to a scholarly audience. In addition to economic awareness, the publisher must be familiar with the world of arts and letters, science, and social science, and make sure he has hired an editorial staff competent to work in these different arenas. Judgements about the quality, value, and saleability of a manuscript must constantly be made.

The publisher must also understand how his product will reach

the hands of the intended consumers; he must know the mechanics of the distribution system. The publisher has many roles in an enterprise which is complicated and unpredictable. Even in the best of circumstances, the publishing of 'serious' books is a financially marginal operation.

Lewis Coser has pointed out that the publisher is a 'gatekeeper' of knowledge.<sup>12</sup> By virtue of his control over what appears in print, the publisher exercises considerable power. Control over access to information and over one of the means of distribution of knowledge is of considerable importance to any society. In most industrialized societies, this control is fairly diffuse and thus permits a fairly wide range of material to get published. Commercial publishers must decide whether a given manuscript has the potential to recoup the investment made on it and hopefully to make a profit. University presses must carefully weigh the scholarly merit of a particular manuscript against its sales potential. If the sales potential is too limited, even the highest quality of manuscript can seldom be published. The means for determining the 'marketability' of a particular book is very unsophisticated.<sup>13</sup> Publishing firms are among the few businesses which rely very little on market research. Thus, the gatekeeping function is often a matter of guesswork. In the case of the university presses, committees of established scholars decide on whether to publish a manuscript. Such a process maintains an acceptable level of quality, but tends to prevent *avant garde* or academically unpopular books from being published by the university presses.

It is important to note that established publishers, academic or commercial, do not always meet their responsibility to bring important new knowledge to the attention of the public. This is particularly the case when highly controversial materials are involved. In such instances, very small publishers are often willing to take the risk of publishing, or authors occasionally publish their books themselves. A number of writers who later achieved great fame, such as James Joyce, Upton Sinclair, Emma Goldman, and others, were forced to publish their own books because no 'reputable' firm was willing to issue them.<sup>14</sup> In countries where there is overt censorship by political, religious or other authorities the situation is, of course, very much more difficult.

Publishing is in part a sales enterprise. Most publishers pay considerable attention to the publicity and distribution of their books.

'Selling' in the publishing world is often of a fairly genteel nature. Advertisements in appropriate newspapers and journals, and direct mail campaigns are means of making information about books available. Specialized books are advertised in academic journals. Publishers try to have their books reviewed in appropriate media, feeling that independent reviews will help sell books. All of these efforts assume that the journals, mailing lists, book reviewers, book trade publications, and other media exist. Most industrialized nations are endowed with the basic book trade publicity mechanisms, but the situation in Third World nations is much less favourable.

A final yet quite important aspect in the distribution chain for books is the bookseller. While publishers have little direct control over bookselling, their policies with regard to discounts, returns, and other factors directly affect the booksellers. Bookstores in many countries are inadequate in quality and there are too few of them. In many countries, bookstores are located in metropolitan areas and in intellectual centres, with little spread elsewhere.<sup>15</sup> In a sense, the 'centre-periphery' situation discussed earlier with regard to nations also functions within countries, with large parts of most countries virtually cut off from exposure to current books on serious and scholarly topics.

Book publishing remains one of the elements of communication in an increasingly diversified society which does not require large amounts of money. Successful long-term publishing does demand considerable capital and business enterprise, but it is possible to enter publishing on a small scale and have the possibility of success. It has been estimated that it takes about \$15,000 to produce a single scholarly title.<sup>16</sup> As a result of the economic reality of publishing, there are a large number of publishing firms in most industrialized nations, representing many diverse cultural, political, and other interests. Even in Third World nations, it is easier to start a publishing firm than a newspaper. Although it is relatively easy to start a publishing firm, it is more difficult to sustain an active publishing programme, and even more difficult to earn a profit from publishing. This is particularly true for 'scholarly' books, which have a limited sales potential and which are often difficult to market.

This summary of the role of the publisher by no means does justice to what is a complex undertaking. A publisher is a businessman, an intellectual, a publicity agent, a grammarian, and hopefully in the long run a teacher. The publisher is a 'gatekeeper' who has con-

siderable control over the kinds of knowledge that are available in a society.<sup>17</sup> The importance of publishing is perhaps exemplified in authoritarian societies, which make major efforts to control what is published, and often destroy books considered 'subversive' of public order or the approved ideology.

#### THE 'CRISIS' OF PUBLISHING

In the first part of this section, a number of the fairly 'constant' variables affecting publishing were discussed. These factors tend to affect publishers, and intellectual life generally, in a consistent predictable manner. Literacy rates rise only slowly, and the basic purchasing power of a population will rise (or fall) fairly slowly. However, publishing is presently faced with a series of unpredicted 'crises' which will affect its ability to serve the intellectual needs of most countries in the future. It is the purpose of this concluding section to highlight some of these problems.

Perhaps the most serious problem affecting publishers is economic. The economic situation affects publishing in a number of ways. Basically, publishers are faced with a cost-price squeeze that threatens to price many kinds of books out of the market. This is particularly the case for scholarly books, which usually have a fairly high price because of small editions, and 'quality' paperbacks, which find fewer buyers at high prices. The university presses, which are financially marginal operations in the best of times, have been hardest hit by the inflationary spiral. It is not difficult to understand the cause of the present situation. The cost of paper, for example, has doubled in the United States in the period of a year. In other countries the increase has been even larger. Printing ink, labour, and even overhead have increased dramatically in cost. All this has meant that the prices of books go up and that capital expenditures rise sharply. Books are not a 'necessity' for most people, and when economically pressed, individuals will decrease their purchases of books. The situation is perhaps even more serious in the Third World, where publishing is a marginal enterprise even in prosperous times.

At the same time that the publishers have been faced with inflationary pressures, the main purchasers of scholarly books—libraries and those connected with educational institutions—have been affected by the same crisis. In addition, universities in the United States and in a number of other countries have been faced with

their own special crises—of declining enrolments, political pressures, etc.—and both academic libraries and faculty members have cut down on their purchases of books. Libraries find themselves able to purchase fewer books because individual volumes cost more. And as sales drop for particular titles, the size of editions tends to decline, and thus the individual price of a book rises even more precipitously than the rate of inflation. There is no question that the economic situation is a most serious matter for publishing. Inflation, the crisis in the universities, and severe shortages of materials (particularly paper) have combined to place publishers in an unprecedented crisis.

The proliferation of books has created a problem. American publishers have claimed that there are 'too many books'.<sup>18</sup> Publishers in many countries experienced a considerable boom during the 1960s, when educational systems expanded rapidly and library budgets rose. This boom resulted in an increase in the number of titles published. But the recent constriction of the market for books has made the wide variety of titles more difficult to sell. The competition for sales is very fierce, and in a market which is not growing dramatically, it is increasingly difficult for a publisher to function on an economically viable basis. There is insufficient space in bookstores for the number of new books published, libraries find it difficult to purchase and store the volume of new publications, and readers cannot keep up with the flow. Part of the cause for this situation is the much discussed 'knowledge explosion'—the increasing range of research which inevitably led to the production of books, journal articles, and other means of reporting research findings.

Publishing has also seen a growing trend towards specialization of the market for books that has created a number of problems for the industry. This is perhaps especially the case for scholarly books. University presses in the United States print about as many copies of a single title today as they did fifteen or twenty years ago. The number of titles has risen steeply but sales per title have not expanded. The number of copies sold per volume has remained constant despite a doubling in the number of faculty in a little more than a decade. This phenomenon is due largely to the specialization which is endemic in academes—the fact that scholars tend to be 'experts' on smaller and smaller topics, and that scholarly books are increasingly written for more limited audiences. It may be worth noting that the same thing has happened to 'general' magazines in the United States. The demise of *Life* and *Look*, and the growth of

special interest magazines are indicative of a societal trend. Specialization means that the publisher has a small market for some kinds of books, and that rising costs cannot be offset by larger editions.

A new technology that might make it possible to deal with some of these problems—inflated costs, knowledge explosion, extreme specialization coupled with limited audiences—is in the process of development. Although industrialized nations are usually responsible for technological innovations, developing countries are indirectly affected by these changes. New methods of printing and composition, such as photo-offset, computer-based typography, and other innovations, are beginning to change the economics of publishing. Publishers are only starting to use the technological innovations which are available. This is particularly true of scholarly publishers, who have been slow to innovate. Entirely new means of information presentation, such as the use of microfiche instead of books printed on paper, is another innovation which has potential implications for publishing. 'Books' on microfiche can be 'printed' on demand very cheaply once the original copy is made. Information can be stored in a very small area, thus potentially revolutionizing the traditional library. The developing countries are only now considering the implications of some of these innovations and offset printing is coming into widespread use in the Third World. The point of these comments is that publishing, as other sectors of the economy, will necessarily have to deal with the impact of technology. Such consideration is at present in its very early stages. Change, however, is inevitable as economic factors price 'traditional books' out of the market, as libraries cannot cope with the bulk of new books and as new technological innovations are perfected.

The implications of photocopying, for example, have widespread relevance for publishing. Discussion of the meaning of copyright in the United States is heated in an era when individuals can make inexpensive photocopies of books and where even libraries share materials through the Xerox process.<sup>19</sup> In Sweden, the principle of royalty payment for the use of books in libraries was recently established. Methods of providing payment to authors and publishers for the use of their materials or for photocopying books or articles are now under consideration in a number of countries. Many of the traditional notions concerning the production, distribution, and use of books are being called into question by technological innovations. Indeed, the very concept of the 'book' as it has been known since

the seventeenth century may be in the process of change.

This discussion of some of the aspects of the crisis of modern book publishing, and particularly the publishing of 'serious' works of science, politics, and research brings us back to the original theme of this section. Publishers are part of an intellectual system which consists both of the circulation of ideas and trends in a society, and of economic and institutional structures. Publishers are affected not only by intellectual currents but by economic and other factors which have implications for the rest of the society. Inflation, changes in technology, and other matters have direct implications for publishers. Publishers are also affected by the institutional structures of society. The nature of the educational system, of libraries, and of copyright regulations all have implications for publishing.

Publishers are not powerless ciphers in their social milieu. They have considerable power over the kinds of materials which reach the mainstream of a society. They function as gatekeepers and arbiters of literary taste and culture. There is considerable interaction between editors and authors, and this interaction often shapes the nature of what is published. At the scholarly level, the kinds of books published have implications for the direction of research, for academic careers, and indirectly for currents of intellectual life. What is needed, therefore, is that both publishers and those involved in the intellectual enterprise understand the system which affects the publication of books. This system, often seemingly irrational, is in reality quite complex and related to key elements in the society.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The text of Part I was originally published as an article in *Annals of the American Academy* and is a continuation of the discussion begun in Philip G. Altbach, 'Publishing in Developing Countries', *International Social Science Journal*, 26 (No. 3, 1974). I am indebted to Sheila McVey and John Grove for their comments on an earlier draft.

<sup>2</sup> Many of the concepts elaborated in this chapter are taken from the writings of Edward Shils. See particularly his *The Intellectuals and the Powers and Other Essays* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972). See also Edward Shils, 'Intellectuals' in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), vol. 7, pp. 399-415.

<sup>3</sup> Chandler B. Grannis, 'U.S. Book Industry Statistics', *Publishers Weekly*, 205 (4 February 1974), p. 58. Statistics are for 1972.

<sup>4</sup> For a general discussion of textbooks in the United States, see 'Textbooks' in *Encyclopaedia of Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), vol. 9, pp. 210-24.

<sup>5</sup> Chandler Grannis, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

<sup>6</sup> It might be noted that the United States has no equivalent to the *Times*

*Literary Supplement* of London, a publication which helps to set literary standards in addition to its coverage of important new books.

<sup>7</sup> For an overview of the book situation in the Third World, see Ronald Barker and Robert Escarpit, *The Book Hunger* (Paris: UNESCO, 1973).

<sup>8</sup> See Edward Shils, 'Metropolis and Province in the Intellectual Community', in Edward Shils, *The Intellectuals and the Powers and Other Essays*, op. cit., pp. 355-71.

<sup>9</sup> There are some exceptions to the use of copyright. See for example David Kaser, *Book Pirating in Taiwan* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1969).

<sup>10</sup> *Records of the Conference for Revision of the Universal Copyright Convention* (Paris: UNESCO, 1973). See also N. N. Gidwani, ed., *Copyright: Legalized Piracy?* (Bombay: Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom, 1968).

<sup>11</sup> See Datus Smith, Jr., *A Guide to Book Publishing* (New York: Bowker, 1966) for a brief discussion of the roles of the publisher.

<sup>12</sup> Lewis A. Coser, 'Publishers as Gatekeepers of Ideas', *Annals of the American Academy of Social and Political Science* (September 1975). See also Paul M. Hirsch, 'Processing Fads and Fashions: An Organization-Set Analysis of Cultural Industry Systems', *American Journal of Sociology*, 77, No. 4, 1971, pp. 639-59 for a discussion of the intricacies of publishing and other cultural 'industries'.

<sup>13</sup> Paul M. Hirsch, op. cit., p. 648.

<sup>14</sup> See Sheila McVey, 'Publishing in a Developing Country: America in the Nineteenth Century', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, September 1975, for some examples of this situation in the United States.

<sup>15</sup> See Edward Shils, 'The Bookshop in America', *Daedalus*, Winter, 1963, pp. 92-104 for a discussion of bookselling in the United States.

<sup>16</sup> Morris Philipson, 'What is a University Press Worth?', *Encounter*, 40, May 1973, p. 45.

<sup>17</sup> It is probably true that in nations where the 'intellectual infrastructure' is weak the publisher is more important than in countries which have a system of television stations, intellectual journals, newspapers, and other outlets for knowledge.

<sup>18</sup> John Dessauer, 'Too Many Books?', *Publishers Weekly*, 206, 30 September 1974 and 14 October 1974, pp. 24-5 and 32-3.

<sup>19</sup> Barbara Ringer, 'The Demonology of Copyright', *Publishers Weekly*, 206, 18 November 1974, pp. 26-9.

## PART II

# Publishing in Developing Countries<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

The printed word is a key to the creation and diffusion of knowledge, to the maintenance of an active intellectual life and to the development of advanced technology. Further, books, periodicals, and other reading materials are central to the educational system, to research, and to the creation of an independent national culture. Regardless of advances that have taken place in the diffusion of information, scholars, policy-makers, and intellectuals still depend on the printed word to communicate. Books are not the sole artifact of a culture, but they are among the elements of a modern society. Books are especially crucial to Third World nations, which are trying to quickly modernize while at the same time reinterpreting old cultures. As one observer has put it:

To establish an indigenous publishing house is an act of liberation, and therefore, a necessity because it breaks the control, indeed the monopoly, which the white races have had over world literature, for which reason they have controlled the mind of the African.<sup>2</sup>

It is not argued here that books are the sole requisite for modernization or cultural development, but only that books—and publishing—are a part of the intellectual equation of any nation and deserve attention and analysis.

The production and distribution of books is controlled by publishers. They not only make ideas available to a public, but in many ways share in deciding which ideas will emerge into the arena of public discourse. They are, in a sense, 'gatekeepers' of knowledge and culture.<sup>3</sup> Publishing stands at the crossroads between intellectual activity and commercial enterprise. The publishing house, in its 'pure' form, coordinates the production of a book, from the initial

contact with an author through the editing process, printing, binding, publicity and arrangements for sales. The publisher ensures that the final product is of a certain standard of quality, intellectually as well as physically, and that it is suitable for its intended market. Thus, different standards of production will be used for a mass-market school textbook than for a refined volume on art. The function of a publisher is basically one of coordination and most publishers do not possess the physical means of producing books. Composing, printing, and binding are generally done by outside firms. The main contribution of a publisher is expertise and skill—his knowledge of the various elements of the book trade and his ability to manipulate them in order to produce a book and to ensure its efficient distribution.<sup>4</sup>

Although publishing is a complex enterprise, producing everything from scientific treatises to comic books, this study is only concerned with the role of publishing in the creation and diffusion of pure and applied knowledge in Third World countries. The focus is on the publication of research in the sciences and humanities for use in post-secondary institutions.<sup>5</sup>

Third World nations are characterized by scarcities of almost all the elements of a modern industrial society. Not only is there a shortage of investment capital, industrial capacity, and skilled manpower, but this scarcity extends to intellectual areas as well. Literacy rates are low and massive efforts have been made to raise them so that educational skills can be used to speed the processes of modernization in other fields. Schools are in short supply and so are qualified teachers. Top-level experts, planners, and intellectuals are too few in number to provide the expertise needed in any modern society. It is to this uncharted area of intellectual scarcity that books and publishing is related. Books can contribute to the easing of scarcities of educational resources and trained individuals able to contribute to the process of modernization.

But publishing is also affected by scarcities. There are not enough books to meet growing demands. There is not enough paper and printing presses are often in short supply. There are few trained editors able to effectively oversee the production of books, and there are sometimes not enough authors writing relevant and useful books.

The nature of the 'book hunger', as Barker and Escarpit have recently called it, can be seen in the fact that the 34 industrialized

countries, with only 30 per cent of the world's population, produced 81 per cent of the book titles.<sup>6</sup> Figures for Asia are equally dramatic. The eighteen developing countries of the region, with 28 per cent of the world's population, accounted for only 7.3 per cent of the world's book titles and 2.6 per cent of the total number of copies. Textbooks comprise about half of the total book supply.<sup>7</sup> This was only 32 book titles per million population, as against a world total of 127 per million and a European average of 418 titles per million. Experts have pointed out that the supply of educational (text) books in Asia would have to increase by about 12 per cent per year to meet projected targets for 1980.<sup>8</sup> Production has fallen far short of this target in recent years.

That sub-system of publishing with which this study is concerned, scholarly and cultural publishing, creates special difficulties for the developing areas. First priority has gone to the 'basic' publishing needs—textbooks at the primary and secondary level. In the Third World, where the intellectual community is quite small, where scholarly books are often written in European languages understood by a small minority of the population, and where the purchasing power of the academic community is very limited, the publishing of scholarly books is almost inherently an economically unprofitable undertaking.

While it is difficult to define exactly what goes into a viable publishing enterprise, and there are substantial differences between countries, it is possible to outline some of the preconditions for the emergence of a strong book industry.

A sufficiently large base of effective literacy

A mass educational system which makes use of the printed word

A 'modern' white collar class which feels that books are important and has sufficient purchasing power

Adequate availability of printing paper

Adequate printing equipment

Professionals skilled in publishing

Ancillary skills such as editorial and writing abilities

Commercial distribution and promotion networks of professional standard

Adequate long-term capital

Government policies which are conscious of the importance of books

A nation need not fulfil all of these conditions to have a flourishing publishing enterprise, but many of them must be met. Publishing is a complex undertaking which is very dependent on the social, intellectual, economic, and political milieu in which it exists.

#### SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS

There are many common elements to publishing in every country. This section will outline some of the special circumstances and problems of publishing which are peculiar to the Third World. Among these are the colonial heritage, the orientation and motivation of intellectuals, the economics of the book trade, government and publishing, and 'foreign aid'.

##### *a. The Colonial Heritage*

The colonial past overshadows the intellectual and educational life of many Third World nations. Traditional intellectual institutions atrophied under colonialism in many cases. European languages were imposed at the higher levels of the educational system, government, and eventually for purposes of scholarship. Employment in the 'modern' sector was unattainable for those who did not know the European language, and gradually this language became the medium for government, politics, commerce and science. The publication of books followed this current. The language of the colonizers seriously disrupted the indigenous languages, retarding their development, or even partially displacing them as expressions of a 'high culture'. The controversy between Bengali and English among intellectuals in Bengal in the nineteenth century is indicative of the divided loyalties and confusion which imposition of the Western languages caused.<sup>9</sup>

Even in Indonesia, one of the few developing countries which has made a concentrated and fairly successful effort to promote the use of an indigenous language—*Bahasa Indonesia*—scholarly books and advanced textbooks do not yet exist in that language and materials in English are widely used. In many Third World countries, a significant proportion of book production is in a European language, thereby cutting off most people from this literature. In India about half of the book titles are published in English, while in Anglophone Africa the proportion is virtually 100 per cent. The higher levels of education in many developing countries are effectively cut off from

80 to 90 per cent of the population which does not know English or French.<sup>10</sup>

The influence of European languages and to some extent of European publishers as well is maintained by a combination of inertia, government policy, and the continuing role of foreign publishers. Indian publishers, for example, do not follow a consciously neo-colonialist policy of trying to maintain foreign influence on the sub-continent. Rather, they perceive that the largest market for books is in English and that, in fact, the main national market is for such books. Hindi is emerging as a 'national' market for northern India in the 1970s. Wholesalers, booksellers, and for that matter the reading public with sufficient funds to purchase books all look towards the English market. Perhaps more important, libraries and institutions, which constitute the very large majority of purchasers for scholarly and non-fiction books, are accustomed to buying English books. Authors wishing to write for a national audience and to reach their intellectual peers almost always write in English. The network of economic and intellectual relationships and traditions makes it very difficult to break with publishing in European languages.

*b. Orientation and Motivation of Intellectuals*

The traditions and orientations of intellectuals in developing countries do not foster indigenous scholarly writing for publication. At present, written material on scientific and political matters imported from the West overshadows the writing done in Third World countries. One of the reasons for supporting the growth of local publishing enterprises is to provide locally-produced materials with an effective outlet, but there are many reasons for the lack of local scholarly writing aside from the paucity of publishers. Very few intellectuals in any nation are able to support themselves on the basis of their writing. The orientation of many intellectuals towards the West makes many authors prefer to have their books published in London, New York, or Paris rather than Bombay or Dakar because of the added prestige (and perhaps income) that foreign publication means.<sup>11</sup>

Part of the problem is institutional. In general, intellectuals and academics in developing countries do not have adequate working conditions, income, or leisure time to support active scholarly writing. The universities in the Third World do not often reward research

and scholarly publication. Many of the most able scholars are pressed into administration or government service, leaving them little time to write. While beyond the scope of this study, it is clear that the universities must stress and reward creative and relevant research work. The lack of intellectual journals and particularly of book reviewing media has meant that an articulate intellectual public has been slow to develop. Publicity concerning intellectual work is lacking. There is a lack not only of bookshops, but also of bibliographies and of periodicals. In addition to publishing, these institutional factors constitute the 'infrastructure' of intellectual life and determine the total direction and success of the book trade among other things.

*c. Economics of the Book Trade*

The economics of the book trade is related to such divergent factors as the rate of literacy, the level of income, the reading habits of the population, and government policy towards publishers, libraries, and the educational system. The more technical matters such as the system of book distribution, copyright laws, the price of paper and the availability of printing presses also enter into the publishing equation.<sup>12</sup>

Low per-capita incomes deter college and university teachers, normally a key market for serious books, from purchasing books in many developing countries. The private market for books is small, and a very large proportion of the sales of serious and scholarly books are to libraries and public institutions. In India, libraries account for about 90 per cent of the sales of serious books. This means that editions are small—sometimes under 1,000 copies per title—distribution is expensive, and therefore the prices of books are high. In this sense, there is a kind of 'vicious circle' in scholarly publishing. As one American academic publisher put it, scholarly books are published at the highest prices for the smallest audiences. And because the prices are high (due to high composition and printing costs and small printings), few people can afford to buy these books. High costs for raw materials and small printings outweigh the advantage of low labour costs. Paper, one of the most serious problems for publishing in developing countries, may run to 40 or 50 per cent of production costs.

Many experts have pointed to the problems of book distribution as the single most serious problem of publishing.<sup>13</sup> Dan Lacy divides

the problem of book distribution into three aspects: (1) the actual demand for books as distinguished from the need, (2) the channels of distribution (booksellers, wholesalers, etc.), and (3) the means of conveying information about books (reviews, bibliographical tools, publicity, etc.).<sup>14</sup> Bookshops are few in number in Third World countries and are centred in the large cities and towns, thereby virtually eliminating the rural majority from access to books. The problems of effectively making books available to the relevant readership in developing countries have not been solved. The academic community often has difficulty in obtaining needed research monographs and other specialized studies, which often must be imported from abroad. The problem of distribution to 'newly literate' populations in rural areas is even more serious.

While publishing is not expensive when compared to such investments as steel mills, it is capital intensive. Furthermore, the return on investment in publishing is slow, particularly in countries where books sell slowly and the distribution system is not terribly efficient. Banks and other financial institutions are, consequently, unwilling to invest in publishing, feeling that a faster and more profitable rate of return could be obtained elsewhere. This situation has created an almost universal credit squeeze and has severely limited the establishment and growth of publishing enterprises in developing countries.<sup>15</sup> These problems of financing occur in both the private and government sectors of publishing.

#### *d. Government and Publishing*

Government is a crucial element of publishing in developing countries. It is even more important than in industrialized nations, where strong private publishing enterprises exist. Import regulations, copyright policy and the funding of libraries and universities are but a few areas of direct government involvement in areas related to publishing. Governments have become directly involved in book publishing in many developing countries, with policies ranging from total monopoly over books to subsidies to private publishers.

Textbooks offer a good example of government involvement. In India, and in many other developing nations, the government has nationalized much of textbook publishing at the primary and secondary levels so as to expand the production of textbooks and reduce their cost to students. However, since the relatively stable and lucrative textbook market can enable a publisher to undertake the

risk of less remunerative scholarly and general books, the nationalization of the textbook trade has undermined the economic viability of the private publishers. Thus, a particular decision such as the nationalization of textbooks can have widespread and possibly counter-productive implications for the publishing industry and in the long run perhaps for the intellectual life of the nation.

*e. 'Foreign Aid' and Publishing*

As in most other relationships between the developing and industrialized nations, intellectual trade relations are unbalanced.<sup>16</sup> Industrialized nations export their products, in this case books and expertise, to the developing countries. Commercial relationships of dependence, built up over many years of colonialism, as well as more recent intervention of foreign aid, are part of the equation. Branches of British and French publishing houses still based in the developing countries play a significant and sometimes a dominant role. In Africa, as in other parts of the Third World, a large part of the very modest production of books is carried out by non-indigenous firms.<sup>17</sup> Out of date and clearly irrelevant textbooks manufactured in Europe are common in Africa. Further, much of the scholarship concerning developing areas has been done by foreigners, and this has inevitably had an effect on how societies are interpreted. Part of this important nexus of relationships are the foreign aid programmes which a number of the industrialized countries have sponsored in the developing areas.

A full scale analysis of the complicated nature of foreign assistance to the book trade is clearly beyond the scope of this study. The U.S. Agency for International Development has stressed books as an important component of its aid effort and has engaged in a range of book programmes in many developing countries.<sup>18</sup> One of its largest book-related programmes was conducted in India.<sup>19</sup> Under PL 480, more than 1,000 different American textbooks were reprinted (in English) for use by Indian college level students and sold at subsidized prices. More than 4,000,000 books were distributed. While science dominated the titles published, many books in social sciences and humanities were also issued. The PL 480 Programme had the full approval of the Indian Government, and the textbooks were selected by a joint Indo-American committee. The programme placed inexpensive books in the hands of students and it made textbooks in a range of disciplines quickly available in India.

American aid also had some negative repercussions.<sup>20</sup> Subsidized American books drove their more expensive (unsubsidized) domestically produced counterparts off the market. In some fields, particularly the social sciences, American books are not necessarily relevant to the Indian situation. Yet their availability at inexpensive prices makes locally written books difficult to market. Furthermore, the existence of artificially low prices for books gives book buyers a confused sense of the real cost of books. Scrutinizing the implications of foreign aid programmes in publishing, it is quite possible that the disadvantages might outweigh the advantages. It seems clear that most programmes are implemented without a full evaluation of the possible results, both positive and negative. The motivations of the aid-giving agencies are at least as much tied to the national interests of the industrialized 'donor' countries as to the needs of the Third World. But the repercussions of aid programmes in publishing are, without question, considerable and deserve careful attention.

#### SCHOLARLY PUBLISHING

Books which directly add to the stock of knowledge and the interpretation of culture are usually referred to as scholarly books. Such books are often uneconomic to produce. Yet, these books are of considerable importance because they do contribute to the growth and diffusion of knowledge. Scholarly publishing in developing countries is subject to all of the problems affecting the book trade generally. In addition, special difficulties exist. The market for scholarly books is a limited one, they are difficult to produce, hard to market because of the dispersal of potential buyers, and the return on capital is even slower than usual. The economic difficulties of scholarly books make commercial firms often unwilling to publish them.

The economics of scholarly publishing are problematical. Some Indian publishers say that it is possible to publish scholarly books in English and make a modest profit. Such books cannot be published in the indigenous Indian languages without substantial subsidies. No publisher, however, can survive only on the basis of scholarly publishing, and therefore such publishing must be combined with wholesaling, importing books, and of 'popular' publishing. Text-books have traditionally been a financial mainstay of publishing in India.

The largest market for scholarly books in any country is that of libraries. India is somewhat unique among Third World nations in having a fairly well-developed library system, and thus there is a small 'natural' market for scholarly books. The publication of scholarly books usually requires some kind of support, direct or indirect, from government agencies. This support is often in the form of the funding of libraries. This is as true for the industrialized nations as it is for developing countries.

There are various mechanisms that can be used to ensure both the efficient and independent operation of scholarly publishing. Datus Smith, Jr., has outlined some requisites of a non-profit scholarly publishing enterprise. He stresses that the following conditions must be met for a viable university or scholarly press in any country.

Academic control—final control over what the press publishes must remain in the hands of scholars and manuscripts should be judged by competent authorities

Professional staff—however modest the enterprise, there must be professional staff competent to edit and produce quality books

Long-term commitment to the publishing enterprise—publishing takes three to five years to get firmly established

Operational autonomy—within guidelines, the press should be able to make its own day to day decisions

Finances—because of the nature of the situation, scholarly publishing loses money and the press must have some sort of outside financial support

An active and well planned publishing programme<sup>21</sup>

One model for scholarly publishing is that of the non-profit university press. The prototype for such a press is probably Oxford University Press, but the modern university press is probably best developed in the United States. These presses make use of subsidies, usually from their parent institutions, but at the same time have considerable autonomy and independence of operation.<sup>22</sup> The university press may be a particularly relevant model for the Third World, since this mechanism provides needed autonomy and links with one of the most important intellectual institutions—the university. Academic institutions may be one of the few agencies in developing countries which can maintain suitable independence from outside interference.<sup>23</sup>

At present, most developing countries reflect the publishing situa-

tion in Britain or Japan rather than in the United States. Most scholarly books are published by private firms in both Britain and Japan, and university presses are thus far relatively modest segments of the publishing apparatus. Fairly low costs of book production combined with a relatively small market area and much interest in books have permitted private firms to engage in scholarly publishing on a wide scale.

The Soviet Union constitutes a third model for scholarly publishing.<sup>21</sup> Like many Third World nations, the U.S.S.R. is a multilingual country with state-owned publishing houses. Although politics is a criterion in the process of book selection, a large number of scholarly books are published in a variety of languages. Stress is placed on science and technology; thus 54 per cent of the books published in the Soviet Union deal with these topics. Decisions on publishing are not based exclusively on economic factors; this policy enables a wider range of potentially unprofitable but important books to be published. Most scholarly publishers are administered by one of the ministries dealing with education or science or by the prestigious Academy of Sciences.

The university press is a new phenomenon in developing countries, and despite substantial interest in many areas, their growth has been limited. In several countries, largely in formerly British colonies, university presses have been established recently. Perhaps the most impressive efforts have been in Nigeria (University of Ibadan Press) and to some extent in Singapore, Hong Kong, and Malaysia.<sup>25</sup> These presses have been able to publish scholarly books on subjects related to their own regions and have plans for expansion. The recent establishment of the International Association of Scholarly Presses and a conference of Asian scholarly publishers in Tokyo indicate that universities in the Third World are becoming increasingly involved in publishing.<sup>26</sup> The major contribution of the university presses so far has been to make available scholarship on the regions and countries in which they are located—material which might not have been published in the West and is of direct relevance to readers in those regions.

#### CONCLUSION

Scholarly publishing is crucial for the development of an active and independent intellectual life and to the growth of indigenous tech-

nology and research. The publishing enterprise flourishes only if all of its elements are effectively coordinated and supported. In developing countries, competition from foreign publishers and governments, a weak intellectual infrastructure, continued dominance of foreign (Western) languages, an inadequate reservoir of research and critical writing all work against the emergence of a viable publishing enterprise. For those Third World nations characterized by small populations, low levels of literacy and few universities, cooperation in publishing among a number of nations in a region may prove a useful pattern. Thus, the smaller countries of West Africa could rely on Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, and perhaps the Ivory Coast for some of their book needs. India already has a good book export business in other South Asian countries, the Middle East and, for some specialized categories of books, Europe and the U.S. The export of scholarly books can help to increase the small internal market for these books. Latin America also has a fairly well organized regional book trade.

Nevertheless, one cannot be very optimistic that the kind of publishing apparatus needed by the developing countries will emerge. On the very basic levels, requirements for school textbooks cannot now be met and rising levels of literacy and population increases are continually outstripping book production. In fact, it has been pointed out that the book deficit is growing in many developing countries.<sup>27</sup> Scholarly books are in an even more tenuous situation. No major political or social pressure exists for the provision of scholarly books or for the support of authors and research. In the hard-pressed developing countries, these activities are marginal and in most likelihood will continue to be so.

This generally pessimistic situation should not, however, prevent the academic and business communities from continuing the progress that has been made. The strongest initiatives can come from those in the universities, in the publishing enterprise, and in government; foreign aid is not necessary. Indeed, the few examples of successful scholarly publishing, such as the University of Ibadan Press and the work of private sector publishers in India, have been done without massive outside assistance. The task of building an adequate system for the creation and diffusion of knowledge in the developing countries will in the long run be left to those most concerned—the academic community and intellectuals of the Third World.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Portions of this section appear, in different form, in Philip G. Altbach, 'Publishing in Developing Countries', op. cit.

<sup>2</sup> Don and Barbara Dodson, 'Publishing Progress in Nigeria', *Scholarly Publishing*, 4, October 1972, p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> Lewis A. Coser, op. cit.

<sup>4</sup> The 'theoretical' aspects of publishing in developing countries are most adequately discussed in Datus Smith, Jr., op. cit.

<sup>5</sup> We are not concerned here with journals and periodicals, although these are extremely important parts of the intellectual equation. Indeed, it is common for much research on the frontiers of knowledge to be published first in journals and only later in book form. Periodicals are also quite important to dialogue on current affairs and politics. See, for example, I. L. Horowitz, 'Transaction Magazine: A Decade of Critical Social Science Journalism', *International Social Science Journal*, 25, no. 1-2, 1973, pp. 169-89.

<sup>6</sup> Ronald Barker and Robert Escarpit, op. cit., p. 16. This new book provides a short but concise discussion of the nature of the book shortage in developing countries.

<sup>7</sup> *Book Development in Asia: A Report on the Production and Distribution of Books in the Region* (Paris: UNESCO, 1967), p. 25.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>9</sup> For a detailed discussion of Bengali intellectual currents, see David Kopf, *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1969).

<sup>10</sup> Latin America is, of course, an exception in this regard since either Spanish or Portuguese is the language of a large majority of the population and a large regional market for books exists. The two publishing giants of the region, Mexico and Argentina, have fairly effectively used this linguistic unity to build a viable book enterprise.

<sup>11</sup> For a discussion of the situation of intellectuals in India, see Edward Shils, *The Intellectual Between Tradition and Modernity: The Indian Situation* (The Hague: Mouton, 1963).

<sup>12</sup> See Datus Smith, Jr., op. cit., for a book specifically concerning developing countries. Herbert Bailey, Jr.'s *The Art and Science of Book Publishing* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970) is a more technical assessment dealing largely with the United States. Another general overview can be found in Robert Escarpit, *The Book Revolution* (London: Harrap, 1966).

<sup>13</sup> Artur Isenberg, 'Toward Better Book Distribution in Asian Countries', *Indian Book Industry*, August-September 1970, p. 35. See also Dan Lacy, 'Practical Considerations, Including Financial, in the Creation, Production, and Distribution of Books and Other Educational Materials', in F. Keppel, ed., *The Mohonk Conference* (New York: National Book Committee, 1973), p. 55.

<sup>14</sup> Dan Lacy, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>15</sup> Curiously, foreign publishing firms are among the only ones interested in investing in publishing in developing countries, often in order to create a market for their own exported books. This works to the disadvantage of the developing country not only by putting foreigners in charge of local publishing to some extent, but by increasing the number of imported books.

<sup>16</sup> For an elaboration of this point, see Philip G. Altbach, 'Neocolonialism and Education', op. cit.

<sup>17</sup> See John Nottingham, 'Establishing an African Publishing Industry: A Study in Decolonization', *African Affairs*, 68, April 1969, pp. 139-44 for an elaboration of these points.

<sup>18</sup> *The Use of Books in the AID Program* (Manual Order 1612-69.3-1967) as quoted in Stanley Barnett and Roland Piggford, *Manual on Book and Library Activities in Developing Countries* (Washington, D. C.: Agency for International Development, 1969), p. 61.

<sup>19</sup> For a further discussion of this programme, see Philip G. Altbach, 'Neo-

colonialism in Indian Publishing', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 6, 1 May 1971, pp. 902-3. See also Samuel Israel, 'Indian Publishing: The Changing Scene', *Quest*, No. 68, January-February, 1971, pp. 50-58.

<sup>20</sup> See Peter S. Jayasinghe, 'A National Attitude', *Seminar*, No. 97, September 1967, pp. 16-19 for an Indian critique of the PL 480 Textbook Program.

<sup>21</sup> Datus Smith, Jr., 'University Presses in Asia', in T. Nickerson, ed., *Trans-Pacific Scholarly Publishing* (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1963), p. 243.

<sup>22</sup> For discussion of academic publishing in America, see Chester Kerr, 'Publishing Scholarly Books', in T. V. K. Krishnan, ed., *Book Development: Some Current Problems* (Delhi: Federation of Publishers and Booksellers Associations in India, 1969), pp. 127-34. See also Gene R. Hawes, *To Advance Knowledge: A Handbook on American University Press Publishing* (New York: American University Press Services, 1967).

<sup>23</sup> For a discussion of the situation of scholarly publishing in Asia, see Shigeo Minowa and A. A. Arboleda, eds., *Scholarly Publishing in Asia: Proceedings of a Conference* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1973) and T. Nickerson, ed., *Trans-Pacific Scholarly Publishing* (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1963). The journal *Scholarly Publishing*, issued from the University of Toronto Press, provides continuing coverage of themes in academic publishing in many countries.

<sup>24</sup> See D. R. Ellegood, 'Book Publishing in the U.S.S.R.', *Scholarly Publishing*, 3, October 1972, pp. 81-90.

<sup>25</sup> N. J. Udoeyop, 'Scholarly Publishing in Nigeria', *Scholarly Publishing*, 4, October 1972, pp. 51-60.

<sup>26</sup> See S. Minowa and A. A. Arboleda, eds., op. cit., for descriptions of recent developments in Asia.

<sup>27</sup> Ronald Barker and Robert Escarpit, op. cit., p. 17.

## PART III

# India as a Case Study

### INTRODUCTION

India is not a paradigm for all Third World countries, nor are India's experiences directly applicable to other nations. Yet India serves as an excellent case study of publishing in developing countries. It has a long history of indigenous publishing and today has one of the largest publishing enterprises in the Third World. India possesses all of the necessary pre-conditions for publishing—a large printing industry, editorial competence, paper manufacturing, and a network for the distribution of books. Indian publishing functions both as private enterprise and as part of the public sector, an experience common to many developing nations. The central government constitutes the largest single publishing agency in India while private sector publishers are together the largest and most innovative segment of the publishing enterprise. Indian publishing serves markets in both a 'colonial' language, English, and a variety of regional languages. In this study, the focus will be mainly on publishing in English, for while there is a growing publishing effort in the regional languages, most scholarly publishing is still done in English.

India is atypical among developing nations in many respects. It is a vast nation with a varied ethnic and linguistic mix. In its urban sector, India is more advanced in industrialization, education, literacy, and culture than most Third World countries. A generation has passed since Independence, and India has had a chance to create its own distinctive institutional arrangements. Even with these atypical elements, however, India constitutes a useful case study.

UNESCO statistics indicate that India is among the world's largest publishing nations and that it ranks about eighth in terms of numbers of titles published annually. (This rank may have fluctuated somewhat in recent years since India's book production has not been consistent.<sup>1</sup>) The statistics concerning book production in India

are significant in understanding the publishing enterprise. Figures from the National Library show that in 1972-3, a total of 17,020 titles were published as compared to 14,480 a year before.<sup>2</sup> In 1964, 46 per cent of all books printed in India were in English.<sup>3</sup> This proportion has dropped somewhat in recent years, but book titles in English outnumber the leading competitor, Hindi, by almost three to one. The following table indicates the status of the regional languages in book production.

TABLE I  
*Statistics on Book Production in 1972-3*  
*Language of Publication*

<i>Total*</i>	17,020
English	7,314
Hindi	2,825
Marathi	1,231
Bengali	1,053
Gujarati	697
Tamil	689
Malayalam	617
Telugu	576
Oriya	488
Punjabi	353
Urdu	323
Kannada	285
Assamese	282
Sanskrit	176
Other Languages	91

\*Number of titles

SOURCE: National Library, Calcutta

English dominates written expression and, in a sense, intellectual life in a manner disproportionate to its numerical strength in the population. About 30 per cent of India's population is literate, and 2 per cent is literate in English; the total reading public in 1966 was about 77,500,000 in all languages, with approximately 12,000,000 literate in English.<sup>4</sup> Despite these statistics and a campaign by the

government and many intellectuals to stress Hindi and the regional languages, English maintains a virtual monopoly on book production in scientific and scholarly fields. Even fields such as politics and current affairs are greatly dominated by English language publications.<sup>5</sup> English owes its position to the historical circumstances of colonialism, in part to the linguistic bifurcation of the sub-continent, and to the use of English in the educational system. While the situation is changing in that English is being rapidly displaced as the key medium of education, at present it remains the strongest language for many kinds of published material. While it is not possible to discuss the implications of the roles of English and the regional languages in India's overall development, there is no question but that English at present occupies the dominant position.

Publishing statistics are naturally influenced by rates of literacy, the educational system, and other matters. Despite the fact that India's overall production of book titles is quite large, the per capita publishing figures fall significantly below the world average, reflecting both the nation's poverty and its low rate of literacy. In 1963, the world average was 127 titles published per million population. In Asia, the average was 48 titles per million, and in India only 27 titles per million population.<sup>6</sup> The total book production per million in India is also low—the consumption of pages per person is only 32 annually, or the equivalent of one pamphlet per individual. Comparable figures for the consumption of books from industrialized nations go as high as 2,000 pages per person per year. In 1972, India's overall literacy rate was about 30 per cent, but the urban population was 56 per cent literate. Even more significant is the fact that 67 per cent of the population of the state and national capitals is literate.<sup>7</sup>

The print runs per title in India are low—well below the international average of 13,000 (1963). The average printing for a scholarly or general book in English is probably not much higher than one or two thousand copies, and in some of the regional languages it is even lower.

The kinds of books published in India are also somewhat different from other countries, particularly industrialized nations, and perhaps reflect some of the emphases of the society. About 35 per cent of books published are in the social sciences and only about 10 per cent in the pure and applied sciences. By comparison, 54 per

cent of the books published in the U.S.S.R. are on scientific subjects and in the U.S. the figure is 25 per cent. While there is a good deal of writing on scientific subjects, India's internal market makes the publication of scientific books difficult because it is quite small. In recent years, with the growth of exports and an expansion of the internal market, scientific publishing has developed.

The organization of Indian publishing is multifaceted. In the public sector, book enterprises range from ministries of the central and state governments to semi-official publicly-financed bodies such as the National Book Trust, the Sahitya Akademi and the Indian Standards Institution. About 450 agencies in the public sector publish books on a fairly regular basis. These efforts are only partly controlled by the usual economic incentives and constraints which affect the book industry. The private sector is, in India, organized around small and medium-sized firms. It is estimated that there are about 10,000 small publishers in India, 2,000 medium-sized firms, and 200 large publishers.<sup>8</sup> But perhaps only twenty of these large firms are fully equipped publishers, with adequate distribution facilities, some sources of capital and professional expertise. Most of the rest of the publishers issue books only sporadically and have few of the normal facilities of a publishing house. This is especially true of the small and medium-sized firms. There are also an estimated 30,000 printing presses, most of which are outdated and probably useless for book production. Most of the smaller presses and firms are engaged in non-book printing work for the most part. Many are in addition booksellers, wholesalers, distributors, or publishers.

English language publishing is concentrated in the four metropolitan centres of Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras, in that order of importance. There are perhaps fifty firms which publish in English on a regular basis. While Bombay was clearly the centre of Indian publishing until a few years ago, Delhi has now become headquarters for a number of the larger firms. Proximity to government ministries, centres of advanced studies, foreign embassies, and international agencies has made Delhi attractive to the book trade. A location in Delhi can also tap the increasingly lucrative Hindi market. Delhi, because of its large number of educational and government institutions, and its relatively affluent population is itself one of the largest markets for books in the country.

The Indian publishing scene is complex. The cost of labour tends to be low, but the price of paper is very high by international stan-

dards. There are many publishers, but only a very small number who matter when it comes to scholarly or general books. The network of distribution and sales for Indian books is inadequate, yet books reach their intended markets. The public sector engages in a large publishing programme, but without much coordination and in some cases with considerable waste. The language question, internal political matters, the needs and policies of the educational establishment, and other factors all impinge on publishing. The purpose of the remaining part of this study is to unravel some of the complexities in order to obtain an understanding of the publishing enterprise in its social, political, economic and intellectual context.

#### HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Printing and publishing in the modern sense can be traced to a Jesuit missionary, who was responsible for the first printing in India with movable metal type in 1557.<sup>9</sup> While much of the early printing was religious and done by Christian missionary groups, in the eighteenth century secular books began to appear in the vernacular languages, particularly in Bengali, as a result of the cultural renaissance in Bengal. Cultural figures such as Rabindranath Tagore and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee used books to press the Bengali cultural renaissance in the nineteenth century. While few established publishing houses emerged at this time, books were circulated to the growing literate middle class in Bengal. Similar currents were apparent in other parts of India, yet this cultural and intellectual renaissance did not see the emergence of publishing houses in the modern sense of the term. For the most part, individuals or organizations (such as the Brahmo Samaj) simply arranged for the printing of books, which made their way gradually to the intended audience. This was perhaps a rather inefficient means of disseminating information, but the community of readers was sufficiently small and concentrated in the urban areas to make it viable.

As the educational system expanded, an increasing demand arose for textbooks and educational materials at both the school and college levels. Among the first publishers to take full advantage of this need were British-owned firms, such as Macmillans in 1903, Longmans in *c.* 1906, and Oxford University Press in 1912. Most early British efforts were concentrated on importing books from

England and to some extent on reprinting or developing original books for use in schools and colleges. The British firms had the advantage that the education system was, for the most part, simply imported from England with a curriculum similar or identical to that used in Britain. Thus, textbooks published in Britain could be adapted for Indian use or simply used without alteration. Both Oxford University Press and Longmans concentrated on the textbook field, but occasionally ventured into original publishing of books related to India. The British firms were responsible for bringing out some of the first scholarly books published in India.

Another important current was Indian, impelled largely by nationalist political motives. These Indian publishers were overshadowed by the British firms and were generally short-lived. Many were of an *ad hoc* nature and aimed simply at getting books of topical, political, or cultural interest into the hands of educated Indians. These publishing thrusts were particularly strong in Bengal and in Maharashtra.

In this century independent publishing has profited by the Independence struggle and was in part related to it. The traditional British firms continued, and textbooks rolled off the presses. A new current was emerging, however, that proved to be the basis for post-Independence publishing: a number of firms loosely associated with the nationalist movement were founded during the 1940s. Padma Publishers, Hind Kitabs, and others emerged but collapsed within a few years.<sup>10</sup> Renaissance Publishers was established by followers of M. N. Roy to assist in the dissemination of his political views. This early generation of Indian publishers issued books primarily in English; and like its predecessors it was also short-lived. Misperception of the market due to the largely political motivations of the firms, harassment by the British authorities, lack of professional and business expertise and experience, and inadequate capital resources caused these publishing ventures to fail. These pioneering firms did prove, however, that indigenous publishing of a serious nature was possible; this helped to stimulate post-Independence efforts.

It is not surprising that the immediate post-Independence period saw a great increase in publishing. Not only were Indians optimistic in the spirit of newly-won independence, but the need for books increased rapidly. The educational system, which under the British was generally elitist and urban oriented, expanded. New colleges

and universities were established (the number of colleges increased from 933 in 1947 to 2,360 in 1960) and the student population at the college level grew from 225,000 in 1947 to 1,000,000 in 1960. The educational market, traditionally one of the main sources for publishers' revenues, was large. Public and college libraries, another important market for books, grew rapidly and many new libraries were established. The British-owned firms remained in India but took a lower profile after Independence. The political and other restrictions imposed by the British authorities, particularly during wartime, were lifted by the new independent government. Perhaps most important, however, was the fact that the newly independent nation had a great need for educational materials and wanted to open discussion of public questions. Books were one of the key elements in these discussions. This was the combination of circumstances which led to the quick growth of a publishing enterprise in India after 1950.

After 1947, when the market for books of all kinds increased dramatically, an indigenous publishing enterprise grew to meet this demand. At first, books appeared in an *ad hoc* manner, issued largely by booksellers turned publishers. Soon, a number of enterprising booksellers, wholesalers, and book importers went into publishing in a more serious manner and began to develop a 'backlist' of books, the beginnings of a distribution network, and some staff who had specific responsibilities for publishing books. The first major Indian firm to devote itself largely to publishing rather than to such functions as importing or distributing books was Asia Publishing House, founded in 1943. Asia was the first Indian publisher to attempt to meet international editorial and production standards and to develop professional specialization and expertise in publishing. Indeed, Asia Publishing House trained many of the staff members of the other Indian firms. Allied Publishers and Popular Prakashan followed and established themselves as publishers of serious books. Bombay emerged as the centre of Indian publishing in this period, although there were active firms in the other metropolitan areas.

The Indian government also entered into the publishing field. Government ministries began to publish books and reports. Some of this publishing activity was handled by the Manager of Publications and distributed through this channel. But much central government publishing was done in an *ad hoc* manner, with little or no sales of the material issued. The state governments were slower

to begin publishing activities, although some of the states started to issue books. The government publishing efforts were characterized by especially poor distribution facilities and fairly low standards of production. While a few of the private firms tried to set a higher standard, most were not much better than the government.

The import of books from abroad also accelerated at this time. Much of the importing was from Britain, the traditional supplier of books to India, but American firms slowly entered the field, particularly after the beginning of major American book programmes in 1954, which included incentives for book exports and direct foreign aid programmes in the field of publishing. International book trade agreements, however, left the Indian export market largely in the hands of British publishers, sometimes to the disadvantage of the Indian importer and reader. Book imports were, and remain to some extent, an important aspect of the publishing enterprise in India. Many publishers are also importers and could not survive economically without the income from their import activities.

Few, if any, Indian publishers survive on the basis of their publishing activities alone. Almost all engage in subsidiary commercial activities, usually related to the book trade. Most publishers originated as booksellers, wholesalers, or importers of books, and occasionally as printers. For many firms, such activities are more profitable than publishing. Publishing is, therefore, very closely linked to other business enterprises, and it is unlikely that it could stand on its own as a 'pure' enterprise without these ancillary activities. This situation is true in general in the Third World due to the fact that publishing is usually too marginal an activity to make a steady profit. It is possible that publishing as a profession has suffered because of its combination with other activities, but this is probably an inevitable result of the overall economic situation.

It is possible that Indian publishing in a sense matured too early, in that expansion was rapid and often took place without planning. The output of titles in India increased rapidly to around 18,000 in the mid-1950s and then declined. The level has again been slowly rising, and only recently reached its earlier production.

The reasons for the rapid decline between 1955 and 1960 are complex. Without question, the most important reason was economic. Fluctuations in the general economic situation were combined with a slight decline in educational expenditures. Another related

TABLE 2  
*Output of Book Titles in India*

1950	12,689 titles
1955	18,559
1960	10,741
1965	13,094
1970	14,145
1974	17,600

SOURCE: National Library, Calcutta. (Figures include pamphlets.)

factor was connected with the lack of expertise and planning. Those in charge of publishing firms could not foresee impending problems, in part because of a rapidly changing situation and in part because of a lack of knowledge about publishing. Networks for the distribution and sale of books were rudimentary and limited possible sales. The very fast expansion of the educational system and of libraries slowed somewhat, thereby limiting the expansion of book sales to crucial institutional markets. The general currents of the Indian economy, which underwent severe fluctuations in the 1950s, also affected the publishing scene.

Indian publishing has always had shaky financial foundations. In the early period, some Indian publishers built their businesses on the basis of credit extended by foreign, largely American, publishers, for the import and sale of books in India. The Indian publishers, who were also wholesalers, used the proceeds of these import sales to finance their own books. When Indian books sold more slowly than expected, the publishers found themselves unable to pay their debts. Bank loans were usually unavailable because the Indian financial community prefers to invest its money in ventures which, unlike publishing, yield a fairly fast and secure return. In addition, banks find it difficult to evaluate the worth of book stocks which might be used as collateral. The government has not extended credit facilities to publishers either. Thus, there has been a severe credit squeeze which still continues to affect publishers. This situation reached a crisis when, in the 1950s, publishers expanded quickly and were unable to recoup their investments.

Without expertise, publishers could not foresee that their books

would not sell quickly, and they could not accurately predict the flow of financial resources. Some publishers resorted to dishonest business practices such as delaying payments and non-payment of royalties. Other firms simply folded. Local printers, binders, and paper suppliers often went unpaid for long periods of time. Publishers became involved in a 'vicious circle' of late payment and problems of credit.

Modern Indian publishing was shaped in the 1950s. The outlook, financial basis, modes of operation, and other matters were developed during the 1950s and remain similar at the present time. The publishing enterprise has grown, has developed some expertise and professionalism, and has raised standards of production and content of books. The market for books is larger, standards are higher, and there is a greater participation from the public sector. But the basic organizational and philosophical orientation of publishing retains its earlier characteristics. Not only are many of the 'founding generation' of publishers still on the scene, but the objective circumstances have not basically changed.

Despite the rather haphazard growth of publishing in the post-Independence period, the publishing enterprise did get established on a firm basis. Led by Asia Publishing House, publishers greatly improved standards of production and selection of manuscripts, and developed expertise and some professionalism. Paperbacks also came onto the Indian scene with Jaico (largely in English) and Hind Pocket Books (in English, Hindi and other languages), proving that there is the beginning of a mass market for popular books in India.

#### THE ECONOMICS OF PUBLISHING

At the very centre of the publishing enterprise are financial considerations. Despite the fact that publishing is in many respects an 'intellectual' enterprise, without a sound economic base it cannot survive. Economic factors intrude into all aspects of publishing, from the selection of a manuscript to the cost of paper to the credit arrangements allowed to booksellers. Economics is one of the least well-understood aspects of Indian publishing. There have been no systematic studies of the economics of publishing in India. Publishers themselves disagree concerning the economic realities.<sup>11</sup> The economics of publishing in India is further complicated by the fact

that publishing is often financially linked to other enterprises, and it is often difficult to separate these aspects.

By its nature, publishing is one of the most imprecise and risky of 'industries'. In India, this natural imprecision is combined with 'unnatural' confusion over important economic issues to the long-term detriment of the publishing enterprise. The economics of Indian publishing is in some respects difficult to understand. In some ways India is a 'high cost' publishing country, while in others it is low cost. Labour tends to be inexpensive (by international standards) but high quality printing is difficult to obtain and is expensive.<sup>12</sup>

The case of paper is indicative of some of the problems of publishing. Paper has always been costly in India, due in part to restrictions on its import. The recent paper 'famine' has placed publishing in a precarious position.<sup>13</sup> (It should be pointed out however that the paper 'famine' was caused not so much by an absolute shortage as an unwillingness of paper mills to produce less remunerative grades of paper required for publishing price-inelastic textbooks. Recently, government regulations have increased the supply of paper for publication of textbooks and the crisis has eased somewhat.) The price of paper has risen dramatically, precipitating higher prices for books. Oxford University Press, for example, has estimated that paper costs 50 to 55 per cent of the total cost for educational and general books together and about 30 per cent of the cost of a scholarly book. Further, supplies of paper are uncertain and the quality is undependable in a seller's market. Paper suppliers demanded cash payment and also some additional 'kickbacks'. Large quantities of paper have been either unavailable or beyond the abilities of publishers to pay. The publisher cannot raise the prices of books indefinitely since they are already relatively expensive, yet the cost of paper continues to rise and the publisher is caught very much in the middle.

The market for books determines to a considerable extent the kinds of books that are published and the cost of these books. In India, the market is both small and to some extent inelastic. This means that the individual market for scholarly and general books is limited, both by low literacy rates and by low purchasing power. The institutional market accounts for the bulk of book sales, and this market is inelastic—there is a limited number of libraries. Publishers are not constrained to offer the lowest possible price for

books, since libraries are not as concerned about this matter. In India, it is estimated that 90 per cent or more of book sales are to institutions.<sup>14</sup> In India, as in most developing countries, the market for books is small and therefore the printings are small. Editions as small as 500 copies for a scholarly book are not uncommon and the general range is between 1,000 and 2,000 copies. It is natural that the cost per copy for such small editions is high. There are some exceptions to this general situation. Recently, books by prominent journalists or politicians on topical subjects have sold in large numbers. Seven to ten thousand copies is not unusual for the sales of such a topical volume, and sales of up to 30,000 have been achieved in a few cases.

The calculations which go into the pricing of a book are a key to understanding the economics of publishing. Indian publishers have usually priced their books at four to five times the cost of production. Some scholarly books have recently been priced at an even higher ratio. Textbooks and paperbacks are usually priced at a lower rate since sales are expected to be larger and require negligible promotion, discounts for booksellers are lower, the quality of production can be lower, and the individual buyer is of importance in pricing calculations. It is estimated that a publisher must spend Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000 in direct costs (composition and printing, binding, paper, and jackets) for an average-sized serious book in English. This investment has increased considerably recently as paper costs have more than doubled and composition costs have gone up from Rs 12 to Rs 21 per page in the major cities. Costs can be lower outside Delhi or Bombay, although quality tends to be lower as well. Thus, a book that costs Rs 10 per copy to produce in an edition of 1,500 copies would have to be priced at Rs 50 or more, immediately placing it beyond the reach of virtually all teachers and all but the wealthiest book buyers. By international standards, this is still fairly inexpensive, but for the Indian market it is a very high price. Furthermore, a publisher must expect to wait two years for a full return on his investment. If sales of 500 to 700 copies of a serious book are attained in the first eight months to one year after publication, this is considered good. This slow rate of sales means that scarce capital is tied up and it is difficult to continue to publish books, pay printers, etc. In the present inflation, paper merchants and others have been demanding payment in advance, thus precluding the usual credit arrangements.

The cost of a book has been figured in many ways. One common summary of the total cost of a book is as follows:<sup>15</sup>

Production costs	20%
Discounts (to wholesalers, booksellers, etc.)	35%
Royalty	15%
Overhead	20%
Net profit	10%

The direct costs for a scholarly book, as estimated by Oxford University Press, can be summarized as follows:

Composing and printing	40%
Paper	30%
Binding	20%
Jacket, blocks, etc.	10%

This 10 per cent profit is achieved only if the entire edition is sold out and if the cost of publicity and other ancillary matters are relatively modest, which rarely occurs. It is clear that the margin of profit is not very high and that the risk on each book is considerable. Furthermore, publishing, unlike other industries, must pay for many of the costs of production in advance and cannot rely on long-term credit arrangements.<sup>16</sup> The fiscal return on publishing is generally modest and investors as well as banks prefer to place their funds in industries and other commercial schemes where the return on investment can be 15 or 20 per cent and not the modest yield of 5 per cent which is common in publishing.<sup>17</sup>

Both publishers and outside observers agree that there is not much profit to be made in the publishing and sales of scholarly and serious books. One large textbook publisher says that he produces serious books largely to take up the slack during the periods when few texts are purchased and to keep his presses working during quiet periods. Serious books do produce a steady although relatively modest profit throughout the year. The problem is one of recovering invested capital quickly. Such books also give added prestige to the publishing firm, and enable the publisher to build up a good reputation among academics. The publication of serious books can be a marginally profitable sideline for a large publishing firm if it is handled

with a reasonable amount of care, but it cannot be profitable for any but a very small and specialized publisher in India.

The first post-Independence Indian publisher with high professional standards, Asia Publishing House, at first combined importing with publishing but then abandoned most of its importing. While Asia continues to function, it is no longer at the centre of Indian publishing. The firm's economic difficulties began when it became a 'pure' publisher with few non-publishing activities. Asia also over-expanded after its initial success and for a time was publishing one new book per week. In addition, the quality of both market research and production declined. Two other firms, Manaktala and Nachiketa, were founded in the 1960s with a commitment to publish books of high intellectual and technical standards. They both succeeded for a few years, but found it economically impossible to continue.

It has been estimated that it requires Rs 500,000 to start a publishing firm and an additional Rs 500,000 to keep it afloat for three years until income begins to equal outflow.<sup>18</sup> As a result of these financial realities, it is likely that publishing will continue to be done in conjunction with some other business activity, usually related to books. Publishing can also be conducted if capital is available from some source or if it is not necessary to make a profit. An example of the first type of arrangement is a collaborative agreement with a foreign publisher or with a large Indian corporation. The latter could be a university press or a publishing enterprise run by a public sector agency on a non-profit basis. Just as independent publishing has become more difficult in the United States and other industrialized nations, and there has been a trend for larger corporations to purchase publishing firms, India cannot support independent private publishing.

The paper situation is an indication of the ways in which economic, political, and business factors come together to affect the publisher. Government policy prevents the import of paper and for a long time set the price of paper. These policies worked against rapid expansion of the domestic paper industry. A worldwide paper shortage made it profitable for Indian paper manufacturers to export paper to Japan for the first time, thereby exacerbating the continuing shortage in India itself. Paper merchants were able to demand almost any price for their products while the paper mills were tempted to shift production to more lucrative types of paper.

Since the 'nationalization' of the textbook market, one sub-system

of educational publishing which remains open to private sector publishers is the publication of 'guides' and similar self-help books. 'Guides' are usually poorly printed and poorly written books which are aimed at helping a student in a particular subject pass the university examinations or one of the many government civil service examinations. The better publishers eschew guide publishing as below the dignity of a serious firm, but a number of firms make considerable profits from these books, which have large circulations and sell for low prices. The authors of guides, generally academics, also obtain substantial royalties from them. While perhaps lacking in dignity and usually in intellectual merit, there is a large market for these kinds of books, and many small publishers are able to reap large profits. Similar sub-systems exist for the publishing of textbooks in law, medicine and other subjects. Although some textbooks in these specialized and professional fields have been published with subsidies from the National Book Trust or the American PL 480 programme, there is still a considerable market left in these areas.

During the past decade, government authorities at both the central and state levels have been eliminating private sector publishers from the text market by producing textbooks. This has been done for a number of reasons. In some areas, the private publishers were not supplying relevant textbooks. This was particularly the case in some of the regional languages where publishers took little initiative in producing textbooks. The 'nationalization' of textbooks was also part of a general trend towards public sector initiative in many fields. Finally, government authorities wanted to provide good textbooks to students at a low price, and felt that this could be accomplished through the public sector. The programmes have not been an overwhelming success, although some states have had more successful programmes than others. Most textbooks at the primary and secondary levels in the regional languages are now produced by public agencies and are not marketed by private sector publishers. Textbooks for English-medium schools and most textbooks at the college and university level are still in the hands of private firms, although there has recently been a trend for the universities to publish their own textbooks.

The loss of the textbook market has unquestionably been a serious financial blow to the private sector publishers. While few publishers have gone out of business directly as a result of the withdrawal of this market, there have been serious readjustments. The fact that

the college market does remain has helped, but many publishers are pessimistic about holding on to even this small part of the total text market. The college textbook market is itself complicated since books are usually recommended and not necessarily prescribed. Thus, estimating sales is often difficult and cut-throat competition reigns in popular fields of study. As a result of the limitations of the textbook market several publishers have gone into specialized publishing such as law and medicine. The market for children's books is also considerable. But it is unlikely that any of these avenues will completely replace textbooks as a key economic factor in Indian publishing.

Despite the many problems discussed in this section, Indian publishing has been able to serve the scholarly and intellectual communities with books. Through both private initiative and the recent government intervention in the textbook market, students have been able to obtain textbooks for their courses. For a developing country, these accomplishments are impressive. The economic situation is not without its problems. The current inflation, and particularly the rising cost of paper and the difficulty in obtaining it, have placed a severe burden on publishers and made books even more expensive for the individual purchaser than was formerly the case. A workable adjustment between the private and public sectors so that each will have a role in the publishing enterprise has yet to be worked out. Yet, despite these problems, publishing continues to take place and creative work finds an outlet.

#### THE DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS

Book distribution and consumption is closely linked to the economic viability of the publishing enterprise. Most agree that the distribution network is the weakest link in the 'book chain' in that it is difficult in India to get a book to its intended reader and to provide prospective buyers with information concerning books. The publisher is unable to distribute the books that are produced and must rely on others to get books into the hands of buyers. Some libraries and other institutions may purchase directly from the publisher. Most, however, buy through wholesalers or retail booksellers. The situation is particularly difficult outside the large cities, where bookshops are scarce and stocked with few general or scholarly books.<sup>19</sup>

The problems of book distribution in a developing country are

manifold. Artur Isenberg, a Ford Foundation book expert, has outlined some of them:<sup>20</sup>

- a. publishers place little stress on publicity for their books and thus both the reading public and the booksellers are unaware of relevant publications;
- b. publishers have no clear knowledge of their potential markets and thus cannot accurately estimate the appropriate size for the printing of a given book;
- c. bookshops are undercapitalized, have few return privileges, are poorly and unimaginatively organized, have little status, and as a result of the above, have few books in stock;
- d. rural areas are virtually bookless;
- e. adequate national bibliographies and other reference tools do not exist and books are hard to find;
- f. the system is in general characterized by cut-throat competition, and especially by the 'tender' system.<sup>21</sup>

The Indian book distribution system harbours many middlemen. While a number of the larger publishers act as their own wholesalers and distributors, this function is typically handled by independent wholesalers, who serve bookshops and the institutional trade, especially libraries. The wholesalers take a part of the 35–40 per cent discount given by publishers on general books or college and university texts. (Discounts on school textbooks are generally a bit lower.) The retail bookseller obtains a discount of only 15 to 20 per cent from the wholesaler or distributor and therefore operates on an extremely slim margin. When he is asked to provide an additional discount to libraries for bulk purchases, his profit often disappears entirely. These discounts are in many cases almost mandatory if the bookseller is to obtain the order.<sup>22</sup>

The fact that there is little internal or external regulation of publishing has caused problems for the distribution of books. There is no agreement among publishers, distributors, or booksellers concerning discounts which would prevent the kind of competition which often reduces profits for booksellers to almost nothing. Distributors and booksellers often compete for customers by offering large discounts.

Lack of information is a part of the problem of distribution. Publishers are often lax about publicizing their books, and there are no standard reference works or journals to which a bookseller or reader can turn for information about a new book.<sup>23</sup> Recent efforts to

update the Indian National Bibliography by the National Library, Calcutta, and a privately published *Reference Catalogue of Indian Books in Print* have helped the bibliographic situation, although both of these publications inevitably have substantial time lags between the publication of a book and its listing.

There is little advertising for specialized books, such as scholarly books, although such advertising schemes as direct-mail publicity are beginning to be used as a means of sales and publicity. The local bookseller is unable to stock many new general books and for the most part relies on textbooks for his main sales. This is due to lack of space, credit, and limited local interest. This situation further reduces the exposure of the book-buying public to current titles.

Few booksellers are well trained. Even if adequate bibliographical tools were available, it is unlikely that many booksellers would be able to take advantage of them. UNESCO, the Federation of Publishers and Booksellers Associations, and other groups have undertaken training programmes for booksellers, but there is still a lack of professional expertise in this field. Few booksellers are willing to order a book for a customer, in part because the profit on a 'special order' book is quite low. The situation is even more serious with regard to books published outside India, which prospective purchasers find almost impossible to obtain. It is clear that until there are more booksellers who are able to provide more complete service to customers, book sales will be even more limited than necessary and the reading public and book-purchasing institutions will have difficulty in obtaining the books they need.

A special element of the distribution process of books in India is the importing of books. Book imports still account for a considerable portion of the Indian book business and are quite necessary for India's educational institutions and libraries. A number of publishers are also book importers who rely on profits from importing to sustain their enterprise. The total annual expenditure on book imports is about Rs 6 to 7 crores (1 crore equals 10,000,000). Rs 12 crores is allowed by the government for this purpose, but the expenditure of even half this amount is a large part of the book trade.<sup>24</sup> The trade is handled by private firms which are licenced by the government. It has been estimated that fewer than fifteen large firms handle 80 per cent of the total import of books into India.<sup>25</sup>

Importers work directly with foreign publishers or distributors in ordering books and provide them directly to customers or, more

often, to booksellers. Perhaps a dozen foreign publishers, mostly British or American, have offices in India. Most foreign publishers work through one or more Indian importers. The process by which the individual buyer in India obtains a foreign book is one which involves several 'middlemen' and is generally lengthy, although some Indian booksellers import directly from overseas publishers.

Book importing is a controversial subject in India. Many have claimed that books which are appropriate for India's economic and social development are not being imported and that irrelevant although perhaps profitable books are chosen by the private import firms. Recent regulations which fix a proportion of an importer's licence which must be devoted to educational and scholarly books and in general greater surveillance by government authorities have probably improved the quality of book imports into India. Scholars and librarians say that they are unable to obtain books which they need because it is impossible to import only a few copies of a single title. It is clear that the private importers have been more concerned with maximizing profits than with serving the intellectual and educational communities. This, of course, is not surprising since the importers are profit-making businesses. Book imports have also provided an extra margin of profit for publishers enabling them to bring out their own books. The point is that, for various reasons, Indian buyers have not been able to obtain needed books from abroad and the process of book import has been less than adequate. Most private publishers and importers have argued that there should be no restrictions concerning the import of books, since restrictions would lead to limitations on the freedom of information.<sup>26</sup> The government, and many librarians and others, have argued that there is a need for some regulation of the import trade.

As a result of the criticisms levelled against the importers, the central government, through the State Trading Corporation (STC), moved into the import business for a short time in 1973. The STC issued a circular to libraries asking that orders for imported books be placed through them. At the same time, the rupee equivalent of import licences available to the private sector was cut, although the total was still close to the amount which was actually spent for imported books. The government's concern was to improve the distribution of imported books, to cut down on malpractices by commercial importers, and to make sure that relevant books were imported into India.

Reaction against the State Trading Corporation's import scheme was swift and vocal from the publishing community.<sup>27</sup> Most publishers denounced the plan as spelling financial disaster for the book trade and particularly for the importers. The STC intervention was also denounced as a limitation on the freedom of information since a government agency would be directly in charge of book imports and could restrict the nature of books coming into the country.<sup>28</sup> Libraries opposed the plan as well, in part because of pressure from publishers and in part because they feared that obtaining imported books would become even more difficult. The STC, which could not extend credit to purchasers, had to demand cash payments. This also aroused opposition, since most institutional buyers were used to having credit available for purchases.

Two elements combined to defeat the STC's initiative, and the plan was abandoned before it was ever fully implemented.<sup>29</sup> The first was the lack of preparation and facilities by the STC itself. Government officials simply did not realize that the importing of books is a complex matter yielding limited profits and requiring considerable work. The other factor was the strenuous opposition of most of the publishing community. Almost all publishers, and particularly those with an interest in importing books, opposed the government. Institutional buyers, who feared increased bureaucracy and a lack of credit facilities, also opposed the plan.

The problem of importing books has by no means been solved. For the present, the system remains the same as it was prior to the STC's initiative. The problem of adequately regulating the import trade so that scarce foreign exchange is not wasted and at the same time necessary books are supplied to Indian buyers remains. The situation is particularly serious for scholarly books, which are almost inevitably imported in small quantities and are therefore the least profitable type of book import.

There is no question but that book distribution must be improved if adequate markets for Indian books are to be assured. This is true not only for scholarly books, but for all kinds of reading materials. The scarcity of booksellers in smaller towns is a problem. The lack of adequate credit facilities to booksellers from banks and a discount structure which allows only a small profit for booksellers contribute to the weakness. Inadequate bibliographical materials and publicity hinder the rapid spread of information about new books. The difficulty of obtaining imported books contributes to the problem.

There seems to be no immediate hope for the amelioration of most of these problems.

#### COPYRIGHT

Copyright policies and regulations are one of the most perplexing policy issues for the book trade in developing countries. Copyright as an institution evolved over a long period in the West, and only in recent years has it been fully accepted in most Western countries.<sup>30</sup> It is worth noting that American publishing firms got their start when U.S. publishers in the nineteenth century disregarded copyright regulations and freely reprinted books from England and elsewhere without the payment of royalties. At present, however, Western authors and publishers are protected by copyright agreements and laws both within their own countries and internationally.<sup>31</sup>

The situation of the developing countries with regard to copyright is somewhat complicated at the present time. For one thing, the major international copyright agreements (the European-sponsored Berne Agreements and the American-sponsored Universal Copyright Convention) have been written by the industrialized nations in their own interests. The developing countries have unique problems which are not considered in the copyright agreements. In recent years, there have been moves in the direction of making copyright agreements more relevant for developing countries, in part to forestall massive disaffiliation by Third World nations from the copyright system. India has been a leader in advocating reforms in the system.<sup>32</sup>

The problems of developing countries in relation to copyright are considerable. While most developing countries affirm the need for individual authors to have legal protection for their own work and for publishers to have some assurance that they will be the sole producer of a particular book, they also recognize that they have some special needs. For example, the apparatus of publishing is, in general, controlled by publishers in the industrialized nations. These nations publish the very large majority of books, and have a virtual monopoly over books on scientific and technical subjects. The bulk of the world's translations are from the major world languages into smaller languages, such as the indigenous languages of India. Moreover, publishers in advanced countries profit more from exporting books than from granting permission to reprint them or

translate them in developing areas. India is in a particularly difficult situation because of traditional practice of 'Commonwealth preferences' which has cut India off from the American book market. According to this informal arrangement, British publishers handled India's interests and controlled most of the exports to India. This situation did not serve India very well.

The Indian view concerning copyright is somewhat unclear. India is a signatory to both the Universal Copyright Convention and to the Berne Agreements, and is a member of the international copyright community. For the most part, Indian publishers adhere to the copyright agreements. There is, however, some pirating (illegal printing) of books which have a high sales potential such as novels and some textbooks. Scholarly books, because they do not sell in large quantities, have been ignored by 'book pirates'.<sup>33</sup>

The Indian government has advocated changing the international copyright agreements to provide more adequately for the needs of developing countries. The government has particularly advocated 'compulsory licencing' by which the developing countries would have the power to reprint for very modest fees any essential scientific or technical books even if the original publisher did not provide permission. There have been hints that India would arbitrarily impose such licencing if the international community did not act, although no action in this regard has been taken as yet. Indian publishers themselves have no unified position, perhaps reflecting the differing interests of publishers, wholesalers, booksellers and others represented in the Federation of Publishers and Booksellers Associations, the 'official' voice of the book trade. Most publishers seem to be committed to the accepted concept of copyright. However, they also favour compulsory licencing or some arrangement which would save foreign exchange and make it easier to reprint and translate books in India. Some publishers continue to support the traditional notion of copyright and do not favour compulsory licencing.

One of the advocates of compulsory licencing has outlined some of the arguments in its favour:

- a. India could reprint foreign books in India and could charge only one-third of the foreign price;
- b. part of the Rs 6 crores now spent annually for book imports could be saved;
- c. licencing would stimulate the Indian book industry and provide jobs at all levels;

- d. domestically printed books earn tax revenue for the government, while imports do not, and this would further help the economy.<sup>34</sup>

Other critics of current copyright practice have pointed out that there is a 'manufacturing clause' in the American system which forbids the import into the United States of more than 500 copies of a single title. This, they argue, should be applied to India as well.

The problem of translation into the Indian regional languages is part of the copyright equation. Some titles are published in as many as a dozen languages in India, usually in fairly small printings. It is usually necessary to obtain permission from foreign copyright holders for translation rights, and securing permission is often both time-consuming and expensive. Most advocates of compulsory licencing feel that India should be able to freely publish translations of books on scientific and technical subjects so long as their authors receive some modest payment. In return for this blanket permission, India would guarantee not to export books printed under compulsory licence and would otherwise abide by copyright agreements. Recent changes in the international copyright agreements have closely paralleled the Indian position, although the situation remains in flux.

The interests of various constituencies concerned with books differ to some extent on copyright matters. Some of the smaller publishers with no interest in importing books favour the scrapping of all international copyright agreements. Most publishers seem to favour some kind of compulsory licencing arrangements, although a few importers prefer to retain the *status quo*. Authors do not constitute a vocal pressure group, and thus have not strongly expressed themselves on copyright questions. It is clear, however, that authors will be affected by any changes. If Indian publishers are allowed to freely and inexpensively reprint books from abroad, it is possible that they will find this cheaper than to publish Indian authors. Libraries would also be affected by changes in copyright policy, as it would have implications for the kinds of books published in India and the availability of books from overseas.<sup>35</sup>

The copyright question shows how much a single issue has many ramifications for Indian publishing. It is an international issue since agreements between nations are involved. In this regard, India has been one of the leading voices of the developing nations in international copyright discussions. Copyright affects different elements of

the book trade differently. Authors might well be harmed by relaxing the present regulations, as is advocated by many. Importers have a vested interest in retaining a substantial import trade, and have tended to support the *status quo*. Most publishers, in whose interest it is to make reprinting foreign books easier, have strongly advocated reform in the copyright law. The international publishing community, dominated by the industrialized nations, has only reluctantly moved towards reform.

#### ‘PUBLIC’ AND ‘PRIVATE’

The publishing enterprise in developing countries is underwritten by the state to a considerable degree. Government subsidy supports the production of books which are deemed necessary but which private concerns could not afford to publish. Government policy directs priorities in publication and stimulates development in given sectors of the trade. In many developing countries, national ideological commitment to the ‘public sector’ as the crucial area of the economy makes government intervention more accepted and stimulates financial commitment.

Since Independence, the largest single publishing agency has been the Government of India, which is responsible for an estimated 20 per cent of the books produced. Through ministries and departments at the centre and in the states, and through government-sponsored research institutes, many books, pamphlets, reports and other documents are published by government. The government is a recognized and accepted fact in publishing in India, not only in its direct role but also in formulating policy concerning many aspects of the book trade. Government authorities have increasingly recognized books as an important aspect of national development, and have devoted an increasing amount of resources and attention to publishing and books. Because of its large and growing participation in publishing, the role and policies of the government must be critically examined. The following discussion will examine some of the major issues raised in the continuing discussions concerning the role of the government in publishing.

The government has a role in publishing not only through its direct activities but through its broader policies. In developing countries, government policy impinges on most aspects of the economy, even where a strong private sector exists.<sup>36</sup> India is no exception. Govern-

ment decisions concerning the import and export of books, the construction of new paper mills, paper prices, and credit regulations have a direct and immediate effect on the book trade. A recent cutback in library expenditures was immediately felt, and the 'paper crisis' in the book business of the past year was in part a result of government policy decisions. Even such seemingly unrelated matters as the development of a machine-tool industry can have implications for publishing.<sup>37</sup>

The Federation of Publishers and Booksellers Associations in India maintains an office in New Delhi which monitors government policy and keeps in close touch with government officials concerned with books. The Federation has sought, with only limited success, to influence policy. At least, Federation representatives make sure that relevant government officials are aware of their views. However, the Federation is not united on the issues. Theoretically, the Federation has represented the views not only of publishers but also of importers, distributors, and booksellers, the latter being under-represented, however. Recently, a split in the Federation has created a new organization, the Federation of Indian Publishers, which speaks only for the publishers. In time some working relationship between the two groups will most likely evolve. In the meanwhile, the factionalism among official organs of the book trade has weakened their bargaining position with government officials.

Government book policy is predicated on many considerations. The publishers are one of several influences on government decision-making. The balance of payments, the requirements of other sectors of the economy for imported items may, for instance, affect book import quotas. Demands from newspapers, packaging manufacturers, and others for paper allotments affects the supply of paper for books. In a developing country such as India, the competition for scarce resources is very sharp, and in relation to food or fuel, for example, an industry such as publishing may seem peripheral to the development of the nation. The inherent competition between public sector publishing enterprises, such as the National Book Trust (NBT) or the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), may also enter into the balance of government decision-making concerning publishing.

An example of dramatic government initiative in publishing is the nationalization of textbooks at the school level; the economic implications of this development were discussed previously. Officials

of the Ministry of Education were particularly concerned that Indian textbooks reflect a 'national' approach and that the use of 'irrelevant' foreign books be ended. Public authorities also wanted to raise the quality of textbooks and felt that public initiative was the most effective means of doing this. Another goal of nationalized textbooks was to reduce the price through public subsidy. The textbook scheme was initiated by the central government, and some funding came from the centre. However, the implementation of most of the programmes was in the hands of the states. Agencies like the National Council of Educational Research and Training were asked to develop 'model' textbooks and have helped to provide state boards with books which would lend themselves to easy translation and printing. With the exception of the guidance provided by the NCERT, most textbook publishing efforts have been at the state level, usually channeled through the state directorate of education. The states have taken as an urgent task the provision of basic texts in the regional languages. These state programmes have begun the task of providing vernacular textbooks at a cost students can afford.

It is not surprising that the government became involved in the production of textbooks at the elementary and secondary school levels. Textbooks are widely recognized as a crucial element of any educational system, and are perhaps especially important where many teachers are not highly qualified. Textbooks are a potential means of instilling national values, and government authorities are naturally concerned that appropriate values are stressed. The political pressure for inexpensive textbooks also played a role. Whether the public sector has achieved complete success in terms of providing useful, inexpensive, and well-produced textbooks at the school level remains a subject of debate in Indian educational and publishing circles. Most commentators have major criticisms of the state programmes, citing long delays in the publication of books, some waste and substandard production. Authors have criticized the payment of modest lump-sum payments instead of royalties. Many have questioned the inherent danger of having a monopoly over the production of textbooks in the hands of political authorities. Despite these criticisms, many states have produced textbooks in the regional languages which are successfully used in the schools.

The last major markets for private sector textbook publishing are in the English-medium primary and secondary schools, and especially at the college and university levels.<sup>38</sup> Most college level textbooks are

still published by private firms, particularly in subjects for which only English is used as the medium of instruction. At the post-graduate level, virtually all textbooks are produced by private firms; there is no plan to change this. Several universities have in the past decade begun to produce textbooks in some undergraduate subjects themselves, thereby cutting into the market of the private publishers. University presses produce books for their own institutions and can accurately predict the market for books in particular subjects. Distribution is easy since it is to a local market. While this trend towards university-published material is not yet far advanced, it is seen by the private sector publishers as a threat to one of their few remaining textbook markets.

The government has established a number of agencies which deal with books in addition to the textbooks and other programmes. The Publications Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting not only issues government documents of various kinds, but publishes a large number of books and pamphlets on a range of subjects. One of the largest and most important government agencies is the National Book Trust (NBT).<sup>39</sup> The NBT has a key role not only in its own publishing programmes but also in coordinating the activities of private publishers and assisting in national book programmes.

The NBT's sponsorship of an annual book fair, which not only includes displays of books but also symposia concerning aspects of publishing, is the main forum for national discussion among publishers. The book fairs are also a means of publicizing the book trade to the public. Founded in 1957, the NBT had a budget of around five million rupees in 1972.<sup>40</sup> The agency also receives funds for specific projects from the Ministry of Education as well as other agencies. According to many observers, the NBT suffered from an initial, not uncommon, distribution lag. One estimate is that the NBT has ten million rupees worth of unsold books.<sup>41</sup> This wastage was in part because early projects were not of great relevance, the titles were poorly selected, and technical standards low.<sup>42</sup>

The National Book Trust publishes about 200 titles, including reprints, per year. The thrust of its publishing programme is to make books of educational and cultural value available to the general reader. It has sponsored a series of children's books, a series on the Indian states, and other publications. The NBT has a small book subsidy programme for university level textbooks in English, which

is funded from Indian government sources. Another small programme funded by the United States is intended to make books on science and technology from the United States and from Indian sources available in the Indian languages. NBT books are distributed by private firms for the most part, although the agency is becoming more active in promoting its own publications. All NBT printing is done by commercial presses. The NBT's substantial book publishing programme and its staff of 150 make it an active force in Indian publishing.

Government book programmes of various kinds grew rapidly after the late 1950s. As the need for books in the regional languages became clear, the government provided grants of Rs 10,000,000 to many of the regional languages. However, only Rs 25,000,000 of the total of Rs 80,000,000 allocated was used in the first few years of the programme. Other specialized government agencies have participated in book programmes. The Indian Council for Social Science Research has had a publication scheme which provided small grants to private publishers to assist in the printing of social science studies. States have also assisted in the publication of textbooks in a major way, and some of the states, such as Kerala, have fairly substantial general book programmes. It is impossible to document in entirety the various publishing activities of the state governments.

In an effort to coordinate government-related book activities, a National Book Development Board (NBDB) was founded in 1967. The Board has also acted as a liaison between private publishers and the government. As recently reconstituted, it includes some sixty individuals from the publishing community and from government, and has concerned itself with recommending and mediating broad aspects of book policy. Not particularly active, the NBDB met only seven times between 1967 and 1972; nor has it been very successful in having its recommendations implemented. Among the recommendations are the following: (1) the publishing enterprise should be classified as an 'essential industry', (2) tax concessions for publishers, (3) more adequate credit advances to publishers, (4) reduced postal rates for books, (5) restricted import of foreign titles except books which cannot have an Indian reprint edition for economic reasons, and (6) that the government set up an export promotion council for books.<sup>43</sup> The advisory status of the NBDB delineates its role and effectiveness. At least the existence of such an agency

provides a forum for discussion and shows the interest of the government in coordinating book-related activities.

Direct government involvement in publishing was not very large during the 1950s. There was little coordination of the government's own publishing programmes, and no overall direction or policy orientation to the government's book programmes. Despite the fact that government agencies were responsible for more than 20 per cent of the nation's book output, the distribution mechanisms at the centre and in the states were quite inadequate. Because government-sponsored publishing efforts were not usually subject to market conditions, funds were allocated for printing and sometimes for distribution, but the enterprise was not expected to show a financial balance. There has been some improvement in recent years, particularly by semi-government agencies like the Sahitya Akademi, the Indian Standards Institution, and others. Many of the publications of various ministries, however, remain virtually without distribution or publicity channels.<sup>44</sup>

Direct government involvement in publishing cannot be underestimated, and this participation is growing. It has been estimated that there are about 400 publishing agencies in the public sector, some 200 of these under the auspices of the central government or its agencies. The Ministry of Education itself has publishing agencies under its jurisdiction, including the National Book Trust, the NCERT, and the Indian Council for Social Science Research. An agency like the Sahitya Akademi, which is concerned with promoting creative writing and cultural matters, has published at least 450 books in recent years in all of the Indian languages and English and Nepali. Some of these books were published through commercial channels, but most were issued directly by the Akademi. In addition, various government-sponsored research institutes, such as the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, the Indian Council of Medical Research, and others, have issued scientific and scholarly publications.

This discussion has only highlighted some of the important aspects of the government's role in publishing. Direct government involvement by many ministries and agencies at the central and state levels accounts for a significant portion of the total number of books produced in India. Indirect government involvement through policies relating to publishers and subsidies to libraries so that they can purchase books, affects the status of the publishing enterprise in

India. Indeed, it is almost impossible to consider any aspect of Indian publishing without some government involvement. This is true from the regulation of the paper supply and the allocation of foreign exchange for replacement parts for printing presses to the provision of subsidies for the production of certain kinds of books. The government, on its part, has many concerns and problems of which the state of the publishing enterprise is but one small aspect. Thus, it is not surprising that publishers complain that their interests are not given top priority by government officials. While important, books must inevitably lag behind food supplies and industrialization as concerns of government.

#### FOREIGN INFLUENCES

Publishing is not only a regional and national enterprise, but it also has an international dimension. Developing countries and nations which are at the 'periphery' of the world's intellectual currents are especially dependent on the international sector of publishing. Being provincial in the international intellectual world imposes certain realities upon a developing country: books (and knowledge) must be imported from abroad; works from one of the 'world languages' must be translated into their own more limited languages and, finally, perhaps Third World authors themselves prefer to publish their work abroad rather than at home. Developing countries not only have 'provincial' languages, but lack the financial and technical resources for an active publishing and communications enterprise. The result of this situation is that the Third World must rely on the industrialized nations for most basic knowledge, particularly in the sciences.

The problem is in part one of language. The bulk of the 'knowledge producing' nations use one of the major metropolitan languages although there are a number of exceptions, such as Japan and the Soviet Union, to this rule. English, French, and to a lesser extent German and Spanish are the languages of necessity for communication among scientific and intellectual elites. India, in this respect, is in a peculiar position. A large number of people are literate in English and English has been used as a medium of government and of scientific and intellectual life for two centuries. Thus, Indians are ahead of many developing countries in being able to communicate easily with the centres of scientific work. On the other hand, this

very facility with English has hindered the sophisticated and scientific development of indigenous languages. The Indian elite continues to use English as the primary means of intellectual interchange, and the indigenous languages remain to some extent underdeveloped.

There is also an economic aspect to the continuing foreign influence on publishing in developing countries. The developing countries are importers of knowledge, and hence of books and other published materials. India spends about Rs 7 crores on book and periodical imports annually. The key scientific journals are published in the West, scientific books appear there first, and many important scientific materials must be imported. Not only is the Indian market too small to warrant reprinting many of these materials, but it is important to have scientific materials available quickly, and importing is the only way to assure this availability. As a result of this situation, there is a large book importing network in India. Foreign books, and foreign publishers as well, have some influence in Indian publishing and intellectual circles as a result of copyright arrangements, historical traditions, and the perhaps inevitable intellectual 'balance of power' that gives the industrialized world the lead in the creation of scientific knowledge of many kinds.

Political factors also enter into the intellectual relations between the industrialized nations and the Third World. Publishers have been at the centre of this 'battle' for the intellectual allegiance of the developing areas. The developing areas have been battlegrounds of the 'Cold War' which, while muted by detente, continues to some extent. India particularly has been an ideological battleground because of its size and the fact that it is one of the most strategic non-aligned nations. The various Great Powers have attempted to influence Indian intellectuals and public opinion generally through books and a variety of other intellectual and cultural programmes.

Foreign embassies publish journals and books, and subsidize Indian newspapers and magazines. Besides the book programmes and the efforts which foreign countries have made to influence Indians through the printed word, embassies also hold seminars and provide free trips to Indian intellectuals and other 'opinion makers'. Several of these programmes will be examined in some detail. The largest of these is the American-sponsored PL 480 book programmes. The British English Language Book Society (ELBS) is extensive, as is the Soviet Union's multiple book programmes, from the subsidized distribution of Soviet books in English to the subsidization of

Soviet books published in India. While part of the impetus for these book programmes is a sincere effort to upgrade Indian education and intellectual life, many of these efforts are politically motivated and aimed at enhancing the influence of the donor power in India, particularly among 'opinion making' segments of the population.

The developing countries can do relatively little about their position of intellectual dependence. Countries like Burma, which have simply banned all outside knowledge and outside cultural and political influences, have found themselves cut off from intellectual developments and virtually stagnant. Even China, with a record of the most successful intellectual self-sufficiency, has been partly dependent on outside technological information. Developing countries must rely on new knowledge and research findings from the industrialized nations. They must pay for patents as well as for the import of books. They must, to some extent, continue to rely on the major world languages as a means of scientific, intellectual, and to some extent cultural communication.

India has been particularly dependent on outside intellectual currents. The large circulations of magazines like *Time* and *Newsweek* indicate this current. Foreign films are influential and widely viewed in India. Specialized and scholarly journals are widely circulated and often considered more important than Indian magazines by intellectuals. And a large number of books are imported from abroad. These books are not only scholarly monographs and research studies, but popular best-sellers and even comic books. The impact of the West on India through all of the media of communication, but especially through the printed word, is quite important. Given this situation, it is not surprising that Indian authors often prefer to publish their work abroad because this is more prestigious as well as being more remunerative financially.

Third World nations are not entirely at the mercy of the industrialized countries. A country can insist on the development of an indigenous language for scientific as well as general communication, as Indonesia has done. The import of journals and books can be strictly controlled. Or the import of foreign films can be limited, as India has done. Less drastic steps than censorship, such as moves towards compulsory licencing of books which would reduce the outflow of foreign exchange, and the subsidization of local journals which could attract scholars, are also possible. However, in discus-

sions of the intellectual relationships between the industrialized and developing countries the basic factors of the 'centre' and 'periphery' in world intellectual life must be considered, and also the very large amounts of money available in the industrialized nations for research and publication in a range of fields. These factors almost inevitably place the Third World in a position of at least partial dependence.

Neither foreign publishers nor foreign governments dominate Indian publishing as is the case in much of the Third World. In Francophone Africa, for example, most books are directly imported from France, and there has been almost no development of indigenous publishing. In English-speaking Africa, with a publishing history of several decades, British firms completely dominated the market until the past decade, when several indigenous publishing houses were founded. Foreign influences do, however, continue to exist in India although they are less crucial to the total intellectual scene than in many other Third World nations. The traditional form of foreign involvement—private British publishers—remain to some extent active in India. Book-related foreign aid programmes have assumed a larger role than private involvement in recent years. The point of this discussion is that the interrelationships between India and the industrialized nations are complex and should be arranged so that sufficient benefits accrue to the Indian side.<sup>46</sup>

The role of the traditionally important British firms has considerably diminished in the post-Independence period. Most of these publishers now have Indian management, and all have Indians in senior positions—Oxford University Press is probably the only firm which still has an Englishman as its head. The British firms still publish textbooks, but mostly for the elite English-medium schools. The firms have increased their commitment to general and scholarly books, and have maintained high standards both in terms of selection of manuscripts and production. The British publishers are actively engaged in importing books from England. Oxford University Press, for example, has been active in reprinting and distributing in India scholarly books published abroad. While still expensive by Indian standards, such books are priced significantly below their cost in the West. It has been estimated, for example, that binding imported sheets of a foreign book in India would save about 25 per cent over importing the book. Reprinting the book in India would save about 50 per cent. While the trend has been for the diminution of British

influence in Indian publishing, a number of British firms have set up operations in India in recent years, often in collaboration with an Indian publisher. Arnold Heinemann, for example, has recently established a subsidiary in New Delhi which has taken some interest in Indian creative writing.

American publishers are a relatively new addition to India's publishing scene. American firms have become particularly active since the advent of large-scale American government assistance to book programmes in the late 1950s. Many of the larger American publishers (McGraw-Hill, Van Nostrand, Prentice-Hall, John Wiley, and a few others) now have Indian branches. The American firms differ from the British concerns in that their work is mostly limited to publishing their own American titles or importing American books. McGraw-Hill, which has a collaboration agreement with Tatas and their new firm, Tata-McGraw-Hill, is an exception to this general rule as it has embarked on a highly professional programme of publishing books in India. Most of the American and American-oriented firms such as Affiliated East-West Publishers, Prentice-Hall, and Wiley-Eastern have basically been reprint houses concerned mostly with the Indian college textbook markets and attuned to the American assistance programmes. These firms are not undertaking independent publication of books by Indian authors, with a stress on scientific and technical subjects. It remains to be seen whether these firms will be able to operate as independent entities on the Indian publishing scene with the reduction of the various aid programmes. It is clear, however, that the American-affiliated publishers in India are undergoing considerable change.

The non-Indian publishers are subject to the same government regulations regarding repatriation of profits and income taxes as any foreign enterprise. The foreign publishers have an advantage because their foreign connections are useful in obtaining credit and capital from the 'parent' company and also assistance in the import of books. Prentice-Hall and McGraw-Hill have series of textbooks printed in English in Japan, Hong Kong or Singapore for marketing to colleges throughout Asia. These books have been imported into India. Oxford University Press acts as the distribution agent for a number of university presses in the United States and Britain who wish to have their books marketed in India. The American firms benefited from 1948 until 1967 from the U.S. government sponsored Informational Media Guaranty Program, under which the U.S.

government underwrote the export of American books to developing countries.<sup>47</sup>

Of greatest concern to this analysis are the programmes sponsored by foreign governments in India related to books and publishing. We shall be primarily concerned with American book programmes since these have been the largest in terms of size and expenditures. The Soviet Union has had a small book programme of its own in India. There is a joint Indo-Soviet textbook effort which has mainly made Soviet scientific textbooks available in India at subsidized prices. Other Soviet books on topics from politics to economics are sold in India at subsidized prices through normal commercial channels. In general, direct Soviet book efforts have been small and not very effective. Most of the political books have been on Marxism or allied topics. The textbooks have been used to a limited extent in colleges and universities. Soviet writings have not been very influential in Indian intellectual or educational life.<sup>48</sup> The Peoples' Publishing House is loosely affiliated to the Communist Party of India, and has cooperated in many Soviet book programmes. PPH distributes some Soviet books and has printed many volumes in collaboration with various Soviet publishing houses or the Soviet government. Soviet efforts have lacked expertise and a sustained thrust. They have relied, with some exceptions, on the distribution channels of the Peoples' Publishing House and other leftist channels, and have therefore not reached a very wide audience. Soviet programmes have been considerably smaller than American or British book efforts, and this has also contributed to their lack of viability.

British book programmes are also a force in the Indian market. The main British book effort in India is the English Language Book Society (ELBS). The ELBS functions in many developing countries where English is a medium of instruction in schools and colleges. Its aim is to bring college and university level textbooks published in Britain to readers in developing countries at a fraction of their original price. The textbooks are in fields ranging from agronomy to sociology, with stress on the natural and applied sciences. Several hundred titles are included in the ELBS programme; more than 1,000,000 ELBS books are sold throughout the world each year, with about 60 per cent of the total sale in India.<sup>49</sup> Unlike most American-sponsored book aid, where the books are printed in India, most of the ELBS books are printed in England. The British publisher is

directly subsidized by the British government, and the books are then distributed through normal export-import and commercial channels to the developing areas at prices well below the usual British cost. Indian publishers have opposed this programme not only because of a general opposition to foreign book programmes and subsidies, but because the printing of ELBS books is done in England, thereby depriving the Indian industry of any benefits.<sup>50</sup> Many of the ELBS titles are not screened by Indian authorities, since the books are not published specifically for India and are imported through normal commercial channels. This gives the Indian authorities less control over the British programme than over its American counterpart since there is no Indian input into the screening process. In addition to the ELBS, the British High Commission maintains a full time officer to assist with book programmes.

While most aid has been in the form of loans for the import of food, and assistance programmes in agriculture and industry, a small part of American foreign aid has concerned intellectual and cultural life. American efforts in education have been widespread, and the U.S. has helped to develop agricultural universities, engineering institutions, and other educational institutions. Book aid has been a small but important part of the total American aid package. The largest book-related programmes were administered by the United States Information Service, indicating perhaps that the U.S. authorities felt that book aid was aimed at promoting American interests and knowledge of the United States. Other book projects were run by the Agency for International Development.<sup>51</sup>

The motivations for American book aid to developing countries are complex. The Agency for International Development began to take an interest in book projects in the late 1950s as part of efforts to assist in modernization and development. American aid agencies have been concerned with building up institutional 'infrastructures' in developing areas that would assist rapid modernization, and education was seen as one of these elements. The 1950s was the period when American government agencies were most concerned with the 'ideological threat' of international communism. Books were seen as a means of opposing Communism, and efforts were made to make anti-Communist books available to readers in the Third World. Assistance to anti-Communist intellectual activities was also common, with funds often being provided by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency through various 'cover' organizations.<sup>52</sup>

Foreign aid, and particularly intellectual assistance, cannot be separated from the policy goals of the donor country, or for that matter, from the policies and orientation of the recipient nation. American book efforts flourished at a time when massive U.S. aid was being given to India and when American advisers were evident in India in large numbers. All this has changed, and India has assumed a more self-reliant position. As a result, American aid programmes have declined and the book programmes have all but disappeared.

The rationale for book aid to developing countries was expressed well in an AID document:

Books are one of the major factors in building the human resources required for the political, economic and social development of a nation. They are a tool for stimulating both leaders and the general public in thinking about political, economic, and social issues. They offer information which is vital for a balanced understanding of the processes with which an emerging nation has to deal. They are a record of the action taken in dealing with social and economic problems. They serve as a medium for the transfer of knowledge and know-how in the education and training process within a generation and between generations.<sup>53</sup>

The United States Information Service, which has also been very active in book programmes, has expressed its rationale as well:

The Agency promotes the translation and distribution abroad of American books which illustrate important aspects of American life and culture or which contribute significantly to the exposure of communist theory and practice. Most of these books are sold through existing or newly developed commercial channels. Many are used in schools or universities or are made available for supplementary reading.<sup>54</sup>

The scope and range of AID book programmes internationally is large. In addition to direct book programmes, the Agency assisted in the training of publishing and editorial personnel, sponsored surveys of local book industries, provided equipment for printing, and subsidized the promotion, distribution, and production of books on many subjects. AID has stressed books considered to be directly useful in development programmes, such as volumes on technology, textbooks in scientific fields, and similar books.

The United States Information Agency statistics indicate the scope of the book aid. Between 1950 and 1964, USIA assisted in the production of 9,000 editions and printed 80 million copies in 51

languages, almost all in the Third World.<sup>55</sup> India has had one of the largest American book efforts. It is estimated that the USIA general book programme in India published around 1,500 titles in English and Indian languages between 1951 and 1972. This programme has been ended, due in part to the cooling of relations between India and the United States and in part because USIA officials questioned its effectiveness. It has been replaced by a much more modest effort which includes an American Book Club.

The American textbook project is more important for the purposes of this study than the 'general' programme. Many hundreds of titles were published under the USIA-administered PL 480 textbook programme. In 1970, 297 English reprint titles appeared and 1,679,906 copies were produced; in 1972, 289 titles were published in a total of 1,390,019 copies. Most of the editions of these books were fairly modest, with between 3,000 and 5,000 copies being printed. Some books received larger printings. For example, a volume in educational psychology sold 20,000 copies and 50,000 copies of a dictionary were sold in a few weeks. Although the large proportion of titles were in the sciences and technology, a significant minority were in the social sciences and humanities.

While American-sponsored books constitute only a small part of the annual production of the Indian publishing industry, they have had a significant impact on the college textbook market, and have been quite important to several publishing firms. The American 'standard textbook programme', which has placed more than 1,000 different textbook titles on the market in India, has made it difficult for Indian publishers to publish unsubsidized textbooks in areas covered by the American programme. Thus, American books in some fields dominate the market. The book programme, which was intended to supply low-priced textbooks for Indian students in fields where suitable Indian books were unavailable, has had the result of inhibiting the emergence of Indian texts. And, unfortunately, American books have been issued in fields where Indian books were either available or could have quickly been produced.

The American programme was a windfall for a number of Indian publishers. While most of the larger Indian publishers have participated in some aspect of American-sponsored publishing programmes, several have been built around them. Several affiliates of American publishers, for example, Affiliated East-West Publishers, a subsidiary of Van Nostrand, which has published more than 200 PL 480 text-

book titles, have made substantial profits from the programme because of subsidies and sales.<sup>56</sup>

There has been much criticism in India of the programme, although the PL 480 standard textbook project was initiated with the specific agreement of the Ministry of Education. The committee which makes the final decision concerning selection of books was a joint Indian-American group with representatives of the Ministry of Education on the committee. The Americans did not foist the programme on an unsuspecting Indian educational establishment. Moreover, the publishing community has, by and large, approved of the programme, although some individual publishers have privately criticized it. The larger Indian publishers have found the programme quite profitable. However, one of the most vocal critics of the programme has stated:

[The PL 480 programme] delivers a crippling blow to the Indian publisher who refuses to be tempted by the blandishments of foreign governments and publishers to become a mere reprint house for their books and who insists on performing a more exalted task—that of presenting and promoting the finest in Indian thought and scholarship. He has to compete on grossly unequal terms with the foreign publisher whose vast resources are more than amply augmented by generous subsidies from his own government.<sup>57</sup>

The programme has implications for the production of indigenous textbooks and implications for the Indian author by making it quite difficult in some fields for him to compete with subsidized books. Indians, in this way, are discouraged from writing the most profitable types of books—textbooks. The efforts also make demands on the time of publishers and upon limited resources such as paper and press time. When a book is subsidized and cannot possibly lose money, most publishers jump at the opportunity to issue it.

Alongside the academic market, the American government, through the U.S. Information Service, subsidized the production of many hundreds of titles aimed at the general book market. Books selected by the USIS presented information concerning American life or contained anti-Communist polemics. These books were offered to private Indian publishers and published for the general market at low prices. This was possible because the Indian publisher received up to 80 per cent of the cost of production from the American

authorities. Most of these books were not commercially successful despite the fact that the publishers made a profit because of the subsidy. Books in English were augmented by a few translations into Indian languages. No statement in the books informed the reader that a foreign country had subsidized publication, and the Indian authorities had no role in the selection of the titles. Discriminating readers could, of course, tell that a thick volume priced at five or ten rupees must be subsidized by someone; moreover, biographies of Richard Nixon or Benjamin Franklin were obviously American-issued products.

Although accurate documentation is unavailable, it is possible that foreign book aid to India has in a sense contributed to corruption and to external political influences in the publishing enterprise. One publisher has claimed that PL 480 contracts were given to publishers with pro-American views, and that a few publishers benefited considerably because of the programmes.<sup>58</sup> Critics have claimed that the American authorities did not exercise careful controls over the programmes, and that Indian publishers gave inaccurate figures for printings with the result that payment was made for books never actually printed. In some cases, books were pulped since efforts to sell unpopular titles were not worthwhile to the publisher. It is clear many of the books subsidized by foreign countries in India were of little value to India, and that the programmes involved elements of waste.

The balance sheet for foreign book aid to India, and particularly for the American textbook programmes, is mixed. The textbook programme did supply books to Indian students inexpensively in some fields in which no books were available at the time. This was particularly useful at a time when the educational system was expanding rapidly. The seminars and conferences on book-related matters sponsored by a variety of national and international agencies were useful ways of providing expertise to Indians.<sup>59</sup> But the textbook programmes have had negative results as well. The ideological biases of Western textbooks in fields like the social sciences and humanities may be damaging for Indian students. The textbook efforts may have hampered the emergence of Indian authors, since unsubsidized Indian-authored textbooks could not effectively compete on the market. Artificially low prices for textbooks may have to some extent distorted the pricing structure, and made Indians unwilling to pay market-related prices for unsubsidized books. The issue of

foreign participation in Indian publishing—and in intellectual life generally—is a complex one and deserves careful analysis.

#### REGIONAL LANGUAGE PUBLISHING

The main focus of this study has been on the role of the publisher in the creation and dissemination of knowledge. The bulk of this kind of publishing in India takes place in English, and so our discussion has mainly concerned the English language book trade. Nevertheless, there is a vital and growing publishing effort occurring in the Indian languages, and a modest amount of scholarly and scientific publishing going on as well. It is, therefore, important to give at least some attention to this aspect of the publishing enterprise. This discussion must necessarily be both brief and very incomplete. Only two languages are considered—Hindi and Marathi—because of the availability of data. A number of other languages also have an active publishing enterprise. Bengali, Malayalam, Telugu, and Tamil are particularly important in this respect.<sup>60</sup>

Regional language publishing is in a generally rather difficult situation. As has been noted, the percentage of the population literate in English is very small and the number of individuals who read the major regional languages is considerable. Yet, it is fair to say that with the possible exceptions of Bengali and perhaps Marathi, there is little 'book consciousness' among readers in the regional languages. An indication of this situation is that individuals who are willing to pay Rs 30 for a book in English will only pay Rs 10 or less for a book in their mother tongue. Book buying in India has been limited to a small elite able to afford books and with a strong educational background. This elite is English-speaking for the most part, scattered throughout the country, but concentrated in the cities. The number of libraries which purchase serious books is not very large and these libraries are scattered throughout India. Thus, the library market in a particular state is often too small to sustain regional language publishers, and 'exports' of books in, for example, Bengali to Maharashtra or Tamilnadu are practically non-existent. Thus, the regional market is balkanized.

The structure of intellectual prestige, financial remuneration, and national exposure all impel the Indian author to publish in English rather than in one of the regional languages. As has been pointed out, creative work in many fields occurs most often in English, and the

regional languages have active written expression only in such areas as religion, fiction, cultural commentary, and a few others. The pressures towards writing in English are considerable, and few authors who are able to do so resist them.

The relationship between English and the regional languages is similar to the centre-periphery situation which is evident in India's intellectual relationships with Britain or the United States. Power, influence, and knowledge generally flow up to the centre (New Delhi) through the use of the English language (and to some extent Hindi). English is not only the language of India's elite, of its national politics, and of elements of its legal and educational systems, but it is also India's means of communication with the outside world.

Hindi, as the mother tongue of more than 40 per cent of India's population and as the national language, is in a somewhat stronger position than the other regional languages, but all, including Hindi, find themselves pressed by the power of English over the means of communication in the nation. The smaller regional languages (Punjabi, Assamese, Sindhi, and a few others) find themselves threatened as 'publishing' languages. The volume of books and journals published in these languages is small, and many commentators have warned of the disappearance of these languages as literary entities. For example, fewer than 300 titles a year are published in such languages as Kannada, Assamese, and Punjabi.

The situation is not totally bleak, however, nor are the publishers (and authors) completely powerless. The cultural renaissance of the nineteenth century in Bengal was initiated in part by creative writers who were committed to expressing themselves in Bengali.<sup>61</sup> Publishers, as well as journalists, artists, authors, film-makers and others, can contribute to the viability of the regional languages and the cultures which support these languages by committing themselves to making creative work available in these languages. But the battle is an uphill one. The economic situation of cultural life in the regional languages is quite difficult, and the trend towards English or Hindi continues as a very strong element.

Several of the regional languages have been active and have a viable publishing apparatus, although none, including Hindi, can be called flourishing. In Kerala, which has the highest literacy rate (60 per cent) in India and a long tradition of creative writing, the existence of a cooperative publishing house owned by Malayalam writers, the Sahitya Pravartaka Sahakarana Sangam, has helped

serious publishing. This cooperative pays its authors royalties, has been able to set up a good distribution network, and successfully publishes serious fiction, literary and cultural commentary, and other books. Publishers in Marathi, Tamil, Bengali, Gujarati, and Telugu have been able to function. In other languages, there are very few reputable publishers. Book sales and the market for books in some of the regional languages simply cannot support publishing firms on any but the most modest levels. Per capita book production figures indicate the situation of the regional languages. The Asian average in 1964 was 48 titles published per million population, and the world figure was 127. In Hindi, only 9.6 titles were published per million, with the number going to 31.2 in Marathi and 29.2 in Gujarati. The all-India figure was 27 titles per million. These statistics are more than a decade old, and it is clear that Hindi has increased its standing.<sup>62</sup>

One might expect that publishing in the regional languages would be growing at a rapid rate since the number of literate individuals is increasing. But the situation is mixed, and great optimism is certainly not warranted. There are a number of reasons to expect that the long-term future of regional languages will be favourable. Education at all levels, including higher education, is increasingly conducted in the regional languages, and textbooks and ancillary materials are needed. Literacy rates in the regional languages are rising slowly as well. As the importance of English declines, as the government stresses Hindi or the regional languages and as the educational system uses English less, it is logical that there should be a corresponding rise in the use of the regional languages for political and educational purposes. There is a long-term trend towards the growth of an active economic, political, and intellectual development of the regional languages.

Despite these long-term trends, regional language publishers have stated that their sales have not increased markedly, that they are caught in a cost-price squeeze, and that they feel themselves more threatened now than at any time in recent years. The market for scholarly books is particularly limited, although there are the beginnings of sales potential for popular books in areas like religion, politics, and fiction. Some have commented that the audience for books in regional languages is small—in Tamil, for example, magazines printing serious literature have large circulations but readers do not buy books. In Marathi, despite a fairly high literacy rate

and a strong intellectual tradition, books do not sell well—people would rather attend a play or a serious film than buy a book.<sup>63</sup>

Publishing in the regional languages shares many of the characteristics of English-language publishing. One pessimistic observer noted:

The majority of publishers of books in Indian languages are essentially booksellers possessing neither the technique nor the staff nor the equipment which are indispensable for any good publishing concern. Thus, publishers rush to press as soon as they catch hold of any manuscripts, which, in their opinion, are of marketable value. Hardly any editing is done by these publishers and the attention paid to the printing, binding, and get-up leaves much to be desired.<sup>64</sup>

It is probably true that the regional language publishers have smaller staffs, less expertise, and a less secure financial base than their English-medium counterparts. Further, there is a great need to keep the cost of books quite low since the market cannot absorb high book prices. This means that standards of production must be low. Also, most of the regional language publishers are smaller than their counterparts in English. Furthermore, while distance is less of a problem for distribution, there are few bookshops which stock regional language books, and have less incentive to stock a particular title, since the profit per book is low.

As in English, library sales account for a large proportion of the sales of scholarly books. In both Hindi and Marathi, it is estimated that 60 per cent of the sales are to libraries, which is a lower percentage than for English books.<sup>65</sup> Because of the necessity of keeping prices low, the cost-price margin is lower than in English, with many regional language publishers pricing books three to four times the cost of producing the book. Print-runs tend to be similar to those in English, with 1,000 copies being typical for a serious book in Hindi or Marathi.

Everyone agrees that there is a future for books in the regional languages. The total number of titles published each year is growing and the number of serious and scholarly books is increasing modestly. However, the regional languages and Hindi are not overtaking English as the language of intellectual communication in India. Long-term change is inevitable, particularly as the upper levels of government and the educational system shift to the regional languages. At present, the regional languages are media of creative writing and expression only in a few areas. There are more books being

translated from English to the regional languages, but most writers choose to express themselves in English. The regional languages are viable means of communicating well-developed cultures but they have a long way to go to become the predominant languages of intellectual work in India.

#### 'ACADEMIC' PUBLISHING

This study is largely concerned with scholarly publishing—with those books that add to the knowledge of a society or communicate this knowledge. It is often the case that scholarly books introduce new knowledge into a society through seemingly abstract research studies. A volume of basic or applied research in agriculture, for example, may form the basis for an innovation in agricultural practice later. In this way, scholarly books have an indirect impact on the society. In this section, our concern is with publishers who specifically deal with scholarly books as their primary focus of interest. We have called these 'academic' publishers. While some academic publishers are universities, some government agencies and a few private sector publishers fall into this category. Academic publishing as a speciality of the publishing enterprise is not as yet well developed in India due to the inherent economic and distribution problems which exist. This section will discuss both the present situation and the potential for such publishing in India. Academic publishing is in the best of circumstances a rather difficult undertaking. As one American publisher put it:

We publish the smallest editions at the greatest cost, and on these we place the highest price, and then we try to market them to people who can least afford them.<sup>66</sup>

Academic publishing on a non-profit basis has become one of the major means of getting new knowledge, research findings, and criticism published in the United States. The main non-profit scholarly publishers in the United States, the university presses, account for about one-tenth of the title production in the U.S. each year but only two per cent of the book sales. The American university presses emerged as a major element of American publishing after the Second World War when it became clear that private publishers were unwilling to publish the increasing amount of scholarly work being produced. A means, not tied to profit making, had to be found to

assure the availability of this type of material. The university presses, which have until recently received subsidies from their parent institutions, were able to fill the gap and emerged as an important element of American publishing.

As noted earlier in this study, the American-style university press is not the only model for scholarly publishing. While university presses are important in Britain (Oxford and Cambridge University Presses are among the largest and oldest scholarly presses in the world), private publishers take a more active role in publishing scholarly materials than is the case in the United States. In Europe, although there are some academic presses, most scholarly books are published by private publishers, who are able to make a modest profit on these books due to universal literacy, high levels of education, and a tradition of book buying by individuals. The socialist countries of Eastern Europe use a third model of scholarly publishing, with public sector publishers issuing all books, including scholarly books. For the most part, scientific organizations like the Academy of Sciences and its branches handle the publication of research monographs and scholarly books without regard for the possible profitability of such books.<sup>67</sup> All industrialized countries have devised mechanisms for the publication and dissemination of scholarly materials, as the importance of these materials has been recognized, as has the inherent uneconomic nature of publishing them.

While India has at least the rudiments of an academic publishing network, with universities, some private firms, and various specialized institutions taking part, other Third World nations are less fortunate. Indonesia, which has a large population and a substantial university system, has problems making books available. There are very few publishers in Indonesia and a limited number of academics able to produce scholarly books of high quality. The situation is so serious that college textbooks in Indonesia are lacking in many fields.<sup>68</sup> Smaller developing countries are in an even worse situation, since the natural market for books is so small as to make publishing almost of any kind uneconomic. The provision of scholarly books and the stimulation of high level research is a problem for many of the smaller developing countries. It has been suggested that cooperative marketing and perhaps publishing arrangements for countries with the same language or in the same region may be a partial solution.<sup>69</sup>

India has made use of publishing by research institutes, government ministries, and universities as means of making knowledge available. Another relevant model for developing countries is a kind of cooperative publishing arrangement between a number of academic institutions and research centres. Such a hypothetical cooperative press would be able to have materials readily available and would not be an undue drain on economic or personnel resources. Distribution of books would be easier and high technical standards could be maintained. This model has particular attraction for India, where university presses have often been parochial in orientation and seldom publish materials by scholars outside the home campus. A pooling of financial and technical resources would permit a cooperative press to distribute books more effectively than is now possible for the academic presses, could ensure higher technical standards, and could have more control over the quality of the manuscripts.

The 'hidden hand' in scholarly publishing in almost every country is the government. This is perhaps especially the case in developing countries where academic institutions do not have a surplus of funds and where capital for publishing is very difficult to obtain. Even in the United States, academic presses depend on indirect government subsidies through grants to university libraries and occasionally on direct grants for particular projects.<sup>70</sup> The critical factor is to ensure that government (or foundation) assistance does not intrude directly on the publishing process and that academic publishers have sufficient technical and intellectual independence to operate in a fully professional manner.

Private sector publishers in India have a continuing role to play in scholarly publishing in India, and have in fact produced many scholarly books. The economics of Indian publishing permit publishers who have careful control over the costs of production to make a modest profit on editions of 1,000 copies or even fewer. Thus, scholarly publishing is economically within the realm of the private sector publishers. As in the United States and other countries, scholarly publishing is often undertaken by private firms for reasons of prestige rather than profit. Private publishers have considerably more flexibility and independence than either government agencies or university presses.

A number of government programmes have been aimed at assisting the publication of scholarly books and also helping private

publishers. One of the most interesting of these programmes was sponsored by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR). The ICSSR provided publication grants of Rs 3,000 to doctoral theses and other studies it considered worthy of support. Studies which were selected by the ICSSR were published by private publishers, who used these grants to defray the costs of publication. The books were then sold on a commercial basis. A total of 146 studies, mostly dissertations which were edited for publication, were published under this ICSSR programme, which was ended in November 1973, in part because ICSSR authorities felt that some of the grants were not administered properly. Universities and other semi-public agencies have used private publishers either to publish books and studies sponsored by them or have used private firms for distribution. The Gokhale Institute of Politics in Poona and the Indian Statistical Institute have at various times used Asia Publishing House as their publisher, and the University of Bombay Press has used Popular Prakashan to distribute its books. Popular Prakashan currently functions as the printer and distributor for many of the publications of the Indian Council of Social Science Research.

University publishing has a fairly long but not a very distinguished history. The first university press, Calcutta University Press, was founded in 1909, and has a backlist of more than 1,000 titles.<sup>71</sup> Other fairly old presses exist at the University of Bombay and at Punjab University at Chandigarh. Other universities have presses, but few are actively pursuing scholarly publishing. A recent experiment in publishing occurred at Jodhpur University under the leadership of the former Vice-Chancellor, V. V. John. A university press was created at a new institution and faculty members were involved in running it. While the press was not concerned primarily with scholarly books—its main mission was to provide books useful to the university's students—it was an attempt to innovate, to involve the academic community in the publishing enterprise, and to produce new kinds of books. The experiment came to an end with Vice-Chancellor John's abrupt departure from office in 1972.

University presses have become more widespread and more active in India recently. But their main activities have been printing stationery, examination papers, other university materials, and publishing textbooks. These textbooks are generally written by professors in the university and are not used outside the institution. Such textbooks have concentrated on language and literature, but have

by no means been limited to these fields. The trend for universities to publish their own textbooks has been growing.

University press involvement in textbook printing has several drawbacks. It detracts from the more scholarly role of the university press and means that the major consideration is given to textbooks. Since each university sponsors its own books and there is little national or even regional distribution among academic presses, there is probably needless duplication and unnecessarily small printings. If textbooks were printed in larger editions, the cost per copy might be lowered and students thereby provided with real savings. At present, many universities prefer to use textbooks or volumes of readings written by their own faculty. But there is no reason why textbooks could not be used on a national or regional basis, as is common in most other countries. Perhaps the major drawback of the university press textbooks is the fact that the private sector is increasingly denied its last major textbook market. Thus, private firms are unable to use the profits that they might make on textbooks to issue scholarly books.

The University of Bombay Press is a well-established university press and takes a greater role in scholarly publishing than most academic publishers. It is, therefore, a good example of the organization and management of this type of publishing enterprise.<sup>72</sup> About one-fifth of its total work is devoted to the printing of books (the rest being taken up with the printing needs of the university, particularly examination papers), and less than half of this amount to scholarly and general books. Thus, it is likely that about ten per cent of the effort of the University of Bombay Press is concerned with publishing books of a general or scholarly nature. In 1972-3, for example, the Press printed 96,300 copies of textbooks and about 8,300 copies of general and scholarly books. About twenty textbooks and perhaps a dozen scholarly books are published in a given year, with the printings of the latter running between 1,500 and 3,000. A series of research monographs is also published that has even smaller printings. The Press prints in eleven languages, although almost all of its scholarly publishing is in English. The Press is fiscally a department of the University of Bombay, and has no independent financial status. The University provides a grant of Rs 50,000 each year for its operation as well as providing rent-free quarters. This subsidy is relatively modest since the annual turnover is about Rs 450,000.

The Press has no professional editorial staff at all. Its superinten-

dent is a printer by background, and there is no editorial or stylistic work done by the Press on its publications. The Press has a fully equipped printing establishment, although much of its machinery is outmoded. Decisions concerning the Press, including the selection of titles, are handled by a Publications Board of about eight members from the faculties of the University. There seems to be almost no attention given to promoting or distributing the publications of the Press. Several distribution arrangements with private publishers have been tried but none have proved successful. At present, the University Cooperative Store handles the distribution of the Press's books. This arrangement may be suitable for textbooks, but it does not provide an adequate distribution for scholarly and general books.

While the University of Bombay Press is able to continue with its work because of its 'captive' textbook market and its printing services to the University, it is not a major scholarly publisher and contributes little to the advancement of knowledge in India. Most academic books published by commercial presses are more attractive. At present, the University of Bombay Press is a printer of substantial proportions, but is not a publisher.

The University of Bombay Press is fairly typical of the larger and better established university presses in India. It is possible that Calcutta and Punjab pay more attention to scholarly publishing, but on the other hand, most of the Indian university presses have no general and scholarly publishing programmes at all. If university presses are to play an active role in issuing scholarly books in India, they must have resources and clearly defined goals. The purposes of a university press have been outlined by Datus Smith. These purposes include:

- to serve scholarship in the local country by making the results of research coherently available for the use of all;
- to stimulate and vitalize research, to encourage authors, to subject research to criticism by public exposure;
- to serve as a connecting link with the world community of scholars through informing other countries of results of research and to publish selected scholarly works from abroad;
- to exhibit standards of book publishing that can help raise the general level;
- to strengthen cultural morale at the university and in the country generally by ending dependence on foreign countries in doing scholarly publishing.<sup>73</sup>

Smith goes on to argue that scholarly publishers must meet a number of conditions. Among these are (a) academic control (key editorial decisions should remain in the hands of professors), (b) professional staff (editorial functions should be handled by skilled professionals), (c) long-term commitment (institutions should commit themselves to a functioning press for a number of years at a time), and (d) operational autonomy (within a framework of broad university policy).<sup>74</sup>

Universities are not the only non-profit producers of scholarly books. In the Delhi area alone, there are a number of institutions which publish 'serious' books on a regular basis.<sup>75</sup> When the total number of publications issued by these agencies is added up, it is a substantial annual figure. Coordination of editorial, production, and distribution arrangements would greatly improve both the standards of these publications and would probably lower the costs. Coordinating arrangements would also be made for some of the smaller university presses.

Scholarly publishing is an important function, and one which has been done in an *ad hoc* manner for the most part. This section has outlined some of the means which India has used to provide scholarly materials. It is clear that the issue needs further consideration by those in the book trade as well as universities, government ministries, and others involved in education.

#### CASE STUDIES

These discussions have so far been general in nature, seeking to provide an overview of Indian publishing. In order to provide a more complete view of the 'reality' of Indian publishing, several short 'case studies' of individual publishers are presented. These vignettes are not complete analyses of the firms discussed, nor is there a claim made that these publishers are typical of the book trade. The focus is on providing some detailed information concerning a few publishers. The problems and contributions of several publishers are presented here. These discussions are incomplete, and do not include a detailed picture of any individual publishers. The publishers considered here are well-established private firms publishing mostly in English.<sup>76</sup>

Asia Publishing House was perhaps the first Indian publisher to publish along professional lines and to devote itself largely to the

publication of 'serious' books.<sup>77</sup> Although Asia has become much less active in recent years, it remains one of India's larger and most respected publishing firms. Asia is the only Indian publisher to maintain offices in both London and New York. Its founder and head, Peter Jayasinghe, is still one of the leaders of Indian publishing. Asia is important in Indian publishing not only because it is one of the larger firms, but because it was one of the first to differentiate between the various editorial and production functions and to train professionals in the field of publishing. Indeed, many of the senior editors in other firms were trained at Asia Publishing House. One veteran described Peter Jayasinghe as the only 'real' publisher in India in the sense that he has a long-range vision concerning books. Asia Publishing House was founded in 1943 and has published 4,300 titles in the thirty-one years of its existence, of which 1,500 are still in print. While most of these books are devoted to scholarly topics, to current affairs and politics, or to science, a few novels have also been published. The bulk of Asia's work has been in English, but some efforts have been made in Hindi as well. Asia has an annual turnover of about Rs 6,400,000, most of which is accounted for by sales of books from their back-list.

Despite its status, Asia Publishing House has seriously declined. In 1973, for example, Asia published fewer than 35 new titles, and its senior editorial staff in Bombay was reduced to fewer than four. Part of its impressive headquarters building in Bombay was rented out to a bank. There have been many rumours in recent years of the impending collapse of the firm; most of the talented senior editors have left to join other publishers. While the full explanation of the decline of Asia Publishing House cannot be presented here, a number of factors of general applicability can be mentioned. A number of observers have noted that Asia grew too fast in the 1950s, that it selected many titles which were of marginal value (both in terms of literary and scientific merit and in terms of sales potential), and as a result there was a lack of capital since the books published did not sell quickly enough to recoup the investment. In addition, despite a well-trained professional staff, it was not possible to maintain high technical standards when more than 300 books were being published in a year. Thus, standards of production as well as quality of the books fell to some extent. The declining tempo of sales that resulted, not by any means a unique phenomenon in Indian publishing, led to all the familiar difficulties which confront a publisher

when cash inflow does not balance outflow. An acute shortage of working capital can be crippling in an enterprise like publishing in which capital turnover is slow and at the same time does not easily attract investment from private or institutional sources.

The rise and fall of Asia Publishing House shows both the strengths and weaknesses of Indian publishing. Asia proved that it is possible to build a large firm by combining the import and distribution of foreign books with the publishing and distribution of Indian books. Peter Jayasinghe proved in the 1950s that there is scope for an Indian publisher with imagination and high professional standards. While some Asia books were printed in large numbers and sold very well, such as some of the writings of Jawaharlal Nehru, most of the books were issued in printings of 2,000 copies and took three or four years to sell out. The firm relied to some extent on its contacts with eminent Indians who published their books with Asia—some of these books were successful, while others proved to be failures. These contacts in high places were no doubt valuable to the firm.

One of the signs of the 'decline' of the firm was the delay in publication of manuscripts and payment of royalties, which was a natural corollary of Asia's cash-flow problems. This also contributed not only to a demoralization of the authors but also to their abandoning Asia as a publisher of their books. Asia's story is all too familiar in Indian publishing.

Another example of a publisher who attempted to maintain very high technical standards and to build a firm along 'modern' lines but who in the end failed is P. C. Manaktala and Sons. P. C. Manaktala, for many years associated with Allied Publishers, went into business for himself in 1964, with the aim of producing high quality serious books and distributing them effectively. The firm had no foreign agency or other ancillary elements—its only concern was publishing. Most of the books published by Manaktala were general books of a serious nature, on politics, current affairs, and social questions. A few college textbooks were published. The firm had a relationship with the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom, which subsidized the publication of a number of Manaktala books. In its two and a half years of active existence, the firm published 70 general books and 7 textbooks. Manaktala maintained extremely high standards—it is probably true that Manaktala books were the best produced in India, meeting international standards in terms of design

and production. Moreover, the titles were usually chosen with care and the manuscripts were subjected to some editorial work. Distribution was handled through Allied Publishers, which has a large distribution network. Manaktala also made an effort to publicize its books by mailing publicity material and other means.

Despite an active publishing programme, effective leadership and high standards, Manaktala was forced to cease its publishing activities in late 1967.<sup>78</sup> A number of reasons have been given for this situation. Perhaps the basic problem was a shortage of capital. Manaktala may have expanded publishing operations too quickly, using up the available capital and small bank credit arrangements before the books that were published were able to inject sufficient new money into the firm. Negotiations with the British firm Allen and Unwin, which would have provided capital for the operation, proved unsuccessful at the moment when funds were urgently needed. Further, it is possible that Manaktala's overhead costs were too high and the operation simply too lavish for Indian conditions. Editorial staff were very well paid and with the considerable care given to each book, it was inevitable that the editorial costs per volume were quite high. The capital of Rs 230,000 that was available to start the firm was insufficient to see it through until it could be self-financing. The firm also began operations just before a major economic recession hit the country, and this naturally caused a decline in the sales of books in general.

A publisher who has been reasonably successful in bringing out scholarly books and is now celebrating its fiftieth anniversary is Popular Prakashan. Founded in 1924 as a bookstore (Popular Book Depot) and publishing books since 1928, Popular Prakashan has been in the hands of the same family since that time. The bookstore operation continues to be a key part of the business, and acts as a distributor for Popular Prakashan books as well as the books of other publishers. One of the largest bookstores in India, it attracts many institutional buyers and has a reputation throughout the country. Popular Prakashan has also been engaged in working with other institutions in cooperative publishing arrangements. For a period, Popular was the publisher for the University of Bombay, and it now works with the Indian Council of Social Science Research. In 1973, the total turnover of the publishing operation of Popular Prakashan was about Rs 800,000 and about 75 books were published, 45 of them in English and most of the rest in Marathi. (The

firm has been publishing books in Marathi and to a very limited extent in Hindi since 1952.) Most Popular books are serious or scholarly books along with some textbooks.<sup>79</sup>

It is possible that Popular Prakashan and its associated enterprises have survived as publishers because they are a 'conglomerate' of book-related businesses, most of which are not very large. In addition to its publishing firm and bookshop, Popular owns a printing press and binding equipment; it runs a modest importing business, and it publishes one of the two major book-trade publications. None of the personnel of the firm seem to be highly paid professionals, thus further cutting down on overhead. Indeed, Popular Prakashan has been criticized for its lack of care in editorial work on manuscripts and for the inconsistent technical quality of its books. The firm's backlist is quite large and includes many standard academic works. The fact that Popular Prakashan has been able to survive as a publisher and bookseller of considerable size and with a good reputation for almost fifty years is a unique achievement.

So far this discussion has focused on publishers who are headquartered in Bombay, the centre of publishing in India until 1970. In recent years, the locus of the book trade has moved to Delhi. Most of the firms which have been founded in recent years are located in Delhi, such as Tata McGraw-Hill, Vikas, Sterling, Thompsons, and others. In addition several formerly Bombay-based firms have moved to Delhi, including Oxford University Press. Macmillans, formerly centred in Madras, has also moved to Delhi. Even the firms which retain their headquarters in Bombay have sizable branch offices in Delhi.

Vikas Publishing House is something of a sensation among Indian publishers. Founded in 1969, Vikas has established itself, according to many observers, as one of the most successful publishers in India. Vikas is now publishing about 100 titles per year. Its list varies considerably and features serious studies of the development problems of India and China along with 'instant' best-selling volumes on cricket. According to Vikas director Narendra Kumar, the bulk of the titles are of a scholarly nature but a large proportion of the sales are from more popular books. Vikas is part of the UBS Publishers Distributors firm, and thus obtains its capital from one of India's most successful distribution agencies and has the advantage of effective distribution.<sup>80</sup> Vikas publishes predominantly in English, but also publishes books in Hindi. It also issues a paperback

series, and has recently begun to issue college textbooks.

While a number of observers have compared Vikas's rapid rise to that of Asia Publishing House and have worried that the firm may be over-expanding, most feel that Vikas is at present the most effective publisher in India. Its books are almost all well produced and well edited, although some have criticized Vikas's list as being uneven. Its overheads are fairly low and its distribution network perhaps the best in India. It may also be significant that Vikas's leadership is comparatively young and has aggressively sought new and different kinds of books to publish. Vikas is at present an example of what a solid financial base from the UBS agency and a distribution system can do in the Indian market.

These vignettes have stressed the larger, more visible English-language publishers. Asia, Vikas, Popular, and Manaktala are by no means typical. They are without question among the largest and best in the country. A more typical example is a small Bombay firm which attempted to enter the publishing field, brought out a handful of books in English and Hindi, and virtually ended its publishing activities. This firm was beset by internal problems (disputes between the editors and management), could not find sufficient capital, and was unable to locate a good distribution mechanism.

A smaller new firm has the problems of obtaining sufficient capital (at least Rs 200,000 is needed to see a publisher through the first year or so of operation), or distribution, or publicity, and of trained staff. Without considerable outside financial backing it is very difficult to maintain the publishing initiative for long enough to begin to make the business pay. Furthermore, it is difficult for a newly established firm to obtain manuscripts which have either quality or sales potential. The incidence of failure of publishing efforts is quite high.

There is the additional problem of trained editorial personnel. There are relatively few well-trained editors who are able to see a manuscript through from its raw form to a printed book. In India, where most publishing firms do not have bifurcated editorial functions, the editor must handle many jobs. Typically, well-trained publishing professionals tend to move from firm to firm in search of higher salaries and a greater degree of professional autonomy. The newer firms are often unable to afford this talent or unwilling to allow the required autonomy.

The more typical Indian publisher engages in publishing only as a

sideline and is primarily a bookseller, printer, or distributor. This kind of firm issues a few books a year, has no professional staff, makes no effort to publicize or professionally distribute books, and is a purely marginal operation for its owner. These firms often reprint old books which are no longer under copyright, or publish in an eclectic manner in accordance with the manuscripts which happen to reach the owner.

There are also a number of specialized firms some of which do excellent work and contribute to scholarly publishing. Several firms publish Indological works, both reprints and new books. One such publisher is Motilal Banarsidass. Other firms specialize in the publishing of law or medical books. There are several paperback publishers who devote at least some of their lists to serious books. The largest are Orient Paperbacks and Jaico, which publish popular novels and self-improvement books along with some serious works of fiction, politics, or scholarship. Orient Paperbacks' parent firm, Hind Pocket Books, has a backlist of 3,000 titles in Hindi (compared to 160 titles in English). Many of these paperbacks are 'serious' books, reprints from Western classics, or current discussions of Indian problems. Hind Pocket Books' parent firm, Rajpal and Sons, was founded in 1891.

Indian publishers are a mixed lot, and it is difficult to generalize about them. Publishers range from firms with professional staff, backlists of hundreds of titles, distribution networks, and export potential, to small operations issuing a few titles a year with virtually no distribution effort. While publishing has not established itself as a fully profitable commercial operation in India, there is no question but that considerable professionalism and efficiency have been built up in the past decade.

#### PUBLISHING AND THE INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY

This study concludes with a consideration of the one element which has been left out of this discussion—the publishing personnel and the 'public' which publishing serves—the Indian intellectual and educational communities. Publishing responds to market demand to a considerable extent, and is at the same time dependent on what intellectual 'products' are produced by authors. In this way, publishers and authors are in a symbiotic relationship. Part of the equation also concerns the characteristics of those professionals who

work in publishing firms and those who own the firms—sometimes the same individuals. Thus, publishing is not simply a matter of manuscripts, printing presses, and books. It concerns authors, editors, owners, and, finally, readers.

(a) *The Publisher*

After this consideration of the difficulties of publishing in a developing society, one might ask who would be ill-advised enough to become engaged, either financially or professionally, in publishing. It is difficult to provide a definitive answer to this question, but there seems to be no lack of individuals interested in the field. A new training course for publishing at the College of Vocational Studies of Delhi University has more than fifty students, and a newly formed Association of Publishing Professionals attempted for a short period to represent the interests of a new breed of non-owner professionals. This new Association was formed as a counterbalance to the Federation of Publishers and Booksellers Associations, which was seen as dominated by owners and wholesalers, and as too concerned with the purely economic aspects of the publishing enterprise, but for a number of reasons never established itself.<sup>81</sup>

It is difficult to describe the 'typical' individual working in publishing. The majority have a business or bookselling background and have become publishers somewhat by chance. The leadership of most of the smaller firms is neither well trained in publishing nor has much knowledge about books. Some bookseller-publishers have a genuine love for books and a reasonable knowledge about them, but these individuals are in a minority. Many of the owners are primarily businessmen who happen to be in a book-related business. The economics of book distribution and printing is related but in many ways different from that of publishing. And a good deal more specialized knowledge is needed to run a publishing house. Most know enough to provide leadership to their firms and some have a flair for picking profitable titles or series.

Most of the individuals at the top levels of publishing come from business-oriented classes and have urban backgrounds. They tend to be well educated, often with post-graduate degrees in arts subjects. The families tend to have been involved in publishing, or at least bookselling, for more than a generation, and knowledge of the book business comes naturally for many owner-publishers. With some exceptions, publishing houses tend to be family concerns, with all

basic decisions made by the owners. It is only in the foreign firms and a few of the larger new concerns that there are corporate financial and decision-making structures. Owner-publishers remain the key people in the publishing enterprise in India, although the trend is slowly towards more bureaucratic business organizations. The owner-publishers dominate the Federation of Publishers and most other professional organizations, and these are the individuals who generally represent India at international meetings. They also dominate the regional publishers' organizations.

There is also a 'new breed' of publishers developing in India. These are non-owner professionals who have come into publishing in recent years and have risen to positions of senior executives in some of the larger firms. Most publishers, of course, have virtually no staff at all beyond the owner and some clerks, so the professionals are limited to private sector firms which have some senior employees, and also some of the public-sector publishing activities, which have professional personnel at the top levels. The number of these professionals is still quite small in India. A few professionals also work in the more serious regional language firms such as Rajpal and Sons, Rajkamal Prakashan, and some others. It is likely that there are perhaps one hundred qualified non-owner professionals in India, concentrated largely in Delhi and Bombay, with a few in Calcutta and Madras. These individuals are usually well educated, generally with a humanities or social science background. They are reasonably well paid, earning from Rs 1,500 to about Rs 2,000 per month. All have been trained 'on the job' with many coming from backgrounds in Asia Publishing House or a few other firms. There is some job mobility between firms, and a few such professionals have been lured into the advertising industry by higher salaries.

There are, of course, many job frustrations for these professional editorial personnel. One is the fact that most decisions in the firm are in the hands of the owners, who are often not as well trained or knowledgeable as their staff and may not be primarily interested in the publishing aspects of their business enterprises. Publishing houses are very short of trained staff, and this means that the few professionally trained staff must handle many functions. It is not uncommon for a single individual to handle all of the aspects of book production, from copy-editing to negotiations with printers, publicity, proof-reading, and the like. In the long run this is clearly not in the best interests of the firm since relatively well-paid manpower

is doing a job which could be done by support staff.

Professional editors are seldom in direct contact with authors, a function which they perform in many other countries, which keeps them in touch with literary and academic currents. Professional staff seldom define themselves as 'intellectuals'. They are to some extent in touch with current intellectual trends, but few are directly involved in manuscript development—the usual practice in India is simply for an author to hand a manuscript to a publisher and for the publisher to make a decision about whether to publish it. Editorial staff are seldom writers themselves, and they are not involved in the organizations of writers or other intellectuals.

The future of publishing as a career in India is unclear. The continuing decline of standards of English in the educational system will make it more difficult for publishers to find personnel with a sense of style in the English language. While salaries in publishing, at the senior levels, are competitive with academic salaries, it is likely that a talented individual could earn more in an advertising agency or some other non-publishing business. As competition for jobs becomes sharper, it is possible that well-qualified individuals will enter publishing as a career. At present, however, publishing is not seen as a high status and remunerative career by many young Indians.

Professionalism is an increasingly important element in Indian publishing. Owners are increasingly aware of the need for skilled professional assistance and standards of production are gradually rising. Editing manuscripts is now accepted as an important part of the publishing process. Specialization of functions within publishing firms is gradually developing, although at this point such specialization is limited to the larger firms. Publishers are paying more attention to publicity and other functions previously ignored, and this will provide openings for trained individuals. The regional language publishers will grow and eventually require professionally trained staff as well.

#### *(b) The Author*

In many respects, the author is the forgotten person in the publishing equation. Publishers are dependent on authors for books; authors are infrequently accorded the respect that is their share in industrialized countries, are seldom sought after and sometimes dishonestly dealt with, once the book is published. There is little

effort to 'develop' a book idea with an author, and publishers do not often attempt to publish a number of books by the same individual. Perhaps most important, authorship is not very remunerative in India; the rewards in terms of money, prestige, and advancement are not large.<sup>82</sup>

The general practice in India is for an author to submit a completed manuscript to a publisher for consideration. If the publisher is interested, a contract is drawn up and the book published. There are seldom advances on royalties paid to authors and it is unusual for publishers to provide contracts to authors before a manuscript is completed. It is very common in India for authors to subsidize their own books by paying publishers to defray the cost of printing. While many reputable publishers are hesitant to discuss this, it is practised by many publishers in India, and is often the only avenue for an author to get a book published. Once a manuscript has been accepted by a publisher, very little editorial work is done on it in most cases. This is a particularly serious problem for books published in English, since many authors do not have a firm command of the language, and manuscripts are often in need of considerable editorial work.

Authors are occasionally exploited by publishers. In addition to long delays in publication, changes in design and paper, and other problems which are common in many countries, Indian authors have some special problems. While standard contractual royalties are between 10 and 15 per cent—with some textbook authors getting up to 25 per cent royalties—it is not uncommon for publishers to pay royalties late or in some cases not to pay them at all. The author has little remedy since the cost and delay of taking the matter to court is substantial. Publishers sometimes do not render accurate sales statements and occasionally even print a second edition of a book without informing the author. Some publishers have been known to consistently under-report the sales of a book and thus have smaller royalty payments to make. Indian authors often feel considerable hostility towards their own publishers and towards the publishing community generally.<sup>83</sup> Few authors are known to feel loyalty to a particular publisher and often shift from firm to firm.

Authorship in India is not a well-developed profession. There is little money to be made in writing scholarly books or books on current events. An occasional volume on an issue of public interest, such as the Bangladesh war, will sell reasonably well—a sale of

8,000 copies in hardback is considered extraordinary. Novels in paperback sometimes sell more copies, and a paperback publisher printed an edition of 500,000 of a Hindi novel by a popular low-brow author not long ago. Most authors of scholarly books are not freelance writers but rather are academics, government officials, businessmen, or journalists.

Indian authors have seldom organized to protect their interests. Authors are not represented in any of the committees which are concerned with books or publishing, and their interests have not been a major issue in discussions of copyright. There is no professional association of authors, although a recent effort to set up a Writers' Guild in Delhi may be a step in this direction. The Indian P.E.N. organization acts as an intellectual forum for writers. In a few cases, writers have organized to publish their own books as a protest against the state of commercial publishing, but these efforts have been regionally based for the most part. They have met with reasonable success in Kerala and West Bengal, where workshops and cooperatives have a role in publishing creative work.

Some Indian authors prefer to publish abroad not only because they can make more money but also they feel their work is valued more highly and they find publishers more congenial. Several of India's most popular novelists in English, such as Ruth Praver Jhabvala and R. K. Narayan, receive most of their income from the sales of their books abroad. Narayan for many years published his novels himself rather than entrust them to a commercial press. Many academic writers attempt to publish their books in the United States or Europe where the financial remuneration is higher and where they can hope for a businesslike relationship with their publisher. The number of Indian authors able to publish abroad is very small but the widespread interest among Indian intellectuals in publishing abroad is an unfortunate commentary on both the state of intellectual life and on the image of publishers.

Writers in English are not only better and more professionally treated by publishers than their regional language compeers, but they earn more money. The situation of writing in the regional languages is particularly bleak from the author's viewpoint. There are few regional language publishers who are able to adequately distribute books. Financial returns are small because of low sales combined with a modest price for the books, and the publishers tend to be even less professional than in English. The situation in

Kerala, where book sales tend to be somewhat higher, is a partial exception to this rule. One well-known intellectual has said that at least in some regional languages, it is much better for a creative writer to write for periodicals rather than write books, since the long-term financial rewards are probably better.<sup>84</sup>

The Indian intellectual subculture does not stress writing as much as similar subcultures in the West. In the still strong traditional culture, creative and scholarly writing does not play an important role. Stress is on traditional knowledge often communicated through non-written forms. Elements of the traditional culture are stronger in India than their counterparts are in the West. The modern institutional network does not support writing and publishing to a very great degree. Career advancement in the universities does not depend on publication. It is very difficult for an individual to make much money writing books. Even journalistic writing is poorly paid. All of these factors tend to diminish the impetus to write books and to place authors outside of the centre of the society.

Indian authors have few means of obtaining 'feedback' concerning their work. The mechanisms of book reviewing are inadequate, and this fact has a number of implications. Few journals feature high quality book reviews of a critical or evaluative nature. A few exceptions, such as the *Economic and Political Weekly* or *Quest* cannot make up for the lack. Newspapers feature few reviews, and even the specialized scholarly journals have only a few reviews, and these tend to be descriptive in nature. The implications of this situation are that books do not receive publicity through review media, and, perhaps most important, authors have no way of obtaining evaluations of their work. The public has no means of evaluating which books may be worth purchasing. The lack of book reviews of a serious analytic nature is indicative of the general situation of Indian intellectual life.

#### CONCLUSION

This study has focused on the role of the publishing enterprise in India's intellectual and educational life, and has discussed some of the problems and possibilities of the book trade. We have been just as concerned with the internal dynamics and realities of publishing as with a broad discussion of the sociology of publishing. In this sense, this study is more a descriptive exercise than an effort to

theorize about the role of books in a modernizing society. We have made no pretence at providing a 'theory' and have been content to describe and analyse the present situation in the hope that such an analysis will stimulate further research and broad theorizing.

Publishing occupies a small but vital role in the intellectual life of a nation and deserves critical attention. It is a national resource and as such should have support not only from government but from intellectuals and, more generally, from readers. The ignorance of the nature of publishing and of its problems exhibited by authors and intellectuals not only in India but in other countries as well is considerable. As has been noted, books occupy an ancillary role in the process of modernization and are a means both of the transmission of a culture and of the infusion of new ideas and new technologies into a society.

In many ways, the accomplishments of Indian publishing are impressive. Despite the difficulties which have been described in this study, India is one of the world's leading publishing countries in terms of annual production of titles. The publishing enterprise is fairly well established and has, despite setbacks, been able to grow. Furthermore, the quality of Indian books has improved markedly. Regional language publishing, while still in an early stage of development, has grown and in several languages there is an active and viable publishing enterprise. India has built what is without question the largest publishing enterprise in the Third World. A publishing infrastructure has also been developed. There is not only a printing and binding industry, but competent editors, production supervisors, and other personnel necessary for publishing.

These accomplishments have taken place in a society of scarcity, with resources at a premium and acute competition for them evident. The paper 'crisis' which has been described in this study is one example of this situation. Publishing is subject to the stresses of the Indian economy, and these stresses have without question hindered the growth of publishing. Furthermore, shortage, inflation, and other economic problems have caused books to be expensive, and thus beyond the purchasing power of most Indians. The level of literacy in India remains low, and the general educational situation has affected the growth of publishing. The key to a flourishing publishing enterprise is literacy combined with adequate purchasing power and a large number of libraries. This situation exists in part for English language publishing, but not as yet for the regional languages.

The post-Independence progress of publishing has not been without problems. The quantitative progress of publishing has not been steady. After a very quick period of growth, there was a decline followed by slower growth. Despite the emergence of a number of publishing firms with a commitment to scholarly publishing and with a degree of professionalism, much of Indian publishing remains in the hands of small entrepreneurs who are unable to exercise high standards of quality or even to provide for the distribution of their books. Scholarly publishing, the main concern of this study, is not generally a profitable undertaking and exists in India on a somewhat uncertain foundation. Regional language publishing has also seen uneven growth. The great expectations for books in Indian languages were not met. Slow growth in literacy, lack of purchasing power by readers in the regional languages, and little government support all limited the growth of this area of publishing. Even in Bengal, Maharashtra, Kerala, and Tamilnadu, which have strong intellectual traditions in their respective languages, English continues to play a very active role in scholarly writing.

It was stated earlier that no policy recommendations would be made. It is felt that such recommendations are not the appropriate task for a foreign observer. Nevertheless, it might be useful to outline in broad terms some of the areas of Indian publishing which deserve serious consideration by publishers and others concerned with books.

1. *Professionalism.* The publishing enterprise has made impressive strides towards professionalism in terms of editing, improvement of standards, upgrading of personnel and other aspects. This progress has helped to improve publishing considerably. Adequate training for publishing personnel, a sense of professional responsibility, and sufficient autonomy within publishing firms, both private and public, to exercise professional judgement are all important elements of publishing. They need continuing improvement.

2. *The Government.* It has been repeatedly pointed out that the government is a key element in publishing, not only through the vitally important aspect of public sector publishing but in terms of policies that concern the book trade directly or indirectly. Government agencies at all levels should recognize the impact that their decisions have on publishing, and take this impact into consideration. Publishing needs government resources to flourish, but perhaps even more, it needs sympathetic awareness and the kind of policy

decisions which will permit publishers, in both the public and private sectors, to grow and improve.

3. *Coordination*. Indian publishing is very much in need of greater coordination and communication. At the top, the organizations of publishers have not been as effective as they might be in representing the interests of the publishing enterprise, nor have these organizations provided the kind of forum for internal communications that would be useful. There is a particularly strong need for coordination between the private and public sectors in publishing.

4. *Academic Publishing*. Since scholarly books are generally unprofitable to publish, non-profit agencies can be particularly useful in publishing them. University presses are a natural source. The Indian university presses need upgrading, and their missions need to be redefined so that scholarly publishing is one of their major roles. Cooperation among university presses can reduce costs. Autonomy and a sense of direction are an integral part of effective academic publishing. Non-university research institutions and other organizations can also contribute to the publication of scholarly books.

5. *Regional Language Publishing*. While this is a very complex subject which is somewhat beyond the scope of this study, it is clear that regional language publishing has been slow to develop. Regional cooperation, special assistance by state governments, and in general, careful consideration of the needs of the regional language publishers can greatly improve the situation.

6. *The Intellectual 'Public'*. There is much that can be done to encourage Indians to write and publish, and authorship can not only be a source of prestige but also of income. Attention to the concerns of authors, and businesslike and efficient handling of their economic affairs can help to stimulate better writing and eliminate the desire of authors to publish their works abroad. The development of book reviewing and of publicity for books is an integral part of this development. Publishers must pay attention to both authors and readers.

7. *Foreign Influences*. This study has pointed to the varied aspects of foreign influences on publishing and intellectual life in the Third World. Some of these influences are inevitable. However, Third World nations can minimize these influences by an awareness of their existence and careful scrutiny of foreign aid programmes. The existence of well-supported journals and an indigenous publishing

enterprise will help considerably in focusing intellectual attention on domestic concerns. Minor changes in copyright regulations and some restrictions on imports can also help in this. Perhaps the main challenge is for developing countries to be constantly alert about the problem and prepared to make policy decisions to protect their own intellectual independence as much as possible.

8. *The Publisher*. At the heart of the enterprise is, of course, the publisher. Without an effective and aware publisher, none of the improvements mentioned above will be possible. Publishers must be willing to conduct themselves efficiently, with professionalism, and in the interests of their authors and customers as well as in their own.

These are but a few areas which deserve careful attention by publishers and others in India. If this study has been able to highlight some of the needs and aspirations of Indian publishing and, by implication, publishing in other Third World nations, it has served a useful purpose.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Abul Hasan, 'Indian Book Industry: New Perspective', *Indian Publisher and Bookseller*, 22, February 1972, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> These figures were supplied to the author by the National Library, Calcutta, from its annual statistical summary. Subsequent statistics concerning quantitative aspects of Indian publishing come from the same source. Statistics concerning publishing in India are not uniformly reliable. UNESCO sources sometimes differ from Indian sources due to discrepancies in the definition of a book. Thus, the figures cited in this volume may not always be entirely accurate or current. The National Library is now consolidating record-keeping, and this should provide a reliable source in the future.

<sup>3</sup> Om Prakash, 'The Facts', *Seminar*, No. 97, September 1967, p. 14

<sup>4</sup> Robert Escarpit, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

<sup>5</sup> For a further discussion of the language situation as it applies to higher education, see A. B. Shah, ed., *The Great Debate: Language Policy and Higher Education* (Bombay: Lalvani, 1968).

<sup>6</sup> Om Prakash, *op. cit.*, p. 12. Robert Escarpit, *op. cit.*, p. 83, states that the figure is 25 per million in India.

<sup>7</sup> Gopal Krishan and Madhav Shyam, 'Pattern of City Literacy', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 9, 18 May 1974, p. 795.

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Abul Hasan, Book Officer, Ministry of Education, 19 January 1973.

<sup>9</sup> P. Banerjee, 'India' in T. Nickerson, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>10</sup> Samuel Israel, *op. cit.*, p. 50. There is no history of Indian publishing available at the present time, so these notes are necessarily rather cursory.

<sup>11</sup> Our understanding will be increased by a detailed study of publishing which has been undertaken by the National Council of Applied Economic Research under the direction of N. Venkataraman.

<sup>12</sup> Interview with Peter S. Jayasinghe, Director, Asia Publishing House, 29 December 1972.

<sup>13</sup> See Arvind Shah, 'The Paper Industry in India', *Indian Publisher and Bookseller*, 24, February 1974, pp. 28–33.

<sup>14</sup> While this situation is exaggerated in India, scholarly books published in the United States also rely on library sales for a considerable proportion of their sales. It has been estimated that close to 60 per cent of the sales of American university presses are to libraries, with about one-third going to bookstores. Chandler Grannis, 'AAUP: Coping with Crisis', *Publishers Weekly*, 24 July 1972.

<sup>15</sup> These figures have been provided by individuals involved in publishing. I am particularly indebted to Wellington Caldeira, D. N. Malhotra, Dr Sujit Mukherjee, and Narendra Kumar for their insights.

<sup>16</sup> O. P. Ghai, 'Publishing in India', *Illustrated Weekly of India*, 19 March 1972, p. 10.

<sup>17</sup> R. J. Taraporevala, 'Economics of Book Publishing and Need for Capital', in T. V. K. Krishnan, ed., op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with P. C. Manaktala, Director, Allied Publishers, 13 January 1973.

<sup>19</sup> See Artur Isenberg, op. cit., for a discussion of the problems of book distribution.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35ff.

<sup>21</sup> The 'tender' system in the Indian book trade is the curious relationship between the bookseller or distributors and the librarian in which the librarian places substantial orders with individual booksellers or distributors and demands a higher than usual discount for placing the order. The librarian occasionally also demands an 'under the table' bonus for his business. As a result of their power to place orders, librarians are cultivated by the book trade. The whole system has led to gross dishonesty and has placed the book trade in a particularly difficult moral as well as fiscal situation.

<sup>22</sup> It is worth noting in this context that the national voice of the book trade, the Federation of Publishers and Booksellers Associations in India, has been dominated since its inception by publishers or publisher-distributors and the booksellers have had almost no influence. The Federation has recently split into two organizations but it is unlikely that the booksellers will be much more influential. Clearly, the bookseller is the odd man out in the book trade.

<sup>23</sup> There are two main publications serving the book trade, the *Indian Publisher and Bookseller* and *Indian Book Industry*. While both of these publications feature listings of new books, these are incomplete. The editors of these journals have said that they do not receive the complete cooperation of publishers in compiling their listings. The National Library, Calcutta, after a lapse of several years, is beginning to provide information on newly published books. This source may assist the book trade with current bibliographical information.

<sup>24</sup> Ashwin Shah, 'Government Takes Over Book Buying', *Illustrated Weekly of India*, 13 May 1973, p. 45.

<sup>25</sup> R. J. Taraporevala, 'Government Policy', *Seminar*, No. 97, September 1967, p. 20.

<sup>26</sup> V. V. John, 'The Battle of the Books', *Times of India*, 19 March 1973.

<sup>27</sup> For a sampling of reaction, see 'STC and the Booktrade', *Indian Publisher and Bookseller*, 23, July 1973, pp. 197–223.

<sup>28</sup> A. B. Shah, 'Book Trade in Doldrums', *Times of India*, 12 August 1973, p. 6. See also V. V. John, op. cit., and Ashwin Shah, op. cit.

<sup>29</sup> At present the STC has not given up its plan for importing books, but has 'postponed' its implementation pending further study.

<sup>30</sup> The Soviet Union only in 1974 finally agreed to adhere to international copyright agreements. See J. A. Koutchoumow, 'The New Soviet Copyright Agency is Feeling Its Way', *Publishers Weekly*, 24 June 1974, pp. 40–42.

<sup>31</sup> For a critique of the international copyright system, see Jaman Shah, 'India and the International Copyright Convention', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 8, 31 March 1973, pp. 645–8.

<sup>32</sup> See *International Copyright: Needs of Developing Countries* (New Delhi: Ministry of Education, 1967).

<sup>33</sup> For a detailed discussion of book pirating, see David Kaser, *Book Pirating*

in *Taiwan* (Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1969).

<sup>34</sup> Jaman Shah, op. cit., p. 645.

<sup>35</sup> For further discussion of the copyright issue, see N. N. Gidwani, ed., *Copyright: Legalized Piracy?* (Bombay: Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom, 1968).

<sup>36</sup> It should be pointed out that even in the United States, the heartland of *laissez faire* capitalism, government book policy has a considerable impact on publishing. Government grants to libraries and government aid to higher education both have a direct impact on the book trade. Publishers, through the American Publishers Association, maintain a lobbyist in Washington, D.C. to influence government policy concerning books. Other book-related organizations, such as the American Library Association, maintain similar representation.

<sup>37</sup> The first Indian-made printing press was recently put into production.

<sup>38</sup> It should be noted that private sector publishers still serve the elite English-medium private schools, a small but important market.

<sup>39</sup> For a critical account of the National Book Trust, see Attar Singh, et al., 'National Book Trust', *Round Table*, 1, 9 March 1973, pp. 28-42.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with K. S. Duggal, former Director, National Book Trust, 28 January 1973.

<sup>41</sup> Suresh Kohli, 'National Book Trust', *Round Table*, 1, 9 March 1973, p. 41.

<sup>42</sup> Samuel Israel, op. cit., p. 54.

<sup>43</sup> See Abul Hasan, 'Role of National Book Development Bodies in Developing Countries', *Indian Book Industry*, 7, November 1972, pp. 12-16, for a discussion of the National Book Development Council.

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Abul Hasan, Special Officer (Books), Ministry of Education, 7 January 1974.

<sup>45</sup> For a discussion of this aspect of intellectual life see Edward Shils, 'Metropolis and Province in the Intellectual Community', in Edward Shils, *The Intellectual and the Powers and Other Essays* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), pp. 355-71.

<sup>46</sup> A few nations have declared total 'independence' from most foreign influences, and have managed to survive. Tanzania, which has placed great stress on indigenous local development, has greatly downgraded foreign advice and technology, although it has not eliminated them. Burma has almost completely rejected all foreign involvement, and its economy and intellectual life have stagnated. China and North Korea have also de-emphasized foreign technology and intellectual influences, apparently with considerable success. All of these efforts have required careful planning, and there is insufficient information at this point on how complete the success has been or whether the 'break' with imported knowledge has been complete.

<sup>47</sup> The Informational Media Guaranty Program of the U.S. Government meant that U.S. publishers undertook little risk in exporting books to developing countries. Under the programme more than \$80,000,000 worth of books were exported to the Third World. The programme also converted 'soft' currencies into dollars for the U.S. publishers. See Stanley Barnett and Roland Piggford, op. cit., pp. 76-7.

<sup>48</sup> For a detailed discussion of this topic, see Stephen Clarkson, 'The Low Impact of Soviet Writing and Aid on Indian Thinking and Policy', *Survey*, 20, Winter 1974, pp. 1-23.

<sup>49</sup> Information concerning the ELBS was provided by H. L. Davis of the British High Commission, New Delhi. Additional data were collected from ELBS publications.

<sup>50</sup> Samuel Israel, op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>51</sup> For some further comment on American book programmes in India, see Philip G. Altbach, 'Neocolonialism and Indian Publishing', op. cit. Additional materials have been obtained from USIS documents relating to book programmes as well as interviews with both USIS officials and with publishers.

<sup>52</sup> See Christopher Lasch, 'The Cultural Cold War' in C. Lasch, *The Agony of the American Left* (New York: Knopf, 1969), pp. 61-114 for a more detailed discussion of American cultural policy at this time.

<sup>53</sup> Quoted from AID manual, 1612-69.3-1967 cited in Stanley Barnett and Roland Piggford, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> Curtis Benjamin, *Books as Forces in National Development and International Relations* (New York: National Foreign Trade Council, 1964), p. 72.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>56</sup> Interview with S. L. Gupta, M. P., Director of S. Chand, one of India's largest textbook concerns, 17 January 1973.

<sup>57</sup> Peter S. Jayasinghe, op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>58</sup> K. C. Beri, 'Hindi Books with U.S. Aid Opposed', *Indian Publisher and Bookseller*, 22 March 1972, p. 99.

<sup>59</sup> UNESCO, the British Council, Franklin Book Programs, and other agencies have been active in providing technical assistance to Indian publishing. UNESCO maintains a regional book centre in Pakistan which provides assistance to South Asia.

<sup>60</sup> There is very little information available concerning the operation of regional language publishing, its scope, and its potential markets. The major journals dealing with publishing, *Indian Publisher and Bookseller* and *Indian Book Industry*, give almost no attention to the regional publishers. There is a federation of Hindi publishers, and organizations also exist for some of the other languages. But there is no all-India focus for these publishers. There is one volume available concerning the history of Marathi publishing. See S. P. Limaye, *History of Marathi Publishing* (Poona: Venus Book Stall, 1968), in Marathi.

<sup>61</sup> See David Kopf, op. cit.

<sup>62</sup> Om Prakash, op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Professor S. P. Bhagwat, Director, Mouj Prakashan, 17 December 1973.

<sup>64</sup> Peter Jayasinghe, 'Book Distribution and Promotion in North India', in N. Sankaranarayanan, ed., *Book Distribution and Promotion Problems in South Asia* (Madras: UNESCO, n.d.), p. 37.

<sup>65</sup> Interviews with Mrs S. Sandhu, Director, Rajkamal Prakashan, 17 January 1973, and with Prof. S. P. Bhagwat, op. cit.

<sup>66</sup> Chester Kerr, 'Publishing Scholarly Books' in T. V. K. Krishnan, ed., op. cit., p. 126.

<sup>67</sup> The best coverage of the world of scholarly publishing is in the pages of the journal *Scholarly Publishing*, edited at the University of Toronto.

<sup>68</sup> Stanley Barnett, et al., *Developmental Book Activities and Needs in Indonesia* (New York: Wolf Management Services, 1967), p. 79. This report was conducted by an American team financed by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

<sup>69</sup> Chandler Grannis, 'Toronto: Scholarly Publishers Meet, Form International Association', *Publishers Weekly*, 4 December 1972, p. 24.

<sup>70</sup> William C. Becker, 'The Crisis One Year Later', *Scholarly Publishing*, 4, July 1973, pp. 291-303. More general information on American scholarly publishing can be found in Chester Kerr, 'The Kerr Report Revisited', *Scholarly Publishing*, 1, 1970, pp. 5-30, and in Gene Hawes, op. cit.

<sup>71</sup> S. Kanjilal, 'The University Press in India', *Scholarly Publishing*, 4, October 1972, p. 75.

<sup>72</sup> Most of the data concerning the University of Bombay Press was obtained from V. G. Moghe, Superintendent, University of Bombay Press, 2 January 1973, and from documents of the Press.

<sup>73</sup> Datus Smith, Jr., 'University Presses in Asia' in T. Nickerson, ed., op. cit., p. 242.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 243.

<sup>75</sup> The following are a few of the organizations in the New Delhi area which engage in some publishing of scholarly and serious books: Indian Institute of Public Administration, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Indian School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Jamia Millia Islamia, Sahitya Akademi, Indian Council of Social Science Research, Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary Studies, Council for Social Development, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, and others. This listing does not include the publications of various government ministries. It is probable that more than

100 books are published annually by this group of institutions.

<sup>76</sup> The data for these vignettes is based largely on interviews with employees of the firms, on comments by other publishers, and by impressions gathered on visits to the firms.

<sup>77</sup> Samuel Israel, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

<sup>78</sup> Most of the information concerning P. C. Manaktala and Sons, Publishers, comes from interviews with P. C. Manaktala, Director, Allied Publishers, 4 January 1973.

<sup>79</sup> Information concerning Popular Prakashan is primarily based on interviews with Sadanand Bhatkal and Ramdas Bhatkal, owners, Popular Prakashan and Popular Book Depot. As part of its fiftieth anniversary celebrations, a history of the firm is being written.

<sup>80</sup> Interview with Narendra Kumar, Director, Vikas Publishing House, 16 January 1973.

<sup>81</sup> Interview with Samuel Israel, Director, National Book Trust, 15 January 1973.

<sup>82</sup> The non-remunerativeness of writing books is especially clear for scholarly books. Authors who write 'guides' for use in schools or some kinds of textbooks can make fairly large sums of money, but authors of scholarly books seldom make much.

<sup>83</sup> Samuel Israel, 'Book Publishing in India: Public Image and Reality', *Monthly Public Opinion Surveys*, 18, No. 4, 1972, p. 2.

<sup>84</sup> Interview with Kaa Naa Subramaniam, Tamil novelist and intellectual, 10 January 1974.



## Bibliography

This select bibliography focuses largely on publishing and closely related topics as they relate to India in particular and developing countries in general. Some references which deal with publishing generally or with publishing in the United States or other industrialized countries are also included. An effort has been made to list materials which provide some analytic focus on the subject and which will be at least minimally available to a scholar interested in it. Materials which are unavailable have been omitted, as have newspaper articles and short works. This bibliography does not claim to be comprehensive in any sense. It results largely from the process of researching this study and not from any comprehensive research of the literature. It is presented here to provide a preliminary source of information for those wishing to consider this subject in more detail.

The literature on publishing is fairly limited given the importance of the subject. This is particularly true for developing countries, where detailed and analytic consideration is almost non-existent. Particularly lacking in the literature are careful sociological and economic studies. There are quite a large number of books providing histories of particular publishing firms. These are especially numerous in the United States, Britain, and Germany. There has been almost no attention given to the relationship between publishing and other elements in society. There is some detailed, usually legal, discussion of copyright and its implications. Trade journals generally stress discussion, some of it quite detailed and illuminating, concerning the events and background of developments in the publishing field. These journals, which are among the most valuable sources of information, seldom feature detailed analytic articles.

It is fair to say that the study of publishing as an important element in a nation's intellectual life is in its early stages. This is true not only from the sociological and economic viewpoints, but also in terms of the internal workings of publishing houses. There has been a little more work in the historical field which not only describes various publishing firms, but also links these firms to intellectual currents at the time. Most of the historical writing concerns Europe, but there is some on the United States as well. It is hoped that this modest volume, along with the bibliography, will stimulate further interest in the socio-cultural-economic role of publishing in developing countries.

The bibliography is divided into two parts, with books, reports, and dissertations in the first part and articles in the second part. References are listed in alphabetical order.

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