
Chapter – 7

The Adventure

The Adventure by Jayant Vishnu Narlikar is, in fact, a science fiction which is trying to show the convergence of Science History and Philosophy. In reality the three disciplines, namely, Science, History and Philosophy have to employ different methodology of inquiry vis-a-vis the subject matter.

Prof. Gaitonde had a collision with a truck. At that time he was thinking of the catastrophe theory and its implications for history. He found himself in another Bombay-which looked more like England (cleaner, big English shops). The East India Company was flourishing.

In this different Bombay, he went to the Asiatic Society library in the town hall, to read some History books, including the ones he had written. Most of the history was as he knew it in his world—but the point where history had changed was the Battle of Panipat. In this different world, the Marathas had won.

The Marathas had not allowed the East India Company to expand. In fact, its influence was limited to a few places like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. India had become a democracy but allowed the British to carry on for commercial reasons.

Prof. G wanted to find out how the Marathas had won the battle. According to one history book, the Maratha army's morale was boosted when Vishwasrao managed to escape death narrowly. Next morning he went for a stroll to Azad Maidan. There was a lecture and Prof. G went and sat on the vacant presidential chair. It turned out that in this world people were fed up of long speeches and had abolished the 'chairing' custom. They got angry because Prof. G would not stop talking.

They threw things at him and then got onto the stage to throw him out. And suddenly Prof. G vanished. He was found in the Azad Maidan, in his own familiar world. Where had he been for two days? He showed RD the proof that he had been somewhere else and not just imagining things—the torn-off page of the history book from the other world, about Vishwasrao escaping death. In his book in his own world, the account was given as V being hit by the bullet and dying. So in our world, the Marathas had not won, the East India Company had not flourished and so on.

Through discussions, Prof. G and RD came to the conclusion that there could be many 'different worlds.....at different points of time.' They could all have a different history. Prof. G had been to another world. The time was the present but their history was completely different! The story The Adventure by Jayant Vishnu Narlikar is, in fact, a science fiction which is trying to show the convergence of Science History and Philosophy. In reality the three disciplines, namely, Science, History and Philosophy have to employ different methodology of inquiry vis-a-vis the subject matter.
