

institutions. He was given extraordinary access to scientific institutions and archival material that was not generally available to Indian researchers at that time, and he had extensive conversations with the entire range of scientific workers—students, technicians, scientists, laboratory directors, even Vikram Sarabhai, then chairman of India's Atomic Energy Commission. As a result, the author is able to discuss the contributions of the “nucleus” comprehensively and devoid of the uncritical, reverent treatment that Indian scientists of the time tended to accord those greats.

With a huge amount of information, *Nucleus and Nation* contains lots of interesting and, at times, quite amusing details. Nonetheless, it fails, in my opinion, to put all that information together in a coherent narrative that could have helped the reader reach definitive conclusions—the long “Conclusions” chapter notwithstanding. Moreover, the book is replete with errors and omissions, of physics and otherwise. Some of those are trivial, some quite important; in any event, the book would have greatly benefited from a look-over by a physicist and from the services of a fact checker.

The following are but a few examples: Bhabha and Walter Heitler developed the cascade theory of electronic showers, not Bhabha scattering (page 19), which is something different altogether; it would be a stretch to characterize James Chadwick as a “neutron theorist” (page 201); Daulat Singh Kothari never worked on “formation of neutron stars in white dwarfs” (page 222) and never worked at the National Physical Laboratory (page 224); Paul Dirac was married to Eugene Wigner's sister, not daughter (page 70); Schrödinger's first name was Erwin, not Ernst (page 70); Henry Kissinger's famous trip to China and India's treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union both happened in 1971, not 1969 (page 433); India had a woman chief minister, Sucheta Kripalani, before Indira Gandhi became the prime minister (page 375); and India has 28 states, not 29 (page 5). Indeed, my list of such errors, by no means exhaustive, ran to almost two pages.

Despite those flaws, I think that a future researcher looking to craft a more cogent and error-free narrative will certainly find the voluminous information provided in *Nucleus and Nation* most useful.

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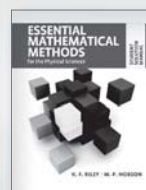
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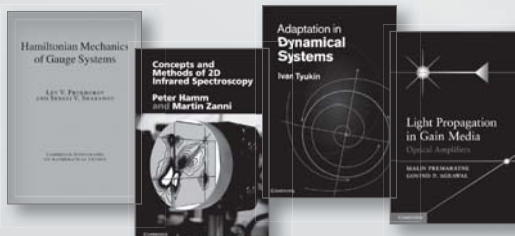
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