



The Public Intellectual in India

Romila Thapar

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The Public Intellectual in India Romila Thapar

The public intellectual in India is an endangered species. Should we care? In this well-argued book, Romila Thapar and others tell us why we should. Thapar begins by defining the critical role that such individuals play in our societies today. Collectively, they are the objective, fearless, constructive voice that asks the awkward questions when government, industry, religious leaders and other bulwarks of society stray from their roles of ensuring the proper functioning of a country whose hallmarks are (or should be) social and economic equality, justice for all, and the liberty to say, think and profess the fundamental requirements of good citizenship. Through the lens of history, philosophy, science, and politics, she shows us the key role enlightened thinkers and activists have played in India, Europe and elsewhere. Today, as the liberal space in India is threatened by religious fundamentalism, big business, and, worryingly, a government that appears to be tacitly (and sometimes overtly) encouraging the attack on freedom of expression, secular values and rational readings of history, there could be no book as timely as this one. With contributions from writers and scholars in the fields of philosophy, science, history, journalism and social activism, *The Public Intellectual in India* shows us why it is important to have independent voices to protect the underprivileged, ensure human rights and social justice, and watch over the smooth functioning of our liberal, secular democracy.

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