
PAPERBOUNDS

BANARAS: City of Light. By Diana L. Eck. Princeton, 1983. 427 pp. \$10.95

The city of Banaras is more than a relic of India's ancient Hindu past. As seen by Eck, a Harvard professor of religion, it is a place that preserves the past "like a palimpsest," the older layers of civilization partially visible through more recent additions. Founded in the sixth century B.C., Banaras was physically altered by foreign invasions lasting from the 13th to the 17th centuries. But its religious significance to Hindus has remained constant: Thousands still bathe there in the sacred Ganges. And along the shore, on *ghats* (steps), they still tell the story of Shiva, the revered god who chose the city as his earthly home. Nineteenth-century Christian missionaries, vainly struggling to convert the Hindus, were shocked by the ubiquitous symbol of Shiva: a phallus, or *linga*, from which the god was often depicted emerging. In fact, though it has sexual connotations, Shiva's *linga* is believed to be the pillar at the center of the earth, an infinite shaft symbolizing the god's unfathomable powers. Eck's explanations of this and other Hindu beliefs enable the Westerner to see the fabled city through the believer's eyes.

BETRAYERS OF THE TRUTH: Fraud and Deceit in the Halls of Science. By William Broad and Nicholas Wade. Touchstone, 1983. 256 pp. \$6.95

Scientific fraud is as old as science. Galileo reported experiments that never took place; Newton fudged figures in his *Principia* to strengthen his case against arch-rival Leibnitz. In this historical exposé, *New York Timesmen* Broad and Wade examine the carefully cultivated facade of scientific objectivity and catalogue the many ethical abuses. This century's pro-

fessionalization of a pursuit once limited to the dedicated amateur has increased the rewards, and lessened the risks, of cutting corners and falsifying data. The built-in safeguards against deceit are inadequate. Repeating the experiments of a colleague seldom results in either glory or new grant money; peer review now relies, essentially, on an "old boy" network with little emphasis on merit. Until scientists agree with Thomas Huxley that science is "no purer than any other region of human activity" and begin surveying their own field more closely, time, "the invisible boot," will remain the only reliable arbiter of scientific veracity.

A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN WORKER. Edited by Richard B. Morris. Princeton, 1983. 251 pp. \$7.95

Originally produced for the U.S. Bicentennial by the Department of Labor, these six essays trace the American laborer's plight and progress from indentured servitude and slavery through the early industrial system, the rise of unions, and the spread of collective bargaining. One theme recurs: the relationship between the health of the economy and the strength of workers' organizations. Before the 1873 depression, for example, unions won concessions in the coal, construction, and iron industries, but the depression, like others before and since, wiped out their gains in wages and conditions of service. The essays (some of whose authors have had shopfloor *and* academic experience) are enriched by revealing statistics: Until 1776, 80 percent of all immigrants, excluding slaves, were bound laborers. And during the 1880s, 40 percent of working-class families earned less than \$500 a year, the bare minimum in those days for a family of five.