

1970s America – An Indian student’s journey

Anil K Rajvanshi

Director

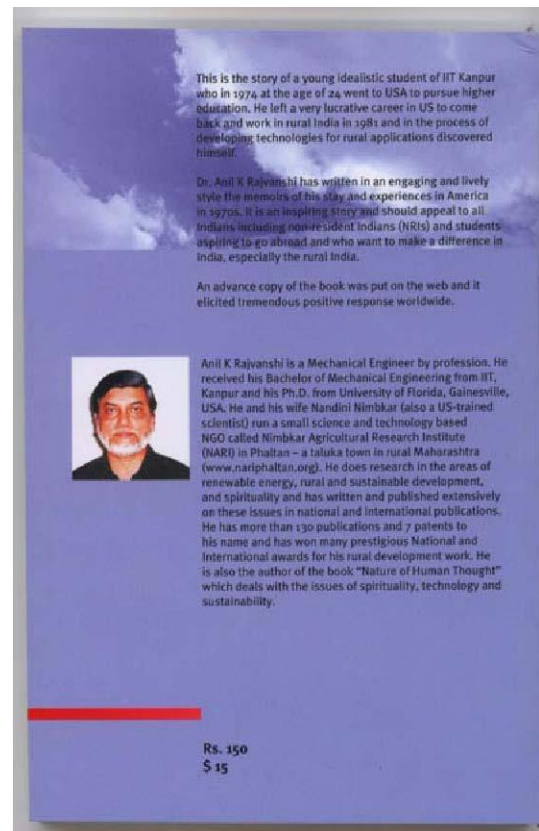
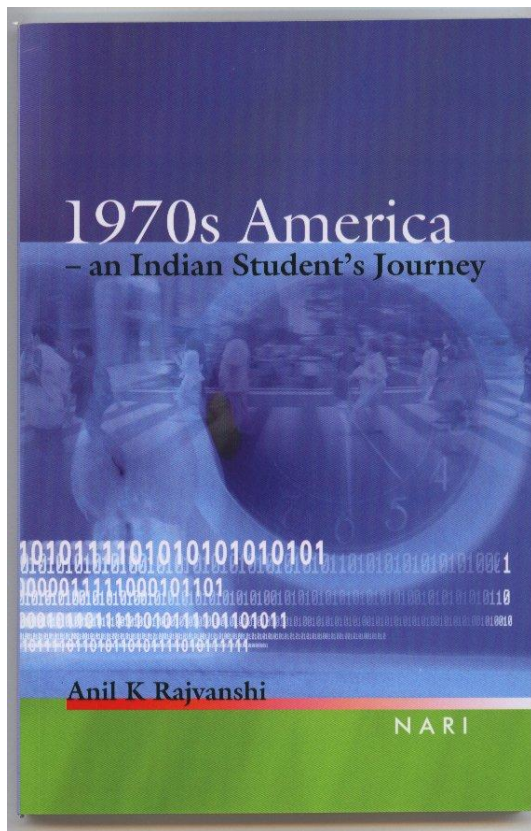
Nimbkar Agricultural Research Institute (NARI)

Phaltan – 415523, Maharashtra, India

This is the story of a young idealistic student of IIT Kanpur who in 1974 at the age of 24 went to USA to pursue higher education. He left a very lucrative career in US to come back and work in rural India in 1981 and in the process of developing technologies for rural applications discovered himself.

Dr. Anil K. Rajvanshi has written in an engaging and lively style the memoirs of his stay and experiences in America in 1970s. It is an inspiring story and should appeal to all Indians including non-resident Indians (NRIs) and students aspiring to go abroad and who want to make a difference in India, especially the rural India.

An advance copy of the book was put on the web and it elicited tremendous positive response worldwide.



Paperback. 166 pages

Preface

I went to US for higher education in 1974 and came back to rural India in 1981. This is the story of my experiences in America in the 1970s both as a graduate student and as a faculty.

America in 1970s was a very nice, open and courteous society and I really enjoyed the graduate student experience. I have tried to capture it as best as possible based upon my 30 year-old memories. If any event or names of people and places have been wrongly depicted then I apologize for the mistakes and blame it on my failing memory rather than any intentional misrepresentation.

As one grows older there is an urge to pen down the experiences that have shaped ones life. My stay in US was one such experience.

It has been little more than 25 years since I came back to India. In late 1981 when I returned, rarely any Indian with an IIT degree came back. Even the few who did come back went to big cities like Bombay, Delhi, Bangalore etc. I went straight to rural Maharashtra which was as alien to me as any foreign country since I hardly knew the local language or the milieu! This was so as I had mostly spent my life staying in cities in Northern India.

Why did I do it and was it worth it? This is what I have tried narrating in the epilogue.

This is also the story of my self-discovery and I have always thanked the higher forces for giving me a place in rural Maharashtra - no matter how small - where I could think deeply on various issues including that of rural development, work on them and write about them.

I really thank my wife Nandini and my younger daughter Madhura who went through the narrative with a fine-tooth comb. Many thanks are also due to Sitaram Ramaswamy, Harish Rao and Keith Ingram for sending their comments and suggestions on the manuscript and Sujit Patwardhan for designing the cover. I thank Sanjay Aherrao for typing innumerable versions of the draft and the team of Sujit Patwardhan and N.A.Kulkarni of Mudra for printing the book.

Anil K Rajvanshi,
Phaltan, November 2007

For what I did after coming to Phaltan has been written in a new book entitled ["Romance of Innovation – A human interest story of doing R&D in rural setting"](#). This book is available on the internet.

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The book is priced at Rs. 150/- for Indian customers and US\$ 15/- for International consumers. The book is available from the Institute. Please [click here](#) to buy it online.

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All proceeds of the sale of this book will go towards the charitable purpose of setting up a [Center of Sustainable Development](#) at NARI.

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