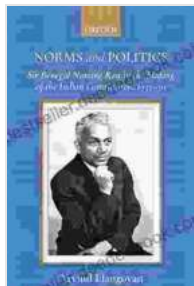


Sir Benegal Narsing Rau: The Architect of the Indian Constitution (1935-50)



Norms and Politics: Sir Benegal Narsing Rau in the Making of the Indian Constitution, 1935–50

by Tracy Sugarman

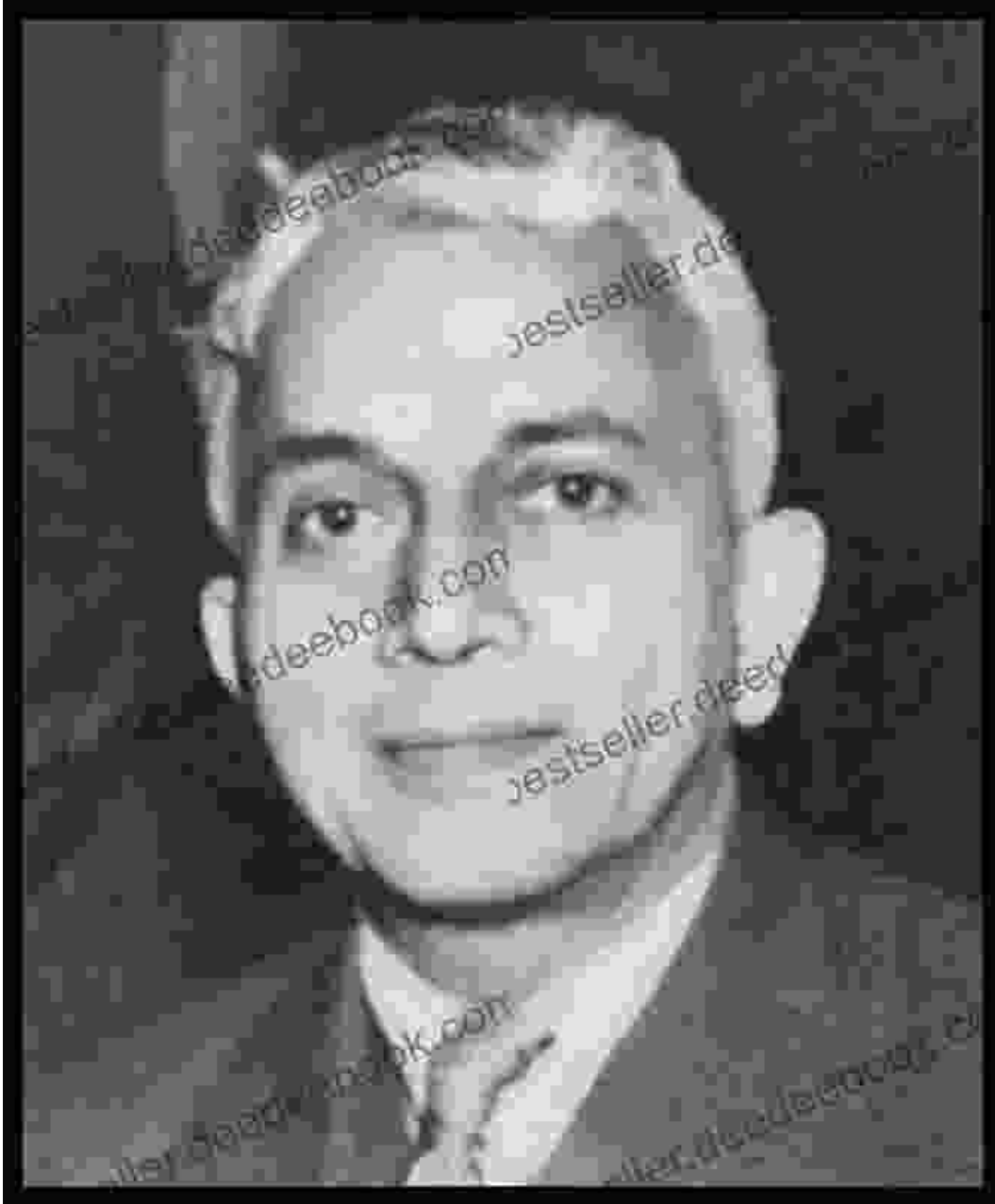
★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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The Indian Constitution, which came into effect on January 26, 1950, is one of the most enduring and comprehensive constitutions in the world. It is a testament to the vision and dedication of its framers, who worked tirelessly to create a document that would guide the newly independent nation of India. Among these framers, one man stands out as the principal architect of the Constitution: Sir Benegal Narsing Rau.

Early Life and Education

Benegal Narsing Rau was born on January 4, 1887, in Mangalore, Karnataka. His father, Rai Bahadur R. Narsing Rau, was a respected lawyer and scholar. Rau's early education was at St. Aloysius College in Mangalore, where he excelled in his studies. He later went to Presidency College in Madras, where he earned a degree in law.

Legal and Diplomatic Career

After graduating from law school, Rau began his legal career in Madras. He quickly gained a reputation as a brilliant lawyer and legal expert. In 1919, he was appointed as the first Indian Advocate-General of Madras. In this role, he played a key role in drafting the Government of India Act of 1919, which expanded the powers of Indian representation in the central government.

Rau's legal expertise and diplomatic skills also saw him serve as a delegate to the League of Nations in 1920. He later served as India's representative to the International Labour Organization and the Permanent Court of International Justice.

Role in the Constituent Assembly

In 1946, Rau was elected to the Constituent Assembly of India, which was tasked with drafting the country's new constitution. He was appointed as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee, a group of seven members responsible for preparing the final draft of the Constitution.

Rau's leadership was instrumental in shaping the Constitution. He drew upon his extensive legal experience and knowledge of comparative constitutional law to craft a document that was both comprehensive and

suited to India's unique needs. He also played a key role in resolving debates and reaching consensus among the Assembly's members.

Key Contributions to the Constitution

Rau's contributions to the Indian Constitution are numerous and far-reaching. He was the main architect of several key provisions, including:

- * The Preamble, which sets out the fundamental principles and objectives of the Constitution.
- * The Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens, which guarantee the basic human rights of all Indians.
- * The Directive Principles of State Policy, which provide guidelines for the government to strive towards achieving social and economic justice.
- * The structure of the Parliament and the judiciary, including the powers and responsibilities of each branch.

Challenges and Criticisms

The task of drafting the Indian Constitution was not without its challenges. Rau and the other members of the Constituent Assembly faced numerous obstacles, including:

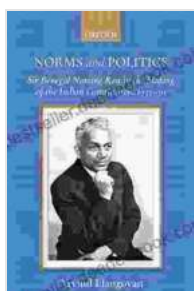
- * The diversity of India's population, which had to be reflected in the Constitution's provisions.
- * The need to balance individual rights with the needs of the state.
- * The pressures and demands from various political and social groups.

Despite these challenges, Rau was able to successfully navigate these issues and produce a Constitution that was widely accepted by the Assembly and the Indian people.

Legacy

Sir Benegal Narsing Rau's contribution to the Indian Constitution is immeasurable. The document he helped to create has served as the foundation for India's democracy and has guided the nation's development for over seven decades. Rau's legacy extends beyond the Constitution itself; he is also remembered for his legal scholarship, his diplomatic service, and his dedication to the cause of Indian independence.

Sir Benegal Narsing Rau was a brilliant jurist, a skilled diplomat, and a visionary leader. His tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to the drafting of the Indian Constitution left a lasting impact on India's history and its democratic future. He is rightly regarded as the architect of the Constitution and one of the most influential figures in modern Indian history.



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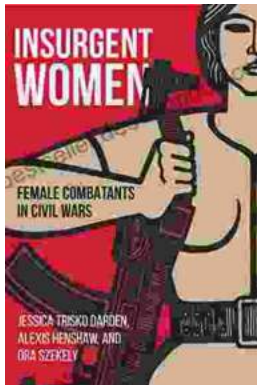
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