



# Nehru: A Tryst with Destiny

*Stanley Wolpert*

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## **Nehru: A Tryst with Destiny** Stanley Wolpert

Jawaharlal Nehru was India's royal figure, its matinee idol, its most gifted prime minister. He combined a unique array of talents: compelling oratory, a brilliant mind, good looks, a keen political sense, but he also suffered from brooding isolation. He left an indelible mark on both the country he led to independence, and the world in which he lived. Yet even though Nehru wrote more about himself than did any other modern Indian, "Panditji's" true face has always remained veiled.

Following Nehru from childhood, through his Harrow and Cambridge education, to his years as nationalist leader and Prime Minister of India, Stanley Wolpert's compelling, authoritative biography strips Nehru of his many cloaks and covers, removing the public masks he fashioned for himself throughout his mature life. With a subtle analysis of the various influences on Nehru's intellectual and political life--including the early homosexual influences, his conflict with his father, his close relationship with Mahatma Gandhi, his English education, and the years of periodic and sometimes prolonged imprisonment--Wolpert lays open to the reader the most nuanced, insightful rendering of Nehru's life yet written.

Wolpert describes Nehru's brief career as a barrister, and his devotion to India's struggle for freedom, following in the footsteps of Mahatma Gandhi to the dust and poverty of India's villages. The book traces Jawaharlal's swift rise to the presidency of India's National Congress, revealing how his radical ideas and fearless leadership of Congress's left wing soon won him the martyrdom of long years behind British bars for conducting civil disobedience campaigns. After his release in 1945, Nehru met Lord Mountbatten, with whom he was destined to negotiate the independence and partition of British India into the nation states of India and Pakistan in 1947. Nehru then went on to become India's immensely popular Prime Minister for almost two decades.

Wolpert brings Nehru's complex personality to life against a vividly portrayed picture of India's fascinating history throughout its most turbulent century. He shows how India's own destiny was intimately wrapped up in the destiny of Nehru, a charismatic leader who stands among the twentieth century's foremost statesmen.

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