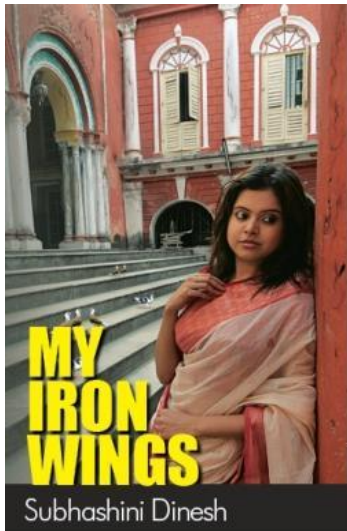


By Nirmalya Banerjee

Slice of Kolkata

At a time when Kolkata is just a shadow of its glorious past facing myriad problems like traffic, transportation, unemployment and hawkers it is



heartening to note that a writer from the deep south has chosen the city as the theme of her maiden novel. Subhashini Dinesh, an assistant professor at the Asian College of Journalism, Chennai, has set her fiction, *My Iron Wings*, in the backdrop of Kolkata as it was in the last decade of the last century. It is the story of a young woman's struggle to gain control of her own life under the shadow of her father's anxiety to arrange her marriage. The protagonist in the novel, like the author herself, is a city-based journalist. From the Metro to speeding mini-buses to

typical scenes in a newspaper office, the book captures all the facets of the city. Kolkata is there everywhere in the book. In fact, it was the city which inspired me to write the novel. Wherever the protagonist goes, the city travels with her, says Subhashini.



Subhashini Dinesh read Political Science at Calcutta University. She worked for several newspapers before taking up her present assignment as Assistant Professor at Asian College of Journalism, Chennai

Set in the bustling, colourful and sometimes chaotic Calcutta of the 1990s, *My Iron Wings* deals with a young woman's struggle to assume control over her own life and its possibilities in the obsessive shadow of her father's determination to arrange her marriage. As Maya's extended family life, with its female submissiveness and male hypocrisy, becomes more irrelevant to her, her career obliges her to adapt to change in personal as well as professional matters. Ultimately she does assert herself as less of a commodity and more of an individual, yet still she has to settle for a compromise. But is it a compromise on her terms?

JOHN W. HOOD